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Hivatalos Lapja

C 231

57. évfolyam

Magyar nyelvű kiadás

Tájékoztatások és közlemények

2014. július 17.

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Európai Parlament

ÍRÁSBELI VÁLASZT IGÉNYLŐ KÉRDÉSEK A VÁLASZOKKAL

2014/C 231/01 Az Európai Parlament tagjai által feltett, írásbeli választ igénylő kérdések és az európai uniós intézmények által rájuk adott válaszok 1

(Lásd az olvasónak szóló megjegyzést)

HU

Megjegyzés az olvasónak

Ez a kiadvány az Európai Parlament tagjai által feltett, írásbeli választ igénylő kérdéseket és az európai uniós intézmények által rájuk adott válaszokat tartalmazza.

Minden kérdés és válasz esetében az eredeti nyelvi változat szerepel először az esetleges fordítások előtt.

Egyes esetekben előfordulhat, hogy a válasz más nyelven születik, mint a kérdés. Ez a válaszadásra felkért bizottság munkanyelvétől függ.

E kérdések és válaszok az Európai Parlament eljárási szabályzatának 117. és 118. cikkével összhangban kerülnek közzétételre.

Minden kérdés és válasz megtalálható az Európai Parlament weboldalán (Europarl) a „Parlamenti kérdések" cím alatt:

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

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PPE	Európai Néppárt (Kereszténydemokraták) képviselőcsoport
S&D	Európai Szocialisták és Demokraták Progresszív Szövetsége képviselőcsoport
ALDE	Liberálisok és Demokraták Szövetsége Európáért képviselőcsoport
ECR	Európai Konzervatívok és Reformerek képviselőcsoport
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EFD	Szabadság és Demokrácia Európája képviselőcsoport
NI	független képviselők

IV

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EURÓPAI PARLAMENT

ÍRÁSBELI VÁLASZT IGÉNYLŐ KÉRDÉSEK A VÁLASZOKKAL

Az Európai Parlament tagjai által feltett, írásbeli választ igénylő kérdések és az európai uniós intézmények által rájuk adott válaszok

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(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012780/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Nacionalización del Valencia Club de Fútbol — finanzas públicas y deuda total del Estado

La Generalitat Valenciana se convertirá en la máxima accionista del Valencia Club de Fútbol —con el 70 por ciento— cuando Bankia ejecute el aval que el Instituto Valenciano de Finanzas (IVF) dio a la Fundación Valencia CF para que comprara ese paquete accionarial en 2009 ([1]).

Así lo constató este viernes el vicepresidente y portavoz de la Generalitat, José Císcar, que dio por hecho que Bankia ejecutará el aval de 81 millones de euros pocas horas después de que la Fundación tirara la toalla y anunciara que no pagará los intereses correspondientes a 2012 —5,6 millones, que debía haber abonado en agosto—. Bankia había concedido varios aplazamientos, el último hasta el 31 de enero.

Según Císcar, su Gobierno «negociará con Bankia para no tener que hacer el desembolso de esa cantidad de dinero, porque la liquidez que tiene la Generalitat en estos momentos vamos a destinarla a compromisos de pago más urgentes».

En concreto, negociará un préstamo por los 86,6 millones que debe pagar —sumando los intereses—, como ya hizo con el Sabadell cuando ejecutó avales del mismo tipo —de 18 y 9 millones correspondientes al Hércules CF y Elche CF, respectivamente.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. Considerando que la deuda total de la Generalitat Valenciana es equivalente a 29 235 millones de euros, ¿cree la Comisión que la adquisición del Valencia CF por la Generalitat Valenciana puede empeorar sus finanzas públicas y la deuda total del Estado?

2. ¿Sabe la Comisión que el Gobierno de la Generalitat Valenciana también es el accionista mayoritario del Elche CF?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que la conversión de clubes de futbol en empresas de titularidad pública es coherente con las medidas de reducción del déficit previstas en el Semestre Europeo y las recomendaciones específicas de la CE?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de enero de 2014)

1. Las repercusiones de la ejecución del aval emitido por el Instituto Valenciano de Finanzas (IVF) a la Fundación Valencia Club de Fútbol en el déficit y la deuda de la Comunidad Autónoma de Valencia solo podrán valorarse cuando se disponga de los datos correspondientes.

2. La Comisión no estaba al corriente de la estructura accionarial del Elche FC.

3. La Comisión está siguiendo de cerca la aplicación de las políticas de reducción del déficit de las comunidades autónomas españolas, incluidas las satisfactorias medidas de racionalización de la llamada administración pública institucional. La Comisión considera que las comunidades autónomas son actores clave para el éxito del proceso de reforma y saneamiento estructural en España.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/valenciana/noticias/4538460/01/13/El-Valencia-Club-de-Futbol-pasara-a-ser-una-empresa-publica-de-la-Generalitat.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012780/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Nationalisation of Valencia Football Club — public finance and the State's total debt

The Autonomous Government of Valencia will become Valencia Football Club's majority shareholder — with a holding of 70% — when Bankia demands payment of the guarantee issued by the Valencia Finance Institute (IVF) to the Valencia FC Foundation to buy this shareholding in 2009. ([1])

This was confirmed on Friday by the Autonomous Government's Vice-President and spokesperson, José Císcar, who, a few hours after the Foundation threw in the towel and announced it would not pay the interest for 2012 — EUR 5.6 million, due in August –, accepted that Bankia would now demand payment of the EUR 81 million guarantee. Bankia had granted several postponements, the last until 31 January.

According to Císcar, his Government will negotiate with Bankia in order not to have to make payment of this amount of money, because the liquidity available to the Autonomous Government at this time will be used to pay more pressing commitments.

Specifically, it will negotiate a loan to cover the EUR 86.6 million it must pay — with interest included –, as it did previously with Banco Sabadell when this bank demanded payment of similar guarantees — of EUR 18 million and EUR 9 million for Hércules FC and Elche FC, respectively.

1. Considering that the Autonomous Government of Valencia's total debt is EUR 29.235 billion, does the Commission believe that acquisition of Valencia FC by the Autonomous Government may worsen public finances and the State's total debt?

2. Is the Commission aware that the Autonomous Government of Valencia is also the majority shareholder of Elche FC?

3. Does the Commission believe that converting football clubs into publicly owned enterprises is consistent with the deficit reduction measures under the European Semester and the specific recommendations of the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2014)

1. The impact of the execution of the guarantees issued by the Valencia Finance Institute (IVF) to the Valencia FC Foundation on the Autonomous Community of Valencia's deficit and debt can only be assessed when the data will be available.

2. The Commission was not aware of the shareholding structure of Elche FC.

3. The Commission is following closely the implementation of policies to reduce the Spanish regions' deficit, including welcome policies to streamline the so-called public institutional administration. The Commission considers that the Autonomous Communities are key actors for the success of the structural reform and consolidation process in Spain.

([1]) http://www.eleconomista.es/valenciana/noticias/4538460/01/13/El-Valencia-Club-de-Futbol-pasara-a-ser-una-empresa-publica-de-la-Generalitat.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012781/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Renegociación o cancelación de tipos de intereses abusivos

La obligatoriedad de las instituciones de pagar la deuda pública por encima de los servicios públicos y los derechos sociales, en momentos de crisis, aumenta la pobreza y la exclusión social.

Los mecanismos del BCE para proveer liquidez a la eurozona, como los LTRO *(Long-Term Refinancing Operations)*, permiten a la banca española acceder a créditos a un interés inferior al 1 %. Sin embargo, la misma banca otorga crédito o refinanciación de estos a las administraciones públicas, cobrando elevados intereses del 5,54 %.

Esto implica que, en Cerdanyola del Vallès, por ejemplo, se tenga que pagar 3 000 000 de euros adicionales en concepto de intereses contraídos por el préstamo de un capital de 8 610 354,05 euros, otorgado en el marco del «Plan de Pago de Proveedores 2012 del Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas», donde se han aplicado intereses del 5,54 %.

En Badalona, el gobierno municipal ha aumentado en 41 millones de euros en 2012. Caixabanc, CatalunyaBanc, Bankia, Banco Sabadell, CAM, Banco Santander, Banesto, Banco Popular, Bankinter, Caja España, Cajamar y BBVA otorgaron un préstamo al ayuntamiento de Badalona por un capital de 31 036 946,75 euros a un tipo de interés del 5,54 %, cuando estas entidades financieras han obtenido financiación pública a intereses inferiores al 1 %.

La reestructuración de la deuda y los finiquitos son prácticas reconocidas en la legislación internacional. Sabemos que la cancelación de las deudas ilegítimas ha sido posible en el pasado, tanto en Europa como en países en desarrollo, y que esta cancelación se relaciona con un alivio inmediato de las necesidades básicas de la población.

¿Considera abusiva la posición adoptada por parte de la banca española respecto a los créditos a las administraciones públicas? ¿Comparte que dicha deuda de las administraciones públicas debería considerarse ilegítima (al derivarse de fondos oportunistas en condiciones abusivas)?

¿Considera que debería haber una renegociación de los tipos de intereses y cancelación, si es necesario, por el tipo de interés del 5,54 % aplicado a los préstamos referidos?

¿Considera que el BCE debería condicionar los créditos a las entidades financieras, como los LTRO, a que estas presten a tipos similares a las administraciones públicas para políticas públicas?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión estima que no se ha abusado en modo alguno de las condiciones bajo las cuales se otorgaron los fondos. De hecho, el Fondo para la Financiación de los Pagos a Proveedores (FFPP) se creó en plena crisis financiera, cuando las administraciones autonómicas o locales españolas más frágiles tenían un acceso limitado a la financiación del mercado o carecían por completo de él. El tipo de interés cobrado por los préstamos a las administraciones autonómicas y locales era igual, o estaba próximo, al tipo de mercado vigente en ese momento para la deuda del Tesoro. Si dichas administraciones hubiesen podido obtener la refinanciación de sus préstamos a tipos de mercado inferiores, cabe suponer que lo habrían hecho. La conveniencia o no de una renegociación de los tipos de interés es algo que las partes del contrato deben discutir y acordar.

La política monetaria en la zona del euro es competencia exclusiva del BCE, cuya independencia está consagrada por el Tratado, y la Comisión no interfiere en las obligaciones que el Tratado o sus propios Estatutos imponen al BCE. Por otra parte, el artículo 123 del TFUE prohíbe al BCE conceder apoyo directo a los Estados de la zona del euro.

A través de su operación de financiación a plazo más largo (LTRO) de una duración de tres años, anunciada por primera vez a finales de 2011, el BCE otorgó financiación a los bancos de la zona del euro a tipos de interés reducidos, a fin de aliviar los efectos de la crisis económica y financiera. La finalidad de la LTRO era mantener un colchón de liquidez en los bancos que tuvieran en su poder activos ilíquidos y evitar así una grave contracción del crédito o el hundimiento del sistema bancario. Los bancos no estaban sujetos a restricciones a la hora de utilizar los fondos proporcionados al amparo de la LTRO.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012781/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Renegotiation or cancellation of abusive interest rates

The fact that institutions, in times of crisis, are obliged to put paying public debt ahead of public services and social rights increases poverty and social exclusion.

European Central Bank (ECB) mechanisms for providing liquidity in the euro area, such as long-term refinancing operations (LTROs), allow the Spanish banking system to access credit at interest of less than 1%. However, the same banking system offers credit and refinancing to government administrations at high interest of 5.54%.

This means that Cerdanyola del Vallès, for example, has to pay an additional EUR 3 million in interest incurred on the loan of EUR 8 610 354.05, granted under the '2012 Supplier Payment Plan of the Ministry of Economy and Finance' with interest of 5.54%.

The amount paid by the local government of Badalona has increased by EUR 41 million in 2012. Caixabanc, CatalunyaBanc, Bankia, Banco Sabadell, CAM, Banco Santander, Banesto, Banco Popular, Bankinter, Caja España, Cajamar and BBVA granted a loan to Badalona city council of EUR 31 036 946.75 at an interest rate of 5.54%, when these financial institutions obtained public financing at under 1% interest.

Debt restructuring and settlements are practices recognised in international law. We know that cancellation of illegitimate debt has been possible in the past, both in Europe and in developing countries, and that such cancellation is associated with immediate relief of the population's basic needs.

Does the Commission consider the position taken by Spanish banks in regard to loans to government administrations to be abusive? Does it agree that government debt should be considered illegitimate (as it results from opportunistic funds under abusive conditions)?

Does it believe the interest rates should be renegotiated and, if necessary, cancelled because of the 5.54% interest rate applied to the aforementioned loans?

Does it think the ECB should place conditions on loans made to financial institutions, like LTROs, so that these institutions make loans at similar interest rates to government administrations for public policies?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 January 2014)

The Commission is of the view that there has not been any abuse of the conditions under which the funds have been provided. In fact, the Fund for Financing of Payments to Suppliers (Fondo para la Financiacion de Pago a Proveedores — FFPP) was set up in the midst of the financial crisis when the weaker Spanish regional and local governments had either limited or no access to market funding. The interest charged on the loans to the regional and local governments was the prevailing market rate for Treasury borrowing at the time (or close to it). Had the regional and local governments been able to secure re-financing for their loans to suppliers at lower market rates they would have presumably done so. Whether the interest rates should be renegotiated this is a matter to be discussed and agreed upon by the contractual parties.

Monetary policy in the euro area is the exclusive competence of the ECB, whose independence is enshrined in the Treaty and the Commission does not interfere with the ECB's Treaty or statutory obligations. Furthermore, Article 123 TFEU prohibits the ECB from providing direct support to euro area governments.

Via its three-year long-term refinancing operation (LTRO), announced for the first time in the end of 2011, the ECB provided financing to euro area banks at low interest rates to ease the financial and economic crisis. The aim of the LTRO was to maintain a cushion of liquidity for banks holding illiquid assets and thus avoid a severe credit crunch or a collapse of the banking system. Banks were not constrained in their use of funding under LTROs.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012784/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Καθεστώς επί «μακρόν διαμένοντα» για υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών

Η οδηγία 2003/109/ΕΚ σχετικά με το καθεστώς υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών οι οποίοι είναι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες, είχε υιοθετηθεί το 2003 και έπρεπε να έχει ενσωματωθεί στις νομοθεσίες των κρατών μελών το αργότερο στις 23 Ιανουαρίου 2006. Η οδηγία προβλέπει τη δυνατότητα των κρατών μελών να δίνουν σε υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών που διαμένουν στην επικράτειά τους νόμιμα και αδιάλειπτα κατά τα πέντε τελευταία έτη να παρέχουν καθεστώς επί μακρόν διαμένοντα και ορίζει τις συνθήκες διαμονής σε χώρα της ΕΕ άλλη από αυτή που τους χορήγησε το καθεστώς του διαμένοντος.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα ευεργετήματα που παρέχει το εν λόγω καθεστώς στους υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών; Πότε ενσωματώθηκε στην ελληνική έννομη τάξη η οδηγία 2003/109/ΕΚ; Σε πόσους υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών έχει χορηγηθεί το καθεστώς του επί μακρόν διαμένοντα στην Ελλάδα; Μπορεί να διαθέσει η Επιτροπή στατιστικά στοιχεία για τους αριθμούς των ατόμων που πήραν το καθεστώς ανά χώρα μέλος και τους αριθμούς των ατόμων που ζουν σε άλλη χώρα από αυτή που τους χορήγησε το καθεστώς;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Σύμφωνα με την οδηγία αριθ. 2003/109/ΕΚ ([1]), οι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες στην ΕΕ απολαύουν ίσης μεταχείρισης με τους ημεδαπούς όσον αφορά: την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση και τους όρους εργασίας· την εκπαίδευση και την επαγγελματική κατάρτιση· την αναγνώριση των επαγγελματικών διπλωμάτων και πιστοποιητικών· την κοινωνική ασφάλιση, την κοινωνική αρωγή και την κοινωνική προστασία· τα φορολογικά πλεονεκτήματα· την πρόσβαση στα αγαθά και τις υπηρεσίες· την ελευθερία του συνεταιρίζεσθαι και της εγγραφής σε οργάνωση εργαζομένων ή εργοδοτών· την ελεύθερη πρόσβαση στο σύνολο της επικράτειας του οικείου κράτους μέλους.

Οι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες στην ΕΕ και τα μέλη των οικογενειών τους έχουν επίσης δικαιώματα κινητικότητας εντός της ΕΕ υπό ορισμένους όρους και απολαύουν ίσης μεταχείρισης με τους ημεδαπούς όσον αφορά τους προαναφερθέντες τομείς στο έδαφος κράτους μέλους διαφορετικού από το κράτος μέλος που τους χορήγησε το καθεστώς του επί μακρόν διαμένοντος. Οι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες απολαύουν επίσης προστασίας από την απέλαση.

Η οδηγία αριθ. 2003/109/ΕΚ μεταφέρθηκε στην ελληνική νομοθεσία στις 31 Ιουλίου 2006 με το προεδρικό διάταγμα αριθ. 150/2006 για την Προσαρμογή της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας στην οδηγία αριθ. 2003/109 του Συμβουλίου, της 25ης Νοεμβρίου 2003, σχετικά με το καθεστώς υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών οι οποίοι είναι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες ([2]).

Στα τέλη του 2012, 918 υπήκοοι τρίτων χωρών που διέμεναν στην Ελλάδα υπόκειντο στο καθεστώς του επί μακρόν διαμένοντος στην ΕΕ, ενώ στα τέλη του 2011 οι εν λόγω υπήκοοι ήταν 554 (και αντίστοιχα 287 στα τέλη του 2010, 134 στα τέλη του 2009 και 51 στα τέλη του 2008) ([3]).

Στο τέλος κάθε έτους, η Eurostat συλλέγει και δημοσιεύει στοιχεία ανά κράτος μέλος σχετικά με τον αριθμό των ατόμων που υπόκεινται στο καθεστώς του επί μακρόν διαμένοντος στην ΕΕ ([4]). Επισημαίνεται ότι η Επιτροπή δεν συλλέγει στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό των νέων αδειών παραμονής για επί μακρόν διαμένοντες στην ΕΕ που εκδόθηκαν σε συγκεκριμένο έτος.

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει πλήρη στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τον αριθμό των ατόμων που ζουν σε χώρα διαφορετική από εκείνη που τους χορήγησε το καθεστώς του επί μακρόν διαμένοντος ([5]).

([1]) ΕΕ L 16 της 23.1.2004, σ. 44-53 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003L0109:en:NOT

([2]) ΕΕ 160/Α της 31.7.2006. Στις 7.11.2006, το Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών εξέδωσε εγκύκλιο με αριθ. 47/06 για την Εφαρμογή ρητρών του προεδρικού διατάγματος αριθ. 150 (ΕΕ 160 Α) «Προσαρμογή της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας στην οδηγία αριθ. 2003/109 του Συμβουλίου, της 25ης Νοεμβρίου 2003, σχετικά με το καθεστώς υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών οι οποίοι είναι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες».

([3]) Πηγή Eurostat http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_reslong&lang=en και στη συνέχεια επιλέξτε «Reason — EU directive».

([4]) ό.π.

([5]) Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες, βλέπε τη μελέτη του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικτύου Μετανάστευσης σχετικά με την κινητικότητα υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών εντός της ΕΕ, σελίδα 48: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/doc_centre/immigration/docs/studies/emn-synthesis_report_intra_eu_mobility_final_july_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012784/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: 'Long-term resident' status for third-country nationals

Directive 2003/109/EC concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents was adopted in 2003 and was meant to be transposed into the legislation of Member States by 23 January 2006. The directive sets out the possibility for Member States to give third-country nationals residing in their territory lawfully and uninterruptedly over the previous five years long-term resident status, and defines the conditions for residence in EU countries other than the country which granted this status.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What benefits does the above regime provide to third-country nationals? When was Directive 2003/109/EC transposed into Greek law? To how many third-country nationals has long-term resident status been granted in Greece? Can the Commission provide statistical data by Member State on the numbers of persons acquiring the status and the numbers of persons living in a country other than the one that granted them this status?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

Under Directive 2003/109/EC ([1]) long-term EU residents enjoy equal treatment with nationals as regards: access to employment and working conditions; education and vocational training; recognition of professional diplomas and qualifications; social security, social assistance and social protection; tax benefits; access to goods and services; freedom of association and affiliation; free access to the entire territory of the Member State concerned.

Long-term EU residents and their family members also have intra-EU mobility rights under certain conditions, and can enjoy equal treatment with nationals in the abovementioned areas in a Member State other than the one that granted the long-term resident status. Long-term EU residents also have protection against expulsion.

Directive 2003/109/EC was transposed into Greek law on 31 July 2006 by Presidential Decree 150/2006 on Adaptation of Hellenic legislation to the Council Directive 2003/109 of 25 November 2003 on the status of third-country nationals who are long term residents ([2]).

At the end of 2012, 918 third-country citizens resident in Greece held long-term EU resident status, while at the end of 2011 there were 554 such persons (and correspondingly 287 at the end of 2010; 134 at the end of 2009; and 51 at the end of 2008) ([3]).

Data on the number of persons holding long-term EU resident status per Member State are collected at the end of each year and made available by Eurostat ([4]). Please note that the Commission does not collect data on the number of long-term EU permits newly issued during a particular year.

The Commission has no complete statistical data on the number of persons living in a country other than the one that granted them long-term resident status ([5]).

([1]) OJ L 16, 23.1.2004, p. 44-53 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003L0109:en:NOT

([2]) OJ 160/A 31.7.2006. On 7.11.2006 the Circular 47/06 of Ministry of Interior on the Application of clauses of the presidential decree 150 (OJ 160 A) 'Adaptation of Hellenic legislation to the Council Directive 2003/109 of 25 November 2003 on the status of third-country nationals who are long term residents' was adopted.

([3]) Source Eurostat http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_reslong&lang=en then select 'Reason — EU directive'.

([4]) idem.

([5]) For more information on data provided by some Member States, see European Migration Network's study on intra-EU mobility of third-country nationals, page 48: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/doc_centre/immigration/docs/studies/emn-synthesis_report_intra_eu_mobility_final_july_2013.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012785/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(12 november 2013)

Betreft: Duitsland bestraft voor succes

Op 11 november 2013 heeft Olli Rehn, vicevoorzitter van de Commissie, een artikel op zijn blog geplaatst over het surplus van Duitsland ([1]). Hij voert aan dat Berlijn moet opteren voor een gewijzigd economisch beleid om een win-winsituatie te creëren voor de volledige eurozone. Volgens de heer Rehn is het van wezenlijk belang dat een stijging van de binnenlandse vraag in Duitsland moet helpen om de opwaartse druk op de wisselkoers van de euro te verminderen, waardoor de toegang tot de mondiale markten voor exporteurs zou worden vergemakkelijkt in zuidelijk Europa. De Commissie zou zelfs overwegen een diepgaande herziening van de Duitse economie te initiëren in het kader van de procedure voor macro-economische onevenwichtigheden.

Tegen deze achtergrond wordt de Commissie verzocht de volgende vragen te beantwoorden:

1. Is de Commissie van mening dat Duitsland bestraft moet worden voor zijn buitengewone economische prestaties?

2. Indien Duitsland de meest concurrerende economie van de Europese Unie is, waarom wil de Commissie zijn economisch beleid dan wijzigen? Is de Commissie van mening dat dit in lijn is met een „industriebeleid in een tijd van globalisering", één van de twee vlaggenschipinitiatieven in het kader van Europa 2020 die de Commissie promoot als manier om te komen tot „duurzame groei" door de productiviteit en het concurrentievermogen te verbeteren?

3. Is ze niet van mening dat een devaluatie van de euro zou leiden tot ingevoerde inflatie en de koopkracht van kernlanden en perifere landen verder zou verminderen?

4. Is ze van oordeel dat een gedevalueerde euro Duitse goederen minder concurrerend zou maken dan ze momenteel zijn?

5. Waarom denkt de Commissie dat een win-winsituatie mogelijk kan zijn in de nabije toekomst, gelet op de structurele onevenwichtigheden tussen de lidstaten van de eurozone?

6. Indien ze denkt dat Duitsland zijn economisch beleid moet herzien ten voordele van de hele eurozone, kan ze dan bevestigen dat de EMU niet meer is dan een permanente transferunie?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(17 januari 2014)

De Commissie heeft op 15 november 2013 haar waarschuwingsmechanismeverslag (WMV) aangenomen, dat een economische lezing van een scorebord van indicatoren omvatte. Het geachte lid van het Europees Parlement wordt verzocht inzage te nemen van de bevindingen van de Commissie in het WMV ([2]) alsmede het in deze context uitgebrachte memo ([3]), dat informatie verschaft over de zienswijze van de Commissie betreffende Duitsland in dit verband.

De Commissie is van oordeel dat het sterke concurrentievermogen en de gezonde fundamentals van de Duitse economie een groot voordeel zijn voor de EU en de eurozone.

([1]) http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/rehn/turning-germanys-surplus-into-a-win-win-for-the-eurozone/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/amr2014_nl.pdf
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-970_nl.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012785/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Germany punished for success

On 11 November 2013 Vice-President of the Commission Olli Rehn published an article about Germany's surplus on his blog ([1]). He argues that Berlin should adjust its economic policy in order to produce a win-win situation for the eurozone as a whole. 'Crucially, a rise in domestic demand in Germany', Mr Rehn affirms, 'should help to reduce upward pressure on the euro exchange rate, easing access to global markets for exporters' in southern Europe. The Commission is even due to consider whether to launch an in-depth review of the German economy in the framework of the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure.

In the light of this, could the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it think that Germany needs to be sanctioned for its extraordinary economic performance?

2. If Germany is the most competitive economy in the European Union, why does it want Germany to change its economic policy? Does it think that this is in line with 'an industrial policy for the globalisation era', one of the two EU 2020 flagship initiatives it has promoted as aiming to achieve 'sustainable growth' by improving its productivity and competitiveness?

3. Does it not think that devaluing the euro would cause imported inflation and further reduce the purchasing power of core and peripheral countries as well?

4. Does it think that a devalued euro would make German goods less competitive than they are at the present?

5. Given the structural imbalances among eurozone Member States, why does it think that a win-win situation may be envisaged in the near future?

6. If it thinks that Germany should readdress its economic policies for the 'benefit' of the eurozone as a whole, can it confirm that the EMU is nothing other than a permanent transfer union?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

The Commission adopted on 15 November 2013 its Alert Mechanism Report (AMR), which included an economic reading of a scoreboard of indicators. The Honourable Member of the European Parliament is invited to consult the Commission's findings in the AMR ([2]) as well as the Memo issued in this context ([3]) , which provides information regarding the Commission's view on Germany in this respect.

The Commission considers that the strong competitiveness and sound fundamentals of the German economy are of major benefit for the EU and the euro area.

([1]) http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/rehn/turning-germanys-surplus-into-a-win-win-for-the-eurozone/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/amr2014_en.pdf
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-970_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012793/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Representación de los trabajadores en las elecciones del Consejo Agrario

El Ministro de Agricultura del Gobierno de España, Miguel Ángel Arias Cañete, ha anunciado su intención de celebrar unas nuevas elecciones al Consejo Agrario durante el primer semestre de 2014. Estas elecciones se producen 35 años después de las últimas elecciones celebradas entre los representantes del sector. El anteproyecto de Ley de Representatividad Agraria que el Consejo de Ministros está discutiendo no recoge ninguna vía para la participación de los trabajadores del sector agrario.

Las federaciones agroalimentarias de los sindicatos, CC.OO. y UGT, han denunciado que dicho proyecto de ley no recoge la participación de, aproximadamente, unos 800 000 trabajadores del sector agrario que existen en España. En el proyecto tampoco se prevé la creación de ningún Consejo Agroalimentario específico, dejando fuera de los mecanismos oficiales de representatividad del sector a los sindicatos y organizaciones de trabajadores en el campo. El reglamento, como hemos denunciado anteriormente, supone una regresión en el derecho de los actores sociales del sector a ser representados en el Consejo Agrario, y en el ámbito laboral puede llegar a incumplir la Directiva de la Unión Europea 2002/14/CE, por la que se establece un marco general relativo a la información y a la consulta de los trabajadores en la Comunidad Europea. Dicha Directiva trata de garantizar que los trabajadores europeos tengan derecho a los mecanismos apropiados que garanticen la información y consulta en decisiones que les afecten, y que, por tanto, los 800 000 trabajadores del medio rural español, según el actual anteproyecto de ley, quedarían privados de lo establecido por esta Directiva.

¿Conoce el Consejo el anteproyecto de Ley de Representatividad Agraria que discute el Gobierno de España?

¿Considera que los objetivos de la PAC: «garantizar el nivel de vida adecuado para la comunidad agraria» así como «promover el desarrollo económico del conjunto de la economía rural», pueden implementarse sin la representación de las organizaciones de los trabajadores agrarios?

¿Qué países de la Unión Europea no incluyen a las organizaciones de trabajadores agrarios en los foros oficiales del sector?

Respuesta
(3 de febrero de 2014)

Si bien no corresponde al Consejo comentar los proyectos de ley nacionales, incumbe a la Comisión, como guardiana de los Tratados, supervisar el cumplimiento de la legislación de la Unión por los Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012793/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Worker representation in the Agriculture Council elections

The Spanish Minister for Agriculture, Miguel Ángel Arias Cañete, has announced his intention to hold new elections to the Agriculture Council in the first half of 2014. These elections come 35 years after the last elections held among representatives in the sector. The preliminary draft law on agricultural representativeness being discussed by the Council of Ministers does not include any way for workers in the agricultural sector to participate.

The agri-food federations of the Spanish trade unions CCOO and UGT have claimed that this draft law does not account for the participation of some 800 000 employees in the agricultural sector in Spain. Nor does the draft envisage the establishment of any specific agri-food council, thereby excluding relevant trade unions and workers' organisations from the sector's official representativeness mechanisms. The regulation, as previously reported, is a step back with regard to the right of social stakeholders in the sector to be represented in the Agriculture Council, and in the workplace it could lead to a breach of Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community. That directive seeks to ensure that European employees have the right to the appropriate mechanisms guaranteeing information and consultation in decisions concerning them, and the 800 000 workers in the Spanish countryside, according to the current draft law, would therefore be denied the provisions of the directive.

Is the Council aware of the preliminary draft law on agricultural representativeness being discussed by the Spanish Government?

Does it think that the aims of the CAP: to ensure 'a fair standard of living for the agricultural community' and to 'promote the economic development of the wider rural economy', can be implemented without the representation of agricultural workers' organisations?

Which European Union countries do not include agricultural workers' organisations in the sector's official forums?

Reply
(3 February 2014)

While it is not for the Council to comment on national draft legislation, the Commission, as guardian of the Treaties, is responsible for overseeing Member States' application of Union law.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012794/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Representación de los trabajadores en las elecciones del Consejo Agrario

El Ministro de Agricultura del Gobierno de España, Miguel Ángel Arias Cañete, ha anunciado su intención de celebrar unas nuevas elecciones al Consejo Agrario durante el primer semestre de 2014. Estas elecciones se producen 35 años después de las últimas elecciones celebradas entre los representantes del sector. El anteproyecto de Ley de Representatividad Agraria que el Consejo de Ministros está discutiendo no recoge ninguna vía para la participación de los trabajadores del sector agrario.

Las federaciones agroalimentarias de los sindicatos, CC.OO. y UGT, han denunciado que dicho proyecto de ley no recoge la participación de, aproximadamente, unos 800 000 trabajadores del sector agrario que existen en España. En el proyecto tampoco se prevé la creación de ningún Consejo Agroalimentario específico, dejando fuera de los mecanismos oficiales de representatividad del sector a los sindicatos y organizaciones de trabajadores en el campo. El reglamento, como hemos denunciado anteriormente, supone una regresión en el derecho de los actores sociales del sector a ser representados en el Consejo Agrario, y en el ámbito laboral puede llegar a incumplir la Directiva de la Unión Europea 2002/14/CE, por la que se establece un marco general relativo a la información y a la consulta de los trabajadores en la Comunidad Europea. Dicha Directiva trata de garantizar que los trabajadores europeos tengan derecho a los mecanismos apropiados que garanticen la información y consulta en decisiones que les afecten, y que, por tanto, los 800 000 trabajadores del medio rural español, según el actual anteproyecto de ley, quedarían privados de lo establecido por esta Directiva.

¿Conoce la Comisión el anteproyecto de Ley de Representatividad Agraria que discute el Gobierno de España?

¿Considera que dicho anteproyecto garantiza el derecho a información y consulta estipulado en la Directiva 2002/14/CE a los 800 000 trabajadores agrarios que existen e España?

¿Considera necesaria la representación de los trabajadores agrarios en las mesas nacionales del sector agrario? ¿Piensa solicitar al Gobierno de España que incluya a representantes de los trabajadores del sector en el Consejo Agrario?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que diera anteriormente a la pregunta escrita E-12010/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012794/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Worker representation in the Agriculture Council elections

The Spanish Minister for Agriculture, Miguel Ángel Arias Cañete, has announced his intention to hold new elections to the Agriculture Council in the first half of 2014. These elections come 35 years after the last elections held among representatives in the sector. The preliminary draft law on agricultural representativeness being discussed by the Council of Ministers does not include any way for workers in the agricultural sector to participate.

The agri-food federations of the Spanish trade unions CCOO and UGT have claimed that this draft law does not account for the participation of some 800 000 employees in the agricultural sector in Spain. Nor does the draft envisage the establishment of any specific agri-food council, thereby excluding relevant trade unions and workers' organisations from the sector's official representativeness mechanisms. The regulation, as previously reported, is a step back with regard to the right of social stakeholders in the sector to be represented in the Agriculture Council, and in the workplace it could lead to a breach of Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community. That directive seeks to ensure that European employees have the right to the appropriate mechanisms guaranteeing information and consultation in decisions concerning them, and the 800 000 workers in the Spanish countryside, according to the current draft law, would therefore be denied the provisions of the directive.

Is the Commission aware of the preliminary draft law on agricultural representativeness being discussed by the Spanish Government?

Does it think that this preliminary draft ensures the right to information and consultation laid down in Directive 2002/14/EC for the 800 000 agricultural workers in Spain?

Does it think that agricultural workers should be represented in national elections in the agricultural sector? Does it intend to call on the Spanish Government to include workers' representatives from the sector in the Agriculture Council?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(17 December 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-12010/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012795/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Información sobre los comités de empresa europeos

La Directiva 94/45/CE, sobre la constitución de un comité de empresa europeo o de un procedimiento de información y consulta a los trabajadores en las empresas y grupos de empresas de dimensión comunitaria, ya establecía la necesidad de la creación de un comité de empresa en las empresas o grupos de empresas de «dimensión europea». Dicha norma fue sustituida por la Directiva 2009/38/CE, con título similar, que entró en vigor en el año 2011.

La Directiva en vigor, en su artículo 1, apartado 2, establece la obligación de todas las empresas de «dimensión comunitaria» de crear un comité de empresa europeo. Sin embargo, la transparencia sobre la formación de dichos comités deja mucho que desear. En efecto, no existe ninguna base de datos abierta al público que permita comprobar qué empresas de «dimensión comunitaria» han constituido dicho comité de empresa europeo.

La necesidad de publicar datos sobre los comités de empresa europeos está directamente relacionada con la capacidad de garantizar el control de las empresas que no cumplen con los derechos laborales ni con lo estipulado en la citada Directiva 2009/38/CE. Más allá de esto, la Comisión ha afirmado en múltiples ocasiones que trata de promover la responsabilidad social de las empresas (RSE) como vía para promover «más allá de sus obligaciones legales» sus objetivos sociales y ambientales. Sin embargo, más importante que la RSE para los citados objetivos es la garantía de que cumplen con sus propias obligaciones legales, dado que —según sabemos — en numerosas ocasiones, empresas con una RSE muy anunciada ni siquiera respetan las propias leyes.

¿Conoce la Comisión el número de empresas o grupos de empresas de «dimensión comunitaria» que no han constituido su respectivo y obligatorio comité de empresa europeo?

¿Podría publicar el nombre de todas aquellas empresas o grupos de empresas de «dimensión comunitaria» que, pese a contar con un comité de empresa europeo, han incumplido sus obligaciones con respecto a él?

¿Piensa establecer un registro de las empresas de «dimensión comunitaria» para mejorar la transparencia y la seguridad jurídica en el ámbito laboral?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de enero de 2014)

No existe una obligación general para las empresas de dimensión europea de crear comités de empresa europeos. Igual que la antigua Directiva 94/45/CE, el artículo 1, apartado 2, de la Directiva 2009/38/CE ([1]) prevé que se constituya un comité de empresa europeo o un procedimiento de información y consulta a los trabajadores en cada empresa y cada grupo de empresas de dimensión europea. El artículo 5 de dicha Directiva establece que la dirección central iniciará la negociación para la constitución de un comité de empresa europeo o de un procedimiento de información y consulta, por propia iniciativa o a solicitud escrita de un mínimo de cien trabajadores, o de sus representantes, pertenecientes por lo menos a dos empresas o establecimientos situados en dos o más Estados miembros diferentes.

El Instituto Sindical Europeo ha creado una base de datos ([2]) de los acuerdos constitutivos de comités de empresa europeos y afirma que actualmente se encuentran activos 1 048. Con arreglo al informe ([3]) del grupo de expertos sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 2009/38/CE refundida, 2 350 empresas entraban en el ámbito de aplicación de la Directiva en 2009.

La Comisión no tiene intención de publicar los nombres de las empresas o grupos de empresas que no han creado un comité de empresa europeo ni de establecer un registro de las empresas de dimensión europea.

([1]) Directiva 2009/38/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 6 de mayo de 2009, sobre la constitución de un comité de empresa europeo o de un procedimiento de información y consulta a los trabajadores en las empresas y grupos de empresas de dimensión comunitaria, DO L 122 de 16.5.2009.
([2]) http://www.ewcdb.eu/index.php
([3]) Diciembre de 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=707&langId=en&intPageId=211

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012795/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Information on European Works Councils

Directive 94/45/EC on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees, already established the need to establish a European Works Council or 'Community-scale' groups. This standard was replaced by the directive 2009/38/EC, with a similar title, which entered into force in 2011.

Article 1(2) of the directive currently in force establishes the obligation of all 'Community-scale' undertakings to set up a European Works Council. However, transparency with regard to the formation of such councils leaves much to be desired. In fact, there is no publicly accessible database making it possible to verify which 'Community-scale' undertakings have set up such a European Works Council.

The need to publish details about the European Works Councils is directly related to being able to monitor undertakings which do not respect labour rights or comply with the provisions of the abovementioned Directive 2009/38/EC. Beyond this, the Commission has repeatedly stated that it is seeking to promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a means of promoting 'beyond their legal obligations' undertakings' social and environmental targets. However, more important than CSR for meeting the above targets is ensuring that undertakings comply with their own legal obligations, since — as we know — undertakings with much-trumpeted CSR often do not even comply with the laws applicable to them.

Does the Commission know how many 'Community-scale' undertakings or groups have not set up their own mandatory European Works Council?

Can it publish the names of all those 'Community-scale' undertakings or groups, which in spite of having a European Works Council, have failed to fulfil their obligations with regard to it?

Does it intend to set up a register of 'Community-scale' undertakings to improve transparency and legal certainty in the workplace?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

There is no general obligation for Community-scale undertakings to establish European Works Councils. Like Directive 94/45/EC, Article 1(2) of Directive 2009/38/EC ([1]) provides for the establishment of either a European Works Council or a procedure for informing and consulting employees in every Community-scale undertaking and every Community-scale group of undertakings. Article 5 of that directive stipulates that the central management is to initiate negotiations for the establishment of a European Works Council or an information and consultation procedure on its own initiative or at the written request of at least 100 employees or their representatives in at least two undertakings or establishments in at least two different Member States.

The European Trade Union Institute has set up a database ([2]) of agreements establishing European Works Councils, of which it says 1048 are currently active. According to the report ([3]) of the Group of Experts on the Implementation of Recast Directive 2009/38/EC, 2350 companies fell within the scope of the directive in 2009.

The Commission does not intend to publish the names of Community-scale undertakings or groups that have not set up a European Works Council or to create a register of Community-scale undertakings.

([1]) Directive 2009/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees, OJ L 122, 16.5.2009.
([2]) http://www.ewcdb.eu/index.php
([3]) December 2010: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=707&langId=en&intPageId=211

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012796/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Normativa de calidad de productos cárnicos I

El Gobierno español ha redactado el Proyecto de Real Decreto por el que se aprueba la Norma de Calidad de Derivados Cárnicos ([1]). En su anexo I, en la tabla de «Derivados cárnicos curados-maduros», parece ser que los diferentes «tipos de presentación» de la normativa vigente hasta el momento se convierten en «categoría del producto». La «sarta», la «ristra» o la «vela» no son otra cosa que presentaciones de un mismo producto y así queda recogido en el apartado E) del anexo 2, de la Orden de Presidencia del Gobierno de 7 de febrero de 1980 ([2]). Es por ello que no parece tener sentido crear una categoría específica para una presentación, alterando además los criterios de composición y calidad que rigen para el mismo producto, pero con otras presentaciones.

La propuesta del Gobierno español conduciría a que chorizos actualmente de categoría «extra» y presentación «sarta» pasarían a perder dicha categoría comercial o deberían cambiar su presentación, por ejemplo, a «ristra» para poder mantener dicha categoría «extra», o bien cambiar la formulación del producto si quieren llamarla «sarta». El proyecto de norma, en su título tercero, artículo 21, punto 6, establece que «en el caso de chorizos y chorizos extras elaborados "en forma de sarta", "en forma de herradura" o "en forma de vela" podrán incluir de forma facultativa esta mención en su denominación de venta», no se está ante una categoría de producto sino ante un tipo de presentación y es precisamente por ello que la mención es facultativa y no obligatoria.

La finalidad del etiquetado es informar y no llevar a confusión al consumidor. Con la nueva normativa, va a ser posible encontrar en el mercado chorizos con las denominaciones «Chorizo Sarta Extra» y «Chorizo Extra en forma de Sarta», y se podría estar confundiendo al consumidor.

¿Cree la Comisión que esta nueva norma cumple con los objetivos esenciales de los Reglamentos (UE) nº 1169/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, y (CE) nº 178/2002 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 28 de enero de 2002, por el que se establecen los principios y los requisitos generales de la legislación alimentaria, se crea la Autoridad Europea de Seguridad Alimentaria y se fijan procedimientos relativos a la seguridad alimentaria?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de diciembre de 2013)

El 11 de octubre de 2013 las autoridades españolas notificaron a la Comisión, con arreglo al procedimiento de notificación contemplado en la Directiva 98/34, el Proyecto de Real Decreto por el que se aprueba la Norma de Calidad de Derivados Cárnicos. El procedimiento está en curso y la Comisión sigue evaluando el proyecto de medida notificado.

En la legislación de la UE no existen denominaciones de venta ni normas de comercialización en relación con los preparados de carne, incluidos los chorizos o embutidos.

([1]) http://www.eurocarne.com/informes/pdf/proyecto_norma_calidad.pdf
([2]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1980/05/09/pdfs/A10024-10024.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012796/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Quality standard for meat products I

The Spanish Government has drawn up a draft Royal Decree adopting the quality standard for meat products ([1]). In the table 'Matured-cured meat products' in Annex I, it appears that the different 'forms of presentation' in the existing legislation to date are converted into 'product categories'. The 'sarta' (string-shaped) 'ristra' (strand) or 'vela' (candle-shaped) are no more than different forms of the same product, which is referred to in section E of Annex 2 to the Order of the Prime Minister of 7 February 1980 ([2]). Therefore, it makes no sense to create a specific category for one form of presentation, altering the composition and quality criteria that apply to the same product, but presented in different forms.

The Spanish Government's proposal would result in chorizos currently in the 'extra' category and 'sarta' form losing this commercial category or having to change their form to 'ristra', for example, in order to stay in the 'extra' category, or change the formulation of the product in order to be called 'sarta'. Article 21(6) in Title 3 of the draft standard lays down that in the case of chorizos and 'extra' chorizos manufactured in a 'sarta (string) shape', 'in a herradura (horseshoe) shape' or 'in a vela (candle) shape' it is optional to include this information in the product name, which is not a product category, but a form of presentation and it is precisely for this reason that inclusion is optional and not compulsory.

The purpose of labelling is to inform consumers and not confuse them. This new legislation means it will be possible to find the names 'Chorizo Sarta Extra' and 'Chorizo Extra en forma de Sarta (chorizo extra in a sarta shape)' in the chorizo market, which could confuse the consumer.

Does the Commission believe that this new standard achieves the essential goals of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 and Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety?

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

On 11 October 2013 the Spanish authorities notified the Draft Royal Decree approving the quality standard for meat products to the Commission in accordance with the notification procedure of Directive 98/34. The procedure is ongoing and the Commission is still assessing the notified draft measure.

In the EU legislation there are no sales descriptions nor marketing standards on meat preparations, including chorizos or sausages.

([1]) http://www.eurocarne.com/informes/pdf/proyecto_norma_calidad.pdf
([2]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1980/05/09/pdfs/A10024-10024.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012797/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Normativa de calidad de productos cárnicos II

El Gobierno español ha redactado el Proyecto de Real Decreto por el que se aprueba la Norma de Calidad de Derivados Cárnicos ([1]). En su anexo I, en la tabla de «Derivados cárnicos curados-maduros», parece ser que los diferentes «tipos de presentación» de la normativa vigente hasta el momento, se convierten en «categoría del producto». La «sarta», la «ristra» o la «vela» no son otra cosa que presentaciones de un mismo producto y así queda recogido en el apartado E) del anexo 2, de la Orden de Presidencia del Gobierno de 7 de febrero de 1980 ([2]). Es por ello que no parece tener sentido crear una categoría específica para una presentación, alterando además los criterios de composición y calidad que rigen para el mismo producto, pero con otras presentaciones.

El «chorizo riojano» está inscrito en el Registro de Denominaciones de Origen Protegidas y de Indicaciones Geográficas Protegidas, según el Reglamento (UE) n° 249/2010 de la Comisión, de 24 de marzo de 2010 ([3]).

En caso de aplicación de la nueva norma española, ¿el «chorizo riojano» tendría que incumplir el Reglamento (UE) n° 249/2010 de la Comisión, de 24 de marzo de 2010?

¿No cree la Comisión que sería mejor la supresión de esta categoría artificial de producto e incluir y mantener el «chorizo sarta» como una presentación más del chorizo, como ya sucede en la actualidad?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de enero de 2014)

El Gobierno español ha notificado a la Comisión el proyecto de Real Decreto por el que se aprueba la Norma de Calidad de Derivados Cárnicos, de conformidad con la Directiva 98/34/CE ([4]). El texto a que remite la nota a pie de página 1 de la pregunta de Su Señoría es distinto al que ha sido notificado por las autoridades españolas, por lo que la Comisión basa su respuesta en el proyecto notificado por el Gobierno español.

La indicación geográfica protegida «Chorizo Riojano» no incumpliría necesariamente el Reglamento (UE) n° 249/2010 de la Comisión, de 24 de marzo de 2010 ([5]), en caso de aplicarse la nueva norma española.

La Comisión toma nota de que el proyecto de Real Decreto menciona que, en el caso de los chorizos y chorizos extra preparados «en forma de sarta», «en forma de herradura» o «en forma de vela», estos pueden incluir esta indicación en la denominación del producto. La Comisión está examinando actualmente la notificación y no puede pronunciarse aún sobre el resultado de este proceso que finaliza el 13 de enero de 2014.

([1]) http://www.eurocarne.com/informes/pdf/proyecto_norma_calidad.pdf
([2]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1980/05/09/pdfs/A10024-10024.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:079:0003:0004:ES:PDF
([4]) Directiva 98/34/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 22 de junio de 1998, por la que se establece un procedimiento de información en materia de las normas y reglamentaciones técnicas y de las reglas relativas a los servicios de la sociedad de la información (DO L 204 de 21.7.1998).
([5]) Reglamento (UE) n° 249/2010 de la Comisión, de 24 de marzo de 2010, por el que se inscribe una denominación en el Registro de Denominaciones de Origen Protegidas y de Indicaciones Geográficas Protegidas [Chorizo Riojano (IGP)] (DO L 79 de 25.3.2010).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012797/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Quality standard for meat products II

The Spanish Government has drawn up a draft Royal Decree adopting the quality standard for meat products ([1]). In the table 'Matured-cured meat products' in Annex I, it appears that the different 'forms of presentation' in the existing legislation to date, are converted into 'product categories'. The 'sarta' (string-shaped) 'ristra' (strand) or 'vela' (candle-shaped) are no more than different forms of the same product, which is referred to in section E of Annex 2 to the Order of the Prime Minister of 7 February 1980 ([2]). Therefore, it makes no sense to create a specific category for one form of presentation, altering the composition and quality criteria that apply to the same product, but presented in different forms.

'Chorizo riojano' is entered in the register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications, in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 249/2010 of 24 March 2010 ([3]).

If the new Spanish standard is applied, would 'chorizo riojano' necessarily be in breach of Commission Regulation (EU) No 249/2010 of 24 March 2010?

Does the Commission not believe that it would be better to eliminate this artificial product category and preserve the 'chorizo sarta' as another form of chorizo, as is currently the case?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 January 2014)

The Commission was notified by the Spanish Government with the draft Royal Decree adopting the quality standard for meat products, in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC ([4]). The text referred to under footnote one of the question of the Honourable Member is different to the one which has been notified by the Spanish authorities. The Commission, therefore, bases its reply on the draft notified by the Spanish Government.

The Protected Geographical Indication 'Chorizo Riojano' would not be necessarily in breach of Commission Regulation (EU) No 249/2010 of 24 March 2010 ([5]) by applying the new Spanish Standard.

The Commission notes that the draft Royal Decree mentions that in the case of chorizos and chorizos extras prepared 'in the shape of a string', 'in the shape of a horseshoe' or 'in the shape of a sail', they can optionally include this indication in their product name. The Commission is currently examining the notification and is not yet in a position to comment on the outcome of this process expiring on 13 January 2014.

([1]) http://www.eurocarne.com/informes/pdf/proyecto_norma_calidad.pdf
([2]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1980/05/09/pdfs/A10024-10024.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:079:0003:0004:ES:PDF
([4]) Directive 98/34/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 22 June 1998 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and of rules on Information Society services (OJ L 204, 21.7.1998).
([5]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 249/2010 of 24 March 2010 entering a name in the register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications (Chorizo Riojano (PGI)) (OJ L 79, 25.3.2010).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012800/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: EU dairy exports to the US

The second round of negotiations on the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) was due to commence during the week beginning Monday 11 November 2013. One of the areas up for discussion is non-tariff trade barriers, particularly in terms of EU dairy exports to the US. At present, EU exporters pay additional fees under the US Farm Bill's Dairy Promotion Program, resulting in a competitive disadvantage for producers from Member States.

These negotiations are critical, given the potential benefits of the TTIP to the EU agricultural sector. What assurances can the Commission give that the removal of unnecessary non-tariff barriers, such as the additional fees on EU dairy exports, will be one of the key objectives in the TTIP discussions?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The Commission is of the view that non-tariffs trade barriers may constitute a very significant obstacle to the EU-U.S. bilateral trade and both the EU and the U.S. agree that addressing these aspects in TTIP is of key importance.

To this purpose, the Commission has also requested in its consultations with stakeholders to specifically identify the most relevant non-trade barriers that should be addressed in the TTIP negotiations.

The TTIP negotiations will offer the possibility to address these issues in order to find appropriate solutions in all relevant areas, including in the dairy sector, and to avoid in particular any discriminatory treatment.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012802/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Armistice Day educational programmes

Monday 11 November 2013 marked 95 years since the end of World War I hostilities. We rightfully acknowledge Armistice Day to commemorate members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty. Of course, some have argued that one of the European Union's crowning achievements has been to prevent the recurrence of the devastating events of the two World Wars in mainland Europe.

Given the historical significance of these events in the development and formation of the EU, what educational programmes does the Commission have in place to ensure that our younger generations respectfully remember the sacrifices and dreadful consequences of these wars to ensure that never again will such devastation occur within EU Member States?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2014)

As the Honourable Member recognises, one of the European Union's achievements has been to prevent the recurrence of devastating conflicts, such as the two World Wars, in mainland Europe.

The Commission has supported awareness raising of European history through the Europe for Citizens Programme (2007-2013), in particular Action 4: 'Active European Remembrance'. This Action has focused on commemorating the victims of Nazism and Stalinism, both to overcome the past and to pass on its memory to the young generation of Europeans. The proposal for a regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens programme for the period 2014-2020 aims to broaden the focus of remembrance to defining moments in modern European history, including World War One.

In relation to the content of curricula in schools, the Commission must abide by Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which states that the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-012807/13
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(12. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Utjecaj mobilnosti mladih na budućnost siromašnijih država članica Europske unije

Nezaposlenost mladih predstavlja veliki problem na razini Unije, a stanje je posebno kritično u nekoliko država među kojima je i Hrvatska. Europska komisija dobro je dijagnosticirala problem te se odlučno upustila u borbu protiv njega programima poput „Jamstva za mlade".

Jedan od stupova tog programa je olakšani prijelaz mladih iz obrazovnog sustava na tržište rada kroz sustav stažiranja i strukovnog usavršavanja, što smatram kvalitetnim pristupom.

Drugi stup je poticanje mobilnosti među mladima, što smatram lošim rješenjem. Kratkoročno, mobilnost bi mogla uljepšati nepovoljne statističke podatke na nivou Unije i zadovoljiti trenutne potrebe zajedničkog tržišta rada, ali dugoročno oduzima budućnost siromašnijim državama članicama koje će ostati bez mladog i obrazovanog stanovništva.

Ima li Komisija razrađenu dugoročnu strategiju kojom bismo zaustavili ekonomski i demografski slom siromašnijih članica, a koji bi mogao uslijediti zbog inzistiranja na mobilnosti mladih?

Ako Komisija doista prepoznaje potrebu za solidarnosti i smanjenjem razlika između bogatijih i siromašnijih članica, kako planira postići to smanjenje ako iz siromašnijih članica u one bogatije odu obrazovani mladi ljudi, nositelji budućeg napretka matične države?

Odgovor g. Andora u ime Komisije
(16. siječnja 2014.)

Komisija je upoznata s pitanjima koja izazivaju zabrinutost poštovanog zastupnika.

Mobilnost radne snage unutar jedne države i između više država može poslužiti kao mehanizam prilagodbe tako što osobe koje traže posao a koje dolaze iz regija i zemalja s visokom stopom nezaposlenosti popunjavaju slobodna radna mjesta, što rezultira pozitivnim ishodom i za područja iz kojih dolaze radnici i za ona koja ih primaju, kao i za same mlade ljude.

Iz prijašnjih iskustava možemo zaključiti da nakon odlaska radnika često slijedi povratak u matičnu zemlju nakon što se poboljšaju uvjeti. Isto tako vrijedno je spomenuti da visokoobrazovane osobe čine samo razmjerno mali dio među onima koji se sele unutar EU-a te da taj udio općenito nije veći nego u odnosu na broj radnika u matičnim zemljama ([1]).

Međutim, Jamstvo za mlade treba shvatiti upravo kao dugoročnu strategiju koja služi za neutraliziranje posljedica gospodarske i demografske krize kroz koje prolaze neke države članice. Ona je usmjerena na strukturne promjene koje uključuju cjelovit pristup rješavanju problema nezaposlenosti među mladima u cilju poboljšanja perspektive mladih unutar država članica. Time će se ostvariti trajan učinak. Inicijativa se provodi na državnoj razini: planove za provedbu programa Jamstvo za mlade izrađuju države članice u cilju borbe protiv nezaposlenosti među mladima u zemlji.

Osim toga, nedavno predloženim Kvalitativnim okvirom za pripravnički staž, koji se sastoji od smjernica za pružanje visokokvalitetnog obrazovnog sadržaja i pravednih radnih uvjeta, olakšat će se prijelaz iz školovanja na zaposlenje visokoobrazovanih mladih ljudi, koji najčešće stupaju u tu vrstu radnog odnosa.

Rezultat programa Jamstvo za mlade trebao bi biti upravo to da kvalitetan izbor radnih mjesta, nastavak obrazovanja, naukovanje ili pripravnički staž posluže za aktiviranje mladih u njihovim matičnim zemljama, bez potrebe da odlaze u druge države članice.

([1]) Vidi Europska komisija, Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012807/13
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Influence of youth mobility on the future of poor EU Member States

Youth unemployment is a big problem throughout the EU, but the situation is particularly grave in certain countries, including Croatia. The Commission has accurately diagnosed the problem and taken firm steps towards combating it through programmes such as the 'Youth Guarantee'.

One of the pillars of this programme is easing the passage of young people from the education system to the labour market through a system of traineeships and professional development. I believe that this is a very good approach.

The second pillar is encouraging youth mobility, which I believe to be a bad solution. In the short term, mobility could improve unfavourable statistical data at EU level and satisfy the immediate needs of the single labour market. However, in the long term this will rob poorer EU Member States of their future, as they will lose the young and educated segments of their population.

Has the Commission created a long-term strategy that would enable us to put a stop to the economic and demographic collapse of the poorer Member States which could occur if the objective of youth mobility is insisted upon?

If the Commission genuinely does recognise the need for solidarity and convergence between the richer and poorer Member States, how does it plan to achieve convergence if educated young people — those who will bring progress to their countries — leave the poorer Member States for the richer ones?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the concerns raised by the honourable Member.

Labour mobility within and between countries can act as an adjustment mechanism by filling vacancies with jobseekers from regions or countries affected by high unemployment, resulting in a win-win situation for both sending and receiving locations, and of course young people themselves.

Past experience suggests that mobility is often followed by a return to the home country once conditions improve. It is also noteworthy that only a limited proportion of intra-EU movers are highly educated and this proportion is generally not higher than in the labour force of the origin countries ([1]).

However, the Youth Guarantee should be understood precisely as a long-term strategy that works to counteract the economic and demographic crises experienced in several Member States. It centres on structural change, which entails developing a holistic approach to addressing youth unemployment to improve young people's prospects within a Member State. This will have a lasting impact. It is a national initiative: the Youth Guarantee implementation plans are drawn up by Member States to tackle youth unemployment at home.

Additionally, the recently proposed Quality Framework for Traineeships, consisting of guidelines for providing high quality learning content and fair working conditions, will help ease the school to work transition of highly educated young people, who most often take such placements.

Indeed, the outcome of the Youth Guarantee should be that the good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship serves to keep young people active in their own countries, without them needing to search in other Member States.

([1]) See European Commission, Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012813/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Uso ilegal de ayudas públicas europeas

Los sucesivos Tratados que han dado origen a la Unión Europea han insistido en la necesidad de llevar una buena administración y corregir las actuaciones que pudieran afectar a los intereses financieros europeos. Resulta innecesario citar los preceptos vigentes. Son numerosas, además, las previsiones normativas, comunicaciones, informes y planes de actuación que han desarrollado estas disposiciones de los Tratados.

A raíz de varias investigaciones en España se está conociendo la posible distracción de ayudas públicas derivadas del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) y que debieran haberse destinado íntegramente a cursos de formación.

En anteriores ocasiones he trasladado a la Comisión mi preocupación por el uso ilegal de las ayudas europeas (por ejemplo, mi pregunta número E-000241/2013), que la Comisión respondió recordando que el Reglamento (CE) n° 1083/2006 establece que las autoridades de gestión serán responsables de prevenir, detectar y corregir las irregularidades y recuperar los importes indebidamente abonados, cuando proceda.

En todo caso, siendo tan claras las disposiciones del Derecho de la Unión Europea y teniendo competencia la Oficina de Lucha contra el Fraude para perseguir la incorrecta utilización de fondos públicos, insisto en preguntar:

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión del inicio de algún procedimiento para comprobar que se han utilizado de manera correcta las cuantiosas ayudas europeas en los cursos de formación celebrados por centrales sindicales españolas?

2. ¿No considera que deben precisarse, en la convocatoria de las ayudas, medidas para evitar que organizaciones que no han destinado bien los recursos obtenidos puedan volver a ser beneficiarias de más fondos europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de enero de 2014)

1. La Comisión ha sabido de varias investigaciones relativas a cursos de formación impartidos por el sindicato Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) en España. El caso específico al que se refiere Su Señoría es un curso organizado por la UGT en el marco del proyecto 0078_CITAA_2008_2010_5_E, dentro del programa de cooperación transfronteriza entre España y Portugal del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER). El coste total del proyecto asciende a 500 000 EUR, y la cofinanciación del FEDER es de 375 000 EUR. La autoridad de gestión del programa inició el procedimiento de verificación inmediatamente después de la publicación en la prensa. Asimismo, suspendió los pagos a la UGT y está efectuando una investigación administrativa para comprobar si se ha producido cualquier irregularidad u otra infracción, con objeto de evaluar su posible impacto económico. La autoridad de gestión del Fondo Social Europeo (FSE) también está realizando verificaciones a raíz de la reciente publicación en la prensa de otros artículos relativos a proyectos del FSE.

2. El comité de seguimiento de cada programa determina el proceso y los criterios de selección con arreglo a requisitos transparentes y objetivos. Al definir los criterios, el comité busca garantizar que se tenga adecuadamente en cuenta la experiencia (en particular, la negativa) adquirida en el trabajo de las organizaciones con los Fondos Estructurales. No obstante, no puede excluirse que una organización que haya presentado gastos irregulares obtenga financiación en el futuro, siempre que haya reparado el posible perjuicio y corregido debidamente tales irregularidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012813/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Illegal use of European public aid

The successive Treaties that have created the European Union have stressed the need for good administration and correct action in areas that may affect European financial interests. There is no need to cite the existing requirements. Numerous regulatory provisions, communications, reports and action plans also develop the provisions of the Treaties.

Several investigations in Spain now reveal the possibility that public aid from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) may have been diverted from the training courses to which it was wholly allocated.

I have expressed my concern to the Commission on previous occasions about the illegal use of European aid (e.g. my Question E-000241/2013), to which the Commission responded recalling that regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 provides that management authorities must prevent and detect irregularities with a view to correcting and recovering funds unduly paid.

Nevertheless, given that the provisions of EC law are very clear and that the European Anti-Fraud Office is responsible for pursuing the misuse of public funds, I insist on asking:

1. Is the Commission aware that a procedure has been started to check whether very large sums of European aid were properly used in training courses held by Spanish trade unions?

2. Does it not believe that calls for financial aid should include measures to prevent organisations that have allocated previously obtained resources inappropriately from receiving more European funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 January 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of various investigations related to training courses delivered by the trade union UGT in Spain. The specific case mentioned by the Honourable Member concerns a training course organised by UGT in the framework of the project 0078_CITAA_2008_2010_5_E of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) cross-border cooperation programme between Spain and Portugal. The total cost of the project amounts to EUR 500 000 and ERDF co-financing to EUR 375 000. The verification procedure has been started by the managing authority of the programme immediately after publication in the press. The managing authority suspended payments to UGT and is carrying out an administrative investigation to check whether possible irregularities or any other possible infringement have taken place in order to assess the potential financial impact. The managing authority of the European Social Fund (ESF) is also undertaking verifications after other articles about ESF projects were published in the press recently.

2. The selection process and criteria are determined by each programme's monitoring committee in line with transparent and objective requirements. The committee designs the criteria that ensure that previous experience of organisations with Structural Funds, in particular a negative one, is taken appropriately into account. However, it cannot be excluded that an organisation that previously submitted irregular expenditure will obtain funding in the future, provided that it has taken remedial action and duly corrected previous irregularities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012814/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Plan del Gobierno de España para la finca «La Almoraima»

En la respuesta que el Comisario de Medio Ambiente dio a mi pregunta E-008088/2013, este sostenía que no disponía de información sobre los planes del Ministerio de Agricultura del Gobierno de España sobre la finca «La Almoraima» y que no solicitaría información porque el Gobierno no tenía aún ningún proyecto para la finca.

Como advertíamos tras las declaraciones del Gobierno sobre sus intenciones de privatizar la finca, el Ministerio de Agricultura y Medio Ambiente presentó el pasado 27 de octubre en el Ayuntamiento de Castellar de la Frontera su plan especial de usos de la finca «La Almoraima», que plasma lo anteriormente anunciado por el Gobierno. Dicho plan recoge una serie de proyectos de construcción en el 10 % de la finca que se encuentra fuera del área protegida. El plan señala el desarrollo de infraestructura que tendrá un impacto ambiental muy grave en las inmediaciones del parque, planteando la construcción de un aeródromo y campos de golf, así como de complejos hoteleros de gran tamaño. Más allá, el plan recoge la habilitación para el uso turístico de infraestructuras dentro del área protegida de la finca que acarreará un innegable impacto en dicho espacio perteneciente a la red Natura 2000.

Este plan tendrá un impacto ambiental que podría amenazar todo el espacio, atrayendo a un sector turístico que ya ha operado en otras zonas del país destruyendo el patrimonio ambiental allá donde se ha desarrollado actividad y que ahora amenaza a Cádiz. La población de Castellar de la Frontera ha mostrado su rechazo al plan, proponiendo usos alternativos que permitan una explotación sostenible de la finca. Pero el Gobierno no atiende a las reclamaciones de los habitantes de la localidad y tan solo obedece a los intereses de proyectos turísticos especulativos que han sido la principal causa de destrucción del patrimonio natural del país.

¿Va a solicitar información a las autoridades españolas sobre este plan de uso de la finca «La Almoraima»?

¿Considera que el proyecto de usos planteado por el Gobierno de España, incluyendo la actividad cinegética, respeta lo establecido en las Directivas 2009/147/CE y 92/43/CEE?

¿Considera que, dado el rechazo mostrado por los residentes de la localidad gaditana, el Gobierno está respetando lo establecido en la Directiva 2011/92/UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de enero de 2014)

De acuerdo con la información facilitada por Su Señoría, el Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente ha presentado en el Ayuntamiento de Castellar de la Frontera un plan especial para el uso de la finca de «La Almoraima». Según parece, sin embargo, dicho plan no ha sido aprobado aún por el ayuntamiento y, al no haberse adoptado todavía una decisión definitiva, no es posible determinar si se han cometido o no infracciones contra la normativa de la UE. Así pues, en las circunstancias actuales, la Comisión no tiene intención de pedir información a las autoridades españolas.

El ejercicio de ciertas actividades y usos económicos, incluida la caza, en el interior o en las proximidades de los espacios de la red Natura 2000 no es necesariamente incompatible con los objetivos de conservación de esos espacios. No obstante, de conformidad con el artículo 6, apartado 3, de la Directiva de Hábitats ([1]), todo plan o proyecto que pueda tener un efecto significativo en un espacio de la red debe someterse a una evaluación adecuada, atendiendo a los objetivos de conservación de ese espacio, y las autoridades competentes únicamente han de autorizarlo si comprueban que no afectará negativamente a la integridad del mismo.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012814/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: The Spanish Government's plan for the Almoraima estate

In answer to my Question E-008088/2013 the Commissioner for the Environment claimed that he did not have any information about the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture's plans for the Almoraima estate and that he would not request information since the Government still did not have any project for the estate.

As we noted following the Government's statements regarding its intentions to privatise the estate, on 27 October 2013 the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment presented in the Municipal Council of Castellar de la Frontera its special plan for use of the Almoraima estate, reflecting the Government's previous statements. The plan includes a series of construction projects on the 10% of the estate lying outside the protected area. The plan includes infrastructure development, which will have a very severe environmental impact on the immediate area around the park, proposing the construction of an airfield and golf courses, as well as large hotel complexes. Furthermore, the plan includes adapting infrastructures within the protected area of the estate for tourism, which will have an undeniable impact on the site, which is part of the Natura 2000 network.

This plan will have an environmental impact that could jeopardise the entire area by attracting tourism. This has already been seen in other regions of the country, destroying the environmental heritage where activity has been developed and it is now threatening Cádiz. The people of Castellar de la Frontera have rejected the plan, proposing alternative uses which ensure sustainable exploitation of the estate. However, the Government is not paying any attention to the protests of the town's inhabitants, obeying only the interests of speculative tourist projects which have been the main cause of the destruction of natural heritage in the country.

Will the Commission request information from the Spanish authorities about this plan for use of the Almoraima estate?

Does the Commission think that the uses proposed by the Spanish Government, including hunting, comply with the provisions of Directives 2009/147/EC and 92/43/EEC?

Does the Commission think that, given the rejection by the Cádiz town's residents, the Government is complying with the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

According to the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment presented in the Municipal Council of Castellar de la Frontera a special plan for use of the Almoraima estate, but it appears that for the time being the Plan has not been approved by the Municipal Council. As no final decision seems to have been taken in relation with this Plan, it has not been possible to identify any breach of the EU legislation, and therefore the Commission does not intend to request information from the Spanish authorities at this stage.

The development of certain economic activities and uses, including hunting, within or nearby Natura 2000 sites is not necessarily incompatible with the conservation objectives of the sites. However, in accordance with Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive ([1]), any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site must be subject to an appropriate assessment in view of the site's conservation objectives, and the competent authorities shall agree to it only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012817/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(12 november 2013)

Betreft: Onderzoek naar knikkebolziekte

Op 23 oktober was er op televisiezender Nederland 2 in het programma Nieuwsuur (NOS-NTR) een reportage te zien van de Vlaamse arts en Afrikakenner Chris Michel over de knikkebolziekte. De reportage werd eerder ook uitgezonden op de Vlaamse televisiezender Canvas in het programma Terzake (VRT).

De knikkebolziekte doodde al tienduizenden kinderen en jongeren in Zuid-Soedan, Tanzania en Oeganda. De mysterieuze ziekte ontwricht zo deze afgelegen streek. Tussen de 12 000 en 15 000 kinderen lijden er vandaag de dag aan.

Voorlopig is de oorzaak onbekend en bestaat er evenmin een medicijn.

1. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de bestaande Europese initiatieven ter zake?

2. Hoeveel bedraagt de EU-bijdrage aan elk van deze projecten?

3. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het wetenschappelijk onderzoek dat naar de knikkebolziekte wordt verricht, zoals het initiatief van de Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (VLIR) onder leiding van professor Bob Colebunders (UA) en professor Geert Haesaert (UGent). Overweegt de Commissie dit of gelijkaardige projecten financieel te ondersteunen in het kader van EU-ontwikkelingssamenwerking?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(20 januari 2014)

Over de zogeheten knikkebolziekte is al eerder een parlementaire vraag gesteld. Het geachte parlementslid wordt verwezen naar het antwoord op die vraag (E-003977/2012) ([1]).

Wat de specifieke vragen betreft:

1. De Commissie is zich bewust van deze ziekte en volgt via haar delegaties de ontwikkeling ervan en het relevante onderzoek van internationale partners. Volgens de ontvangen rapporten is er sinds 2012 geen nieuwe relevante informatie te melden. Behalve deze routineopvolging werden geen andere specifieke initiatieven genomen.

2. Er zijn geen specifieke steunprojecten van de EU in verband met deze ziekte. Dit is in overeenstemming met het EU-beleid om omvangrijke, veelomvattende steun voor de gehele gezondheidssector te verstrekken in plaats van individuele programma's voor specifieke ziekten te ondersteunen. Van de drie in de vraag vermelde landen wordt alleen de gezondheidssector in Zuid-Sudan specifiek ondersteund.

3. De Commissie volgt de wetenschappelijke literatuur over de epidemiologie en mogelijke oorzaken van de knikkebolziekte op. Zij is ook bekend met het onlangs (in november 2013) opgestarte onderzoeksproject over een mogelijk verband tussen mycotoxinen en de knikkebolziekte aan de universiteiten van Gent, Antwerpen en Makerere. De Commissie verstrekt geen directe financiële steun voor dit onderzoeksproject, maar in het kader van het nieuwe EU-kaderprogramma voor onderzoek en innovatie „Horizon 2020" kunnen in de toekomst mogelijkheden voor financiering ontstaan.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012817/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Research into nodding disease

On 23 October, Dutch television channel Nederland 2 transmitted a report by Flemish doctor and Africa expert Chris Michel about nodding disease in its programme *Niewsuur* (NOS-NTR). The programme had previously been shown by Flemish channel Canvas in the programme *Terzake* (VRT).

Nodding disease has already killed tens of thousands of children and young people in South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. This mysterious disease is crippling this remote area. Between 12 000 and 15 000 children are suffering from this disease right now.

For the time being, the cause is not known, nor is there medication to fight the disease.

1. Can the Commission provide an overview of existing European initiatives in this connection?

2. What is the EU contribution to each of these projects?

3. What is the Commission's assessment of the scientific research being carried out into nodding disease, such as the initiative by the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR), led by professors Bob Colebunders (University of Antwerp) and Geert Haesaert (Ghent University). Is the Commission considering providing financial support to this or similar projects as part of EU development cooperation?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

The syndrome called nodding disease has already been the subject of a parliamentary question and the honourable MEP is also referred to the reply given on that occasion (E-003977/2012) ([1]).

Regarding the detailed questions:

1. The Commission is well aware of and follows through its Delegations the evolution of this syndrome and the related research by international partners. According to reports received no new salient information can be reported since 2012. Beyond this routine follow up no other specific initiatives have been taken.

2. There are no specific EU support projects to tackle this disease. This is in line with the EU policy to provide larger comprehensive health sector support rather than individual support to single disease programmes. Among the three countries mentioned in the question, only South Sudan is supported in the health sector specifically.

3. The Commission follows the scientific literature on the epidemiology and potential causes of nodding syndrome. It is also aware of the recently (November 2013) initiated research project on a potential relationship between mycotoxins and nodding disease at the universities of Ghent, Antwerp and Makerere. The Commission does not provide direct financial support to this research project, but future funding opportunities might be available within the context of the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 'Horizon 2020'.

([1])http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012818/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(12 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Aderarea Bulgariei și a României la spațiul Schengen

Președintele Comisiei Europene a declarat, la 11 noiembrie, într-o emisiune găzduită de postul francez de televiziune LCI, că „România și Bulgaria nu vor intra în spațiul Schengen în 2014 (…), sunt prea multe opuneri". Cu doar 58 de zile în urmă, într-un interviu acordat postului public de radio din Bulgaria, domnul președinte afirma că România și Bulgaria îndeplinesc toate condițiile prevăzute de acquis-ul Schengen: „România și Bulgaria îndeplinesc criteriile de aderare la zona Schengen și cred că ar fi corect să primească o șansă cât mai curând posibil".

În acest context, aș dori să-l întreb pe domnul președinte ce anume l-a determinat să-și schimbe punctul de vedere într-un timp atât de scurt?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(17 februarie 2014)

Comisia susține aderarea Bulgariei și României la spațiul Schengen.

Cu toate acestea, procesul de evaluare în vederea aderării la spațiul Schengen este realizat de către Consiliu și decizia privind aderarea este luată în unanimitate de către Consiliu. Comisia nu are niciun rol în acest proces.

Declarația președintelui Barroso potrivit căreia Bulgaria și România nu vor intra în spațiul Schengen înainte de 1 ianuarie 2014 trebuie privită prin prisma realității politice că este nevoie să se obțină unanimitate în cadrul Consiliu și că acest lucru nu a fost obținut până în prezent.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012818/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen area

The Commission President stated on 11 November, during a programme broadcast by the French TV station LCI, that 'Romania and Bulgaria will not join the Schengen area in 2014 … because there are too many countries against it'. A mere 58 days ago, the president confirmed in an interview given to Bulgarian National Radio that Romania and Bulgaria fulfil all the conditions stipulated by the Schengen acquis: 'Romania and Bulgaria meet the criteria for Schengen area membership and I believe should be given a chance to join it as soon as possible.'

In light of this, I would like to ask the president what has actually made him change his opinion in such a short space of time.

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

The Commission supports Bulgaria's and Romania's accession to the Schengen area.

However, the evaluation process in view of the accession to the Schengen area is carried out by the Council and the decision on accession is taken by the Council by unanimity. The Commisison has no role in this process.

President Barroso's statement that Bulgaria and Romania would not join the Schengen area before 1 January 2014 needs to be seen in the light of the political reality that unanimity is needed in the Council and that this has not been achieved at this point in time.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012827/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νέες προκλητικές δηλώσεις του Τούρκου πρωθυπουργού Ταγίπ Ερντογάν εναντίον της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας

Σε νέο κρεσέντο προκλητικών δηλώσεων εναντίον της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας προέβη και πάλιν ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, μιλώντας στο περιθώριο διεθνούς συνεδρίου που έγινε πρόσφατα στην Πολωνία. Συγκεκριμένα ανάφερε, μεταξύ άλλων:

1. «Δεν υπάρχει χώρα που να ονομάζεται Κύπρος».

2. «Η Ελληνοκυπριακή Διοίκηση είχε γίνει δεκτή στην ΕΕ για πολιτικούς λόγους και όχι επειδή ήταν εναρμονισμένη με τους ευρωπαϊκούς νόμους».

Στις απαράδεκτες δηλώσεις Ερντογάν αντέδρασαν ακόμα και πολλοί Τουρκοκύπριοι. Η τ/κ αρθρογράφος Τουμάι Τουγιάν, με άρθρο της στην εφημερίδα «Γενί Ντουζέν» υπό τον τίτλο «Μια χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος», ασκεί δριμεία κριτική στον κ. Ερντογάν για τις δηλώσεις του, αναφέροντας μεταξύ άλλων:

«Ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός γνωρίζει πολύ καλά ότι υπάρχει μια χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος» … «Σε μια χώρα που λέγεται Κύπρος τι δουλειά έχουν 40 χιλιάδες δικοί σου στρατιώτες; Γιατί η σημαία σου κυματίζει σε κάθε γωνιά; » … Ποιος είσαι εσύ και όταν το θέμα των Βαρωσίων έρχεται στην ημερήσια διάταξη, μπορείς να λες σαν να ήταν ιδιοκτησία σου ότι «εγώ δεν θα δώσω σπιθαμή γης στην Κύπρο ακόμη και για την πλήρη ένταξη της Τουρκίας; …».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Είναι ενήμερο των πιο πάνω δηλώσεων του κ. Ερντογάν;

2. Θεωρεί ότι τέτοιες δηλώσεις, που είναι άκρως προσβλητικές όχι μόνο για την Κύπρο αλλά και για την ίδια την Ένωση, συνάδουν με τη συμπεριφορά που πρέπει να έχει μια υποψήφια για ένταξη χώρα;

3. Τι πρακτικά μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να τερματιστούν τέτοιες απαράδεκτες συμπεριφορές;

4. Μέχρι πότε θα συνεχίζει η Ένωση να διαπραγματεύεται με την Τουρκία την ένταξή της και να ανοίγει νέα διαπραγματευτικά κεφάλαια σαν να μη συμβαίνει τίποτε, αγνοώντας τα όσα λέει και πράττει η Τουρκία;

Απάντηση
(3 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η αξιότιμη κ. βουλευτής παραπέμπεται στην απάντηση που έδωσε το Συμβούλιο στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-001629/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012827/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: New provocative statements by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan against the Republic of Cyprus

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erodgan has unleashed a new flurry of provocative statements against the Republic of Cyprus, when speaking in the margins of an international conference recently held in Poland. Among other things, he specifically stated:

1. 'There is no country called Cyprus'.

2. 'The Greek-Cypriot Administration was accepted in the EU for political reasons, and not because it was compatible with European laws'.

Numerous Turkish Cypriots have reacted to these unacceptable statements by Mr Erdogan. The Turkish-Cypriot journalist Tumay Tugyan, in an article entitled 'A country called Cyprus' in the newspaper Yeni Duzen, criticises Mr Erdogan harshly over his statements, in the following terms:

'The Turkish Prime Minister knows very well that there is a country called Cyprus' … 'What are 40 000 of your soldiers doing in a country called Cyprus? Why is your flag flying on every corner? ' … 'When the issue of Varosha comes onto the agenda, who are you to talk as if it was your property, saying that "I will not give an inch of land to Cyprus even for the full accession of Turkey"? …'

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Is it aware of the above statements by Mr Erdogan?

2. Does it think that such statements, which are utterly offensive not only to Cyprus but also to the Union itself, conform to the behaviour that a candidate country accession should display?

3. What practical measures does it intend to take to put an end to such unacceptable behaviour?

4. How long will the Union continue to negotiate Turkey's accession and to open new negotiation chapters as if nothing is happening, ignoring what Turkey says and does?

Reply
(3 February 2014)

The Honourable Member is kindly invited to refer to the reply given by the Council to the Written Question E-001629/2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012828/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νέες προκλητικές δηλώσεις του Τούρκου πρωθυπουργού Ταγίπ Ερντογάν εναντίον της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας

Σε νέο κρεσέντο προκλητικών δηλώσεων εναντίον της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας προέβη και πάλιν ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, μιλώντας στο περιθώριο διεθνούς συνεδρίου που έγινε πρόσφατα στην Πολωνία. Συγκεκριμένα ανάφερε, μεταξύ άλλων:

1. «Δεν υπάρχει χώρα που να ονομάζεται Κύπρος».

2. «Η Ελληνοκυπριακή Διοίκηση είχε γίνει δεκτή στην ΕΕ για πολιτικούς λόγους και όχι επειδή ήταν εναρμονισμένη με τους ευρωπαϊκούς νόμους».

Στις απαράδεκτες δηλώσεις Ερντογάν αντέδρασαν ακόμα και πολλοί Τουρκοκύπριοι. Η τ/κ αρθρογράφος Τουμάι Τουγιάν, με άρθρο της στην εφημερίδα «Γενί Ντουζέν» υπό τον τίτλο «Μια χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος», ασκεί δριμεία κριτική στον κ. Ερντογάν για τις δηλώσεις του, αναφέροντας μεταξύ άλλων:

«Ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός γνωρίζει πολύ καλά ότι υπάρχει μια χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος» … «Σε μια χώρα που λέγεται Κύπρος τι δουλειά έχουν 40 χιλιάδες δικοί σου στρατιώτες; Γιατί η σημαία σου κυματίζει σε κάθε γωνιά; » … Ποιος είσαι εσύ και όταν το θέμα των Βαρωσίων έρχεται στην ημερήσια διάταξη, μπορείς να λες σαν να ήταν ιδιοκτησία σου ότι «εγώ δεν θα δώσω σπιθαμή γης στην Κύπρο ακόμη και για την πλήρη ένταξη της Τουρκίας; …».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερο των πιο πάνω δηλώσεων του κ. Ερντογάν;

2. Θεωρεί ότι τέτοιες δηλώσεις, που είναι άκρως προσβλητικές όχι μόνο για την Κύπρο αλλά και για την ίδια την Ένωση, συνάδουν με τη συμπεριφορά που πρέπει να έχει μια υποψήφια για ένταξη χώρα;

3. Τι πρακτικά μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει ώστε να τερματιστούν τέτοιες απαράδεκτες συμπεριφορές;

4. Μέχρι πότε θα συνεχίζει η Ένωση να διαπραγματεύεται με την Τουρκία την ένταξή της και να ανοίγει νέα διαπραγματευτικά κεφάλαια σαν να μη συμβαίνει τίποτε, αγνοώντας τα όσα λέει και πράττει η Τουρκία;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει την κ. βουλευτή στην κοινή απάντησή της στις κοινοβουλευτικές ερωτήσεις P-012808/2013, P-012809/2013, P-012847/2013, P-012858/2013, E-012861/2013, P-012878/2013, P-012894/2013, E-012897/2013, P-012986/2013, P-013054/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013942/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: Erdoğan: „Er bestaat geen land Cyprus"

De Turkse premier Erdoğan heeft opnieuw gezegd dat Turkije Cyprus niet erkent: „Er bestaat geen land genaamd Cyprus".

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de recente uitspraak van premier Erdoğan dat „er geen land genaamd Cyprus zou bestaan" ([1])?

2. Realiseert de Commissie zich dat — in het kader van de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije resp. indien Turkije tot de EU wil toetreden — Turkije Cyprus als land én als EU-lidstaat dient te erkennen? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie dan de hierboven geciteerde, recente uitspraak van premier Erdoğan, die wederom bevestigt dat Turkije Cyprus níet erkent en waaruit blijkt dat Turkije dat ook niet zál doen? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het niet-erkennen van de realiteit door premier Erdoğan?

3. Hoe verantwoordt de Commissie het dat de EU over toetreding onderhandelt met een land dat een EU-lidstaat en daarmee de EU als zodanig niet erkent? Hoe verklaart de Commissie deze contradictie? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat deze contradictie de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije onwettig maakt? Zo neen, hoe verdedigt de Commissie, in deze context, de legitimiteit van de toetredingsonderhandelingen dan wél?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije eens en voor altijd dienen te worden beëindigd? Zo neen, welke consequenties verbindt de Commissie dan wél aan de verwerpelijke Turkse houding tegenover EU-lidstaat Cyprus?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(28 januari 2014)

De Commissie verwijst de geachte Parlementsleden naar haar gezamenlijk antwoord op de parlementaire vragen P-012808/2013, P-012809/2013, P-012847/2013, P-012858/2013, E-012861/2013, P-012878/2013, P-012894/2013, E-012897/2013, P-012986/2013, P-013054/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.cyprusnewsreport.com/?q=node/7170.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012828/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: New provocative statements by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan against the Republic of Cyprus

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erodgan has made a new flurry of provocative statements against the Republic of Cyprus, when speaking in the margins of an international conference recently held in Poland. Among other things, he specifically stated:

1. 'There is no country called Cyprus'.

2. 'The Greek-Cypriot Administration was accepted in the EU for political reasons, and not because it was compatible with European laws'.

Numerous Turkish Cypriots have reacted to these unacceptable statements by Mr Erdogan. The Turkish-Cypriot journalist Tumay Tugyan, in an article entitled 'A country called Cyprus' in the newspaper Yeni Duzen, criticises Mr Erdogan harshly over his statements, in the following terms:

'The Turkish Prime Minister knows very well that there is a country called Cyprus' … 'What are 40 000 of your soldiers doing in a country called Cyprus? Why is your flag flying on every corner?' … 'When the issue of Varosha comes onto the agenda, who are you to talk as if it was your property, saying that "I will not give an inch of land to Cyprus even for the full accession of Turkey"? …'

Will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of the above statements by Mr Erdogan?

2. Does it think that such statements, which are utterly offensive not only to Cyprus but also to the Union itself, amount to acceptable behaviour from a candidate country for accession?

3. What practical measures does it intend to take to put an end to such unacceptable behaviour?

4. How long will the Union continue to negotiate Turkey's accession and to open new negotiation chapters as if nothing is happening, ignoring what Turkey says and does?

Question for written answer E-013942/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Erdoğan: 'There is no country called Cyprus'

The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has reiterated that Turkey does not recognise Cyprus, stating that 'There is no country called Cyprus'.

1. Is the Commission aware of Mr Erdoğan's recent pronouncement that 'there is no country called Cyprus' ([1])?

2. Is the Commission aware that — in connection with the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey, and if Turkey wishes to accede to the Union — Turkey has to recognise Cyprus as a country and as an EU Member State? How, in that case, does the Commission view the recent pronouncement by Mr Erdoğan, cited above, which once again confirms that Turkey does not recognise Cyprus and indicates that it has no intention of doing so? What is the Commission's assessment of the Turkish Prime Minister's refusal to recognise the reality?

3. How does the Commission justify the fact that the EU is negotiating accession with a country that does not recognise an EU Member State, and thus the EU as it actually exists? How does the Commission explain this contradiction? Does the Commission share the view that this contradiction renders the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey unlawful? If not, how does the Commission defend the legitimacy of the accession negotiations in light of this?

([1]) http://www.cyprusnewsreport.com/?q=node/7170

4. Does the Commission share the view that the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey must be brought to an end once and for all? If not, what consequences will the Commission attach to Turkey's disgraceful position on the EU Member State of Cyprus?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission

(28 January 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Members to its joint answer given to Parliamentary Questions P-012808/2013, P-012809/2013, P-012847/2013, P-012858/2013, E-012861/2013, P-012878/2013, P-012894/2013, E-012897/2013, P-012986/2013, P-013054/2013 ([2]).

([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012830/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelsabkommen mit Kolumbien und Peru

Das Freihandelsabkommen der Europäischen Union mit Peru und Kolumbien ist vorläufig in Kraft getreten. In früheren Diskussionen, die mit dem für Handel zuständigen Kommissionsmitglied im Parlament geführt wurden, hat er uns zugesichert, dass die EU die Einhaltung der Menschenrechtsklausel sicherstellen würde, die ein wesentlicher Bestandteil des Vertrags sei.

Bei jüngsten Treffen mit kolumbianischen Menschenrechtsverteidigern berichteten uns diese indes über die weiter wachsende Zahl an Morden an Menschenrechtsverteidigern und Wortführern in Landrückgabeverfahren. So wurden nach Angaben des „Programa Somos Defensores“ (Programm „Wir sind Verteidiger“) 49 Menschenrechtsverteidiger im Jahr 2012, 69 im Jahr 2012 und 52 in den ersten neun Monaten von 2013 ermordet. Das jüngste dieser 52 Mordopfer war César García, Wortführer von Kleinbauern und Umweltschützern, der sich gegen den Bau einer Mine in seiner Region gewandt hatte und der am 2. November 2013 getötet wurde.

Welchen konkreten Überwachungsmechanismus gedenkt die Kommission einzuführen? Wie häufig soll dieser Mechanismus zum Einsatz kommen und wie wird die Zivilgesellschaft darin eingebunden? Welche Kriterien werden angewandt, um zu entscheiden, ob Maßnahmen im Falle von Menschenrechtsverletzungen zu ergreifen sind? Zu welchem Zeitpunkt wird die Europäische Union diese Maßnahmen durchführen und woraus sollen diese Maßnahmen bestehen?

Wie wird die Kommission zudem den Fahrplan für Menschen-, Arbeitnehmer- und Umweltrechte weiterverfolgen und seine Umsetzung sicherstellen? Wer genau ist für die Überwachung zuständig?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(11. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission stimmt vollständig mit dem Parlament darin überein, dass das Handelsabkommen mit Kolumbien und Peru durch die Förderung der Handelsöffnung und der wirtschaftlichen Interdependenz auch das übergeordnete Ziel der EU unterstützen wird, die Demokratie, die Rechtsstaatlichkeit, die Menschenrechte und die Grundsätze des Völkerrechts zu schützen.

Die EU-Missionen in Bogotá beobachten die Menschenrechtssituation aufmerksam. Sie treffen sich monatlich in einer lokalen Arbeitsgruppe „Menschenrechte“, um Informationen und Analysen auszutauschen. Sie tauschen außerdem Informationen mit Organisationen, die in verschiedenen Regionen Kolumbiens vertreten sind, und mit Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft aus.

Zudem finden im Rahmen des Menschenrechtsdialogs zwischen der EU und Kolumbien jährliche Treffen mit Vertretern Kolumbiens auf hoher und auf technischer Ebene statt. Diese bieten ein Forum, in dem Menschenrechtsfragen angesprochen werden können. Zusätzlich werden Anliegen der EU in Menschenrechtsfragen regelmäßig auch bei hochrangigen Besuchen angesprochen.

Die Zivilgesellschaft ist und wird auch weiterhin eng in diesen Prozess eingebunden sein, auf formeller Ebene (z. B. durch Fragerunden vor Treffen im Rahmen des Menschenrechtsdialogs und durch Nachbesprechungen) und weniger formell durch Treffen mit Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft und mit einzelnen Menschenrechtsverteidigern und Experten sowohl in Bogotá als auch in Brüssel.

Der Fahrplan, den Kolumbien auf Antrag des Europäischen Parlaments erstellt hat, wird ein nützliches Instrument für die Stärkung des Schutzes der Menschenrechte, der Arbeitnehmerrechte und der Umwelt sein. Obwohl die Verantwortung für die Umsetzung des Fahrplans bei Kolumbien liegt, sind die Kommission und die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin bereit, die Umsetzung gemeinsam mit dem Europäischen Parlament durch die Mechanismen, die im Rahmen unserer bilateralen Beziehungen einschließlich dem Handelsabkommen geschaffen wurden, zu unterstützen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012830/13
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Free Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru

The Free Trade Agreement between the European Union, Peru and Colombia has provisionally entered into force. In previous discussions held in Parliament with the Trade Commissioner, he assured us that the EU would ensure compliance with the human rights clause considered essential to the treaty.

In recent meetings with Colombian human rights defenders they have told us about the continued increase in the instances of murder of human rights defenders and leaders of land restitution processes. Indeed, the 'We Are Defenders' programme (Programa Somos Defensores) has reported that there were 49 murders of human rights defenders in 2011, 69 in 2012, and 52 in the first nine months of 2013. Fifty-two. The most recent case was the killing of small-scale farming and environment leader Cesar García, who opposed the construction of a mining project in his region, on Saturday 2 November 2013.

We would like to know what concrete monitoring mechanism the Commission is planning to implement; with which benchmarks; how regularly it is planning to activate this mechanism; and how civil society will be involved in this monitoring process. We would also like to know what criteria will be used to decide whether measures will be implemented in cases of human rights violations, at what stage the EU will implement such measures and what these measures will be.

Moreover, how will the Commission follow up on the roadmap on human, labour and environmental rights and secure its implementation? Who exactly is in charge of monitoring?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The Commission fully agrees with the Parliament that the Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru, through promoting trade openness and economic interdependency, will support the EU's overarching objective to protect democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law.

EU missions in Bogotá closely follow the HR situation. They hold monthly meetings of a local working group on human rights to share information and analyses. They also exchange information with organisations having a local presence in Colombia's regions as well as with civil society organisations.

Moreover, annual meetings (high level and techinical level) take place with Colombia in the framework of the EU-Colombia Dialogue on Human Rights. They constitute a forum in which HR-related concerns are raised. In addition, EU concerns on HR issues are also regularly addressed on the occasion of high-level visits.

Civil society is and will continue to be closely associated in this process, both in a formalised way (i.e. consultative sessions before meetings in the framework of the HR Dialogue and in debriefing sessions) and more informally through meetings with civil society organisations and individual HR defenders or experts both in Bogotá and in Brussels.

The roadmap drafted by Colombia upon request of the European Parliament will be a useful instrument in furthering the protection of human rights, labour rights, and the environment. While the responsibility for implementing them lies with Colombia, the Commission and the HR/VP stand ready to support their implementation, alongside the European Parliament, through the mechanisms established in the context of our bilateral relations, including through the Trade Agreement.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012832/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — EU-Mittel und Menschenrechtslage in Nepal

Die bevorstehenden Wahlen werden unter anderem aus dem „Nepal Peace Trust Fund", einem Fonds zur Finanzierung der im Friedensabkommen von 2006 niedergelegten Vereinbarungen, finanziert. Die Europäische Union leistet den größten Beitrag zu diesem Fonds.

Die Liste der Kandidaten enthält Personen, die verdächtigt werden, schwere Menschenrechtsverletzungen begangen zu haben (laut „Accountability Watch Committee").

Kann die Kommission folgende Fragen ausführlich beantworten:

1. Ist der Hohen Vertreterin dieser Sachverhalt bekannt? Falls ja, wie rechtfertigt dies die Tatsache, dass EU-Gelder für eine Sache bewilligt wurden, die eindeutig mit Menschenrechtsverletzungen im Zusammenhang steht?

2. Sind der Hohen Vertreterin die Entwicklungen in Bezug auf die Straffreiheit bewusst sowie die Gefahr einer Amnestie durch einen Erlass der Wahrheits- und Versöhnungskommission? Falls ja, wie gedenkt die Hohe Vertreterin, hiergegen vorzugehen?

3. Ist der Hohen Vertreterin bekannt, dass Mädchen in Bezug auf Bildung und selbst in Bezug auf ihre Lebensumstände merkwürdigen Bedingungen unterworfen sind (in bestimmten Gebieten müssen die Mädchen in Hütten schlafen, wenn sie ihre Regel haben) und benachteiligt werden? Falls ja, was hat bzw. wird die Hohe Vertreterin unternehmen, damit gewährleistet ist, dass Mädchen gleiche Bildungsmöglichkeiten und Lebensumstände haben?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(30. Januar 2014)

Die EU ist sich der genannten Problematik bewusst. Die EU-Wahlbeobachtungsmission unter Leitung der EP-Abgeordneten Eva Joly hat in einer ersten Erklärung den Wahlprozess positiv beurteilt und auf die hohe Wahlbeteiligung und den friedlichen Verlauf sowie auf den positiven Beitrag der nepalesischen Wahlkommission hingewiesen. Ferner hat sie bestätigt, dass die Wahlkommission die Vorschriften über den Ausschluss von Kandidaten ordnungsgemäß angewandt hat.

Trotz des enormen Drucks seitens der Zivilgesellschaft und der Entwicklungspartner in Nepal wurde die Verordnung über die Kommission für Wahrheitsfindung und Versöhnung im März 2013 als Gesetz verabschiedet. Die Entwicklungspartner haben weiter gefordert, dass die Verordnung nicht angewandt wird, da sie der Kommission die Befugnis zugesteht, Amnestien zu empfehlen, und als nicht den internationalen Standards entsprechend bewertet wird.

Nach nepalesischem Recht haben Mädchen ein vollwertiges Recht auf Bildung und die Chaupaudi-Praxis wurde unter Strafe gestellt. Allerdings wirken wirtschaftliche und soziale Faktoren für Mädchen als Hindernisse beim Zugang zum und Verbleib im Bildungssystem und das Chaupaudi-System wurde in einigen Gebieten, wenn auch leider noch nicht überall, abgeschafft. Die EU unterstützt das Programm 2009-2015 für die Reform des Schulwesens durch sektorbezogene Budgethilfe. Die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern und die soziale Inklusion stehen weit oben auf der Agenda des politischen Dialogs, der in gemeinsamen Sitzungen mit der Regierung und monatlichen Sitzungen mit den Entwicklungspartnern geführt wird. Auch die Projekte, die über das Europäische Instrument für Demokratie und Menschenrechte und die Haushaltslinien für nichtstaatliche Akteure finanziert werden, befassen sich schwerpunktmäßig mit der Förderung der Bildung von Mädchen, der Verbesserung der Lebensbedingungen sowie auch der Bekämpfung der Diskriminierung.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012832/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — European funds and human rights situation in Nepal

The upcoming elections in Nepal are being financed by, among others, the Nepal Peace Trust Fund, to which the European Union is the biggest donor.

The list of candidates includes people who are suspected of having committed serious human rights violations (according to the Accountability Watch Committee).

Can the Commission provide a detailed answer to the following questions:

1. Is the High Representative aware of these facts? If so, how is it justified that European money is being given for a cause where we obviously find violations of human rights?

2. Is the High Representative aware of the developments concerning impunity in Nepal and the risk of an amnesty being granted by an ordinance of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission? If so, what plans has the High Representative to combat this?

3. Is the High Representative aware of the particular situation of girls, who lack equal rights to education and even in terms of their living conditions (in certain areas, girls have to sleep in huts during menstruation)? If so, what steps are being or have been taken by the High Representative to ensure that girls have equal educational and living opportunities?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The EU is aware of this issue. The EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) chaired by MEP Ms Eva Joly, provided a positive preliminary assessment of the electoral process, stressing the high turnout and the peacefulness of the process as well as the positive contribution by the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN). EOM confirmed that the ECN had properly applied the law regarding disqualifications of candidates.

Despite the enormous pressure created by civil society and development partners in Nepal, the ordinance on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was signed into law in March 2013. The development partners continued urging not to execute the ordinance, as it grants the TRC the power to recommend amnesties and has been considered as not meeting international standards.

According to Nepalese law, girls have equal rights to education and the practice of *chaupaudi* has been criminalised. However, various economic and social factors act as barriers to girls accessing and staying in education and the practice of *chaupaudi*, although eliminated in some areas unfortunately remains in some places. EU is supporting the School Sector Reform Programme 2009-2015, through sector budget support. Gender Equity and Social Inclusion are high on the agenda for policy dialogue in regular joint meetings with Government and in development partners monthly meetings. Projects funded through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and Non State Actor budget lines have also focused on promoting girls' education, improving living condition and also combating discrimination.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012834/13
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: eBay cross-border differential pricing

It has come to my attention that there is a discrepancy in the charges levied by eBay on the posting and packaging of goods in different EU countries. There seems to be an issue of cross-border differential pricing in relation to these charges. For example, eBay fees in Ireland represent 10% of the final value of the item, whereas in the UK they also include 10% of the postage fee. UK sellers are therefore charged more to sell their items than sellers in other EU countries, even when these items are sent to the same EU country they are listed in.

In light of this, could the Commission confirm whether it is planning to take any action on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

The Commission is already aware of the fact that some online marketplaces, such as the ones referred to by the Honourable Member, charge different fees from sellers on their platforms (e.g. for delivery, packaging), which may vary depending on the location of the seller.

Article 20(2) of the Services Directive obliges Member States to ensure that general conditions of access to a given service do not contain discriminatory provisions relating to the nationality or place of residence of the recipient of the service.

It is for the competent authorities of the Member States, whose list ([1]) can be found on the dedicated website of the Commission, to ensure that this provision is respected by the service providers. However, the Commission together with the European Network of Consumer Protection Centres is continuously working on raising awareness of businesses and consumers of their rights and obligations under EC law, notably in the context of Article 20(2) of the Services Directive.

DG Internal Market and Services will inform the UK ECC about the issue raised and will seek information from the UK ECC about possible measures that may be taken in this regard.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/docs/services-dir/guides/bodies_designated_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012836/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(12 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Ix-xiri online

L-aħħar statistika tal-Eurostat turi għal darb'oħra żieda fix-xiri bl-internet fl-Istati Membri kollha, fejn attwalment 60 % tal-utenti tal-internet jużaw dan il-mezz għal skopijiet ta' xiri online. L-Istati Membri b'livelli avvanzati ta' xiri online jinkludu r-Renju Unit (82 % tal-utenti tal-internet), id-Danimarka u l-Isvezja (it-tnejn 79 %), il-Ġermanja (77 %), il-Lussemburgu (73 %) u Malta (63 %).

Madankollu, il-konsumaturi Maltin ta' spiss jiffaċċjaw il-problema ta' bejjiegħa fil-livell tal-konsumatur li ma jwasslux il-prodotti fl-indirizzi Maltin. Din il-limitazzjoni ġeografika titlob attenzjoni partikolari fil-kuntest tal-funzjonament tas-suq intern online. Hu ta' interess partikolari li kulħadd ikollu aċċessibbiltà bl-għan li s-suq intern jibbenefika kemm lin-negozji kif ukoll lill-konsumaturi b'mod sħiħ.

1. X'inhuma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni dwar ir-riluttanza tal-forniturili joffru s-servizzi tagħhom lil Stati Membri żgħar u periferali partikolari, b'hekk jillimitaw il-kompetizzjoni fi ħdan is-suq intern Ewropew għad-detriment tal-konsumaturi tiegħu?

2. X'azzjoni se tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex tevita tali diskriminazzjoni ġeografika fi ħdan is-suq intern?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(31 ta' Jannar 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni taqbel mal-Onorevoli Membru li għadu jiġri ta' spiss li riċevituri ta' servizzi jiġu miċħuda t-tranżazzjoni jew inkella jkollhom iħallsu prezz ogħla peress li jkollhom ir-residenza tagħhom fi Stat Membru ieħor.

Filwaqt li hija primarjament ir-responsabbiltà tal awtoritajiet kompetenti nazzjonali rilevanti biex jiżguraw il-konformità mal-Artikolu 20(2) tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi f'dak li għandu x'jaqsam mal-imġiba tal-forniturili tas-servizzi, il-Kummissjoni tara li tiffaċilita b'diversi modi l-forniment transkonfinali ta' servizzi.

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda kontinwament tipprovdi assistenza lill-Istati Membri, min-negozji u lill-konsumaturi f'dak li jikkonċerna l-implimentazzjoni tal-Artikolu 20(2) tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi. F'dan il-kuntest, f'Ġunju 2012 inħarġet Gwida dwar l-Applikazzjoni tal-Artikolu 20(2) tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi ([1]). Barra minn hekk, fis-16 ta' Diċembru 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat Pjan Direzzjonali ([2]) dwar il-kunsinna transkonfinali tal-pakketti, li jistabbilixxi pjan ta' azzjoni komprensiv li jfittex li jipprovdi lill-bejjiegħa fuq l-internet u lill-konsumaturi servizzi ta' kunsinna tal-pakketti li jkunu ta' kwalità għolja, aċċessibbli u bi prezz raġonevoli, filwaqt li jitqiesu l-ħtiġijiet tal-SMEs u ta' reġjuni inqas avvanzati jew inqas aċċessibbli.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni, flimkien man-Netwerk Ewropew ta' Ċentri ta' Protezzjoni tal-Konsumatur, qiegħda taħdem kontinwament biex tkabbar l-għarfien tan-negozji u tal-konsumaturi dwar id-drittijiet u l-obbligi tagħhom skont il-liġi tal-UE, notevolment fil-kuntest tal-Artikolu 20(2) tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi.

([1]) SWD(2012) 146 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 886 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012836/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Online shopping

The latest Eurostat statistics once more show an increase in Internet shopping throughout the Member States, with by now 60% of Internet users using the medium for online shopping purposes. Member States with advanced levels of online shopping include the United Kingdom (82% of Internet users), Denmark and Sweden (both 79%), Germany (77%), Luxembourg (73%) and Malta (63%).

However, Maltese consumers often face the problem of online retailers not delivering products to Maltese addresses. This geographical limitation calls for particular attention in the context of the functioning of the online internal market. The purpose of the internal market being to benefit both businesses and consumers to the fullest, accessibility for all is of particular concern.

1. What are the Commission's views on the suppliers' reluctance to offer their services to designated small peripheral Member States, thereby limiting competition within the European internal market to the detriment of its consumers?

2. What action will the Commission take to prevent such geographical discrimination within the internal market?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that still too often recipients of services are refused the transaction or are forced to pay a higher price on grounds of their residence in another Member State.

While it is primarily for the relevant national competent authorities to ensure compliance with Article 20(2) of the Services Directive when it comes to the behaviour of service providers, the Commission seeks to facilitate cross-border supply of services in various ways.

The Commission is constantly providing assistance to Member States, businesses and consumers when it comes to the implementation of Article 20(2) of the Services Directive. In this context, Guidance on the Application of Article 20(2) of the Services Directive ([1]) was issued in June 2012. Furthermore, the Commission adopted on 16 December 2013 a Roadmap ([2]) on cross-border parcel delivery, which sets out a comprehensive action plan that seeks to provide e-retailers and consumers with high-quality, accessible and affordable parcel delivery services, taking due account of the needs of SMEs and of less advanced or less accessible regions.

Furthermore, the Commission, together with the European Network of Consumer Protection Centres, is continuously working on raising awareness of businesses and consumers of their rights and obligations under EC law, notably in the context of Article 20(2) of the Services Directive.

([1]) SWD(2012) 146 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 886 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012849/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(12 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Impacto en la industria termosolar de la reforma eléctrica en España

El sector eléctrico español es objeto de una reforma que se materializará en un gran número de elementos normativos, que se sumarán a otros cambios sustanciales adoptados en la normativa vigente a lo largo de los dos últimos años. Destaca la imprevisibilidad regulatoria, en muchos casos de carácter retroactivo, que afecta gravemente al principio de seguridad jurídica. Aunque el alcance es general, el sector de las energías renovables está objetivamente discriminado, ya que el impacto real de las medidas aprobadas ha recaído en mayor proporción sobre este sector que sobre el convencional. En particular, la Ley 15/2012 y el Real Decreto Ley 2/2013 afectan particularmente al sector de la industria termosolar. Las antiguas condiciones retributivas ya no son de aplicación y el sector desconoce a día de hoy cuáles serán las nuevas, situación que le lleva a operar sus centrales sin tener elementos ciertos a los que ajustar su comportamiento. El modelo previsto en la nueva normativa pretende cambiar las tarifas que se aplicaban a las renovables por un incentivo a la inversión que garantizaría una rentabilidad del 7,5 % no sobre lo realmente invertido, sino sobre unos hipotéticos costes de inversión y de operación estándar que serán definidos, supuestamente, antes de fin de año por el propio Gobierno.

No es de extrañar, por tanto, el elevado número de reclamaciones en los tribunales españoles —así como en las sedes de arbitraje internacional— de inversores que han visto cómo se alteraban negativamente las condiciones por las que decidieron sus inversiones.

Este diputado entiende que la regulación del sector eléctrico debe contemplarse dentro de la normativa europea y con escenarios de futuro a medio y a largo plazo; una regulación aislada incumple este requisito.

Por todo ello, pregunto a la Comisión: ¿Es razonable que un Estado miembro haya puesto en marcha un proceso de reforma con estas incertidumbres, teniendo en cuenta, además, los continuos cambios anteriores? ¿Qué opina sobre el hecho de que la retribución para alcanzar una rentabilidad razonable no se aplique sobre lo realmente invertido, sino sobre unas cifras artificiales que podrían estar muy alejadas de la realidad y que sí sería perfectamente auditable?

¿Piensa la Comisión tomar medidas para que esos costes estándar se ajusten a la realidad?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión entiende la preocupación de por Su Señoría por la incidencia de la reciente y completa modificación del régimen español de apoyo a las energías renovables. La Comisión ha expresado públicamente en distintas ocasiones, concretamente en su reciente Comunicación titulada «Realizar el mercado interior de la electricidad y sacar el máximo partido de la intervención pública» ([1]), su preocupación acerca de las medidas nacionales que modifican con carácter retroactivo las condiciones económicas de las inversiones ya existentes en materia de energías renovables, si bien ha reconocido que es necesario reformar los regímenes de apoyo por motivos de rentabilidad y eficiencia.

En el marco de su diálogo político con el Gobierno español, la Comisión ha pedido a las autoridades españolas que procedan a una evaluación en profundidad de la incidencia de las nuevas medidas en los proyectos relativos a energías renovables ya existentes y que compartan dicha evaluación con las partes interesadas. Cuando se hayan finalizado estas medidas nuevas y la Comisión disponga de toda la información solicitada sobre ellas, evaluará la compatibilidad del nuevo régimen con la legislación de la UE.

([1]) C(2013) 7243 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012849/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Impact of the Spanish electricity reform on the solar thermal industry

The Spanish electricity sector is undergoing a reform that will result in a great number of regulatory elements, which will be added to other substantial changes to the regulations adopted in the last two years. The unpredictability of the regulations, in many cases changed retroactively, seriously affects the principle of legal certainty. Although the scope of the changes is general, the renewable energy sector is in fact discriminated against, since the real impact of the measures adopted is proportionally greater on this sector than on the conventional sector. Specifically, Law 15/2012 and Royal Decree-Law 2/2013 particularly affect the solar thermal industry. The old terms of remuneration no longer apply and the sector does not at present know what the new terms will be, which means its plants must operate without secure knowledge of elements required to adjust their performance. The model provided in the new law aims to replace the rates previously applied to renewable energy with an investment incentive that would guarantee a return of 7.5%, based not on actual investment, but on some hypothetical investment and standard operating costs, supposedly to be defined before the end of the year by the Government itself.

It is not surprising, therefore, that a large number of claims have been made in the Spanish courts — and in international seats of arbitration — by investors who have seen the conditions under which they decided to invest altered negatively.

I believe that regulation of the electricity sector must be approached from within European regulations and with a view to medium and long-term scenarios; an isolated regulation fails to meet this requisite.

Therefore, I would like to ask the Commission, Is it reasonable that a Member State should launch a reform process with these uncertainties, taking account also of the continuous changes made previously? What is the Commission's view of the fact that the remuneration to provide reasonable returns does not apply to the actual investment made, but to artificial figures that may be far removed from the reality that could perfectly well be audited?

Does the Commission intend to take steps to ensure that these standard costs reflect reality?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(9 January 2014)

The Commission understands the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member about the impacts of the recent complete modification of the Spanish support scheme for renewable energies. The Commission has publicly and repetitively expressed concerns, including in its recent Communication titled 'Delivering the internal electricity market and making the most of public intervention' ([1]), over any national measures that retroactively change the economic conditions of existing renewable energy investments, while recognising that support schemes should be reformed for cost-effectiveness reasons.

In its political dialogue with the Spanish Government, the Commission has asked the Spanish authorities to assess carefully the impacts of the new measures on existing renewable energy projects and to share this assessment with stakeholders. Once these new measures are finalised and the Commission has all information requested on the new measures, the latter will assess the compatibility of the new scheme with EU legislation.

([1]) C(2013) 7243 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012850/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Spähaffäre und Freihandelsabkommen TTIP

Die europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger haben mit großer Entrüstung und Sorge auf die sogenannte „Spähaffäre“ reagiert. Ein Bewusstsein darüber, wie wertvoll die eigenen Daten offenbar sind, entwickelt sich mehr und mehr in Europa, und viele Bürger scheinen es nicht zu wollen, dass ihre Daten zur Ware in der globalisierten Welt werden.

1. Die Kommission wird um eine ausführliche Stellungnahme zu der Frage gebeten, warum die Verhandlungen über das TTIP trotz des derzeit massiv gestörten Vertrauensverhältnisses zwischen der EU und den USA wieder aufgenommen wurden?

2. Welche Argumente sollten nach Ansicht der Kommission ausreichen, um die Bedenken der Bürgerinnen und Bürger zu zerstreuen, die sich eigentlich Klarheit über den Datenschutz gerade in einem so umfassenden Freihandelsabkommen wünschen?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(10. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission hat starke Bedenken geäußert und von den Vereinigten Staaten eine umfassende und unverzügliche Klarstellung bezüglich ihrer angeblichen nachrichtendienstlichen Tätigkeiten verlangt, soweit diese EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger und die Räumlichkeiten der EU-Institutionen betreffen. Allerdings fallen weder Fragen der nationalen Sicherheit noch des Datenschutzes in den Geltungsbereich des Freihandelsabkommens TTIP. Während die Kommission die TTIP-Verhandlungen wie geplant fortsetzt, geht sie davon aus, dass parallel dazu Lösungen gefunden werden, die das Vertrauen in den Datenverkehr zwischen der EU und den USA wieder herstellen werden. Die Kommission wird bei der Verfolgung dieses Ansatzes vom Europäischen Parlament, in dessen Entschließung zu dem Überwachungsprogramm der Nationalen Sicherheitsagentur der Vereinigten Staaten nicht die Aussetzung der TTIP-Verhandlungen gefordert wurde, sowie von den Mitgliedstaaten unterstützt. Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission gemeinsam mit dem EU-Ratsvorsitz eine hochrangige Ad-hoc-Arbeitsgruppe (EU-US) zum Datenschutz eingesetzt, die sich eingehender mit diesen Fragen befassen soll.

Die Kommission hat ihre Beurteilung der Lage hinsichtlich der Datenströme zwischen der EU und den USA in ihrer am 27. November veröffentlichten Mitteilung über die Wiederherstellung des Vertrauens beim Datenaustausch zwischen der EU und den USA ([1]) dargelegt, die auch eine Reihe von Empfehlungen enthält.

Was insbesondere den Datenschutz angeht, so hat die Kommission in der erwähnten Mitteilung klargestellt, dass im Rahmen des TTIP nicht über die Datenschutzstandards verhandelt werden wird, in diesem aber die geltenden und zukünftigen Datenschutzvorschriften umfassend respektiert werden.

([1]) Das vollständige, am 27.11.2013 verabschiedete Paket umfasst: die Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat: Wiederherstellung des Vertrauens beim Datenaustausch zwischen der EU und den USA (KOM(2013)846); die Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat über die Funktionsweise der Safe-Harbor-Regelung aus Sicht der US-Bürger und der in der EU niedergelassenen Unternehmen (KOM(2013)847) und den Bericht über die Ergebnisse der Arbeitsgruppe EU-USA über Datenschutz (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/report-findings-of-the-ad-hoc-eu-us-working-group-on-data-protection.pdf, auf Englisch).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012850/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Spying affair and the TTIP free trade agreement

European citizens have reacted to the 'spying affair' with a great deal of anger and concern. Awareness of how valuable an individual's own data clearly are is growing in Europe, and many people do not seem to want their data to become a commodity in the globalised world.

1. Can the Commission give a detailed opinion on the question of why negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) have been resumed despite the current serious damage to the relationship of trust between the EU and the US?

2. What arguments would the Commission consider sufficient to allay the concerns of people who actually want clarity on data protection, particularly in such an extensive free trade agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 February 2014)

The Commission has expressed its strong concerns and has sought a full and immediate clarification from the United States on their reported intelligence activities to the extent that they concern EU citizens and the premises of the EU institutions. However, neither national security matters nor data protection issues fall under the scope of the TTIP. While continuing TTIP negotiations as foreseen, the Commission expects that in parallel solutions will be found to restore trust in EU-US data flows. In pursuing this approach, the Commission has been supported by the European Parliament, whose resolution on the US NSA surveillance programme did not call for a delay of the TTIP negotiations, and by the Member States. The Commission set up, together with the Presidency of the Council of the EU, an ad-hoc high-level EU-US working group on data protection to examine these issues further.

The Commission's assessment of the situation of EU-US data flows is set out in its communication on rebuilding trust in EU-US data flows published on 27 November ([1]) that includes a set of operational recommendations.

As regards more specifically data protection, in the abovementioned Communication the Commission has made clear that data protection standards will not be negotiated within the TTIP, which in turn will fully respect current and future data protection rules.

([1]) The full package adopted on 27.11.2013 includes: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows, COM(2013) 846; Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Functioning of the Safe Harbour from the Perspective of EU Citizens and Companies Established in the EU, COM(2013) 847, and Report on the findings by the EU Co-chairs of the ad hoc EU-US Working Group on Data Protection available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/report-findings-of-the-ad-hoc-eu-us-working-group-on-data-protection.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012852/13
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Congruità delle cifre erogate rispetto agli standard garantiti per il servizio di accoglienza ai migranti

La gestione dei centri di primo soccorso ed accoglienza è delegata dallo Stato italiano a delle cooperative sociali. Nonostante la cifra media giornaliera erogata per ogni migrante (corrispondente a 45 euro circa), le condizioni igienico-sanitarie non rispettano gli standard minimi di decenza. Fonti giornalistiche riferiscono costantemente dati sconfortanti sulle insufficienze ed inefficienze della gestione, denunciando, insieme al sovraffollamento, il mancato rispetto della dignità umana attraverso la continua violazione di norme igienico-sanitarie, e descrivendo migranti costretti a dormire a cielo aperto, senza neppure il conforto di una coperta, che convivono con i cani randagi che hanno libero accesso al centro e orinano sui loro pochi effetti personali (si apprende di bambini che avrebbero contratto i pidocchi all'interno del centro di accoglienza). Inoltre, desta forte perplessità e sospetto la durata del periodo di permanenza dei migranti all'interno dei centri, prolungato ben oltre i 35 giorni previsti dalla legge e che rischia di trasformare l'accoglienza in vera e propria «detenzione», funzionale solo ad alimentare l'economia «oscura» che ruota intorno alla solita industria dell'emergenza. Una grave anomalia si è verificata anche presso la struttura di Porto Empedocle in cui sono ospitati i migranti: un caso di scabbia dimesso e reintegrato nella struttura, senza isolamento, con la prescrizione di curarsi in mezzo agli altri nonostante l'evidente pericolo di contagio.

Viste le condizioni disumane denunciate dai mezzi d'informazione, e alla luce delle somme erogate per la somministrazione del servizio di primo soccorso e accoglienza, si chiede dunque alla Commissione se non ritiene che nelle situazioni descritte siano ravvisabili non solo il mancato rispetto di criteri di efficienza ed economicità ma, soprattutto, se non debbano individuarsi palesi violazioni di normative e leggi che regolano la materia, oltre che dei diritti fondamentali dell'individuo.

Può la Commissione dire se l'Italia abbia chiesto fondi europei, in particolare tramite il Fondo europeo per i rifugiati per questi centri, prima della dichiarazione del Presidente Barroso in data 9 ottobre 2013, nella quale lo stesso evocava l'allocazione di fondi addizionali fino a un massimo di 30 milioni di euro per aiutare i rifugiati in Italia? A che punto sono precisamente questi nuovi stanziamenti?

Può la Commissione elencare precisamente le azioni da intraprendere tramite il piano di supporto speciale dell'EASO dopo la sua firma? Può la Commissione trasmettere una copia di questo piano?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(27 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente delle accuse che ricadono sulle strutture di accoglienza italiane e ha già trasmesso all'Italia una lettera di costituzione in mora ([1]), il cui seguito è tuttora in corso. L'Italia ha dimostrato di voler garantire condizioni di accoglienza adeguate impegnandosi ad accrescere le proprie capacità di accoglienza e a migliorare le condizioni dei centri di primo soccorso.

In collaborazione con alcune ONG le autorità italiane stanno in effetti finanziando un progetto di monitoraggio della situazione nei centri e proseguono l'opera di miglioramento delle capacità di accoglienza anche con il sostegno tecnico dell'EASO ([2]).

Per il periodo 2008-2013 l'Italia ha ricevuto circa 72 milioni di EUR nel quadro del FER ([3]), 36 milioni dei quali per i servizi di primo soccorso. In passato, parte di tali fondi è stata destinata a migliorare le condizioni e le capacità di accoglienza, obiettivo già designato come prioritario dai dialoghi politici per l'istituzione del nuovo Fondo Asilo e migrazione.

È in via di definizione la decisione di destinare all'Italia nuovi fondi per misure di emergenza a seguito della tragedia di Lampedusa, parte dei quali serviranno a potenziare le capacità di accoglienza e di trattamento delle domande. Sulla scia dei recenti episodi di maltrattamento dei migranti nel centro di soccorso e prima accoglienza di Lampedusa, la Commissione ha poi dichiarato che monitorerà con molta attenzione l'attuazione dei fondi, anche nell'ambito della procedura d'infrazione in corso.

Quanto al piano di sostegno speciale dell'EASO, le principali linee d'azione includono la formazione, le informazioni sui paesi di origine, un sistema di allarme rapido e l'accoglienza. Le eventuali richieste di accesso a questo documento riservato, formalmente espresse da uno degli organi parlamentari di cui al punto 1.4 dell'allegato II dell'accordo quadro sulle relazioni tra il Parlamento europeo e la Commissione europea, saranno trattate conformemente a tale accordo.

([1]) Consultare il seguente documento: http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/eulaw/decisions/dec_20121024.htm#it
([2]) Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo.
([3]) Fondo europeo per i rifugiati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012852/13
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Reception services for migrants: inconsistencies between allocated funds and standards provided

The Italian State delegates the management of first assistance and reception centres to social cooperatives. Despite the average daily allowance for each migrant (approximately EUR 45), the health and hygiene conditions do not meet minimum standards of decency. Press reports constantly set out discouraging figures on the inadequacy and inefficiency of their management, and denounce, in addition to the overcrowding, the lack of respect for human dignity through the persistent violation of health and hygiene standards. Migrants are forced to sleep in the open air, without even the comfort of a blanket, and to live aside stray dogs that freely access the centres and urinate on their few personal belongings (children have apparently contracted head lice within the centres' premises). Furthermore, the duration of the migrants' stay in the centres is bewildering and suspicious, as it lasts well beyond the 35 days provided for by law. The risk is that the reception will become an all-out detention, simply fuelling the "murky' economy surrounding the usual emergency industry. A serious situation also occurred at the Porto Empedocle centre which houses migrants: someone suffering from scabies was discharged and brought back onto the site without being isolated, and was expected to get better around other people, despite the obvious risk of contagion.

In light of the inhuman conditions denounced by the media, and considering the amount allocated to first assistance and reception services, does the Commission not believe that the above situations show not only a failure to respect the criteria of efficiency and value for money, but above all, that they show clear violations of relevant rules and laws, as well as violations of fundamental human rights?

Can the Commission say whether Italy requested European funding for these centres, especially through the European Refugee Fund, before the statement by President Barroso on 9 October 2013, in which he called for the allocation of additional funds, (up to EUR 30 million) in order to assist refugees in Italy? What is the current status of this new funding, precisely?

Can the Commission list in detail the actions of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Special Support Plan to be undertaken once it has been signed? Can it provide a copy of this plan?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the allegations concerning reception conditions in Italy and has sent a Letter of Formal Notice to Italy ([1]), which is being followed up. Italy has shown increasing engagement regarding the provision of appropriate reception conditions by committing to expand its reception capacity and to improve conditions in the centres.

A project to monitor the situation in the centres has been financed by Italy in partnership with some NGOs. Improvement of reception capacity is also being pursued through technical support from the EASO ([2]).

Over the period 2008-2013 Italy has received a total of approximately EUR 72 million under ERF ([3]) of which EUR 36 million for emergency. Part of this allocation has been used in the past in order to improve their reception conditions and capacities. This was also considered as a priority in the context of the policy dialogues for the new Asylum and Migration Fund.

The decision on new funding allocated to Italy for emergency measures following the Lampedusa tragedy is being finalised and will include funding targeted at increasing both reception and processing capacity. The Commission has made clear, following the recent mistreatment of migrants in the detention centre in Lampedusa, that the implementation of these funds will be closely monitored also in the context of the on-going infringement procedure.

Regarding the EASO Special Support Plan, the main lines of action include training, country of origin information, early warning and reception. Any request for access to this confidential document formally made by one of the parliamentary bodies referred to in Article 1(4) of Annex II of the framework Agreement on relations between Parliament and the Commission will be dealt with in accordance with that agreement.

([1]) As announced here: http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/eulaw/decisions/dec_20121024.htm#it
([2]) European Asylum Support Office.
([3]) European Refugee Fund.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012854/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(12 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Gazprom acusa Ucrânia de dívida

O grupo económico público russo Gazprom acusou a Ucrânia de lhe dever 882 milhões de dólares, o que pode gerar um novo conflito em torno do fornecimento de gás russo à Ucrânia, precisamente no momento em que se verifica uma aproximação ucraniana à União Europeia.

Esta atitude do gigante energético russo surge precisamente nas vésperas da possível assinatura de um acordo de associação entre a Ucrânia e a União Europeia e parece refletir uma tentativa russa de impedir semelhante passo por parte da Ucrânia e de atrair este país para a sua zona de influência política e económica.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Como qualifica a posição da Gazprom?

2. Contactou as autoridades ucranianas e russas a este respeito? Que respostas obteve?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(16 de janeiro de 2014)

A UE não comenta questões relacionadas com a execução de um contrato comercial, nomeadamente quanto a dívidas relativas a fornecimentos de gás.

A UE tornou claro perante a Rússia que a pressão exercida sobre a Ucrânia e outros países da Parceria Oriental, incluindo no domínio da energia, relacionada com a assinatura dos acordos de associação e de zona de comércio livre abrangente e aprofundado (AA/ZCLAA), é inaceitável. Esta mensagem foi reiterada ao mais alto nível na recente Cimeira da Parceria Oriental realizada em Vílnius, incluindo pelos Presidentes do Conselho da União Europeia e da Comissão Europeia.

A UE aborda as questões relacionadas com a energia, incluindo no que respeita à Ucrânia, nos seus diálogos regulares com a Federação da Rússia.

A UE também garante a execução do terceiro pacote da energia e da igualdade das condições de concorrência entre todos os agentes económicos envolvidos, incluindo a Gazprom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012854/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Gazprom accuses Ukraine of debt

The Russian state-owned corporation Gazprom has accused the Ukraine of owing it USD 882 million, which could lead to a new conflict over the supply of Russian gas to the Ukraine at the very time the Ukraine is seen to be drawing closer to the EU.

This approach by the Russian energy giant has taken place on the eve of the possible signing of an association agreement between the Ukraine and the EU, and it appears to reflect a Russian attempt to block a similar step on the part of Ukraine and to draw it in to the Russian sphere of political and economic influence.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative interpret Gazprom's position?

2. Has she contacted the Ukrainian and Russian authorities on this matter? How have they responded?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The EU does not comment on commercial contract execution issues, including on debts in relation to gas deliveries.

The EU has made it clear to Russia that pressure, including in the field of energy, on Ukraine and other Eastern Partnership countries linked to the signing of the Association Agreements and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (AA/DCFTA), is unacceptable. This message has been reiterated at the recent Eastern Partnership Vilnius summit at the highest level including by the Presidents of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission.

The EU raises questions related to energy, including as regards Ukraine, in its regular dialogues with the Russian Federation.

The EU also ensures implementation of its third energy package and level playing field between all economic actors involved, including Gazprom.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012857/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(13 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Prześladowania chrześcijan w Iranie

W Iranie żyje od 250 tys. do ponad 370 tys. chrześcijan. O ich prześladowaniach na tle religijnym media informują regularnie od pięciu lat. W tym czasie gubernatorem w Teheranie był Morteza Tamadon, oskarżający chrześcijan o „wrogi najazd kulturalny". Nadzieją na poprawę sytuacji były wybory w lipcu 2013 r., kiedy Tamadona zastąpił Hassan Rouhani, deklarując walkę z prześladowaniami mniejszości religijnych. Niestety, ostatnie aresztowania licznych wyznawców protestanckiego kościoła mogą świadczyć o kontynuacji polityki represji.

W dniu 6 października b.r. w Raszt sąd skazał czterech pastorów za spożywanie alkoholu. Zostali oni zatrzymani w trakcie odprawianej w prywatnym domu liturgii, podczas której używano wina mszalnego. Jednak zgodnie z irańskim prawem chrześcijanie mogą spożywać alkohol, o ile nie czynią tego w miejscach publicznych. Mamy więc do czynienia z pogwałceniem gwarancji wolności religijnej dla chrześcijan.

Aresztowania pastorów w Raszt nie są zjawiskiem nowym. W 2012 r. skazano na karę śmierci pastora za szerzenie chrześcijaństwa. Po interwencji organizacji międzynarodowych, po trzech latach więzienia, został on uwolniony.

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel uważa, że Unia Europejska stosuje wszystkie dostępne jej środki, by chronić chrześcijan w Iranie?

2. Czy mając na uwadze deklaracje prezydenta Hassana Rouhaniego dotyczące prawa do wolności wyznania, Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel widzi możliwość podjęcia działań politycznych, aby prawo to było w istocie respektowane?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(27 stycznia 2014 r.)

Szanowni Panowie Posłowie słusznie zauważyli w zadanym pytaniu, że Islamska Republika Iranu jest prawnie zobowiązana do respektowania – podpisanych przez siebie – międzynarodowych zobowiązań w zakresie praw człowieka, a więc też wolności religii.

Unia Europejska wiele razy wzywała Iran do przestrzegania prawa do wolności religii, w tym religii chrześcijańskiej. W reakcji na aresztowania chrześcijan z powodu praktykowania religii, UE wydawała oświadczenia publiczne i poruszała tę kwestię w kontaktach dyplomatycznych z przedstawicielami irańskich władz.

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji zwróciła uwagę, podobnie jak Szanowni Panowie Posłowie, na składane podczas kampanii wyborczej w 2013 r. przez Hassana Rouhaniego, nowego prezydenta Iranu, deklaracje dotyczące praw człowieka. Ma ona nadzieję, że obietnice te zostaną spełnione, zarówno dla dobra obywateli, których dotyczy złe traktowanie, jak i ze względu na opinię Iranu na arenie międzynarodowej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012857/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Persecution of Christians in Iran

Estimates of the number of Christians living in Iran range from 250 000 to over 370 000. The religious persecution of this group has regularly been reported in the media over the past five years. For most of this time the Governor General of Tehran was Morteza Tamaddon, who accused Christians of launching a 'hostile cultural onslaught'. The elections held in July 2013 gave rise to hopes that the situation would improve, since Tamaddon was ousted by Hassan Rouhani, a self-declared opponent of the persecution of religious minorities. Unfortunately, the recent wave of arrests of Protestants may be an indication that the policy of repression is set to continue.

On 6 October 2013, a court in Rasht sentenced four clergymen in connection with the consumption of alcohol. They were arrested during a liturgy held in a private home where Communion wine was served. Under Iranian law, however, Christians are allowed to consume alcohol in non-public locations. This was therefore an infringement of the religious freedom guaranteed to Christians.

The arrests of the clergymen in Rasht were not the first of their kind. In 2012, a pastor was sentenced to death for spreading Christianity. He was released following the intervention of international organisations, having served three years in prison.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that the European Union is using all the channels available to it to protect Christians in Iran?

2. In view of President Hassan Rouhani's declarations on the right to freedom of religion, does the Vice-President/High Representative see any options for political action to ensure that this right is in fact respected?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

As the Honourable Parliamentarians rightly underline in their question, the Islamic Republic of Iran is legally obliged to respect the international human rights obligations that it has signed up to, including the freedom of religion.

The European Union has on a number of occasions called on Iran to respect the freedom of religion including the Christian religion. The EU has been reacting in public statements, as well as in diplomatic contacts with Iranian officials, to arrests of Christians on ground of their practising of religion.

Like the Honourable Parliamentarians, the HR/VP took note of the human rights commitments made by the new President of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, during his election campaign earlier this year. She hopes that it will be possible to honour these promises, both for the sake of the individuals that are suffering mistreatment as well as for the international reputation of Iran.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012859/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: El empleo en las regiones ultaperiféricas

Canarias viene planteando desde hace varias semanas su queja por el reparto de fondos europeos realizado por el Gobierno de España entre las distintas comunidades autónomas, porque confirma un indudable perjuicio para las Islas, que pierden al menos 200 millones de euros, destinados fundamentalmente a fondos de empleo.

Se supone que la Unión Europea asigna los fondos a los Estados en función de determinadas necesidades y parámetros objetivos, sin embargo, el Gobierno de España no negocia con las comunidades autónomas el reparto de los Fondos Estructurales, y los cálculos de menor asignación se han hecho sin tener en cuenta cuestiones como el desempleo juvenil.

La distribución de fondos decretada por el Estado español no tiene en cuenta la situación de las Islas, a pesar de que uno de los criterios para el reparto es el número de desempleados y esta región ultraperiférica alcanza más del 30 por ciento de paro.

Por su parte, el último informe del Comité Económico y Social Europeo recoge la mayor parte de las aspiraciones de las regiones ultraperiféricas y se posiciona claramente a favor del empleo local, de la capacidad de las RUP como plataformas de Europa en su entorno geográfico y del reforzamiento de los vínculos y el sentimiento de pertenencia a la Unión, que podría debilitarse si no se tienen en cuenta los señalados factores.

En este sentido,

¿Considera la Comisión que el procedimiento del Gobierno español tiene en cuenta las políticas y los criterios de la Comisión Europea en favor del empleo en regiones como la de Canarias?

¿Hace lo suficiente la Comisión, desde el ángulo tanto presupuestario como reglamentario, para garantizar la cohesión social en esta región ultraperiférica, dados sus elevados índices de desempleo y su dificultad para acceder a fondos de formación?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de enero de 2014)

Habida cuenta de los preocupantes niveles de desempleo, y, especialmente, del desempleo juvenil y el desempleo de larga duración, la Comisión sigue de cerca los preparativos del acuerdo de asociación relativo a los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos (Fondos ESI) para el periodo 2014-2020 y ha solicitado que la asignación de fondos sea adecuada para responder a los desafíos en materia de empleo e inclusión social y en el ámbito de la educación.

En octubre de 2013, las autoridades españolas responsables de la gestión presentaron un proyecto de acuerdo de asociación que contiene un capítulo que se refiere, en particular a las Islas Canarias, incluido un análisis detallado sobre el desempleo. Por tanto, la Comisión espera que los acuerdos que se apliquen en la región sean adecuados y aseguren un enfoque integrado del uso de los ESI para hacer frente al desempleo y a la falta de acceso a los fondos de formación.

Desde un punto de vista reglamentario, el paquete legislativo relativo a los Fondos ESI permite abordar los problemas específicos de las Islas Canarias como región ultraperiférica. En el periodo 2014-2020 en las Canarias deben aplicarse medidas específicas para tener en cuenta su situación, como una asignación específica suplementaria que neutralice los costes adicionales a que hace referencia el artículo 349 del TFUE, o un importante incremento de la financiación por lo que se refiere a la cooperación territorial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012859/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Employment in the outermost regions

The Canary Island authorities have been complaining for several weeks about the Spanish Government's distribution of European funds among the different autonomous communities, since the Islands are clearly losing out. In fact, they are losing at least EUR 200 million in employment funds.

In principle, the EU assigns funds to the Member States depending on specific necessities and objective parameters. However, the Spanish Government does not negotiate with the autonomous communities on the distribution of structural funds, and important issues such as youth unemployment do not figure in their calculations.

The Spanish Government does not take into account the situation of the Canary Islands, despite the fact that the unemployment rate is one of the official criteria for distributing funds, and over 30% of the Canary Island population is unemployed.

In its latest report, the European Economic and Social Committee underlines the EU's obligation to meet the aspirations of the people of its outermost regions. The committee clearly supports local employment and recognises the geographical role of the ORs as outposts of Europe in their regional neighbourhoods. It is in favour of reinforcing the connections with the continent in order to encourage the feeling of belonging to the Union among the local population. Current Spanish policy may have precisely the opposite effect.

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission think that the Spanish Government, when distributing European funds, takes account of the European Commission's policies and criteria which aim to promote employment in regions like the Canary Islands?

Is the Commission doing enough, from a budgetary and regulatory perspective, to guarantee social cohesion in this outermost region, given its high rate of unemployment and lack of access to training funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

For the 2014-2020 period, in view of the worrying levels of unemployment and especially the youth and long term unemployment, the Commission is closely following the preparation of the partnership agreement on the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and has requested an appropriate allocation of funds to respond to the challenges in employment, social inclusion as well as in the field of education.

In October 2013, the Spanish managing authorities submitted a draft partnership agreement. This draft contains a chapter addressed in particular to the Canary Islands, including a detailed analysis on unemployment Therefore, the Commission expects suitable arrangements ensuring an integrated approach to the use of the ESIF to tackle unemployment and the lack of access to training will be in place.

From a regulatory perspective, the legislative package for the ESIF allows the specific problems of the Canary Islands as an outermost region to be addressed. For the Canaries, specific measures are to be implemented in the 2014-2020 period that take account of their situation, such as a specific additional allocation to offset the additional costs referred to in Article 349 TFEU or and substancial financial increase as regards territorial cooperation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012860/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre del Canal 9

La semana pasada, Alberto Fabra, Presidente de la Generalitat Valenciana, anunció el cierre del Canal 9 debido a sus pérdidas millonarias. Este cierre, que significará el despido de 1 700 trabajadores, limitará la oferta televisiva de los ciudadanos valencianos, así como la oferta televisiva en lengua catalana.

Uno de los objetivos de la Directiva 2010/13/UE sobre servicios de comunicación audiovisual es el respeto a la diversidad cultural y lingüística en los medios de comunicación.

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿No cree la Comisión que esta solución pone en peligro la calidad y la diversidad de la oferta audiovisual en la Comunidad Valenciana tal y como se conciben en la Directiva?

¿No cree la Comisión que una reducción de plantilla podría haber sido una opción preferible al cierre?

¿No cree la Comisión que la oferta televisiva en lengua catalana quedará muy mermada en la Comunidad Valenciana?

¿Cree la Comisión que tras el cierre del Canal 9 los ciudadanos valencianos tendrán acceso a suficientes contenidos televisivos para informarse debidamente sobre lo que acontece en su comunidad?

¿Qué solución propone la Comisión para enmendar la situación?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión concede especial importancia a la función del sistema dual de organismos de radiodifusión públicos y comerciales, que preserva el pluralismo de los medios de comunicación y fomenta los valores europeos. Sin embargo, no puede poner en entredicho el mandato de un determinado Gobierno a la hora de adoptar decisiones relativas a su sistema público de radiodifusión, incluso en caso de que ello incida en la información disponible en una determinada lengua. Según el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, el uso de las lenguas mayoritarias o minoritarias en los Estados miembros entra en el ámbito de su jurisdicción y responsabilidad exclusiva.

Si bien la libertad y el pluralismo de los medios de comunicación constituyen, en efecto, valores en los que se fundamenta la Directiva sobre los servicios de los medios de comunicación audiovisuales, la Comisión no puede pronunciarse sobre la decisión de cerrar un organismo de radiodifusión público, ya que el Tratado deja claro que corresponden a los Estados miembros la gobernanza y las decisiones estratégicas sobre el servicio público de radiodifusión. Aunque la libertad y el pluralismo de los medios de comunicación constituyen las bases esenciales de las sociedades democráticas recogidas en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales, las disposiciones de la Carta solo proceden en caso de que se aplique el Derecho de la UE, y tal no es el caso en las circunstancias presentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012860/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Closure of Canal 9

Last week, the head of the Valencian government, Alberto Fabra, announced that the television channel Canal 9 was to be shut down as a result of losses totalling millions of euros. This closure, which will result in 1 700 job losses, will reduce regional television broadcasting in Valencia, as well as reducing Catalan-language broadcasting.

One of the objectives of Directive 2010/13/EU on audiovisual media services is to guarantee respect for cultural and linguistic diversity in the media.

In the light of the above:

Does the Commission not think that this decision endangers the quality and diversity of audiovisual media in Valencia, and is therefore at odds with Directive 2010/13/EU?

Does the Commission not believe that staff cutbacks would be preferable to closure?

Does the Commission not believe that the range of Catalan-language television available in Valencia will be significantly reduced as a consequence of this closure?

Does the Commission think that, following the closure of Canal 9, people living in Valencia will have a sufficient range of television channels to keep themselves properly informed about current affairs in their region?

What solution does the Commission propose to rectify the situation?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2014)

The Commission attaches special importance to the role of the dual system of public and commercial service broadcasters in preserving media pluralism and promoting European values. However, it cannot question a government's mandate to take decisions regarding their public service broadcasting system even in cases where this impacts on the available information in a specific language. Under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the use of majority or minority languages in Member States remains within their jurisdiction and under their sole responsibility.

While media freedom and pluralism are indeed values underpinning the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the Commission cannot comment on the decision to close down a public service broadcaster, as the Treaty makes it clear that the governance and strategic choices on public service broadcasting lie with the Member States. Media freedom and pluralism constitute essential foundations of democratic societies enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, however the provisions of the Charter apply only when implementing EC law, which is not the case in the present situation.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012865/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(13 november 2013)

Betreft: Verzameling van passagiersgegevens in Nederland en financiering door de Commissie

Onder verwijzing naar schriftelijke vraag E-000385/2013 en het antwoord van de Commissie daarop, heeft de Nederlandse minister van Veiligheid en Justitie zijn voornemen bekend gemaakt om een systeem voor het verzamelen van passagiersgegevens op te zetten. De minister heeft ook aangegeven dat hij een aanvraag voor medefinanciering door de Commissie zal indienen (de Commissie heeft EUR 50 miljoen gereserveerd voor het ontwikkelen van nationale „passagiersinformatie-eenheden", die essentieel zijn voor systemen voor het verzamelen van passagiersgegevens). Dit geld is onderdeel van het financieringsprogramma „Prevention of and Fight against Crime" (ISEC). Volgens de Commissie sluit het aan bij de doelstellingen van het ISEC-programma, namelijk het „ontwikkelen van innovatieve methoden en technologieën die bijdragen aan een hoge mate van veiligheid voor burgers". De Commissie beschouwt het verwerken van passagiersgegevens noodzakelijk voor het vergroten van de interne veiligheid.

Waarom beschouwt de Commissie systemen voor het verzamelen van passagiersgegevens noodzakelijk, in de wetenschap dat het Parlement het wetgevingsproces met betrekking tot de richtlijn persoonsgegevens juist vanwege een gebrek aan bewijs aangaande de noodzaak van dergelijke systemen heeft stopgezet?

Waarom denkt de Commissie niet na over of presenteert ze geen andere maatregelen die doeltreffender en minder ingrijpend zijn dan systemen voor het verzamelen van persoonsgegevens, met het oog op het ontwikkelen van innovatieve methoden en technologieën die bijdragen aan een hoge mate van veiligheid voor burgers?

Waaraan moet volgens de Commissie worden voldaan in de zin van noodzaaak, evenredigheid en gegevensbeschermingsgaranties vooraleer financiering voor infrastructuur voor systemen voor het verzamelen van persoonsgegevens wordt toegekend?

Kan de Commissie volledige openheid verschaffen over de financiële middelen die gereserveerd zijn, en toegewezen zijn en mogelijkerwijs zullen worden voor het ontwikkelen van nationale „passagiersinformatie-eenheden" en andere infrastructuur voor systemen voor het verzamelen van passagiersgegevens, uitgesplitst per lidstaat en project?

Kan de Commissie het Parlement op de hoogte stellen van alle aanvragen van lidstaten voor (mede)financiering voor het ontwikkelen van „passagiersinformatie-eenheden" of infrastructuur voor systemen voor het verzamelen van passagiersgegevens, alsook van de besluiten van de Commissie met betrekking tot die aanvragen en de motiveringen daarvan?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(4 februari 2014)

Volgens de Commissie blijkt uit een aantal feitelijke elementen, waaronder die van de effectbeoordeling ([1]) bij het voorstel voor een EU-PNR-richtlijn ([2]), dat het noodzakelijk is om PNR-gegevens, op beperkte wijze en met inachtneming van de eisen inzake gegevensbescherming, te verwerken. De diensten van de Commissie hebben voorts gedetailleerd bewijsmateriaal over de noodzaak van het verwerken van PNR-gegevens voor de bestrijding van zware criminaliteit en terrorisme gepresenteerd aan de leden van de Commissie burgerlijke vrijheden, justitie en binnenlandse zaken van het Europees Parlement, *achter gesloten deuren,* vanwege de vertrouwelijke aard van de verstrekte informatie. Door het sluiten van PNR-overeenkomsten met derde landen, heeft de Europese Unie erkend dat het verwerken van PNR-gegevens een noodzakelijk hulpmiddel is voor de bestrijding van terrorisme en zware internationale misdaad.

Voorafgaand aan de goedkeuring van het voorstel voor een EU-PNR-richtlijn, overwoog de Commissie andere maatregelen, waaronder het verwerken van op voorhand af te geven passagiersgegevens (Advance Passenger Information — API). Het verwerken van PNR-gegevens is een belangrijk instrument voor het verkrijgen van informatie die niet op andere manieren kan worden verkregen.

De eisen van de medefinanciering, in het kader van het financieringsprogramma „Preventie en bestrijding van criminaliteit" (ISEC), voor de ondersteuning van individuele lidstaten die op vrijwillige basis een passagiersinformatie-eenheid hebben opgezet op basis van de nationale wetgeving, worden uiteengezet in de gerichte uitnodiging tot het indienen van voorstellen ([3]). Op basis hiervan werden de projectaanvragen die werden ingediend door 14 lidstaten (BG, EE, ES, FR, LV, LT, HU, NL, AT, PT, RO, SI, FI, SE) geselecteerd voor medefinanciering. Twee projectaanvragen voldeden niet aan de gunningscriteria en moesten worden verworpen.

De diensten van de Commissie zullen de gevraagde informatie over de medefinanciering verstrekken bij brief aan de voorzitter van de LIBE-commissie.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0133:FIN:NL:PDF.
([2]) COM(2011) 32 definitief.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/prevention-of-and-fight-against-crime/calls/call-2012/pnr-targeted-call/docs/pnr_call_for_proposals_2012_final_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012865/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Collection of passenger data in the Netherlands and the Commission's passenger name record fund

With reference to Written Question E-000385/2013 and the Commission's answer, the Dutch Minister of Security and Justice has announced a proposal to introduce a Passenger Name Record (PNR) system. The minister announced the decision to apply for co-financing from the Commission, which has reserved EUR 50 million for the development of national Passenger Information Units, which are essential to PNR systems. This budget is part of the funding programme 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime' (ISEC) and is considered by the Commission to be in accordance with the objectives of the ISECprogramme, which are 'to develop innovative methods and technologies that contribute to a high level of security for citizens'. The Commission considers the processing of PNR data to be necessary for the enhancement of internal security.

Why does the Commission consider PNR systems to be necessary when Parliament has stalled the legislative process of the PNR directive owing to a lack of evidence regarding the need for PNR systems?

Why does the Commission not consider or present other measures which are more effective and less intrusive than PNR systems in order to develop innovative methods and technologies that contribute to a high level of security for citizens?

What would be the Commission's requirements, in terms of necessity, proportionality and data protection safeguards, for allocating funds to set up a PNR infrastructure?

Could the Commission provide all figures regarding funds reserved, allocated or under consideration for setting up national Passenger Information Units or other infrastructures supporting PNR systems, broken down by Member State and project?

Could the Commission inform Parliament about any applications from Member States for (co)financing for setting up Passenger Information Units or PNR infrastructures, and the reasoned decisions made by the Commission regarding those applications?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2014)

In the Commission's view, the necessity of processing passenger name record (PNR) data, in a limited manner and subject to compliance with data protection requirements, is supported by a number of factual elements, including those set out in the impact assessment ([1]) accompanying the proposal for an EU PNR Directive ([2]). The Commission services presented further detailed evidence on the necessity of processing PNR data for the fight against serious crime and terrorism to Members of the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs *in camera*, due to the classified nature of the information provided. By concluding PNR Agreements with third countries, the European Union recognised that the processing of PNR data is a necessary tool in the fight against terrorism and serious transnational crime.

Prior to adopting the proposal for an EU PNR Directive, the Commission considered other measures, including the processing of advance passenger information (API). The processing of PNR data is a necessary tool that gives information that cannot be obtained by other means.

The requirements of the co-funding, as part of the funding programme on the 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime' (ISEC), to support individual Member States that voluntarily set up a passenger information unit on the basis of national law, are set out in the targeted call for proposals ([3]). On this basis, the project applications submitted by 14 Member States (BG, EE, ES, FR, LV, LT, HU, NL, AT, PT, RO, SI, FI, SE) were selected for co-funding. Two project applications did not meet the award criteria and had to be rejected.

The Commission services will provide the requested information on the co-funding by way of letter to the Chairman of the LIBE Committee.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2011:0133:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) COM(2011) 32 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/prevention-of-and-fight-against-crime/calls/call-2012/pnr-targeted-call/docs/pnr_call_for_proposals_2012_final_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012867/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(13 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Prattiċi ta' użura

Minħabba l-kriżi ekonomika, xi Stati Membri esperjenzaw żieda ta' dejn fost iċ-ċittadini tagħhom u t-twaqqif ta' ftehimiet ta' kreditu. Dan wassal għal sitwazzjoni fejn persuni kienu lesti jħallsu rati perċentwali annwali għolja ħafna biex jissellfu malajr. Persuni vulnerabbli, b'mod partikolari, sabu ruħhom f'diffikultà, b'familji foqra lesti jħallsu l-valur tas-self, għal ħafna drabi iżjed, lill-krediturі bil-wieġħda ta' assistenza finanzjarja rapida. Dan il-fenomenu bla dubju jfakkar f'"rati tal-imgħax tal-użura".

Il-kunċett ta' "użura" fil-kreditu, jew "kreditu inġust", huwa marbut l-aktar mar-rata ta' imgħax imposta u l-isfruttar tal-persuna li tissellef. Rigward miżuri possibbli li jindirizzaw dawn il-prattiċi, f'Malta pereżempju, ċittadini privati ma jistgħux jinvolvu ruħhom f'self privat b'rati ta' imgħax ogħla minn 8 % fis-sena. Il-liġi tipprevedi limitu massimu fir-rigward tar-rata ta' imgħax u tiggarantixxi wkoll għadd ta' eċċezzjonijiet għall-professjonisti u l-istituzzjonijiet tal-kreditu u finanzjarji.

Fid-dawl ta' dan;

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi statistiċi dwar il-prattika tal-użura fl-Istati Membri?

2. Il-Kummissjoni kif tippjana speċifikament li tgħin lil dawk il-familji li waqgħu fl-użura, minħabba l-miżuri ta' awsterità?

3. Il-Kummissjoni għandha xi proġetti li jissensibilizzaw lin-nies dwar x'tikkostitwixxi "il-prattika tal-użura", u x'għandhom jagħmlu ġaladarba jsibu ruħhom f'sitwazzjoni bħal din?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Mimica f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Jannar 2014)

L-informazzjoni dwar ir-rati tal-imgħax u r-restrizzjonijiet fl-użu tar-rata tal-imgħax fl-Unjoni sal-2009 jinsabu fi studju ppubblikat fl-2010 ([1]). Informazzjoni aktar reċenti dwar ir-rati medji tal-imgħax tinstab fuq is-sit elettroniku tal-BĊE ([2]).

Il-Kummissjoni ma għandhiex kompetenzi komprensivi biex tgħin lill-familji f'diffikultà minħabba l-użura u l-miżuri ta' awsterità. Madankollu, skont ir-riżultat tal-proċess leġiżlattiv, id-Direttiva dwar il-ftehimiet ta' kreditu b'rabta ma' proprjetà immobbli residenzjali proposta mill-Kummissjoni ([3]), tista' titlob li l-Istati Membri jinkoraġġixxu lill-krediturі jeżerċitaw tolleranza raġonevoli. ([4])

Barra minn hekk, id-Direttiva 2005/29/KE ([5]) dwar prattiċi kummerċjali żleali tħares lill-konsumaturi milli jiġu ingannati, jiġifieri milli jiġu mġieħla jieħdu deċiżjoni li tinvolvi tranżazzjoni li kieku f'ċirkostanzi oħra ma kinux se jieħdu, inkluż jekk il-kummerċjant ikun naqas milli jipprovdi informazzjoni dwar il-karatteristiċi ewlenin jew il-prezz tal-prodott.

L-Unjoni ħadet ukoll passi rigward l-iżvelar tal-ispejjeż tal-kreditu lill-konsumaturi. Id-Direttiva 2008/48/KE ([6]) dwar kuntratti ta' kreditu għall-konsumaturi tobbliga lill-krediturі kollha jipprovdu informazzjoni dwar dawn l-ispejjeż f'riklamar u informazzjoni prekuntrattwali. Il-Kummissjoni inkludiet dispożizzjonijiet simili fil-proposta tagħha msemmija hawn fuq għal Direttiva dwar ftehimiet ta' kreditu b'rabta ma' proprjetà immobbli reżidenzjali. Dawn ir-regoli jippermettu lill-konsumaturi jagħmlu deċiżjoni infurmata dwar jekk jidħlux f'xi kuntratt ta' kreditu jew le. Il-kampanja ta' informazzjoni li l-Kummissjoni bħalissa qiegħda twettaq fl-Irlanda, Malta, Spanja u Ċipru dwar id-drittijiet tal-konsumaturi li jissellfu hija maħsuba biex tqajjem il-kuxjenza tal-konsumaturi eżattament għal dan l-għan.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/credit/irr_report_en.pdf
([2]) http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu
([3]) Il-proposta inizjali: COM(2011) 142 finali.
([4]) Cf. il-pożizzjoni adottata mill-Parlament Ewropew fl-ewwel qari, fl-10 ta' Diċembru 2013, disponibbli fuq: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0541+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN#BKMD-38 Il-Kunsill mistenni jieħu pożizzjoni pożittiva fl-ewwel kwart tal-2014.
([5]) ĠU L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([6]) ĠU L 133, 22.05.2008, p. 66.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012867/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Usurious practices

As a result of the economic crisis, some Member States have experienced an increase in indebtedness among their citizens and credit agreement terminations. This has led to a situation where people have been ready to pay high annual percentage rates to acquire quick loans. Vulnerable people, in particular, have found themselves in difficulty, with impoverished families willing to repay many times the value of a loan to creditors for the promise of quick financial assistance. The phenomenon inevitably calls to mind the term 'usurious rates of interest'.

The concept of 'usury' in credit, or 'unfair credit', is mostly linked to the interest rate charged and to exploitation of the borrower. Regarding possible measures to tackle these practices, in Malta for instance, private citizens cannot engage in private lending at interest rates higher than 8% per annum. The law provides for a ceiling on the interest rate and also grants a number of exceptions for professionals and credit and financial institutions.

In light of this;

1. Can the Commission provide statistics on the practice of usury in the Member States?

2. How does the Commission specifically plan to help families who have resorted to usury, due to austerity measures?

3. Does the Commission have any projects to raise awareness of what constitutes 'usurious practice', and what people should do once they find themselves in such a situation?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

Information on interest rates and interest rate restrictions in use in the Union until 2009 are contained in a study published in 2010 ([1]). More recent information on average interest rates can be found on the ECB's website ([2]).

The Commission does not have comprehensive competences to help families in difficulty due to usury and austerity measures. However, depending on the outcome of the legislative process, the directive on credit agreements relating to residential immovable property proposed by the Commission ([3]), could require Member States to encourage creditors to exercise reasonable forbearance ([4]).

In addition, Directive 2005/29/EC ([5]) on unfair commercial practices protects consumers against being misled, i.e. caused to take a transactional decision that they would not have taken otherwise, including if the trader has omitted to provide material information on the main characteristics or the price of the product.

The Union has also undertaken steps regarding the disclosure of the costs of the credit to consumers. Directive 2008/48/EC ([6]) on credit contracts for consumers obliges all creditors to provide information on those costs in advertising and pre-contractual information. The Commission has included similar provisions in its abovementioned proposal for a directive on credit agreements relating to residential immovable property. Such rules allow consumers to make an informed decision whether to enter in a given credit contract or not. The information campaign on the rights of consumers as borrowers which the Commission is currently carrying out in Ireland, Malta, Spain and Cyprus is intended to raise consumer awareness exactly for this purpose.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finservices-retail/docs/credit/irr_report_en.pdf
([2]) http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu
([3]) Initial proposal: COM(2011) 142 final.
([4]) Cf. position adopted by the European Parliament in first reading, on 10 December 2013, available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0541+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN#BKMD-38
The Council is expected to take a positive position in the first quarter of 2014.
([5]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([6]) OJ L133, 22.05.2008, p. 66.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012868/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(13 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Nisa b'diżabilitajiet

Madwar 16 % tal-popolazzjoni totali tan-nisa fl-Ewropa, hija magħmula minn nisa bi problemi tas-saħħa jew diżabilitajiet fit-tul. Imqiegħda fl-"intersezzjoni" ta' ġeneru u diżabilità, huma partikolarment vulnerabbli għal diskriminazzjoni u sitwazzjonijiet multipli ta' żvantaġġ soċjali u ekonomiku estrem. Fil-prattika, dan inaqqas serjament il-possibilitajiet tagħhom għas-suq tax-xogħol, sitwazzjoni li teħtieġ attenzjoni partikolari u data suffiċjenti li permezz tagħha tiġi indirizzata.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi statistiċi dwar l-għadd ta' nisa b'diżabilitajiet f'impjieg part-time jew full-time?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tippjana tniedi xi proġetti li jgħinu aktar nisa b'diżabilitajiet biex jintegraw fis-suq tax-xogħol?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(17 ta' Jannar 2014)

Skont l-Istrateġija Ewropea tad-Diżabilità 2010-2020 ([1]) u l-Istrateġija Ewropa 2020, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġa u tissupplimenta l-isforzi nazzjonali sabiex tanalizza u ttejjeb is-suq tax-xogħol u l-qagħda tal-impjiegi tan-nisa u l-irġiel b'diżabilità. Il-Fond Soċjali Ewropew jipprovdi appoġġ finanzjarju għall-integrazzjoni fis-suq tax-xogħol tan-nisa u l-irġiel b'diżabilità.

Is-sess tal-persuna huwa fost il-varjabbli soċjali ewlenin fid-dejta kollha miġbura mill-Kummissjoni. Flimkien ma' Modulu Minimu tas-Saħħa Ewropea (MEHM) li huwa inkluż fi stħarriġ bħas-Survey ta' Saħħa Ewropea permezz ta' Intervista (EHIS) jew l-Istħarriġ dwar id-Dħul u l-Kundizzjonijiet tal-Għajxien (SILC) dan jippermetti lill-Kummissjoni biex tivvaluta b'mod kredibbli s-sitwazzjoni tan-nisa b'diżabilità. Modulu ad hoc Speċjali dwar id-diżabilità fl-Istħarriġ dwar il-Forza tax-Xogħol (LFS) tal-2002 u l-2011 jipprovdi anki dejta aktar dettaljata fuq is-sitwazzjoni tal-impjiegi tan-nisa b'diżabilità.

In-Netwerk Akkademiku Ewropew ta' esperti dwar id-Diżabilità (ANED), li huwa appoġġat finanzjarjament mill-Kummissjoni, jipproduċi rapporti annwali dwar statistiċi dwar id-diżabilità ([2]), inkluża dejta dwar in-nisa b'diżabilità fis-suq tax-xogħol.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:MT:HTML
([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012868/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Women with disabilities

Women with long-standing health problems or disabilities form around 16% of the total female population in Europe. Placed at the 'intersection' of gender and disability, they are particularly vulnerable to multiple discrimination and situations of extreme social and economic disadvantage. In practice, this seriously decreases their chances on the labour market, a situation that requires particular attention and sufficient data with which to tackle it.

1. Can the Commission provide statistics on the number of women with disabilities in either full- or part-time employment?

2. Does the Commission plan to launch any projects to help integrate more women with disabilities into the labour market?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

Under the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) and the Europe 2020 strategy the Commission supports and supplements national efforts to analyse and improve the labour market and employment situation of women and men with disabilities. The European Social Fund provides financial support for the labour market integration of women and men with disabilities.

Gender is among the core social variables included in all data gathered by the Commission. Combined with the Minimum European health module (MEHM) that is included in surveys such as European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) or the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) this allows the Commission to reliably assess the situation of women with disabilities. The Special *ad-hoc* module on disability in the Labour Force Surveys (LFS) of 2002 and 2011 provides even more detailed data on the employment situation of women with disabilities.

The Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED), which is financially supported by the Commission, produces annual reports on disability statistics ([2]), including data on women with disabilities in the labour market.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT
([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012869/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Persecuzione dei cristiani in Nepal

Il Pastore cristiano della comunità evangelica «Gospel for Asia» del villaggio di Phattepur in Nepal è stato sgozzato con un «khukuri», tipico coltello nepalese con lama ricurva, proprio mentre svolgeva il suo ministero. Secondo i cristiani locali, gli abitanti dei villaggi rurali disprezzano i cristiani, ritenendo il Nepal «nazione indù».

1. Quali passi è disposto a intraprendere il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per chiedere alle autorità nepalesi maggiori informazioni su questi fatti?

2. Intende affrontare con le competenti autorità nepalesi la questione dei diritti delle minoranze cristiane in Nepal e della loro protezione?

3. Può inoltre riferire come valutano i funzionari UE in servizio nella regione l'inasprimento dei rapporti tra indù e cristiani?

Risposta dell'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(27 gennaio 2014)

Sebbene le circostanze del caso debbano ancora essere acclarate, si può affermare che il rapporto tra Indù e Cristiani sia pacifico e che questi ultimi non siano oggetto di continue discriminazioni da parte degli Indù. Nel complesso, il rapporto tra Indù e Cristiani in Nepal può essere considerato buono.

La costituzione provvisoria del 2007 prevede la libertà di religione, ma vieta espressamente il proselitismo.

L'UE continuerà a sorvegliare l'evoluzione della legislazione e della prassi in tale ambito. Nei suoi contatti periodici con le autorità nepalesi, l'UE affronta le questioni inerenti ai diritti umani, che essa sostiene con convinzione tramite una serie di programmi d'azione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012869/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Persecution of Christians in Nepal

The Christian pastor of the Gospel for Asia Evangelical Community in the village of Phattepur in Nepal had his throat cut with a khukuri, a typical Nepalese knife with a curved blade, while he was praying. According to local Christians, the inhabitants of the rural villages despise Christians, regarding Nepal as a Hindu country.

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative willing to undertake to call on the Nepalese authorities for more information about these events?

2. Does she intend to raise the issue of the rights of Christian minorities in Nepal and their protection with the competent authorities in Nepal?

3. Can she also say how EU officials serving in the region assess the worsening of relations between Hindus and Christians?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

While the circumstances of this case are still to be fully elucidated, there does not seem to be a pattern of violence between Hindus and Christians or systematic discrimination against them. The relations between Hindus and Christians in Nepal appear to be generally good.

The 2007 Interim Constitution provides for freedom of religion; however, it specifically prohibits proselytising.

The EU will continue to monitor closely the evolution of legislation and practice in this domain. The EU raises human rights issues in its regular dialogue with the authorities in Nepal and strongly supports human rights through its programmes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012871/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Disastro naturale nelle Filippine: il tifone Haiyan

Il tifone Haiyan che ha colpito le Filippine in questi giorni ha mietuto decine di migliaia di vittime. Cifre non ancora ufficiali parlano di 10 000 morti nell'isola di Leyte e altre centinaia nel resto del paese.

I soccorsi sono resi complessi dalla devastazione portata dal tifone che ha messo fuori uso la rete elettrica, interrotto le comunicazioni, e compromesso gli aeroporti e la rete stradale.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Come intende agire per supportare il paese in questa emergenza umanitaria?

2. Vi sono vittime accertate fra i cittadini europei presenti nelle zone colpite dal disastro?

3. Come intende aiutare i cittadini dell'UE in difficoltà attualmente presenti nel paese?

Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2014)

La devastazione causata dal tifone Haiyan è stata di notevole entità. Ad oggi, il numero dei morti è salito a più di 6 100, mentre i dispersi sono 1 785 (fonte: statistiche governative — *National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council*, NDRRMC). Il tifone ha colpito più di 14 milioni di persone, di cui 4 milioni sono sfollati. Secondo le stime, sono state distrutte o danneggiate 1,14 milioni di case.

— La risposta globale dell'UE è stata rilevante. Tutti gli Stati membri hanno fornito sostegno in natura e/o assistenza finanziaria alle popolazioni colpite dal tifone. L'assistenza finanziaria proveniente dagli Stati membri e dall'UE ammonta, in totale, a 178,6 milioni di euro (43,6 milioni di euro dall'UE).

— Il centro di coordinamento della risposta alle emergenze (ERCC) dell'UE ha avuto un ruolo fondamentale nello scambio d'informazioni con gli Stati membri e con i partner dell'UE e ha facilitato l'invio dei soccorsi di emergenza.

— La Commissione ha inviato immediatamente esperti in materia di aiuti umanitari e di protezione civile per analizzare prontamente il fabbisogno della popolazione e, anche grazie all'intervento della delegazione dell'UE a Manila, è stato possibile coordinare l'azione degli Stati membri. I fondi erogati successivamente e destinati all'aiuto umanitario d'emergenza ammontavano a 30 milioni di euro (già alla data del 10 novembre, la Commissione aveva adottato una decisione di prima urgenza che prevedeva lo stanziamento di 3 milioni di euro), più altri 10 milioni di euro per le prime fasi di ricostruzione. La Commissione ha provveduto a rispondere ai bisogni più urgenti della popolazione, fornendole ripari, beni alimentari e di prima necessità e strutture igieniche e sanitarie. A medio termine sarà necessario attuare tutte le operazioni di ripristino e di ricostruzione.

— Il meccanismo di protezione civile dell'UE (EUCPM), attivato su richiesta del governo delle Filippine, ha inoltre coperto le spese affrontate dagli Stati membri per il trasporto dei servizi di assistenza (3,6 milioni di euro).

— Non è stato ancora appurato se tra le vittime della catastrofe vi siano anche dei cittadini europei, poiché, a causa dell'inefficienza dei servizi di telecomunicazione e della lentezza del processo d'identificazione, gli Stati membri non sono riusciti a localizzarli. Sulla base delle informazioni finora disponibili, pochi cittadini europei sono rimasti vittima del tifone; si contano, infatti, 3 morti e 4 dispersi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012871/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Natural disaster in the Philippines: Typhoon Haiyan

Typhoon Haiyan, which ripped through the Philippines in recent days, has claimed tens of thousands of lives. As yet unofficial figures speak of 10 000 deaths on the island of Leyte and hundreds more in the rest of the country.

Rescue work is being hindered by the devastation brought about by the typhoon, which has knocked out the power grid, interrupted communications and damaged airports and roads.

1. What will the Commission do to support the country in this humanitarian emergency?

2. Have any European citizens present in the areas affected by the disaster been confirmed dead?

3. How will it help EU citizens in difficulty who are currently in the country?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

— Typhoon Haiyan was very destructive. To date, the death toll has risen to over 6100, while 1785 people are still missing (source: government statistics — NDRRMC). Over 14 million persons are affected, including 4 million displaced. An estimated 1.14 million houses have been destroyed or damaged.

— The overall EU response has been impressive. All EU Member States have provided in-kind and/or financial support to the disaster. Financial support from Member States and the EU together amounts to EUR 178.6 million (EUR 43.6 million from the EU).

— The EU Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), was used as a hub for sharing information with Member States and partners, and facilitated the delivery of emergency relief.

— Commission humanitarian and civil protection experts were immediately deployed to conduct rapid needs assessments, and coordination with Member States was made also via the EU Delegation in Manila. Subsequent emergency humanitarian funding amounted to EUR 30 million (a primary emergency decision of EUR 3 million was adopted already on 10 November) plus a further EUR 10 million in early recovery. Emergency needs in shelter, food, livelihoods and public health have been supported. Rehabilitation and reconstruction will be needed in the medium-term.

— The EU Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM) that was activated upon request of the government of the Philippines served also to support Member States assistance transportation costs (EUR 3.6 million).

— The situation regarding European casualties is still not entirely clear as Member States were not able to locate their citizens due to poor telecommunication and slow identification process. On the basis of available information so far, only a very limited number of European citizens were confirmed dead (3 persons) or missing (4 persons).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012875/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Concessioni demaniali marittime come locazioni di beni immobili

Una sentenza della Corte di Giustizia europea del 25 ottobre 2007, in relazione alla causa C-174/06, stabilisce che un rapporto giuridico nell'ambito del quale ad un soggetto è concesso il diritto di occupare e di usare, in modo anche esclusivo, un bene pubblico, specificamente zone del demanio marittimo, per una durata limitata e dietro corrispettivo, rientra nella nozione di «locazione di beni immobili».

La caratteristica fondamentale di questo tipo di rapporto giuridico, infatti, in comune con la locazione di un bene immobile, consiste nel mettere a disposizione una superficie, in particolare una parte del demanio marittimo, dietro corrispettivo, garantendo all'altra parte contrattuale il diritto di occuparlo o di utilizzarlo e di escludere le altre persone dal godimento di un tale diritto.

Alla luce di questa sentenza, la Commissione non ritiene errata l'inclusione delle concessioni demaniali marittime all'interno della Direttiva Servizi del 2006, trattandosi, anche secondo la giurisprudenza europea, di concessioni di beni e non di servizi?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non ritiene errata l'inclusione delle «concessioni demaniali marittime» nel campo di applicazione della direttiva «servizi» (direttiva 2006/123/CE).

Infatti, come indicato dalla Corte di giustizia europea al punto 30 della sentenza sulla causa C-174/06, alla quale l'onorevole deputato fa riferimento, la disposizione che contiene la definizione di «affitto e locazione di beni immobili» deve essere interpretata alla luce della sesta direttiva «IVA» ([1]), in particolare per quanto riguarda le esenzioni da essa previste all'articolo 13. La Corte afferma che, secondo la giurisprudenza consolidata, le esenzioni previste da detta direttiva hanno un significato autonomo nel diritto dell'Unione e che non è opportuno lasciare alla discrezione degli Stati membri la definizione del loro campo di applicazione. La Commissione ritiene pertanto che la definizione in quanto tale non possa essere applicabile alla direttiva «servizi».

Nei casi in cui le «concessioni» riguardano beni quali quelli del demanio marittimo, detti beni possono essere anche utilizzati per fornire un servizio. Di conseguenza, la direttiva «servizi» può essere applicabile alle «concessioni» sul demanio marittimo se dette concessioni sono accordate in relazione all'esercizio di un'attività di servizi che rientra nel campo di applicazione della direttiva «servizi».

([1]) Sesta direttiva 77/388/CEE del Consiglio, del 17 maggio 1977, in materia di armonizzazione delle legislazioni degli Stati Membri relative alle imposte sulla cifra di affari — Sistema comune di imposta sul valore aggiunto: base imponibile uniforme (GU L 145, 13.6.1977, pag. 1) abrogata dalla direttiva 2006/112/CE del Consiglio, del 28 novembre 2006, relativa al sistema comune d'imposta sul valore aggiunto (GU L 347 dell'11.12.2006, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012875/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: State-owned maritime concessions as leasing or letting of immovable property

A ruling by the European Court of Justice of 25 October 2007, in relation to Case C-174/06, states that a legal relationship under which a person has been granted the right to occupy and use, including exclusively, public property, namely areas of State maritime property, for a specified period and against payment, is covered by the concept of 'leasing or letting of immovable property'.

The fundamental characteristic of that type of legal relationship, which it has in common with the leasing or letting of immovable property, consists in the provision of an area, that is, part of the State maritime property, in return for payment, together with the grant to the other contracting party of the right to occupy it or use it and to exclude all other persons from the enjoyment of that right.

In light of this ruling, does the Commission not consider it erroneous to include State-owned maritime concessions within the 2006 Services Directive, since, even according to European case law, such concessions concern assets and not services?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The Commission does not consider it erroneous to include state-owned maritime 'concessions' within the scope of Directive 2006/123/EC, the Services Directive, for the following reason:

As the European Court of Justice indicated in paragraph 30 of its judgment in Case C-174/06, referred to by the Honourable Member, the provision which contains the definition of 'leasing or letting of immovable property' must be interpreted in the light of the Sixth VAT Directive ([1]), in particular with regard to the exemptions set out by this directive (in its Article 13). The Court states that, according to settled case-law, the exemptions referred to in this directive have their autonomous meaning in Union law and the definition of their scope should not be left to the Member States. The Commission considers therefore that the definition as such cannot be applicable to the Services Directive.

Where 'concessions' cover assets, as can be the case for State maritime property, these assets may also be used to provide a service. Accordingly, the Services Directive may be applicable to 'concessions' on State maritime property when these are granted in relation to the exercise of a service activity covered by the Services Directive.

([1]) Sixth Council Directive 77/388/EEC of 17 May 1977 on the harmonisation of the laws of the Member States relating to turnover taxes — Common system of value added tax: uniform basis of assessment (OJ L 145 , 13/06/1977 P.1) repealed by Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax (OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p. 1-118).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012881/13
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ο θεσμός του κατώτατου μισθού και η χρησιμότητά του

Γίνονται το τελευταίο διάστημα ενέργειες από διάφορες κατευθύνσεις για δραστική μείωση ή και κατάργηση του κατώτατου μισθού σε κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, ιδιαίτερα σε αυτά που μαστίζονται από οικονομικά προβλήματα ή ευρίσκονται υπό καθεστώς Μνημονίου, όπως π.χ. οι χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου. Επειδή το θέμα άπτεται πτυχών της γενικότερης οικονομικής και κοινωνικής στρατηγικής της Ένωσης, καλείται το Συμβούλιο να απαντήσει στα πιο κάτω ερωτήματα:

1. Πώς τοποθετείται σε σχέση με το θεσμό του κατώτατου μισθού στα κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης;

2. Θεωρεί ότι ο θεσμός του κατώτατου μισθού είναι επωφελής και ότι πρέπει να υπάρχει σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη;

3. Με ποια κριτήρια θα πρέπει να υπολογίζεται το ύψος του κατώτατου μισθού;

4. Πώς σχολιάζει το Συμβούλιο την άποψη που εκφράζεται από πολλούς ότι θα πρέπει να ισχύσει ο αυτός κατώτατος μισθός σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης, με στόχο τη διασφάλιση ενός αξιοπρεπούς επιπέδου ζωής για όλους τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες καθώς και την αποφυγή του κοινωνικού ντάμπινγκ στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση
(27 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 153 παράγραφος 1 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, προκειμένου να υλοποιήσει τους στόχους του άρθρου 151, η Ένωση υποστηρίζει και συμπληρώνει τη δράση των κρατών μελών σε διαφόρους τομείς. Μεταξύ των στόχων αυτών συγκαταλέγεται η προώθηση της απασχόλησης.

Ωστόσο, το άρθρο 153 παράγραφος 5 αναφέρει ρητώς ότι οι διατάξεις του εν λόγω άρθρου δεν εφαρμόζονται στις αμοιβές. Ως εκ τούτου, το Συμβούλιο δεν είναι σε θέση να απαντήσει στα ερωτήματα του αξιότιμου μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012881/13
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: The institution of the minimum wage and its usefulness

Actions are currently being pursued from various sides for a drastic reduction in or even abolition of the minimum wage, particularly in EU Member States hit by economic problems or under a Memorandum regime, such as, for example, the countries of the European South. As this subject relates to aspects of the general economic and social strategy of the Union, can the Council answer the following questions:

1. What is its position regarding the institution of the minimum wage in EU Member States?

2. Does it believe that the institution of the minimum wage is beneficial, and that it should exist in all Member States?

3. What criteria should be used to calculate the level of the minimum wage?

4. What does it have to say about the widely-held view that a minimum wage must be applied in all EU Member States, with the aim of safeguarding a decent living standard for all European citizens, and avoiding social dumping in the EU?

Reply
(27 January 2014)

According to Article 153(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Union supports and complements the activities of the Member States in a number of fields in order to fulfil the objectives listed in Article 151. The promotion of employment is among these objectives.

However, Article 153(5) explicitly states that the provisions of that article shall not apply to pay. Therefore, the Council is not in a position to respond to the questions asked by the Honourable Member.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013232/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(21 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Επιδείνωση της κατάστασης ως προς τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών στον αραβικό κόσμο

Δύο χρόνια μετά την Αραβική Άνοιξη η κατάσταση όσον αφορά τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών στον αραβικό κόσμο εγείρει σοβαρές ανησυχίες, ιδίως όσον αφορά κρούσματα βίας και σεξουαλικής παρενόχλησης.

Η έκθεση «Women's rights in the Arab World, the worst and best Arab States for Women» (Δικαιώματα των γυναικών στον αραβικό κόσμο, τα χειρότερα και τα καλύτερα αραβικά κράτη για τις γυναίκες), η οποία δημοσιεύθηκε στις 12 Νοεμβρίου 2013 από το ίδρυμα Thomson Reuters, εξετάζει τη βία κατά των γυναικών, τη μεταχείριση των γυναικών μέσα στην οικογένεια και τον ρόλο των γυναικών στην πολιτική σε 22 αραβικά κράτη.

Στην έκθεση επισημαίνεται ότι η Αίγυπτος είναι η χειρότερη χώρα για τις γυναίκες στον αραβικό κόσμο: μέχρι και το 99% των γυναικών και των κοριτσιών εκεί υφίστανται σεξουαλική παρενόχληση. Το Ιράκ έρχεται δεύτερο μετά την Αίγυπτο, ενώ ακολουθούν η Σαουδική Αραβία, η Συρία και η Υεμένη. Επιπλέον, σύμφωνα με την έκθεση, το Ιράκ σήμερα είναι πιο επικίνδυνο από ό,τι επί καθεστώτος Σαντάμ Χουσεΐν και δεν υπάρχουν γυναίκες κυβερνήτριες στις 18 επαρχίες του Ιράκ.

Παρ' όλο που 19 από τις 22 εν λόγω χώρες έχουν υπογράψει τη Σύμβαση του ΟΗΕ για την εξάλειψη κάθε μορφής διακρίσεων κατά των γυναικών, τα πορίσματα της έκθεσης είναι απογοητευτικά.

Δεδομένου ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση επιθυμεί να συνοδεύονται οι αλλαγές στον αραβικό κόσμο από σεβασμό στα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα και κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση των γυναικών, απευθύνουμε τα εξής ερωτήματα:

1. Ποια είναι η αντίδραση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου σε αυτή την έκθεση;

2. Έχει αποκτήσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση πιο πρόσφατα στοιχεία επ' αυτού του προβλήματος; Υπάρχουν μελέτες που εστιάζονται σε συγκεκριμένες χώρες ή χρονικές περιόδους;

3. Πώς προτίθεται να ενεργήσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση για να αντιμετωπίσει αποτελεσματικά τη βία, τη σεξουαλική παρενόχληση και άλλες μορφές διακρίσεων κατά των γυναικών στον αραβικό κόσμο; Θεωρούν η Επιτροπή και η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος τη σημερινή ευρωπαϊκή πολιτική αποτελεσματική; Εξετάζουν μήπως τη χάραξη νέας στρατηγικής;

Κοινή απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ συμμερίζεται τις ανησυχίες που εκφράστηκαν και είναι ενήμερη των συμπερασμάτων που περιέχονται σε διάφορες μελέτες, καθώς και σε εκθέσεις των οργάνων της ΕΕ.

Με τα δεδομένα αυτά, η ΥΕ/ΑΠ συγκάλεσε με τις κυβερνήσεις της Ιορδανίας και της Γαλλίας υπουργική διάσκεψη με θέμα «Ενίσχυση του ρόλου των γυναικών στην κοινωνία» στο πλαίσιο της Ένωσης για τη Μεσόγειο, η οποία πραγματοποιήθηκε τον Σεπτέμβριο 2013 στο Παρίσι. Επιπλέον, οι υπουργοί δεσμεύθηκαν στη λήψη συγκεκριμένων μέτρων για την επίτευξη συγκεκριμένων στόχων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων, μεταξύ άλλων, στόχων για την καταπολέμηση της βίας που υφίστανται οι γυναίκες. Επιπλέον, οι υπουργοί κατέληξαν στη σύσταση ειδικού μηχανισμού παρακολούθησης, ώστε να στηριχθεί η υλοποίηση των συμφωνηθέντων μέτρων. Η ΕΕ και ο Σύνδεσμος των Αραβικών Κρατών (ΣΑΚ) έχουν αρχίσει την υλοποίηση του κοινού προγράμματος εργασίας που έχει συμφωνηθεί από την ΕΕ και τους υπουργούς Εξωτερικών της ΕΕ και του ΣΑΚ στην κοινή συνεδρίασή τους του Νοεμβρίου 2012. Το πρόγραμμα εργασίας περιλαμβάνει συνεργασία στον τομέα των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της χειραφέτησης των γυναικών, και σε αυτόν της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, όπου ασκείται σειρά δραστηριοτήτων.

Η ΕΕ στηρίζει πολλά προγράμματα συνεργασίας στον τομέα της καταπολέμησης της βίας κατά των γυναικών.

Μεταξύ των υπό εξέλιξη έργων που υλοποιείται στη Λωρίδα της Γάζας, περιλαμβάνεται το έργο «Στήριξη των προσπαθειών των γυναικών» από οργανώσεις που έχουν ως στόχο την εξάλειψη των διακρίσεων κατά των γυναικών και της βίας λόγω φύλου, το έργο «Άρνηση κληρονομικής διαδοχής ΙΙ» που προωθεί τα κοινωνικά και οικονομικά δικαιώματα των Παλαιστινίων γυναικών και το «Είμαι μια γυναίκα», το οποίο προωθεί την ευαισθητοποίηση του κοινού με τα μέσα μαζικής επικοινωνίας.

Στην Αίγυπτο, η ΕΕ πέτυχε απτά αποτελέσματα στο πλαίσιο του Προγράμματος για την προώθηση και την προστασία των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, βάσει του οποίου χρηματοδοτείται το έργο «Εγκατάλειψη της πρακτικής του ακρωτηριασμού των εξωτερικών γυναικείων σεξουαλικών οργάνων (FGM) και η στήριξη των οικογενειών». Από το 2014 και μετά, η ΕΕ θα στηρίξει μια οργάνωση της κοινωνίας των πολιτών για τη βελτίωση της προστασίας και τη στήριξη 150 κοριτσιών, δυνητικών θυμάτων της πρακτικής του ακρωτηριασμού των εξωτερικών γυναικείων σεξουαλικών οργάνων (FGM).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012884/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rispetto dei diritti delle donne nel mondo arabo

L'ultimo rapporto della fondazione Thomson Reuters sui diritti femminili riferisce che in Egitto il 99,3 % delle donne e delle bambine ha subito molestie sessuali. Dopo la rivoluzione del 2011 sono aumentati gli stupri e le mutilazioni genitali, la tratta e la riduzione delle libertà individuali. Una donna su sei è analfabeta.

In Iraq, dopo l'invasione americana del 2003, la vita delle donne è diventata ancora più difficile: sono moltissime le donne costrette a prostituirsi anche nei paesi vicini, Siria, Giordania ed Emirati Arabi.

Paradossalmente, si vive meglio in Arabia Saudita, dove lo stupro può essere considerato adulterio, la violenza da parte del marito non è contemplata, è vietato guidare ed è vietato viaggiare senza un tutore.

In Yemen non esiste un'età minima per il matrimonio, il Sudan ha stabilito che sia 10 anni. A Gaza il 51 % delle donne ha subito molestie domestiche, in Bahrein la testimonianza di una donna in tribunale vale la metà di quella di un uomo.

In Libano le molestie sessuali non sono un reato.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può l'Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali iniziative intende avviare per aumentare nel mondo arabo il rispetto dei diritti delle donne?

2. Ritiene possibile raggiungere un accordo con i leader religiosi dei paesi islamici per sensibilizzare la cultura araba al rispetto dei diritti delle donne?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012885/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Rispetto dei diritti delle donne nel mondo arabo

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In Libano le molestie sessuali non sono un reato.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali iniziative intende avviare per aumentare nel mondo arabo il rispetto dei diritti delle donne?

2. Ritiene possibile raggiungere un accordo con i leader religiosi dei paesi islamici per sensibilizzare la cultura araba al rispetto dei diritti delle donne?

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(21 gennaio 2014)

L'AR/VP condivide le preoccupazioni espresse ed è al corrente delle constatazioni che emergono dai vari studi condotti e dalle relazioni delle istituzioni dell'UE.

Nel quadro dell'Unione per il Mediterraneo l'AR/VP ha pertanto indetto, di concerto con i governi giordano e francese, una conferenza ministeriale dedicata al potenziamento del ruolo della donna nella società, che si è tenuta a Parigi nel settembre 2013. I ministri si sono inoltre impegnati a varare misure concrete per conseguire obiettivi specifici, tra cui combattere la violenza contro le donne. Hanno altresì deciso d'istituire un apposito meccanismo di follow-up a sostegno dell'attuazione delle misure concordate. UE e Lega araba hanno dato avvio all'attuazione del programma di lavoro comune, adottato dai rispettivi ministri degli affari esteri nella riunione congiunta nel novembre 2012, che prevede una cooperazione in materia di diritti umani, compresa l'emancipazione della donna, e tra le forze della società civile, nel cui quadro si sta dando vita a tutta una serie di attività.

L'UE sostiene molti programmi di cooperazione che combattono la violenza contro le donne.

Tra i progetti in fase di attuazione nella Striscia di Gaza si annoverano il sostegno alle iniziative delle organizzazioni femminili che si prefiggono di eliminare le discriminazioni contro le donne e la violenza di genere, il progetto «Successione negata II», che promuove i diritti sociali ed economici delle donne palestinesi, e il progetto «Sono una donna», che mira a sensibilizzare l'opinione pubblica attraverso i media.

In Egitto l'UE ha già ottenuto risultati tangibili con il programma «Promozione e tutela dei diritti umani», nel cui ambito finanzia il progetto «Abbandono delle mutilazioni genitali femminili e emancipazione delle famiglie». A partire dal 2014 l'UE sosterrà un'organizzazione della società civile con l'obiettivo di tutelare meglio ed emancipare 150 ragazze, potenziali vittime di mutilazione genitale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012884/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Respect for women's rights in the Arab world

The latest report from the Thomson Reuters Foundation on women's rights reports that 99.3% of women and young girls in Egypt have suffered sexual harassment. Since the 2011 revolution, rape, genital mutilation and trafficking have increased and individual freedoms have been further eroded. One woman in six is illiterate.

In Iraq, after the US invasion in 2003, women's lives became even more difficult: many women have been forced into prostitution in neighbouring countries: Syria, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

Paradoxically, life is better in Saudi Arabia, where rape may be considered adultery, domestic violence by husbands is not punishable by law, and where women are forbidden to drive and to travel without a guardian.

In Yemen there is no minimum age for marriage, while Sudan has set it at 10 years of age. In Gaza, 51% of women have suffered domestic harassment; in Bahrain, woman's testimony in court is worth half of a man's.

In Lebanon, sexual harassment is not a crime.

1. What steps will the High Representative take to increase respect for women's rights in the Arab world?

2. Does she believe an agreement can be reached with religious leaders in Islamic countries to raise awareness of women's rights in Arab society?

Question for written answer E-012885/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Respect for women's rights in the Arab world

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In Lebanon, sexual harassment is not a crime.

1. What steps will the Commission take to increase respect for women's rights in the Arab world?

2. Does the Commission believe an agreement can be reached with religious leaders in Islamic countries to raise awareness of women's rights in Arab society?

Question for written answer E-013232/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The deterioration of women's rights in the Arab world

Two years after the Arab Spring, the situation as regards women's rights in the Arab world is a matter of great concern, in particular regarding incidents of violence and sexual harassment.

'Women's rights in the Arab World, the worst and best Arab States for Women', a report published on 12 November 2013 by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, examines violence against women, the treatment of women within the family and women's role in politics in 22 Arab states.

The report highlights that Egypt is the worst country for women in the Arab world: up to 99% of women and girls there are subjected to sexual harassment. Iraq ranked second-worst after Egypt, followed by Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen. In addition, the report alleges that Iraq is more dangerous nowadays than it was under Saddam Hussein's regime, and there are no women governors in Iraq's 18 governorates.

Although 19 out of the 22 countries concerned have signed the UN Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the report's findings are nevertheless frustrating.

Given that the European Union is keen for the changes in the Arab world to be accompanied by respect for human rights and the social inclusion of women:

1. What is the High Representative's response to this report?

2. Has the European Union obtained more recent data on this problem, and are there any studies focusing on specific countries or time periods?

3. How is the European Union preparing to act with a view to tackling violence, sexual harassment and other discrimination against women in the Arab world effectively? Do the Commission and the High Representative consider current European policy to be effective? Do they envisage a new strategy?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The HR/VP shares the concerns expressed and is aware of findings contained in various studies as well as reporting by EU institutions.

Against this background the HR/VP has with the Governments of Jordan and France convened a Ministerial Conference on 'Strengthening the Role of Women in Society' within the Union for the Mediterranean, held in September 2013 in Paris. In addition, the ministers have committed themselves to concrete measures to achieve specific objectives, including inter-alia to combat violence against women. Moreover, he ministers have agreed on a dedicated follow-up mechanism in order to underpin implementation of the agreed measures. The EU and the LAS have commenced implementation of the joint work programme agreed by the EU and LAS Foreign Ministers at their joint meeting in November 2012. The work programme includes cooperation in the area of human rights, including women's empowerment, and civil society, where a series of activities is being implemented.

The EU supports many cooperation programmes combating violence against women.

Among on-going projects being implemented in the Gaza strip are 'Supporting the efforts of women' based organisations on the elimination of discrimination against women and Gender Based Violence, 'Inheritance Denied II' promoting Palestinian women's social and economic rights and 'I am a Woman' promoting public awareness through the media.

In Egypt, the EU has achieved tangible results under the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Programme, under which it is funding the 'Abandonment of FGM and Empowerment of Families' project. From 2014 on the EU will be supporting a civil society organisation to improve the protection and empowerment of 150 girls, potential victims of FGM.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012890/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Inițiative vizând reducerea violențelor în care sunt implicate arme de foc

Recentul atac armat ce a avut loc într-o școală din Nevada a dus la intensificarea dezbaterilor privind controlul armelor de foc în Statele Unite. Infracțiunile în care sunt implicate arme de foc nu sunt însă limitate la această țară: în Uniunea Europeană sunt comise în fiecare an peste 1 000 de astfel de crime. Mai mult, aproape 500 000 de arme de foc pierdute sau sustrase pe teritoriul UE nu au fost încă găsite.

Răspunzând la un chestionar inclus într-un raport al Comisiei intitulat „Armele de foc în Uniunea Europeană", șase din zece europeni și-au exprimat convingerea că numărul infracțiunilor în care sunt implicate arme de foc este posibil să crească în următorii cinci ani. Conform aceluiași raport, 55 % dintre europeni ar fi în favoarea unei legislații mai stricte în ceea ce privește controlul armelor și ar sprijini, în special, o lege care să prevadă obligativitatea marcării tuturor armelor de foc pentru a li se identifica proprietarul.

Ca reacție la indignarea opiniei publice în legătură cu această chestiune, ce inițiative politice noi a propus Comisia în vederea reducerii violențelor în care sunt implicate armele de foc în Europa?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(30 ianuarie 2014)

La 21 octombrie 2013, Comisia a adoptat o comunicare ([1]) ce stabilește, pentru prima dată, un plan cu privire la modul în care UE poate combate mai bine, prin intermediul legislației, acțiunilor operaționale, formării și finanțării acordate de UE, a infracțiunilor penale în care sunt implicate arme de foc.

Prin urmare, Comisia va avea în vedere stabilirea unor standarde UE cu privire la armele de foc care pot fi vândute pentru uz civil, modul în care ar trebui să fie marcate armele de foc și modalitatea de a se acorda permise de armă persoanelor care doresc să dețină și să utilizeze arme de foc. De asemenea, pentru combaterea fenomenului prin care armele de foc sunt deturnate și ajung în mâini criminale, se va avea în vedere stabilirea unor norme eficace privind modul de dezactivare a armelor de foc civile și militare și se vor intensifica eforturile pentru reducerea traficului ilicit de arme de foc (civile sau militare) provenind din afara UE.

Această politică ar trebui să abordeze, de asemenea, necesitatea de a se intensifica presiunea asupra piețelor ilegale printr-o mai bună cooperare transfrontalieră între autoritățile polițienești, autoritățile vamale și poliția de frontieră și prin analizarea necesității de a se prevedea norme UE comune care să stabilească ce infracțiuni în care sunt implicate armele de foc ar trebui să intre sub incidența dreptului penal, precum și nivelul sancțiunilor penale care ar trebui să fie instituite de statele membre, în scopul de a se asigura că efectul disuasiv funcționează în mod eficient în toate statele membre.

Pe baza Evaluării amenințării reprezentate de infracțiunile grave și crima organizată din UE, efectuată de Europol în 2013 ([2]), statele membre și Comisia au făcut din combaterea fabricării ilicite și a traficului ilicit cu arme de foc una dintre cele nouă priorități ale UE în materie de aplicare a legii pentru perioada 2014-2017.

([1]) COM(2013) 716 final : „ Armele de foc și securitatea internă a UE: protejarea cetățenilor și combaterea traficului ilegal".
([2]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012890/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Initiatives to reduce gun-related violence

The recent school shooting in Nevada caused the gun control debate to intensify in the US. However, gun-related crimes are not confined to that country: over 1 000 gun-related homicides are committed within the EU each year. Furthermore, there are close to 500 000 firearms lost or stolen in the EU that are still not accounted for.

In a survey included in a Commission report entitled 'Firearms in the European Union', 6 out of 10 Europeans expressed the belief that the number of crimes involving firearms was likely to increase over the next five years. The same report showed that 55% of Europeans would support stricter gun legislation, and specifically a law that would require each firearm to be identifiable by its owner.

In response to the public outcry regarding this issue, what new policy initiatives has the Commission proposed to reduce gun-related violence in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

On 21 October 2013 the Commission adopted a communication ([1]) setting out, for the first time, a blueprint on how the EU can better tackle gun-related crime, through legislation, operational action, training and EU funding.

The Commission will therefore consider establishing EU standards on which firearms can be sold for civilian use, how firearms should be marked, and how to licence persons who wish to possess and to use firearms. Action to reduce diversion of firearms into criminal hands through the development of effective standards on how to deactivate civilian and military firearms, and greater efforts to reduce illicit trafficking of firearms (whether civilian or military) from outside the EU will be also considered.

This policy should also address the need to increase pressure on criminal markets through better cross-border cooperation between police, customs and border guards and by assessing the need for common EU rules to set out which offences linked to firearms should be criminalised and what level of criminal sanctions should be imposed by Member States, in view of ensuring deterrence works effectively in all Member States.

Member States and the Commission, on the basis of Europol's 2013 EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment ([2]), have made the disruption of illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms one of the EU's nine law enforcement priorities for 2014-17.

([1]) COM(2013) 716 final 'Firearms and the internal security of the EU: protecting citizens and disrupting illegal trafficking'.
([2]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012896/13
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) und Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(13. November 2013)

Betrifft: 2. Follow-up zu E-009882/2013: Mitreisende bei Delegationsreisen von Kommissionsmitgliedern

Kommissionsmitglied Šefčovič weist in seiner Antwort E-009882/2013 darauf hin, dass „nur bei Reisen, die offiziellen oder diplomatischen Zwecken dienen, in ordnungsgemäß begründeten Ausnahmefällen Kosten für Dritte übernommen wurden".

1. Wie viele Reisen zu diplomatischen Zwecken wurden von Kommissionsmitgliedern unternommen?

2. Wie viele Reisen zu offiziellen Zwecken wurden von Kommissionsmitgliedern unternommen?

3. Wie viele Dienstreisen mit anderem Zweck wurden von Kommissionsmitgliedern unternommen?

4. Kann die Kommission angeben, in wie vielen Fällen ordnungsgemäß begründete Ausnahmen vorlagen?

5. Wie hoch waren die Gesamtkosten in diesen ordnungsgemäß begründeten Fällen?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(27. Januar 2014)

1./2./3. Reisen von Kommissionsmitgliedern in Ausübung ihres Amtes haben stets einen dienstlichen Zweck. Die einschlägige Praxis der Kommission entspricht den üblichen diplomatischen Gepflogenheiten.

4. Unter bestimmten Umständen können die Kommissionsmitglieder von Personen begleitet werden, die nicht zum Kommissionspersonal zählen.

So wurden beispielsweise die Gewinner des Wettbewerbs „Frieden, Europa, Zukunft", der von den EU-Organen in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Europäischen Jugendforum organisiert wurde, eingeladen, gemeinsam mit den Delegationen der EU-Organe an der Verleihung des Friedensnobelpreises teilzunehmen. Auch werden Kommissionsmitglieder mitunter offiziell eingeladen, in Begleitung des Partners/der Partnerin an einem Treffen teilzunehmen. Diese nicht besonders zahlreichen Fälle wurden ordnungsgemäß überprüft. Derzeit ist die Kommission nicht in der Lage, die umfangreiche manuelle Recherche durchzuführen, die für eine ausführlichere Beantwortung der schriftlichen Anfrage der Abgeordneten notwendig wäre.

5. Die einschlägigen Kosten unterliegen den üblichen Erstattungsvorschriften gemäß dem Leitfaden für Dienstreisen (Beschluss der Kommission vom 18.11.2008) und dem Verhaltenskodex für Kommissionsmitglieder (K(2011)2904).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012896/13
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE) and Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Second follow-up to Question E-009882/2013: third parties accompanying Members of the Commission on mission

In his answer to Question E-009882/2013, Commissioner Šefčovič states that 'only under exceptional and duly justified circumstances are [third party] expenses reimbursed for official or diplomatic purpose'.

1. How many journeys for diplomatic purposes were undertaken by Commissioners?

2. How many journeys for official purposes were undertaken by Commissioners?

3. How many missions with other purposes were undertaken by Commissioners?

4. Can the Commission say in how many cases there were exceptional and duly justified circumstances?

5. What were the total costs in these duly justified cases?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

1, 2 and 3. In the performance of their duties, the Commissioners' missions are always official and comply with standard diplomatic usage**.**

4. In some specific contexts the Commissioners can be accompanied by persons which are not staff of the Commission.

One example was the invitation of the winners of the 'Peace, Europe, Future' competition organised by the EU institutions in partnership with the European Youth Forum who were invited to attend the Nobel Peace prize ceremony with the delegation of the EU institutions. Another example is the official invitation to attend a meeting with spouse or partner. All t hese cases are limited and verified. At the present time the Commission is not in a position to undertake the lengthy manual research that a detailed answer to the Honourable Member's questions would require

5. Regarding the costs, they are governed by the usual reimbursement rules laid down by the Guide to Missions (Commission decision of 18.11.2008) and the Code of Conduct of Commissioners (C(2011)2904).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012900/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI) en Lucas Hartong (NI)
(13 november 2013)

Betreft: Meer geld voor Cyprus

De Commissie heeft voorgesteld middels het flexibiliteitsinstrument een bedrag van 78,38 miljoen EUR te verstrekken om de financiering van de Cypriotische structuurfondsenprogramma's voor het begrotingsjaar 2014 aan te vullen. In het bewuste voorstel staat echter ook dat de aanvullende structuurfondstoewijzing voor Cyprus voor het jaar 2014 100 miljoen EUR bedraagt, terwijl het ontwerpverslag van de Begrotingscommissie van het Parlement stipuleert dat er 89 miljoen EUR zal worden besteed voor de financiering van de Cypriotische structuurfondsenprogramma's.

Kan de Commissie in het licht van het bovenstaande de volgende vragen beantwoorden:

1. Kan zij nader aangeven hoeveel geld er volgend jaar precies wordt uitgetrokken voor de financiering van de Cypriotische structuurfondsenprogramma's?

2. Is zij ook niet van mening dat de beschikbaarstelling van een dergelijk bedrag in feite neerkomt op het opzetten van een aanvullende reddingsoperatie voor Cyprus?

3. Kan zij uitleggen waarom Cyprus een dergelijk aanvullend bedrag krijgt toegewezen? Houdt een en ander verband met de economische gevolgen van de bankencrisis in het land?

4. Zo ja, acht de Commissie de beschikbaarstelling van dit bedrag volledig in overeenstemming met artikel 174 van het Verdrag, waarin is bepaald dat het cohesiebeleid van de Unie is bedoeld om de verschillen tussen de ontwikkelingsniveaus van de onderscheiden regio's te verkleinen? Om welke redenen?

5. Is zij ook niet van mening dat de crediteurlidstaten aldus worden gedwongen in de vorm van een aanvullende financiering voor de structuurfondsen een extra tranche te betalen ten behoeve van de reddingsoperatie voor Cyprus?

Antwoord van de heer Hahn namens de Commissie
(20 januari 2014)

In haar nota van wijzigingen nr. 1 bij het ontwerp van algemene begroting 2014 van 18 september 2013 stelt de Commissie voor om Cyprus in 2014 een extra bedrag van 100 miljoen EUR in lopende prijzen toe te wijzen uit de structuurfondsen. Hiermee geeft de Commissie gevolg aan een verzoek van de Europese Raad, die op zijn bijeenkomst van 27-28 juni 2013 heeft besloten dat aanvullende bijstand moet worden verleend aan Cyprus. De Europese Raad heeft het Europees Parlement en de Raad verzocht de door de flexibele onderdelen van het meerjarig financieel kader (MFK), waaronder het flexibiliteitsinstrument, geboden mogelijkheden voor het aanpakken van de bijzonder moeilijke situatie van Cyprus te onderzoeken.

Het bedrag van 100 miljoen EUR wordt uitgetrokken naast de oorspronkelijke toewijzing voor Cyprus uit de structuurfondsen, precies zoals in het geval van alle andere extra toewijzingen voor andere lidstaten in de conclusies van de Europese Raad van februari betreffende het MFK. Dit bedrag wordt beschikbaar gesteld volgens de voorschriften inzake de structuurfondsen en dus in overeenstemming met de doelstellingen in artikel 174 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012900/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI) and Lucas Hartong (NI)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: More money for Cyprus

The Commission has proposed to mobilise the flexibility instrument to provide a sum of EUR 78 380 000 in order to complement the financing of the Cypriot Structural Funds programmes for the financial year 2014. However, the proposal also states that the additional allocation from the Structural Funds to Cyprus for the year 2014 will amount to EUR 100 000 000, while the draft report of Parliament's Committee on Budgets states that EUR 89 000 000 will be used for to finance the Cypriot Structural Funds programmes.

In the light of this:

1. Can the Commission clarify how much money is set to fund next year's Cypriot Structural Funds programmes?

2. Does the Commission agree that such a mobilisation equates to an additional bailout for Cyprus?

3. Can the Commission clarify why such an additional envelope has been allocated to Cyprus? Is it related to the economic consequences of the banking crisis in the country?

4. If so, does the Commission think such a mobilisation is fully in line with Article 174 of the Treaty, which establishes that the cohesion policy of the Union will aim to reduce disparities between the levels of development of the various regions? Why?

5. Does the Commission not agree that creditor Member States are being forced to pay an additional tranche for the Cypriot bailout in the form of additional funding for the Structural Funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

In its amending letter n°1 to the draft general budget 2014 of 18 September 2013 the Commission proposes to grant Cyprus an additional amount of EUR 100 million in current prices from the Structural Funds in 2014. It responds to a request from the European Council which concluded at its meeting on 27-28 June 2013 that additional assistance should be granted to Cyprus. The European Council invited the European Parliament and the Council to examine the opportunities provided by the flexibilites in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), including the Flexibility Instrument, to address the particularly difficult situation of Cyprus.

The amount of EUR 100 million is included over and above the initial Structural Funds allocation for Cyprus, exactly as all the other additional allocations that were identified for other Member States in the MFF conclusions of the February European Council. It will be implemented according to the rules governing the Structural Funds and thus in line with the objectives of Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012903/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 november 2013)

Betreft: FTT en pensioenfondsen

Met enige regelmaat heb ik de Commissie vragen gesteld over de legitimiteit van de Europese Financial Transaction Tax (FTT): E-010071/2013, E-002514/2013, E-005510/2013, E-005894/2013 en E-006451/2013.

Daarnaast heb ik op verschillende plenaire bijeenkomsten van het Europees Parlement betoogd dat de introductie van een FTT grote gevolgen heeft voor de financiële markten van de EU. Een van die gevolgen is de verslechtering van de positie van deelnemers aan pensioenfondsen en gepensioneerden. Deze opvatting is onlangs bevestigd door het hoofd beleggingen van APG, het grootste Nederlandse pensioenfonds dat 337 miljard euro beheert voor 4,5 miljoen pensioenverzekerden.

APG heeft zijn zorg geuit over het feit dat de FTT miljarden euro's kost als het wordt geheven over elke transactie van elke partij die in aandelen, obligaties of derivaten handelt. Het totaalbedrag aan transactiebelasting komt neer op 0,9 tot 1,0 % van het belegd vermogen (in het geval van APG circa 3 miljard euro). Het fonds geeft aan dat er wel degelijk alternatieven zijn voor een dergelijke cumulatie van belastingen. Een van die alternatieven is de uitvoering van de FTT zoals die in Frankrijk gestalte wordt gegeven, namelijk het belasten van alleen de laatste koper.

1. Vindt de Commissie het wenselijk dat Europese werknemers een ouderdomspensioen opbouwen?

2. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de cumulatieve effecten van de FTT voor institutionele beleggers?

3. Vindt de Commissie deze cumulatieve belastingeffecten voor pensioenfondsen wenselijk?

4. Zo neen, op welke wijze kan volgens de Commissie een dergelijke cumulatie worden voorkomen?

5. Zal de Commissie initiatieven ontwikkelen om dergelijke ongewenste effecten van de FTT voor pensioenfondsen tegen te gaan? Zo ja, welke?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(16 januari 2014)

Een bekende en sinds jaar en dag gebruikte beleidslijn van de Commissie is alle burgers aan te moedigen en hen er redelijkerwijs alles aan te laten doen om recht op en toegang tot een fatsoenlijk ouderdomspensioen te hebben. Hiertoe zorgen alle lidstaten voor aanzienlijke financiële prikkels, zoals de fiscale aftrekbaarheid van pensioenbijdragen, rechtstreekse subsidies aan spaarplannen voor de oudedagsvoorziening enz.

De Commissie heeft in haar effectbeoordeling en andere aanvullende analyses ([1]) de gevolgen van de door haar voorgestelde FTT-heffing bestudeerd en is tot de conclusie gekomen dat verschillende financiële producten op een verschillende manier zullen worden beïnvloed. De vraag hoe de FTT het uit te betalen bedrag van dergelijke spaartegoeden uiteindelijk zal beïnvloeden, zal met name afhangen van de door de fondsbeheerders gehanteerde bedrijfsmodellen en beleggingsstrategieën: sommige bedrijfsmodellen en beleggingsstrategieën zullen naar verwachting nauwelijks worden beïnvloed (als zij al worden beïnvloed) terwijl andere, met name die waarmee nu al hoge beheers- en transactiekosten zijn gemoeid, negatiever zullen worden beïnvloed.

De voorgestelde FTT is bedoeld als stimulans voor fondsbeheerders om een conservatievere en minder activistische beleggingsstrategie te hanteren en meer te vertrouwen op beleggingen in (onbelaste) primaire markten. Dit alles moet bevorderlijk zijn voor beleggers in spaarplannen voor de oudedagsvoorziening en in pensioenproducten, de stabiliteit van overheidsfinanciën en die delen van de private sector die kapitaal moeten kunnen aantrekken voor investeringen in niet-financiële goederen en diensten.

([1]) Meer informatie over deze analyse is te vinden op http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012903/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) and pension funds

I have been putting questions to the Commission concerning the legitimacy of the European Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) with some regularity: E-010071/2013, E-002514/2013, E-005510/2013, E-005894/2013 and E-006451/2013.

In addition, I have argued at several plenary sessions of the European Parliament that the introduction of an FTT would have major consequences for the EU's financial markets. One such consequence is the deterioration of the position of pension fund stakeholders and pensioners. This view was recently corroborated by the head of investments at APG, the largest Dutch pension fund, which manages EUR 337 billion for 4.5 million pension policyholders.

APG has expressed concerns about the fact that the FTT will cost billions of Euros if it is levied on each transaction by every party dealing in shares, bonds or derivatives. The total level of financial transaction tax will amount to 0.9 to 1.0% of the invested capital (approximately EUR 3 billion in APG's case). The fund has indicated that there are, in fact, sound alternatives to cumulatively accruing taxes in this way. One such alternative is to levy the FTT in accordance with the French model, where only the end purchaser is taxed.

1. Is the Commission in favour of European workers building up an old age pension?

2. Is the Commission aware of the cumulative impact of the FTT on institutional investors?

3. Does the Commission believe that such a cumulative tax impact on pension funds is desirable?

4. If not, how does the Commission believe that a cumulative tax impact of this nature can be avoided?

5. Is the Commission going to develop initiatives in order to counter this kind of unwanted effects of the FTT on pension funds? If so, please specify.

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

It is a long-standing and well known policy line of the Commission that all citizens should be encouraged and undertake every reasonable effort to have the right and access to a decent old age pension. To this end, all Member States provide substantial financial incentives, such as the tax deductibility of pension contributions, direct subsidies to old-age savings plans etc.

The Commission in its impact assessment and other additional analyses ([1]) has studied the effects of levying the FTT as proposed by the Commission and came to the conclusion that different financial products will be affected differently. It will notably depend on the business model and investment strategies applied by fund managers how the FTT will eventually affect the pay-out value of such savings: some business models and investment strategies are expected to be hardly affected (if affected at all) while others, notably those that already now come with high management fees and transaction cost, will be affected more negatively.

The FTT as proposed should serve as an incentive for fund managers to pursue a more conservative and less activist investment strategy, and to rely more on investing in (untaxed) primary markets. All this should be beneficial for both investors in old-age savings plans and pension products, the stability of public finances and those parts of the private sector that are in the need of raising capital for investing in non-financial goods and services.

([1]) Further information on this analysis can be found under http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012906/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(13 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zagrożenia związane z wdrożeniem unijnej dyrektywy dotyczącej danych kierowców

7 listopada weszła w życie unijna dyrektywa, która zobowiązuje państwa do szybkiego przekazywania danych kierowców łamiących przepisy drogowe. Dzięki nowym przepisom powstać ma Krajowy Punkt Kontaktowy, który na żądanie zagranicznych służb drogowych automatycznie przekazywać będzie dane właścicieli pojazdów, którymi naruszone zostały przepisy ruchu drogowego.

Z drugiej strony polskie media, instytucje państwowe, prawnicy czy organy państwa wciąż podają informacje dotyczące problemów związanych z obecnym stanem prawnym dotyczącym fotoradarów w Polsce. Odnosząc się do problemu z fotoradarami w Polsce można chociażby zacytować dzisiejszy artykuł zamieszczony na portalu samorządowym ([1]), gdzie czytamy: „Wciąż brakuje przepisów, które regulowałyby sposób przechowywania i usuwania danych z fotodaradów. Ponadto często łamane są przepisy dotyczące wymogów technicznych, jakie muszą spełniać te urządzenia. Wciąż brakuje rozporządzenia wykonawczego, które określa zasady przechowywania i usuwania danych z fotoradarów. Na tę sytuację zwracała niedawno uwagę Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich. Wskazała m.in. na niezgodność przepisów Prawa o ruchu drogowym z konstytucją, ponieważ przechowywanie danych o osobach fizycznych (w tym ich wizerunku) powinno następować na podstawie ustawy, a nie rozporządzenia" ([2]).

1. Czy Komisji znane są bardzo duże kontrowersje prawne związane z obecnym stanem dotyczącym budowy sieci fotoradarów w Polsce oraz obsługą tego systemu?

2. Czy Komisja jest świadoma, że obowiązki związane z wykonaniem tej dyrektywy, w jej ostatecznej części, czyli prowadzenia samej ewidencji kierowców, i przekazywania ich danych dla uprawnionych organów państw członkowskich UE zostaną przekazane dla Inspekcji Transportu Drogowego, czyli instytucji, która zupełnie nie poradziła sobie ze stworzeniem systemu fotoradarów w Polsce?

3. Czy Komisja może podjąć działania związane z analizą zagrożeń związanych z przekazaniem Inspekcji Transportu Drogowego kompetencji wynikających z powyższej dyrektywy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(24 stycznia 2014 r.)

Jak słusznie zauważył Szanowny Pan Poseł, dyrektywa w sprawie transgranicznej wymiany informacji ([3]) zobowiązuje państwa członkowskie do zapewnienia, począwszy od dnia 7 listopada 2013 r., wzajemnego dostępu do danych dotyczących rejestracji pojazdów za pomocą elektronicznego systemu wymiany informacji umożliwiającego identyfikację kierowców unijnych, którzy popełnili określone wykroczenia dotyczące bezpieczeństwa ruchu drogowego, w tym przekroczenie dozwolonej prędkości, w państwie członkowskim innym niż państwo członkowskie, w którym ich pojazd jest zarejestrowany.

Jeśli chodzi o kwestię braku przepisów regulujących przechowywanie i usuwanie danych z fotoradarów, Komisja pragnie poinformować Szanownego Pana Posła, że państwa członkowskie muszą dopilnować, aby przetwarzanie danych osobowych było prowadzone zgodnie z przepisami Unii dotyczącymi ochrony podstawowych praw i wolności osób fizycznych, w szczególności z dyrektywą 95/46/WE i decyzją ramową 2008/977/JAI.

Bez uszczerbku dla uprawnień Komisji stojącej na straży Traktatów, nadzór nad przepisami w sprawie ochrony danych i ich egzekwowanie leżą w gestii władz krajowych, w szczególności organów nadzorujących ochronę danych i sądów.

([1]) www.portalsamorzadowy.pl
([2]) http://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl/prawo-i-finanse/nie-widac-konca-balaganu-z-fotoradarami,41069.html
([3]) Dyrektywa 2011/82/UE w sprawie ułatwień w zakresie transgranicznej wymiany informacji dotyczących przestępstw lub wykroczeń związanych z bezpieczeństwem ruchu drogowego (Dz.U. L 288 z 5.11.2011).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012906/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Risks associated with the implementation of the EU directive on driver data

On 7 November an EU directive entered into force which obliges the Member States to respond promptly to requests for information about drivers who have committed road traffic offences. The new regulations provide for the establishment of National Contact Points which will automatically forward data about the owners of vehicles involved in road traffic offences in response to requests by road transport agencies in other Member States.

At the same time, however, problems are still being reported by the Polish media, government institutions, lawyers and state bodies in connection with the current legislation on speed cameras. The difficulties faced in relation to speed cameras in Poland are discussed in this article published today, for example ([1]): 'There are still no regulations governing the storage and deletion of data from speed cameras. What is more, the technical requirements laid down in regulations in respect of these devices are frequently not met.' There is still no implementing regulation containing rules for the storage and deletion of data from speed cameras. The Polish Ombudsman recently commented on this situation and pointed out that the provisions of the Law on Road Traffic are incompatible with the Constitution, since data relating to natural persons (including their appearance) may only be stored pursuant to primary and not secondary legislation ([2]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the major legal controversy surrounding the ongoing construction of a network of speed cameras in Poland and the operation of this system?

2. Is the Commission aware that the obligations imposed under the last part of the directive in relation to keeping driver records and forwarding driver data to authorised bodies in other EU Member States will be the responsibility of the Inspectorate of Road Transport, or in other words an institution which has failed miserably at the task of establishing a system of speed cameras in Poland?

3. Can the Commission carry out an analysis of the risks associated with the transfer of competences under the above directive to the Inspectorate of Road Transport?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

As the Honourable MEP rightly points out, according to cross-border enforcement directive ([3]), as of 7 November 2013 Member States have to provide mutual access to each other's vehicle registration data via an electronic data exchange network that enables EU drivers to be identified for specific road safety related offences including speeding committed in a Member State other than the one where their vehicle is registered.

As regards the issue raised that there are no regulations governing the storage and deletion of data from speed cameras, the Commission wishes to inform the Honourable Member that Member States shall ensure that the processing of personal data is carried out in accordance with Union rules protecting fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, in particular Directive 95/46/EC and Framework Decision 2008/977/JAI.

Without prejudice to the role of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation falls within the competence of national authorities, in particular the data protection supervisory authorities, and courts.

([1]) www.portalsamorzadowy.pl
([2]) http://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl/prawo-i-finanse/nie-widac-konca-balaganu-z-fotoradarami,41069.html
([3]) Directive 2011/82/EU facilitating the cross-border exchange of information on road safety related traffic offences (OJ L 288, 5.11.2011).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012907/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(13 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zakaz produkcji alergenu 306-sierść psa

W ostatnim czasie do mojego biura w kraju dotarło zapytanie związane z zakazem produkcji alergenu 306-sierść psa. Zakaz ten miała wprowadzić Komisja Europejska w związku z faktem niehumanitarnego traktowania zwierząt. Według informacji, które zostały mi przedstawione, nie ma alternatywnego środka do przeprowadzenia tych testów. Alergen 306-sierść psa jest podobno prawnie dostępny w niektórych innych krajach Unii Europejskiej, poza Polską. Służy on wykrywaniu chorób u dzieci.

1. Czy Komisja może potwierdzić wprowadzenie zakazu produkcji alergenu 306-sierść psa na terenie Polski?

2. Jakie były powody wprowadzenia ewentualnego zakazu?

3. Czy istnieje możliwość zniesienia zakazu po usunięciu ewentualnych nieprawidłowości?

4. Jak faktycznie wygląda sytuacja związana z produkcją alergenu 306-sierść psa na terenie innych państw członkowskich Unii?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(29 stycznia 2014 r.)

Komisja zasięgnęła informacji w polskim organie właściwym, Urzędzie Rejestracji Produktów Leczniczych, Wyrobów Medycznych i Produktów Biobójczych, i pragnie powiadomić Pana Posła, że produkcja alergenu 306 nie jest w Polsce zakazana.

Pięć produktów leczniczych zawierających alergen 306 (sierść psa) posiada ważne pozwolenie na dopuszczenie do obrotu: Novo Helisen depot, Novo Helisen oral, Roztwory do testów punktowych, Roztwory do testów śródskórnych i Roztwory do testów prowokacyjnych. Wszystkie te produkty są wytwarzane w Niemczech.

Posiadacz pozwolenia na dopuszczenie do obrotu wszystkich powyższych produktów, przedsiębiorstwo Allergopharma, potwierdził, że nie ma problemów z procesem produkcji alergenu 306. Informacje te potwierdził niemiecki organ właściwy, Instytut Paula Ehrlicha (Paul-Ehrlich Institut).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012907/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Ban on the production of allergen 306 — dog hair

A question was recently submitted to my office in Poland regarding the ban on the production of allergen 306 — dog hair. The Commission has apparently imposed this ban due to the inhumane treatment of animals. I have been informed that there are no other substances which can be used to carry out these tests. Despite being banned in Poland, it would appear that allergen 306 — dog hair is legally available in certain other EU Member States, where it is used for diagnostic purposes in children.

1. Can the Commission confirm that a ban has been imposed on the production of allergen 306 — dog hair in Poland?

2. If such a ban has been put in place what were the reasons for this?

3. Would it be possible to overturn the ban if any irregularities were remedied?

4. What are the facts regarding the production of allergen 306 — dog hair in the other EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The Commission has consulted Poland's competent authority, the Office for Registration of Medicinal Products, Medical Devices and Biocidal Products and would like to inform Honorable Member that there is no ban for manufacturing of allergen 306 in Poland.

Five medicinal products containing allergen 306 (dog hair) in Poland have a valid marketing authorisation: Novo Helisen depot, Novo Helisen oral, Roztwory do testów punktowych, Roztwory do testów śródskórnych and Roztwory do testów prowokacyjnych. All these medicinal products are manufactured in Germany.

The marketing authorisation holder for all abovementioned products, Allergopharma, has confirmed that there is no problem with the manufacturing process of allergen 306. This information has been confirmed by the German competent authority, the Paul-Ehrlich-Institute.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012908/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Central de compras europeas de medicamentos

En España, desde hace años, agrupaciones de farmacias, hospitales y gestores de asistencia sanitaria de las comunidades autónomas han establecido centrales de compra de medicamentos con el objetivo de aumentar el volumen y obtener precios más competitivos.

Además, el Gobierno de España, en los Presupuestos Generales del Estado para el año 2013 ([1]), establecía la adquisición de fármacos y productos sanitarios entre el Ministerio de Sanidad y las Comunidades Autónomas.

Los expertos coinciden en que no todos los medicamentos son aptos para participar en concursos de compras agregadas, sino solo aquellos medicamentos denominados «antiguos», es decir, aquellos cuya patente ha vencido y que por lo tanto pueden ser copiados de forma legal; son los más idóneos, debido a la mayor competencia que poseen en el mercado.

Ante esta información, este diputado se permite preguntar:

¿Ha considerado la Comisión la posibilidad de realizar una central de compras europeas para ciertos medicamentos?

¿Ha valorado la Comisión la posibilidad de establecer un precio homogéneo para los medicamentos de toda Europa?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2014)

El artículo 168 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE) no otorga a la Unión Europea competencia para crear una central de compras europeas en lo que respecta a determinados medicamentos. El artículo 5 de la Decisión 1082/2013/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 22 de octubre de 2013, sobre las amenazas transfronterizas graves para la salud crea las condiciones para la adquisición conjunta de productos médicos de respuesta sanitaria a amenazas transfronterizas graves para la salud (incluidas las enfermedades transmisibles) por parte de los Estados miembros, con carácter voluntario.

El artículo 168, apartado 7, del TFUE establece que la Unión Europea debe respetar las responsabilidades de los Estados miembros en lo que respecta a la definición de su política de salud, así como a la organización y prestación de servicios sanitarios y atención médica. Por consiguiente, la Comisión no puede interferir en las responsabilidades de los Estados miembros en este ámbito con una propuesta de que se establezca un precio homogéneo para los medicamentos en toda Europa.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/12/28/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-15651.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012908/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Central body for European drugs purchasing

For a number of years in Spain, groups of pharmacies, hospitals and healthcare operators in the autonomous communities have formed central drugs purchasing bodies with the aim of purchasing larger quantities at more competitive prices.

Moreover, in the General State Budget for 2013 ([1]), the Spanish Government has provided for joint purchasing of drugs and medical devices between the Ministry of Health and the autonomous communities.

Experts agree that not all drugs are suited to collective purchasing, but only 'old' drugs, meaning those whose patent has expired and can therefore be copied legally; they are the most suitable because of the greater competition they enjoy in the market.

Has the Commission considered the possibility of setting up a central body for European purchases of certain drugs?

Has the Commission considered the possibility of setting a standardised price for drugs throughout Europe?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) does not give the Union competence to set up a central body for European purchase of certain drugs. Article 5 of Decision 1082/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 on serious cross-border threats to health creates conditions to allow for Joint procurement of medical countermeasures against serious cross-border threats to health (including communicable diseases) by Member States on a voluntary basis.

Article 168(7) of TFEU provides that the European Union must respect the responsibilities of the Member States for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. The Commission therefore cannot interfere with the Member States' responsibilities in this area by proposing standardised prices for drugs throughout Europe.

([1]) http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2012/12/28/pdfs/BOE-A-2012-15651.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012909/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cátedra en homenaje al fascista Alfredo Kindelán Duany

El Ministerio de Defensa del Gobierno de España realiza estos días un seminario en el marco de la Cátedra del Ejército del Aire Alfredo Kindelán Duany, reconocido aviador que fue el responsable de las fuerzas aéreas fascistas durante la guerra civil, comandando numerosos ataques sobre población civil que provocaron miles de muertos.

Alfredo Kindelán fue el comandante de la aviación fascista durante la guerra civil española. Bajo su mando se incluían, aparte de las fuerzas aéreas levantadas en contra del orden democrático de la República, fuerzas militares de otros países europeos como la Legión Cóndor de la Alemania nazi o la Squadra Legionaria de la Italia fascista. Fuerzas aéreas que llegaron a producir gravísimas matanzas de civiles, desde Guernica a Madrid, durante sus masivos bombardeos en los tres años que duró la contienda y que posteriormente engrosarían las filas del ejército fascista que asoló el resto del continente durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Esta cátedra, inaugurada por un anterior gobierno del Partido Socialista, lleva existiendo desde 1988 y es un reconocimiento oficial por los méritos militares del citado golpista. El Rey de España, como Comandante en Jefe de las Fuerzas Armadas españolas, ostenta su presidencia de honor. Esta cátedra supone un inequívoco homenaje oficial del citado Ministerio a la memoria de un fascista asesino que representa todo lo opuesto a un Estado de derecho y a los derechos humanos. De hecho, este homenaje por parte de un Ministerio del Gobierno podría incumplir hasta la propia Ley de Memoria Histórica vigente en el país. En la respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-005538/2013, la Comisión afirma estar monitoreando la implementación de la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI para elaborar un informe.

¿Conoce la Comisión dichos actos de exaltación fascista en el Ministerio de Defensa del Gobierno de España?

A la luz de este nuevo acto de exaltación del fascismo desde organismos oficiales, ¿podría informar la Comisión en esta fase, antes de su valoración prevista para finales de este año, sobre cómo se ha aplicado la Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI en España, así como sobre la eficacia de la legislación española para luchar contra la incitación pública e intencional a la violencia y el odio?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta E-11140/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012909/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Chair in honour of the fascist Alfredo Kindelán Duany

The Spanish Government's Ministry of Defence has recently held a seminar in connection with the Air Force's Chair in the name of Alfredo Kindelán Duany, a renowned aviator who was responsible for the fascist air forces during the Civil War and led numerous attacks on civilians, causing thousands of deaths.

Alfredo Kindelan was the commander of fascist aviation during the Spanish Civil War. Under his command were, in addition to the air forces mobilised against democracy in the Spanish Republic, military forces from other European countries such as the Condor Legion of Nazi Germany and the Legionary Air Force of Fascist Italy. These air forces were responsible for terrible civilian massacres, from Guernica to Madrid, during their massive bombing raids in the three years the conflict lasted, and later swelled the ranks of the fascist forces that laid waste to the rest of Europe in World War II.

This Chair was established by a previous socialist government in 1988 and officially recognises the aforementioned coup leader's military honours. The King of Spain, as Commander-in-Chief of the Spanish armed forces, is its honorary chairman. This Chair is clearly an official tribute by the Ministry of Defence to the memory of a fascist murderer who stood for precisely the opposite of the rule of law and human rights. Such a tribute by a government ministry could actually be in breach of the Historical Memory Law in force in Spain. In its reply to my previous question, E-005538/2013, the Commission stated that it was monitoring the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA with a view to drawing up a report.

Is the Commission aware of these acts by the Spanish Ministry of Defence in praise of fascism?

In view of this latest glorification of fascism by official bodies, could the Commission say, before its official assessment due out at the end of the year, how Framework Decision 2008/913/JAI has been implemented in Spain and how effective Spanish legislation has been in combating intentional public incitement to violence and hatred?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to E-11140/13.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012910/13
an die Kommission
Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE) und Elisabeth Schroedter (Verts/ALE)
(13. November 2013)

Betrifft: Auflagen an das Land Sachsen-Anhalt

Die Landesgesellschaft IBG in Sachsen-Anhalt soll durch Landesbeteiligungen junge, innovative Unternehmen im Bundesland fördern und setzt dafür EFRE-Mittel ein. Aufsichtsratsvorsitzende für die IBG sind seit ihrer Gründung in den 90er Jahren die jeweiligen Wirtschaftsminister, Gesellschafter ist das Finanzministerium.

2007 wurde das Beteiligungsmanagement privatisiert: die GoodVent GmbH und Co. KG übernahm Verwaltung und Management der IBG.

Aufgabe der GoodVent war es, privates Kapital einzuwerben. Von den 20 Mio. Euro Privatkapital wurden bis heute aber nur 9 Mio. EUR investiert.

Hätte die Landesregierung nach EU-Vorgaben eine vertragliche Verpflichtung zur Investition des privaten Kapitals festlegen müssen?

Im Jahr 2006 stellte es die Landesregierung von Sachsen-Anhalt so dar, dass mit der Beauftragung der GoodVent eine EU-Auflage erfüllt werden müsse. Angeblich habe die Kommission gefordert, ein privates Unternehmen damit zu beauftragen. (Quelle: Protokoll der Sitzung des Ausschusses für Finanzen und Wirtschaft vom 20. Juni 2007)

Welche Auflagen hat die EU dem Land Sachsen-Anhalt tatsächlich gestellt?

Hat die Kommission gefordert, ein privates Unternehmen mit dem Beteiligungsmanagement zu beauftragen?

Zudem wurden in auffälliger Höhe Unternehmen der Unternehmensgruppe „Schlossgruppe Neugattersleben" gefördert. Einige der Unternehmen waren bereits insolvent, wurden unter neuem Namen und mit gleicher Geschäftsführung neu gegründet und erhielten wiederum Förderung durch die IBG. (Quelle: Handelsregisterauszüge von Albis Germany Nonwoven, später ASCANIA Nonwoven)

Welche Kriterien müssen vonseiten der Kommission für eine Wirtschaftsförderung durch die IBG erfüllt sein?

Sind Innovationen ein verbindliches Förderkriterium? Dürfen insolvente Unternehmen gefördert werden?

Laut Aussage des Wirtschaftsministeriums darf die IBG sich nur an Unternehmen mit Sitz in Sachsen-Anhalt und angrenzenden Regionen beteiligen. Mit den EFRE-Mitteln beteiligte sich die IBG aber auch an Unternehmen in Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Berlin und Österreich. (Quellen: Liste der IBG-Beteiligungen aus dem Wirtschaftsministerium, Handelsregisterauszüge)

Dürfen die EFRE-Mittel der IBG auch in anderen Bundesländern bzw. im Ausland eingesetzt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(28. Januar 2014)

Hinsichtlich der Höhe des öffentlichen und privaten Kapitals, welches tatsächlich durch die Verwaltungsgesellschaft der IBG aus den Gesamtmitteln des Fonds investiert wurde, verweist die Kommission darauf, dass die Ermittlung von Investitionsmöglichkeiten sowie die Anlagezeitplanung in der Verantwortung der Fondsmanagementgesellschaft liegt. Dabei ist diese an die Bedingungen der Investitionsstrategie gebunden, auf deren Basis sie ausgewählt wurde.

Die Investitionen der IBG Sachsen-Anhalt unterliegen einer Regelung über staatliche Beihilfen zur Förderung von Risikokapitalinvestitionen ([1]).

Die Fondsmanagementgesellschaft muss auf Basis einer soliden und gewinnorientierten Investitionsstrategie ausgewählt werden. Dabei muss sichergestellt sein, dass der Entscheidungsprozess vom Staat unabhängig ist und dass mithilfe geeigneter Anreize Kapital von privaten Investoren eingeworben wird, wobei unverhältnismäßige Wettbewerbsverzerrungen vermieden und gleichzeitig die Ziele der Kohäsionspolitik gefördert werden müssen. Nach den staatlichen Beihilfevorschriften waren die deutschen Behörden dazu verpflichtet, das Beteiligungsmanagement der IBG über ein offenes und diskriminierungsfreies Ausschreibungsverfahren auszuwählen, um so ein effizientes kaufmännisches Beteiligungsmanagement, das marktwirtschaftlichen Grundsätzen entspricht, zu gewährleisten.

([1]) Genehmigt bis Dezember 2013 per Kommissionsentscheidungen vom 30. August 2007 (Nr. 729/2006 und Nr. 339/2006) und 8. Oktober 2008 (C 33/2007).

Das EFRE-Programm 2007-2013 für Sachsen-Anhalt ([2]) sieht vor, dass die Landesgesellschaft IBG Risikokapital für technologieorientierte, innovative KMU mit Sitz in Sachsen-Anhalt bereitstellt, die sich in ihrer Früh- und Wachstumsphase befinden. Daher sind marktorientierte Innovation und Förderung von Forschung und Entwicklung zwingende Voraussetzungen für eine Unterstützung durch den EFRE im Rahmen des IBG-Fonds; Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten sind von der Förderung ausgeschlossen.

Die Investitionen im Rahmen des EFRE-Programms 2007-2013 für Sachsen Anhalt und folglich die EFRE-Ausgaben der IBG kommen ausschließlich für Projekte in Sachsen-Anhalt in Betracht ([3]).

([2]) Im Folgenden „OP EFRE".

([3]) Das Europäische Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung (OLAF) leitete am 23. Oktober 2013 eine externe Untersuchung nach Artikel 3 der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) Nr. 883/2013 ein, nachdem Anschuldigungen über mögliche Unregelmäßigkeiten bei den Tätigkeiten der IBG eingegangen waren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012910/13
to the Commission
Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE) and Elisabeth Schroedter (Verts/ALE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Conditions imposed on the state of Saxony-Anhalt

The federal state-owned company IBG in Saxony-Anhalt is supposed to promote young, innovative companies in the federal state through regional investments and to use ERDF funds for this purpose. Since its inception in the 1990s, the chairmen of IBG's supervisory board have been the respective Ministers for Economic Affairs; the Ministry of Finance is a shareholder.

In 2007, the investment management was privatised: the company GoodVent GmbH & Co. KG took over the administration and management of the IBG.

It was GoodVent's job to procure private capital. Of the EUR 20 million in private capital, however, only EUR 9 million has so far been invested.

Should the state government have laid down a contractual obligation for investment of the private capital in accordance with EU requirements?

In 2006, the state government of Saxony-Anhalt claimed that, in the appointment of GoodVent, a condition imposed by the EU had to be met. The Commission allegedly called for a private company to be entrusted with this. (*Source:* minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Financial and Economic Affairs of 20 June 2007).

What conditions has the EU actually imposed on the state of Saxony-Anhalt?

Did the Commission call for a private company to be entrusted with the investment management?

Companies in the 'Schlossgruppe Neugattersleben' group were also granted conspicuous sums in financial assistance. Some of the companies were already insolvent, but were re-established with the same management but under new names, and in turn received funding through the IBG. (Source: extracts from the register of companies for Albis Germany Nonwoven, later ASCANIA Nonwoven)

What criteria must be met from the Commission's point of view for business development investment from the IBG?

Is innovation a mandatory criterion for support? Is it permissible for insolvent companies to be supported?

According to a statement by the Ministry of Sciences and Economic Affairs, the IBG is only permitted to invest in companies based in Saxony-Anhalt and neighbouring regions. However, the IBG used the ERDF funds to also invest in companies in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Berlin and Austria. (*Sources:* list of IBG investments from the Ministry of Sciences and Economic Affairs, extracts from the register of companies)

Are the ERDF funds of the IBG also permitted to be used in other federal states and in other countries?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2014)

Regarding the amount of public and private capital effectively invested by the IBG's management company out of the total endowment of the fund, the Commission recalls the identification of investment opportunities and their timing is the responsibility of the fund manager, bound by the terms and conditions of the investment strategy on the basis of which it was selected.

The investments carried out by IBG Sachsen-Anhalt are covered by a state aid risk capital scheme ([1]).

The manager of the fund has to be selected on the basis of a sound and profit-oriented investment strategy, ensuring that the decision making process is independent of the State and such as to leverage capital from private investors through appropriate incentives avoiding undue distortions of competition, while fostering cohesion policy objectives. In order to comply with state aid rules, the German authorities had to select the management of the IBG fund through an open and non-discriminatory tender procedure with an aim of securing an efficient commercial management of the fund reflecting market practices.

([1]) Approved until December 2013 by the Commission decisions of 30 August 2007 (N 729/2006 and N 339/2006) and 8 October 2008 (C 33/2007).

According to the 2007-2013 ERDF programme for Saxony-Anhalt ([2]) the IBG Fund is to provide risk capital to technology-oriented innovative SMEs established in Saxony-Anhalt in their early and growth stages. Therefore, market-oriented innovation or support of research and development are mandatory criteria for the ERDF support within the IBG Fund, which also excludes companies in difficulties.

The investments within the 2007-2013 Saxony-Anhalt ERDF programme and consequently ERDF expenditure by IBG are only eligible for projects located in Saxony-Anhalt ([3]).

([2]) Hereinafter ERDF OP.

([3]) It should be noted that the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), following receipt of allegations about possible irregularities in IBG operations, opened an external investigation according to Article 3 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 883/2013 on 23 October 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012915/13
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Setting safety levels for endocrine disruptors

In view of the continuing debate regarding endocrine disruption and whether or not it is possible to establish safety limits for chemicals which are considered to have endocrine disruptive properties, it is noteworthy that the document of the UK's CRD (Chemical Regulations Directorate) entitled 'UK views on the issue of whether or not a threshold can be determined for endocrine disruptors identified as Substances of Very High Concern' cites the following argument, put forward by Boobis et al., ([1]) in support of the notion that it is indeed possible to establish thresholds for endocrine disrupting chemicals:

'One single molecule adding to a process already active (e.g. hormone receptor agonism) cannot change by itself (or on its own) the normal/physiological response of that process into an adverse response'.

Would the Commission confirm whether or not it agrees with the position of Boobis et al. to the effect that one single molecule of a substance which has endocrine disruptive properties would not result in the disruption of an organism's endocrine system?

On this basis, would the Commission also confirm whether or not it is at least theoretically possible to establish a safety threshold for a known endocrine disruptive chemical?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

The Commission is currently reviewing the way substances with endocrine disrupting properties are dealt with in accordance with Article 138(7) of REACH ([2]).

The review process includes among other considerations the issue whether or not it is possible to establish safety limits for endocrine disruptors. The review process includes consideration of all inputs the Commission has received, including the one referred to by the Honourable Member. As the review process is still ongoing, it is not possible to answer this question now.

([1]) Boobis, A.R. et al. (2009), 'Application of key events analysis to chemical carcinogens and noncarcinogens', in Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition, 49 (8): 690-707.

([2]) OJ L 396, 30.12.2006.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012917/13
au Conseil
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 novembre 2013)

Objet: Problème de compétences des tribunaux entre États membres

Il existe en Europe des conflits de juridiction. En cas de divorce par exemple, certains États membres ne s'accordent pas sur la question de la compétence et les tribunaux de plusieurs États membres entrent alors en conflit, chacun prenant des décisions.

Les citoyens européens se retrouvent pris en otage par des procédures judiciaires et administratives longues, pénibles et très coûteuses, ne serait-ce qu'en frais de traduction, mais aussi d'avocat.

De plus, du fait de ce problème de compétences, les tribunaux émettent donc deux fois plus de décisions que dans des cas classiques. Les frais sont multipliés: un avocat dans chaque État, des traductions dans les deux sens, des déplacements dans deux États, etc.

Certains citoyens européens se retrouvent de ce fait endettés voire ruinés par des procédures interminables.

Des citoyens européens se voient contraints de renoncer à se défendre, ce qui engendre une justice inégale entre les citoyens: ceux qui peuvent et ceux qui ne peuvent pas payer.

Le Conseil compte-t-il améliorer, comme il l'a fait avec le règlement Rome III, la coordination en matière de compétences des tribunaux?

Existe-t-il un fonds d'indemnisation des citoyens européens victimes du chaos des conflits de compétences entre justices des États membres? Ne serait-il pas judicieux de créer un fonds pour rembourser les frais de justice doublés voire triplés?

Enfin, du fait de la démultiplication des procédures, de nombreux citoyens consacrent également du temps à ces procédures. Il arrive que leur employeur licencie ces employés qui se retrouvent démunis et doublement punis. Ce fonds d'indemnisation pourrait-il ainsi couvrir la perte d'un emploi?

Réponse
(10 février 2014)

Dans le but d'éviter les conflits de compétence entre les juridictions des États membres, plusieurs règlements ont été adoptés au fil des années au niveau de l'UE; des règles de compétence y sont définies dans différents domaines du droit civil, comme les obligations contractuelles et non contractuelles, l'insolvabilité, le divorce, les obligations alimentaires et, tout récemment, les questions de succession.

En matière de divorce, domaine que l'Honorable Parlementaire mentionne expressément dans sa question, les règles de compétence sont énoncées dans le règlement (CE) n° 2201/2003 relatif à la compétence, la reconnaissance et l'exécution des décisions en matière matrimoniale et en matière de responsabilité parentale ([1]) (règlement dit «Bruxelles II bis»). Il est vrai que ce règlement énumère en son article 3 plusieurs facteurs de rattachement possibles, ce qui, à première vue, pourrait sembler entraîner un risque de conflit de compétence entre les juridictions de différents États membres. Cependant, ce risque est supprimé par l'article 19 du règlement, qui traite de la litispendance et des actions dépendantes. Cet article indique clairement que c'est à la juridiction première saisie qu'il appartiendra de connaître de l'affaire et que toute autre juridiction saisie doit se dessaisir en faveur de cette première juridiction. Dès lors, il n'existe pas de réel risque de voir deux juridictions statuer sur la même question.

En vertu de l'article 65 du règlement, la Commission doit présenter un rapport sur l'application de cet acte, accompagné le cas échéant de propositions visant à l'adapter. Il appartiendra à la Commission de décider en temps utile s'il y a lieu ou non de proposer une modification des règles de compétence actuelles dans ce contexte. Si la Commission devait proposer une telle modification, il va de soi que le Conseil l'examinerait, étant bien conscient que des règles claires permettant d'éviter les conflits de compétence entre différentes juridictions sont dans l'intérêt des citoyens de l'UE.

([1]) JO L 338 du 23.12.2003, p. 1.

En ce qui concerne le problème du coût élevé et de la longueur des procédures ainsi que de l'indemnisation éventuelle des parties, également évoqués par l'Honorable Parlementaire dans sa question, le Conseil souhaite faire remarquer que tous les États membres disposent de systèmes d'aide judiciaire qui peuvent aider les demandeurs et les défendeurs à financer la procédure. En outre, il convient de mentionner que le 27 janvier 2003, le Conseil a adopté la directive 2003/8/CE visant à améliorer l'accès à la justice dans les affaires transfrontalières par l'établissement de règles minimales communes relatives à l'aide judiciaire accordée dans le cadre de telles affaires ([2]). Cette directive facilite la demande d'aide judiciaire dans les procédures transfrontalières et comporte certaines normes relatives à l'aide judiciaire que tout État membre doit respecter.

([2]) JO L 26 du 31.1.2003, p. 41 + JO L 32 du 7.2.2003, p. 15.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012917/13
to the Council
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Problem concerning the jurisdiction of courts in different Member States

Conflicts of jurisdiction are a problem in Europe. When it comes to divorce, for example, some Member States do not agree on jurisdiction and there is therefore a clash between the courts of several Member States, each taking its own decisions.

EU citizens are forced to put up with legal and administrative proceedings that are lengthy, tedious and very costly, not just in terms of translation, but also in terms of lawyers' fees.

Moreover, as a result of this jurisdictional problem, courts therefore issue twice as many decisions as in normal cases. Fees rocket accordingly: a lawyer in each Member State, translations both ways, travel in two States, etc.

Some EU citizens thus end up in debt or even ruined by never-ending proceedings.

EU citizens are being forced to give up defending themselves, which leads to legal inequality among citizens: those who can pay and those who cannot.

Does the Council plan to improve, as it did with the Rome III Regulation, the coordination of courts' jurisdictions?

Is there a compensation fund for EU citizens who have fallen victim to the chaos caused by conflicts of jurisdiction between Member States' courts? Would it not be wise to create a fund to reimburse legal fees that end up doubled or even tripled?

Lastly, as a result of the increased proceedings, many citizens spend equal amounts of time on the proceedings. Sometimes such employees are dismissed by their employer, leaving them destitute and punished twice. Could this compensation fund also cover people losing their job?

Reply
(10 February 2014)

With the objective of avoiding conflicts of jurisdiction between the courts of the Member States, a number of Regulations have been adopted over the years at EU level laying down rules of jurisdiction in different areas of civil law, such as contractual and non-contractual obligations, insolvency, divorce, maintenance obligations and most recently succession matters.

In the area of divorce which the Honourable Member specifically mentions in his question, the rules of jurisdiction are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 concerning jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and matters of parental responsibility ([1]) (the so-called 'Brussels IIa regulation'). It is true that that regulation lists a number of possible connecting factors in its Article 3 which, at first glance, might seem to entail a risk of conflicts of jurisdiction between courts in different Member States. However, that risk is eliminated by Article 19 of the regulation dealing with lis pendens and dependent actions. That Article clearly states that it will be for the court first seized to hear the case and that any other court seized must decline jurisdiction in favour of that first court. Therefore, there is no real risk that two courts decide on the same matter.

Under Article 65 of the regulation the Commission must present a report on the application of the regulation, accompanied if need be by proposals for adaptation. It will be for the Commission to decide in due course whether or not to propose an amendment of the current rules of jurisdiction in that context. If the Commission were to propose such an amendment, the Council would of course examine it, well aware that clear rules which avoid conflicts of jurisdiction between different courts are in the interest of EU citizens.

With regard to the issue of costly and lengthy proceedings and possible compensation to the parties to which the Honourable Member also makes reference in his question, the Council would like to point out that all Member States have systems of legal aid which may help claimants and defendants finance the proceedings. In addition, it should be mentioned that, on 27 January 2003, the Council adopted Directive 2003/8/EC to improve access to justice in cross-border disputes by establishing minimum common rules relating to legal aid for such disputes ([2]). That directive facilitates the application for legal aid in cross-border proceedings and contains certain standards of legal aid which a Member State has to observe.

([1]) OJ L 338, 23.12.2003, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 26, 31.1.2003, p. 41 + OJ L 32, 7.2.2003, p. 15.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012921/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 novembre 2013)

Objet: Recours ouverts aux citoyens européens, mandat d'arrêt européen

Un citoyen français, donc européen, s'est vu extradé après qu'un mandat d'arrêt européen a été émis à son encontre par l'Allemagne pour non-paiement d'une pension alimentaire.

Au lieu d'engager une procédure administrative de recouvrement des pensions alimentaires transnationales, les autorités judiciaires allemandes ont émis un mandat d'arrêt et ont de ce fait transféré le cas de cet homme au pénal.

Le principe de proportionnalité dans ce cas est totalement inexistant.

À la suite de cette affaire, le citoyen français a fait l'objet de transfèrements dans cinq prisons différentes avant d'être relâché sur le territoire allemand.

Quels sont les recours permettant aux ressortissants européens de faire valoir ses droits à la défense en cas de non-application du principe de proportionnalité?

Quels sont les recours ouverts aux ressortissants européens en cas de non-respect de la décision-cadre 2009/829/JAI du Conseil?

Peut-on considérer que la non-application du principe de proportionnalité dans le cadre du mandat d'arrêt européen ou la non-application de la décision-cadre 2009/829/JAI constituent une violation des droits fondamentaux des citoyens européens?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(30 janvier 2014)

Les difficultés semblent découler de divergences du point de vue des compétences nationales dans le domaine du droit pénal. Ces domaines sont régis par le droit interne des États membres et non par la législation de l'UE.

Bien que la décision de délivrer un mandat d'arrêt européen pour des affaires pénales soit une décision judiciaire fondée sur les faits spécifiques à chaque affaire, la Commission, dans son rapport de mise en œuvre 2011 ([1]), a souligné que, pour empêcher le recours excessif au mandat d'arrêt européen dans le cadre d'infractions mineures, les autorités judiciaires devraient appliquer un critère de proportionnalité lors de l'émission de celui-ci La Commission a approuvé la modification du manuel relatif au mandat d'arrêt européen comme document de référence pour l'application du critère de proportionnalité. ([2])

Les voies de recours, dans le cadre des procédures relatives au mandat d'arrêt européen ainsi que dans celui des procédures liées à la décision-cadre 2009/829/JAI de la décision européenne de contrôle judiciaire ([3]), sont régies par le droit national. Toutefois, conformément à l'article 1^er^, paragraphe 3, de la décision-cadre relative au mandat d'arrêt européen ([4]) et à l'article 5 de la décision européenne de contrôle judiciaire, une personne recherchée peut soulever des questions relatives aux droits fondamentaux et ce, à tout stade de la procédure. Le constat judiciaire de violation de ces droits se fera en fonction des particularités de chaque cas. Les juridictions des États membres peuvent également soumettre des questions relatives à l'interprétation du droit de l'Union européenne à la Cour de justice de l'UE.

À ce jour, la Commission n'a reçu aucune notification de transposition concernant la décision cadre 2009/829/JAI ni de la part de la France ni de celle de l'Allemagne bien que le délai de mise en œuvre expire le 1^er^ décembre 2012.

([1]) COM(2011) 175 final.
([2]) Document 17195/10 COPEN 275 du groupe «Coopération en matière pénale» du Conseil.
([3]) JO L 292 du 11.11.2009.
([4]) JO L197 du 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012921/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Means of appeal open to European citizens as regards the European arrest warrant

A French, and so European, citizen has been extradited after a European arrest warrant was issued for him by Germany for non-payment of maintenance.

Instead of opening an administrative procedure to recover cross-border maintenance, the German legal authorities issued an arrest warrant and have thus turned this man's case into a criminal one.

There has been a total failure to apply the principle of proportionality in this case.

Following this case, the French citizen was transferred to five different prisons, before being released in Germany.

What means of appeal are open to EU nationals to enforce their rights to defence in cases where the principle of proportionality has not been applied?

What means of appeal are open to EU nationals in cases where there is a failure to comply with Council Framework Decision 2009/829/JAI?

Can failure to apply the principle of proportionality in connection with the European arrest warrant or failure to comply with Framework Decision 2009/829/JAI be considered a breach of EU citizens' fundamental rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The issues appear to stem from the differing national remits criminal law. These are governed by the domestic law of Member States and not by EC law.

While the decision to issue a European arrest warrant in criminal cases is a judicial decision based on the specific facts of each case, the Commission, in its 2011 implementation report, ([1]) stressed that, to prevent overuse for minor offences, judicial authorities should apply a proportionality test when issuing an EAW. The Commission has endorsed the amended EAW handbook ([2]) as the guideline for application of the proportionality test.

The means of appeal in EAW proceedings and in proceedings related to Framework Decision 2009/829/JAI on the European Supervision Order (ESO) ([3]) are governed by national law. However, drawing on Article 1(3) of the framework Decision on the EAW ([4]) and Article 5 of the ESO, a requested person may raise fundamental rights issues at any stage of the procedure. A judicial finding of a breach of these rights will depend on the specifics of each case. Member States' Courts can also refer questions relating to the interpretation of EC law to the Court of Justice of the EU.

As of yet, the Commission has received transposition notifications for Framework Decision 2009/829/JAI from neither France nor Germany, despite the implementation deadline of 1 December 2012.

([1]) COM(2011) 175 final.
([2]) Council 17195/10 COPEN 275.
([3]) OJ L294 11.11.2009.
([4]) OJ L190 18.7.2002.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012923/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(13 november 2013)

Betreft: Loyale samenwerking in de context van de Europese drugsstrategie

In haar antwoord op parlementaire vraag E-010600/2013 stelt de Commissie dat de drugsstrategie van de EU voorschrijft dat de lidstaten en de Europese instellingen samenwerken om synergie, communicatie en een doeltreffende uitwisseling van informatie over ontwikkelingen in het drugsbeleid te verzekeren, in overeenstemming met het beginsel van „loyale samenwerking".

Op welke manieren kan de Commissie verzekeren dat het beginsel van loyale samenwerking tussen de lidstaten, in de strijd tegen de drugshandel, ook effectief wordt toegepast in de praktijk?

Meent de Commissie dat dit beginsel overeind blijft wanneer een lidstaat, duidelijk tegen de wens van een naburige lidstaat in en na verschillende oproepen om hier niet mee door te gaan, toch doorgaat met het verhuizen van omstreden coffeeshops naar de grens met deze naburige lidstaat? Is de Commissie bereid ter zake een bemiddelende rol te spelen, in een poging om de prioriteiten van het drugsbeleid van de EU met name in grensregio's maximaal te realiseren?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(20 januari 2014)

Het drugsbeleid valt voor een groot deel onder de bevoegdheid van de EU-lidstaten. De EU-drugsstrategie (2013-2020) vormt het brede beleidskader waarin de lidstaten maatregelen uitvoeren die zijn afgestemd op de nationale sociaaleconomische en culturele context. Het beleid ten aanzien van de verkoop van psychoactieve stoffen valt onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

De Commissie ondersteunt de lidstaten, binnen de grenzen van haar bevoegdheden, bij het verwezenlijken van de prioriteiten van de EU-drugsstrategie en het EU-drugsactieplan (2013-2016), waarvan de strijd tegen de illegale drugshandel een onderdeel is. De Commissie zal zich ten volle inzetten voor de uitvoering van de EU-beleidscyclus voor georganiseerde en zware internationale criminaliteit 2014-2017, die is gericht op de cocaïne- en heroïnehandel en op de handel in synthetische drugs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012923/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Sincere cooperation in the context of the EU Drugs Strategy

In its answer to parliamentary Question E-010600/2013, the Commission states that the EU Drugs Strategy requires the Member States and the EU institutions to cooperate to ensure synergies, communication and an effective exchange of information regarding developments in drugs policy, in line with the principle of 'sincere cooperation'.

What is the Commission going to do to ensure that the principle of sincere cooperation between the Member States is also effectively put into action in the fight against drugs trafficking?

Does the Commission consider that this principle is respected when one Member State proceeds unaltered on its course of relocating its controversial coffee shops to the border of another Member State, despite that being clearly against the wishes of the other Member State in question and after numerous appeals not to go through with its plans? Is the Commission prepared to play a mediating role in this matter, in an attempt to put the priorities of EU drugs policy into effect to the maximum possible degree, in particular in border regions?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

Drugs policy is, to a large extent, the competence of EU Member States. The EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020) provides the broad policy framework in which Member States implement measures that are adapted to their socioeconomic and cultural context. Any policy regarding the selling of psychoactive substances in shops is the competence of the Member States.

The Commission provides support to the Member States, within the limits of its competence, to implement priorities set by the EU Drugs Strategy and its implementing EU Drugs Action Plan (2013-2016), including in the fight against drug trafficking. The Commission will fully support the implementation of the EU policy cycle for organised and serious international crime 2014-2017, which focuses on the trafficking of cocaine and heroin, and that of synthetic drugs.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012924/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(14 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ποινικοποίηση της ελευθερίας της έκφρασης των κατοίκων των Σκουριών και παραβίαση της νομοθεσίας περί προσωπικών δεδομένων

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα του ελληνικού τύπου, στη δικογραφία για τη σύσταση εγκληματικής συμμορίας από κατοίκους που αγωνίζονται κατά της επένδυσης της «Ελληνικός Χρυσός ΑΕΜΒΧ» στις Σκουριές Χαλκιδικής, οι αρχές έχουν συμπεριλάβει απομαγνητοφωνημένα κείμενα ολόκληρων τηλεφωνικών συνεντεύξεων και συνδιαλέξεων με δημοσιογράφους ελληνικών και ξένων ΜΜΕ. Σύμφωνα με τις ίδιες πηγές, η αστυνομία περιλαμβάνει στους σκοπούς της «εγκληματικής οργάνωσης» τον επηρεασμό της κοινής γνώμης με συνεντεύξεις στα ΜΜΕ και στον Τύπο και, κατά συνέπεια, οι συνεντεύξεις αυτές που δίνονται τηλεφωνικά σε δημοσιογράφους αποτελούν και αυτές ενοχοποιητικό υλικό. Σύμφωνα με την ανακοίνωση της Ένωσης Συντακτών Ημερησίων Εφημερίδων Αθηνών (ΕΣΗΕΑ) «αλγεινή εντύπωση έχει προκαλέσει στον δημοσιογραφικό κόσμο το γεγονός ότι "εμπλουτίζεται" η δικογραφία για τη σύσταση δήθεν εγκληματικής οργάνωσης στις Σκουριές της Χαλκιδικής με απομαγνητοφωνημένα κείμενα τηλεφωνικών συνδιαλέξεων — προϊόντων υποκλοπής — δημοσιογράφων ελληνικών και ξένων ΜΜΕ». Όπως επισημαίνει η Ένωση, «το γεγονός αυτό δεν έχει προηγούμενο στην ιστορία της χώρας. Το δημοσιογραφικό ρεπορτάζ, οι συνομιλίες των δημοσιογράφων και τα δημοσιεύματά τους δεν μπορούν να θεωρούνται στοιχεία "εγκληματικών δραστηριοτήτων"». Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες, ανάμεσα στα ΜΜΕ είναι και το πρακτορείο Reuters.

Επιπλέον, με ανακοίνωσή της η Διεθνής Αμνηστία έχει καλέσει «τις ελληνικές αρχές να διεξαγάγουν έγκαιρη, αμερόληπτη και αποτελεσματική έρευνα των ισχυρισμών για παραβιάσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων από την αστυνομία στην Ιερισσό της Χαλκιδικής». Επισημαίνει επιπλέον τους ισχυρισμούς ότι η αστυνομία χρησιμοποίησε χημικές ουσίες εναντίον διαδηλωτών στην Ιερισσό με δυσανάλογο μη αναγκαίο τρόπο, ότι άτομα που ανακρίθηκαν από την αστυνομία ως ύποπτοι στερήθηκαν πρόσβαση σε δικηγόρο πριν ή κατά τη διάρκεια της εξέτασης και ότι δέκα κάτοικοι που αρχικά αρνήθηκαν να δώσουν δείγμα DNA, εξαναγκάστηκαν να το κάνουν. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Αποτελεί παραβίαση της ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας για την προστασία των προσωπικών δεδομένων η καταγραφή των τηλεφωνικών συνδιαλέξεων των κατοίκων με δημοσιογράφους; Αν όχι, εξετάζει η Επιτροπή αναθεώρηση της υπάρχουσας νομοθεσίας προς την κατεύθυνση αύτη;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να διευκρινίσει ότι η καταγραφή τηλεφωνικών συνδιαλέξεων κατά τη διάρκεια διεξαγόμενης ποινικής έρευνας και η χρησιμοποίησή τους σε ποινικές διαδικασίες δεν διέπεται από τη νομοθεσία της ΕΕ για την προστασία δεδομένων. Το άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 2 της οδηγίας 95/46 ([1]) ορίζει σαφώς ότι δεν εφαρμόζεται για την επεξεργασία δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα: «— κατά τη διάρκεια δραστηριότητας η οποία δεν εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής του κοινοτικού δικαίου, […] στην επεξεργασία δεδομένων σχετικά με τη δημόσια ασφάλεια, την εθνική άμυνα, την ασφάλεια του κράτους (συμπεριλαμβανομένης της οικονομικής ευημερίας του κράτους εφόσον οι δραστηριότητες συνδέονται με θέματα ασφάλειας του κράτους) και τις δραστηριότητες του κράτους σε τομείς του ποινικού δικαίου, …». Η προτεινόμενη οδηγία για την προστασία δεδομένων ([2]) αποσκοπεί, μεταξύ άλλων, στη βελτίωση της σαφήνειας και της συνοχής των κανόνων της ΕΕ για την προστασία των δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα σε συμμόρφωση με τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα σε όλους τους τομείς των δραστηριοτήτων της Ένωσης, αλλά δεν προσπαθεί να εναρμονίσει το ποινικό δίκαιο ή την ποινική δικονομία των κρατών μελών περιορίζοντας, έτσι, τις δυνατότητές τους να χρησιμοποιούν το περιεχόμενο μαγνητοφωνημένων τηλεφωνικών κλήσεων.

([1]) Οδηγία 95/46/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 24ης Οκτωβρίου 1995, για την προστασία των φυσικών προσώπων έναντι της επεξεργασίας δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα και για την ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των δεδομένων αυτών, ΕΕ L 281 της 23.11.1995, σ. 31-50.

([2]) COM/2012/010 τελικό — υποβλήθηκε στις 25 Ιανουαρίου 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012924/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Criminalisation of the freedom of expression of the inhabitants of Skouries in Halkidiki and violation of personal data protection law

According to Greek press reports, in the criminal case brought against local inhabitants opposed to the investment of 'Hellenic Gold' at Skouries in Halkidiki on charges of forming a criminal gang, the authorities have included transcripts of entire telephone interviews and conversations with journalists with Greek and foreign media. According to the same sources, the police have included among the purposes of the 'criminal organisation' the attempt to influence public opinion through media and press interviews, and thus these interviews given to journalists by phone themselves constitute incriminating material. According to an announcement by the Journalists' Union of the Athens Daily Newspapers 'a distressing impression has been created in the world of journalism by the fact that police files on the forming an allegedly criminal organisation at Skouries in Halkidiki have been "beefed up" with transcripts of telephone calls — phone interceptions — involving Greek and foreign journalists.' As this Union points out, 'this event is unprecedented in the history of the country. Journalistic reportage, conversations of journalists and publications cannot be considered evidence "of criminal activity"'. According to the reports, the news agency Reuters is one of the media concerned.

Furthermore, Amnesty International has called on 'the Greek authorities to conduct a speedy, impartial and effective investigation into allegations of human rights violations by the police in Ierissos in Halkidiki.' It also refers to allegations that police used chemicals against demonstrators in Ierissos in a disproportionate and unnecessary way, that people questioned by police as suspects were deprived of access to a lawyer before or during the interrogation and that ten residents who initially refused to give DNA samples were subsequently forced to do so.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Is it a violation of EU personal data protection laws to record telephone conversations between local inhabitants and journalists? If not, is it considering whether to revise existing legislation in this regard?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The Commission wishes to clarify that the record of telephone conversations in the course of ongoing criminal investigation and its use in criminal proceedings is not regulated by EU data protection law. Article 3(2) of Directive 95/46 ([1]) regulates explicitly that it does not apply to the processing of personal data: '- in the course of an activity which falls outside the scope of Community law, […] to processing operations concerning public security, defence, State security (including the economic well-being of the State when the processing operation relates to State security matters) and the activities of the State in areas of criminal law,… '. The proposed data protection directive ([2]) aims *inter alia* to improve the clarity and coherence of the EU rules for personal data protection in compliance with fundamental rights in all areas of the Union's activities but it does not strive to harmonise criminal law or criminal procedural law of Member States limiting thereby their possibilities of using the content of tapped telephone calls.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data; OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.
([2]) COM/2012/010 final — presented on 25 January 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012927/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Adquisición de empresas y privacidad de ciudadanos de la Unión

Según parece, la empresa estadounidense de telecomunicaciones AT&T tiene intención de adquirir un operador europeo de telecomunicaciones, Vodafone concretamente. Por otro lado, AT&T ha sido señalada como una de las empresa colaboradoras de la NSA en el caso de las escuchas de comunicaciones electrónicas.

Esta posible adquisición podría suponer poner en manos de AT&T el control de los datos de las comunicaciones de ciudadanos europeos, lo que, visto lo visto, facilitaría la labor de espionaje de la NSA en Europa. La privacidad de miles de ciudadanos europeos estaría en peligro.

La Directiva 2006/24/CE sobre la protección de datos personales deja claro que la Unión tiene que velar por que los Estados miembros impongan normas elevadas de protección para el almacenaje de datos, así como para la extracción y uso de datos relacionados con el tráfico y de datos de localidad.

El Parlamento Europeo aprobó en 2007 la Resolución sobre el SWIFT, el acuerdo PNR y el diálogo transatlántico sobre las mismas. Este texto reafirma la necesidad de proteger los datos de carácter personal.

¿Es la Comisión conocedora de estos hechos?

¿Piensa la Comisión en dar algún paso para garantizar la privacidad de la ciudadanía europea en casos como el de la posible adquisición de Vodafone por AT&T?

¿Cómo piensa la Comisión actuar para que en casos como el descrito se aplique la legislación europea y no la del país de la parte compradora, ya que esta última puede ser lesiva para los derechos de la ciudadanía europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión no puede especular sobre la hipotética adquisición de una empresa ni tampoco puede formular observaciones sobre las posibles consecuencias de tal circunstancia.

En general, en lo que respecta a la privacidad de los ciudadanos de la UE, las empresas que operan en la Unión deben cumplir el Derecho de la UE aplicable al respecto, así como la legislación correspondiente de los Estados miembros en que operen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012927/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Company takeovers and the privacy of EU citizens

US telecommunications company AT&T is apparently intending to buy a European telecommunications operator, specifically Vodafone. AT&T has been identified as one of the companies that helped the NSA to monitor electronic communications.

This potential takeover could give AT&T control over the communication data of European citizens, which would make it easier for the NSA to spy on Europe. The privacy of thousands of European citizens would be at risk.

Directive EC/24/2006 on personal data protection clearly states that the EU is obliged to ensure that Member States impose stringent protection standards on the storage, extraction and use of traffic and location data.

In 2007, the European Parliament adopted the Resolution on SWIFT data, the PNR agreement and the transatlantic dialogue on these matters. This text reaffirms the need to protect personal data.

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

Will the Commission take steps to safeguard the privacy of EU citizens in cases such as the potential takeover of Vodafone by AT&T?

How does the Commission intend to ensure that, in cases such as the one described above, European legislation is applied rather than that of the purchasing party's country, which could infringe the rights of EU citizens?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

The Commission cannot speculate on the hypothetical takeover of a company nor can it comment on the possible consequences of such an event.

More generally, regarding the question on the privacy of EU citizens, companies operating within the EU have to comply with applicable EU legislation on this issue, as well as the relevant legislation of the Member States in which these companies operate.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012928/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Sentencia del accidente del Prestige y desprotección de las costas ante la mareas negras

Los accidentes del *Prestige* en Galicia y anteriormente del *Erika* pusieron de manifiesto la insuficiencia del marco jurídico internacional de reparación de los daños causados por las contaminaciones: malas compensaciones, retraso a las víctimas de las mareas negras, en algunos casos sin compensaciones ni responsables por los delitos medioambientales cometidos. Para poner remedio a esta situación, la Comisión Europea propuso varias reformas legislativas en seguridad marítima en la última década. A pesar de estas medidas, de la creación de la Comisión Temporal sobre el Refuerzo de la Seguridad Marítima en 2003 en el Parlamento Europeo, de las sucesivas reformas y aprobación de los diversos paquetes legislativos de seguridad marítima europea, ese marco legal y la falta de trasposición y cumplimiento de la normativa de varios Estados miembros hacen que se produzcan situaciones de desprotección de las costas ante los tribunales y de impunidad de los responsables de las catástrofes.

Once años después del accidente del 13 de noviembre de 2002, que provocó graves consecuencias medioambientales y socioeconómicas para los sectores pesquero y marisquero gallegos y provocó una movilización ciudadana social de denuncia y de solidaridad internacional en el marco de la Plataforma «Nunca Máis», en el día de hoy la Audiencia Provincial de A Coruña ha emitido una sentencia en la que absuelve de delito medioambiental a las personas implicadas (en ningún momento se llegó a plantear la responsabilidad penal de los responsables políticos) y las deja así libres de responsabilidad por uno de los delitos medioambientales más graves que se hayan producido en las costas europeas, que llenó de chapapote las costas gallegas, llegando a aguas francesas y portuguesas. La inexplicable sentencia ha provocado un gran malestar en la sociedad civil gallega, ya que da a entender que en caso de catástrofes futuras existiría absoluta impunidad administrativa y penal.

La contradicción existente entre la legislación europea que, aunque insuficiente, mejoró a consecuencia de estos graves accidentes, y la interpretación que hacen de ella los tribunales, como en esta reciente sentencia, dejan en evidencia el desamparo de las costas europeas, como la gallega, que ha sufrido demasiados accidentes como para que su ciudadanía acepte que no existen responsables por una catástrofe de estas características.

¿Está conforme la Comisión con el contenido de una sentencia que va en contra de la normativa europea para el refuerzo de la seguridad marítima y para delimitar las responsabilidades por los daños causados por el vertido de hidrocarburos en el mar y sus consiguientes indemnizaciones?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-014073/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(12 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Sentencia del caso Prestige

Hace once años el buque Prestige provocó una marea negra con un enorme impacto ambiental y socioeconómico en Galicia y en toda la franja costera de la Unión Europea que va desde la desembocadura del Miño, en la frontera hispano-portuguesa, hasta el canal de la Mancha.

La sentencia por esta catástrofe, dictada el 13 de noviembre ha suscitado gran inquietud y preocupación, así como protestas. No es normal que, después de una década, se tenga que seguir un procedimiento limitado para conseguir una reparación cuya estimación sobrepasa los 4 000 millones de euros.

Hay que depurar todas las responsabilidades y no existen excusas para que en los procedimientos penales las personas jurídicas no respondan por la actividad de su personal ni para que los titulares de sociedades instrumentales e infracapitalizadas en el ámbito del transporte no hagan lo propio por sus prácticas irregulares.

También las empresas calificadoras deben someterse a los tribunales europeos sin limitación de responsabilidad por verificaciones deficientes de las condiciones de seguridad. La vigencia del principio de que «quien contamina, paga» exige la declaración de responsabilidad de los autores y la imposición de indemnizaciones a su cargo.

Por cuanto que la Comisión debe velar por la efectividad de la protección del medio ambiente y la garantía de los derechos de los ciudadanos en la Unión Europea ¿ha analizado la sentencia dictada? ¿se ajusta al Derecho de la Unión Europea? ¿tiene previsto introducir modificaciones en el Derecho europeo a la vista de las diferencias en relación con la sentencia del caso Erika?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta escrita a la pregunta E-013035/2013 ([1]).

([1]) Consultable en http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012928/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Ruling on the Prestige accident and the vulnerability of coasts to oil slicks

The accidents involving the *Prestige* and the *Erika* in Galicia highlighted the inadequacy of the international legal framework's ability to make reparations for the damage caused by contamination: compensation awarded to oil-slick victims is meagre, delayed, and sometimes non-existent and those responsible for environmental crimes are sometimes not held to account. To remedy this situation, the Commission has proposed various reforms of maritime safety legislation in the past decade. Despite these measures, which include the creation in Parliament of the Temporary Committee on Improving Safety at Sea in 2003, the introduction of successive reforms and the adoption of legislative packages on European safety at sea, this legal framework and the failure on the part of several Member States to transpose and enforce the regulations mean that the courts are unable to protect the coasts, allowing those responsible for disasters to act with impunity.

This accident, which took place on 13 November 2002, had serious environmental and socioeconomic consequences for the Galician fishing and seafood sectors and triggered a social protest and international solidarity campaign under the 'Never Again' banner. Eleven years later, those involved have been acquitted of environmental crime by the Coruña Provincial Court (at no point was the criminal liability of policy-makers ever discussed), thus freeing them of responsibility for one of the worst environmental crimes ever to take place on European coasts, an accident which filled the Galician coasts with fuel oil that also reached French and Portuguese waters. This inexplicable ruling has aroused great discontent in Galicia since it suggests that those responsible for future disasters will be absolved of all administrative and criminal liability.

This recent ruling points to a contradiction between European legislation (which is inadequate but has improved as a result of these serious accidents) and the way it is interpreted by the courts, highlighting the vulnerability of European coasts, such as the Galician one, which have suffered too many accidents for their citizens to accept that no one is responsible for disasters of this kind.

Does the Commission agree with the substance of a ruling that contravenes European regulations intended to increase safety at sea, establish accountability for the damage caused by oil spills at sea and determine the related compensation?

Question for written answer E-014073/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(12 December 2013)

Subject: Judgment in the Prestige case

Eleven years ago, the Prestige tanker caused an oil spill that has had an enormous environmental and socioeconomic impact in Galicia and along the entire coastline of the European Union that runs from the mouth of the Miño, on the Spanish-Portuguese border, to the English Channel.

The judgment for this disaster, which was handed down on 13 November, has given rise to a great deal of worry and concern, as well as protests. It is not normal, after a decade, to have to take part in limited proceedings in order to obtain redress that is estimated to exceed EUR 4 000 million.

Responsibilities need to be clarified across the board, and, in criminal proceedings, there are no excuses for legal entities not to answer for the actions of their employees, or for the owners of undercapitalised financial vehicle corporations in the transportation sector not to answer for their irregular practices.

In addition, companies that meet the criteria must submit to European courts, without limitation of liability, for deficient checks of safety conditions. The polluter pays principle that is now in place demands that perpetrators be held responsible and that they be required to pay compensation.

Given that the Commission must ensure effective environmental protection, as well as respect for the rights of EU citizens, has it examined the judgment that was handed down? Is it in line with EC law? Does the Commission plan to introduce amendments to EC law, in view of the differences vis-à-vis the judgment in the Erika case?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

The Commission would refer the honourable Members to its written reply to Question E-013035/2013 ([1]).

([1]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012930/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Evolución de la situación en Libia — proclamación de autonomía de Cirenaica

Autoridades locales de la parte oriental de Libia, la antigua Cirenaica, han declarado la autonomía de un vasto territorio autodenominado Barqa y la «plena independencia» en la gestión de sus recursos naturales ([1]). Este hecho viene a crear aún más confusión en la ya confusa e inestable situación de Libia.

Visto que este suceso cabía dentro de las posibilidades de evolución de la situación en Libia, ¿tiene la Comisión ya previsto y formulado algún protocolo de actuación?

En caso de no tener previsto protocolo alguno, ¿cómo piensa gestionar la Comisión esta nueva situación surgida en la frontera de la Unión?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de enero de 2014)

La UE cree que el actual proceso constitucional proporciona el marco jurídico adecuado para debatir las cuestiones relacionadas con la futura configuración del Estado libio, tales como el grado de descentralización.

La UE seguirá respaldando las instituciones libias en su camino hacia una transición democrática y a lo largo de las distintas etapas fijadas en la hoja de ruta constitucional libia.

A este respecto, la UE seguirá alentando a las autoridades libias a celebrar elecciones a la Asamblea Constituyente, previstas actualmente a principios de 2014, y a hacer cuanto sea necesario al efecto de garantizar un proceso integrador a la hora de redactar y adoptar la nueva Constitución.

La UE ya proporciona asistencia técnica a la Alta Comisión Electoral Nacional en apoyo a la organización de las próximas elecciones.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-region-cirenaica-proclama-autonomia-anuncia-plena-independencia-recursos-naturales-20131025162257.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012930/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Developments in Libya — declaration of autonomy by Cyrenaica

Local authorities in Cyrenaica, in eastern Libya, have declared the autonomy of a vast territory calling itself Barqa and claimed 'fully independent' control of its natural resources ([1]). This event is generating even more confusion in an already confused and unstable situation in Libya.

Given that this development in Libya was within the bounds of possibility, has the Commission planned and drawn up a protocol for action?

If no such protocol has been planned, how does the Commission intend to manage this new situation on the EU's border?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The EU believes that the ongoing constitutional process provides the appropriate legal framework to discuss issues related to the future shape of the Libyan state such as, for instance, the degree of decentralisation.

The EU will continue supporting the Libyan institutions on their way forward towards democratic transition and throughout the different stages established in the Libyan Constitutional Roadmap.

In this regard, the EU will continue to encourage the Libyan authorities to proceed with the elections for the Constitutional Drafting Assembly, now foreseen for early 2014, and to do everything necessary, so as to guarantee an inclusive process for the drafting and the adoption of the new Constitution.

The EU is already providing technical assistance to the High National Electoral Commission in support to the organisation of the upcoming elections.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-region-cirenaica-proclama-autonomia-anuncia-plena-independencia-recursos-naturales-20131025162257.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012931/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Aumento del consumo de carbón en Europa y cambio climático

Según un estudio realizado por el gabinete Wood Mackenzie, el carbón ocupará el primer lugar entre las energías primarias al final del presente decenio, principalmente por la demanda energética de los países en desarrollo ([1]).

Pero en Europa también se está produciendo un incremento del uso del carbón. En los dos últimos años, países como España, Francia o Italia han aumentado su consumo de carbón. Hasta en ocho de los países miembros de la Unión se ha producido este aumento. Además, parece que en otros países miembros, como Alemania, se puede dar esta misma situación en un futuro muy cercano.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de ese hecho? ¿Ha realizado la Comisión alguna evaluación del impacto que el aumento del consumo de carbón como energía primaria en los países de la Unión puede tener en el cumplimiento de los objetivos establecidos en las políticas europeas contra el cambio climático (la Hoja de Ruta de la Energía para 2050, por ejemplo)?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2014)

El carbón sigue siendo una fuente de energía importante a escala mundial. Por ejemplo, en su informe «World Energy Outlook» para 2013, la Agencia Internacional de la Energía (AIE) prevé el importante papel de este combustible fósil, en particular en los países en desarrollo.

Durante los últimos años, el carbón ha adquirido más importancia como generador de energía en muchos países de la UE, principalmente debido a las baratas importaciones de carbón de terceros países y al hecho de que los precios de los derechos de emisión han permanecido continuamente bajos. Estos factores ofrecían una alternativa competitiva a la generación con gas, dado que los precios del gas siguieron siendo elevados, en parte debido a la todavía existente indización sobre los precios del petróleo y a la bajada de las importaciones de gas natural licuado (GNL) al continente.

El carácter intermitente (no disponibilidad durante todo el tiempo) de las energías renovables (energía solar y eólica) exige unas capacidades de reserva basadas en las combinaciones de fuentes de energía. Teniendo en cuenta la creciente importancia de las energías renovables y el cada vez menor papel de la producción nuclear, como consecuencia de las decisiones adoptadas para retirar las centrales nucleares de la red de energía en algunos países de la UE, el papel del carbón en la generación de energía va en aumento.

Es importante destacar que los Estados miembros de la UE tienen derecho a decidir sobre sus propias combinaciones de producción de energía. No obstante, los Estados miembros también tienen que cumplir sus objetivos vinculantes en materia de energías renovables y emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero, trazando un itinerario hasta 2020, lo que es objeto de un seguimiento regular por parte de los servicios de la Comisión. A la luz de ello, todos los supuestos contemplados en la Hoja de Ruta de la Energía para 2050 apuntan a un descenso progresivo del papel del carbón en la combinación energética europea.

([1]) http://www.woodmacresearch.com/cgi-bin/wmprod/portal/corp/corpPressDetail.jsp?oid=11622811

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012931/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: The rise in coal consumption in Europe and climate change

A study carried out by the energy consultancy Wood Mackenzie states that coal will be the dominant primary energy source at the end of this decade, mainly due to energy demands in developing countries ([1]).

Coal consumption is also increasing in Europe, having risen in countries such as Spain, France and Italy in the past two years. This increase has taken place in eight EU Member States and is likely to occur in other Member States, such as Germany, in the very near future.

Is the Commission aware of this fact? Has the Commission assessed the possible impact of the increased use of coal as a primary energy source in the EU on compliance with the goals set down in European climate-change policy (e.g. the Energy Roadmap 2050)?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

Coal remains an important energy source on a global scale. For example, the International Energy Agency (IEA) in its 2013 World Energy Outlook foresees the important role of this fossil fuel, notably in developing countries.

The role of coal increased over the last couple of years in power generation in many EU countries, mainly due to cheap coal imports from third countries and permanently low emission allowance prices, which offered competitive alternative to gas-fired generation, as gas prices remained high, partly due to still existing oil-price indexation and decreasing liquified natural gas (LNG) imports to the continent.

The intermittent nature (non-availability during all the time) of renewables (solar and wind requires back-up capacities in the power mixes. With the increasing role of renewables and the decreasing role of nuclear generation , following decisions on taking nuclear plants off the grid in some EU countries, the role of coal increases in power generation.

It is important to note that EU Member States have the right to decide on their own power generation mixes. However, Member States also need to comply with their binding renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions targets, setting a pathway until 2020, which is regularly monitored by the Commission services. In light of this, all Energy Roadmap 2050 scenarios reckon with gradually decreasing role of coal in the European energy mix.

([1]) http://www.woodmacresearch.com/cgi-bin/wmprod/portal/corp/corpPressDetail.jsp?oid=11622811

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012932/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Red de AVE en el Estado español

Con la línea actualmente desplegada en el territorio del Estado español, la red de alta velocidad española es, hoy, la tercera red del mundo. En cuanto se acaben los proyectos ya en marcha, será la segunda, superada en kilometraje solo por China, según los datos de la Unión Internacional del Ferrocarril.

Además, si se compara el dato con el número de habitantes, como se hace en el citado estudio, España llega a estar a la cabeza del mundo: casi 0,5 kilómetros de líneas de AVE cada diez mil habitantes.

Finalmente, cabe destacar que un equipo de dos universidades españolas ha calculado la relación entre pasajeros que usan el AVE y los kilómetros construidos. España, en este caso, se encuentra en el último puesto a nivel mundial ([1]).

La Comisión respondía recientemente que «reconoce que la red de alta velocidad actual en España es muy amplia y ambiciosa, aunque los costes unitarios en ella están bastante por debajo de la media de la UE».

¿Cree la Comisión que es necesario construir más kilómetros de ferrocarril de alta velocidad en el Estado español?

Teniendo en cuenta los costes de construcción de las líneas de AVE y su bajo uso, ¿cree la Comisión que la construcción de líneas de AVE adicionales puede aumentar el déficit y, por lo tanto, contradecir las recomendaciones específicas para el Estado español?

¿Le preocupa a la Comisión que en un presupuesto con una partida de inversión decreciente y una gran inversión en líneas de AVE haya financiación suficiente para invertir en la red TEN-T de ferrocarriles?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de diciembre de 2013)

Las inversiones en líneas de alta velocidad realizadas en España deben evaluarse teniendo en cuenta asimismo el valor añadido europeo derivado de la integración de la Península Ibérica en la red más amplia de RTE-T mediante líneas interoperables aptas para el tráfico mixto.

En el marco del semestre europeo de 2013, la Comisión insistió respecto a España en lo siguiente: «La infraestructura de transporte es abundante, pero hay margen para que la selección de las inversiones sea más estricta y se dé prioridad al mantenimiento eficiente de las redes existentes. La creación de un observatorio independiente, tal como está previsto, sería de utilidad a este respecto.» ([2]).

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2013-11-08/espana-la-segunda-red-de-ave-del-mundo-pero-la-penultima-por-numero-de-viajeros_50910/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/csr2013_spain_es.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012932/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Spain's high-speed rail network

Spain's high-speed rail network is currently the third largest in the world. According to data published by the International Union of Railways, Spain's network will be second in size only to China's when projects now in progress are complete.

Furthermore, if network size is compared with population size, as it is in the aforementioned study, then Spain leads the world, having almost 0.5 kilometres of high-speed rail line for every ten thousand inhabitants.

Finally, a team from two Spanish universities has calculated the ratio between the number of passengers using high-speed rail and the number of kilometres built. In this case, Spain is ranked last in the world ([1]).

The Commission recently stated that it 'acknowledges that the current high-speed network in Spain is very wide and ambitious, although unit costs in Spain are considerably lower than the EU average'.

Does the Commission believe that more high-speed rail lines need to be built in Spain?

Bearing in mind the cost of building high-speed rail lines and the limited use that is made of them, does the Commission believe that constructing additional high-speed rail lines could increase the deficit and therefore contravene the recommendations made to the Spanish state?

In a budget in which investment is falling and significant sums are being spent on high-speed rail lines, is the Commission concerned that sufficient funding might not be available for the TEN-T railway network?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

High-speed network investments in Spain should be assessed considering also the European added value arising from integration of the Iberian Peninsula in the wider TEN-T network through interoperable lines suitable for mix traffic.

The Commission stressed, in the framework of the 2013 EU Semester for Spain, that 'The transport infrastructure is abundant but there is scope to make the selection of investment more stringent and prioritise efficient maintenance of existing networks. Setting up an independent observatory, as planned, would help in this respect' ([2]).

([1]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2013-11-08/espana-la-segunda-red-de-ave-del-mundo-pero-la-penultima-por-numero-de-viajeros_50910/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/csr2013_spain_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012936/13
to the Commission
Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Treatment of patients with mental illnesses in Serbia

It has come to my attention that patients suffering from mental illnesses in Serbia have very few rights. There are reports of patients being verbally abused and slapped. Furthermore, reports state that patients are regularly and routinely restrained using mechanical means, in full view of other patients and without medical supervision. Given the status of Serbia as an EU candidate country, and the fact that the country is currently in talks with the EU over accession, may I take this opportunity to urge the Commission to take action to prevent these violations of human rights, which are an affront to democracy — a fundamental principle of the EU.

1. Does the Commission condemn the abuse of these patients by the Serbian establishments?

2. Does the Commission agree that action must be taken against those responsible for the abuse of these patients in Serbia?

3. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that the Serbian authorities respect citizens' human rights and improve the current situation of these patients?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

The European Commission closely monitors the situation of socially vulnerable persons and persons with disabilities in Serbia. In general, the Commission expects Serbia to take appropriate action if they receive reports of abuse towards patients with mental illness.

The Commission has specifically covered such issues in its 2013 Progress report on Serbia ([1]) where it reported *inter alia* that 'deinstitutionalisation efforts have further continued, in tandem with the development of community-based services. However, oversight of living conditions in social care institutions and psychiatric hospitals should be strengthened'. The Commission is currently funding under the instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA) a EUR 2 million project specifically aimed at improving the situation in this area in Serbia.

In addition, the Commission welcomed the adoption in June 2013 of the Serbian Anti-Discrimination Strategy which aims to combat discrimination against people and groups that are more exposed to discrimination and discriminatory practices, including persons with disabilities. The Commission is looking forward to its swift implementation and stands ready to assist Serbia in this respect, including through dedicated financial assistance.

The Commission expects the Serbian authorities to progressively comply with European standards on persons with disabilities over the course of the accession process and will regularly review the situation, particularly under the framework of Chapter 23 on judiciary and fundamental rights and Chapter 19 on social policy and employment.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012938/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: VAT rate on automated external defibrillators in Member States

The removal of VAT from automated external defibrillators would make such devices more affordable to communities, sports clubs and individuals, with clear public health benefits.

The VAT rate in Ireland on automated external defibrillators is set at 23%. Can the Commission state whether or not VAT is applied to defibrillators in other Member States? If so, can the Commission provide the exact VAT rate applied to defibrillators in each Member State?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

Under EU VAT rules ([1]) adopted by the unanimity of Member States, only the standard VAT rate can be applied on automated external defibrillators. The current standard VAT rates applied in Member States, based on information the Member States are legally required to provide, can be found at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/tic/public/index.html.

For additional information regarding the basic structure of the VAT rate rules and the diversity of VAT rates across the European Union, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-011543/12 by Mr Aylward, E-003766/2013 by Ms Harkin and E-012305/13 Mr Higgins.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax (the VAT Directive) — OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012939/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: EU seal ban regulation

For centuries, seal hunting has been one of the main activities of the Inuit population in Greenland. In 2009 the EU regulation on trade in seal products laid down an exemption for the Inuit and other traditional populations in order to protect their way of life. Despite this, the market for the Inuit community in Greenland appears to be negatively affected by the regulation.

1. Following the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on trade in seal products, what action has the Commission taken to inform the public, as well as relevant institutions and industries, about the Inuit exemption to the ban?

2. Are the relevant authorities in Greenland included in a list of recognised bodies under the terms of Article 6 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 737/2010 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009?

3. It is evident that the Inuit exemption has been marred by poor implementation, unnecessary delays and bureaucracy. What specific actions will the Commission undertake to improve its effectiveness?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

Full and complete information on the regulation in question and matters related to its implementation, including the Inuit exemption and the list of recognised bodies for the purposes of Article 6 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 737/2010 ([1]) is available through the Commission website at the link:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/animal_welfare/seals/seal_hunting.htm.

Following the adoption of the Commission Decision C(2013) 9453 of 25 April 2013, the Greenland Department of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture (APNN) was added to the list of recognised bodies for the purposes of Article 6 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 737/2010 of 10 August 2010 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 ([2]). Therefore, the Greenland Department of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture (APNN) is currently able to issue attesting certificates for the placing on the EU market of seal products deriving from Inuit hunts.

After the adoption of the necessary secondary legislation the Commission has immediately opened the possibility to any entity to submit an application and encouraged all the interested and affected parties to use this possibility. The pace of the recognition process in response to the only application so far has been determined by the ability of the applicant organisations to provide in a timely manner the necessary evidence of compliance with all the requirements as set out in the Commission Regulation (EU) No 737/2010. There have been no further requests for recognition by any other entity for the purposes of Article 6 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 737/2010.

([1]) Laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on trade in seal products Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 216, 17.8.2010.
([2]) On trade in seal products, OJ L 286, 31.10.2009.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012941/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(14 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Tendenzi fir-rata tat-tifdil

Wara l-kriżi finanzjarja żdiedet l-inċertezza ekonomika u din wasslet għal żieda fit-tifdil privat min-naħa tal-individwi. Madankollu, skont l-aktar ċifri reċenti tal-Eurostat, fit-tieni trimestru tal-2013, ir-rata tat-tifdil tal-familji fiż-żona tal-euro kienet 12.8 %, meta mqabbla ma' 13.1 % fl-ewwel trimestru tal-2013. Fl-UE-27, ir-rata tat-tifdil tal-familji kienet 10.7 % meta mqabbla ma' 11.1 % fit-trimestru preċedenti.

1. Kif taħsibha l-Kummissjoni rigward din it-tendenza tar-rati tat-tifdil?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tqis li t-tnaqqis fir-rata tat-tifdil tal-familji bħala sinjal ta' fiduċja mġedda tal-ekonomija?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Rehn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(17 ta' Jannar 2014)

1. Id-deċiżjonijiet dwar it-tfaddil fid-djar ġejjin minn inċertezza, il-mira li jitnaqqas il-konsum matul iċ-ċiklu tal-ħajja, il-limitazzjonijiet ta' self, l-inflazzjoni, il-ġid finanzjarju fid-djar u r-rati tal-imgħax. Il-kriżi ekonomika u finanzjarja wasslet għal żieda f'daqqa fir-rata tat-tfaddil tal-familji. Dan laħaq il-15.6 % fiż-Żona tal-Euro u 13.7 % fl-UE fl-2009K1 u 2009K2 rispettivament. Minn dak iż-żmien it-tendenza dejjem tonqos u fl-2013K2 kienet 12.8 % fiż-Żona tal-euro u 10.7 % fl-UE.

2. Bis-saħħa tal-azzjonijiet meħuda fuq politika deċiżiva fil-livell tal-UE u tal-Istati Membri, l-inċertezza dwar perspettivi ekonomiċi tnaqqset b'mod sostanzjali (iżda għadha għolja). Bħala konsegwenza, il-fiduċja tal-konsumatur ilha tiżdied sa minn tmiem l-2012, li kkontribwixxiet għat-tnaqqis fir-rata ta' tfaddil fid-djar.

Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea fit-tbassir għall-ħarifa 2013, tistenna impatt pożittiv fuq il-fiduċja tal-konsumatur dwar ir-rata ta' tfaddil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012941/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Savings rate trends

Following the financial crisis, economic uncertainty has increased and led to more private savings by individuals. However, according to the latest figures from Eurostat, in the second quarter of 2013 the household savings rate in the eurozone was 12.8%, compared with 13.1% in the first quarter of 2013. In the EU-27, the household savings rate was 10.7%, compared with 11.1% in the previous quarter.

1. What are the Commission's views on this trend in savings rates?

2. Does the Commission consider the reduction in the household savings rate to be a sign of renewed economic confidence?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

1. Household saving decisions are driven by uncertainty, the motive of consumption-smoothing over the life cycle, borrowing constraints inflation, households' financial wealth and interest rates The economic and financial crisis has led to a sharp increase in the households' saving rate. It reached 15.6% in the euro area and 13.7% in the EU in 2009Q1 and 2009Q2 respectively. It has been on a downward trend since then and in 2013Q2 stood at 12.8% in the euro area and 10.7% in the EU.

2. Thanks to the decisive policy actions taken at the EU and Member States level, uncertainty about economic perspectives has substantially diminished (but still remains high). As a consequence, consumer confidence has been increasing since end-2012, which has contributed to the reduction in the households' savings rate.

The European Commission autumn 2013 forecast, expects a positive impact of the consumer confidence on the savings rate.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012942/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(14 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Pjan ta' Azzjoni dwar l-HIV/AIDS

Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tal-UE dwar il-ġlieda kontra l-HIV/AIDS kellu l-għan li jgħin inaqqas l-għadd ta' infezzjonijiet ġodda fil-pajjiżi Ewropej kollha sal-2013, biex itejjeb l-aċċess għall-prevenzjoni, it-trattament, il-kura u l-appoġġ u jtejjeb il-kwalità tal-ħajja tan-nies li jgħixu bil-virus, li huma affettwati minnu jew vulnerabbli għalih. Il-promozzjoni u l-protezzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem huma prijorità prinċipali tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni.

Ir-riżoluzzjoni tal-Parlament Ewropew ta' Diċembru 2011 ħadet approċċ ibbażat fuq id-drittijiet u tistieden lill-Istati Membri biex jieħdu kull azzjoni meħtieġa biex tintemm id-diskriminazzjoni kontra n-nies li jgħixu bl-HIV/AIDS. Barra minn hekk, fil-Pjan ta' Azzjoni kien hemm inkluż impenn speċifiku biex jorganizza konferenza dwar l-HIV u d-drittijiet tal-bniedem, li saret fi Brussell f'Mejju 2013. L-objettivi partikolari tal-laqgħa kienu biex jaffermaw mill-ġdid l-impenn tal-UE biex tippromwovi u tipproteġi d-drittijiet tal-bniedem fil-kuntest tal-HIV billi toħloq ambjenti legali ta' appoġġ li jiżguraw ukoll id-dritt għas-saħħa; biex jivvalutaw il-progress u l-isfidi; biex jirrevedu l-evidenza u l-aħjar prattika u biex jiddeterminaw il-passi li jmiss għall-UE, l-Istati Membri tagħha, il-pajjiżi ġirien u s-soċjetà ċivili fil-promozzjoni u l-protezzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem fil-kuntest tal-HIV ([1]).

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi statistika dwar id-diskriminazzjoni bbażata fuq l-HIV/AIDS fit-28 Stat Membru?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi analiżi aġġornata ta' azzjonijiet meħuda mill-Istati Membri biex titnaqqas u tintemm id-diskriminazzjoni kontra n-nies li jgħixu bl-HIV/AIDS?

3. Xi pjanijiet għandha l-Kummissjoni, fil-futur qarib, biex tgħin issaħħaħ id-drittijiet tan-nies li jgħixu bl-HIV/AIDS?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Jannar 2014)

1. Il-Kummissjoni ma għandhiex dejta komprensiva dwar l-okkorrenza ta' diskriminazzjoni kontra persuni bl-HIV/AIDS fl-Istati Membri. Madankollu, ir-rapport "Inequalities and multiple discrimination in access to and quality of healthcare" ippubblikat dan l-aħħar mill-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali jġib eżempji minn diversi Stati Membri ([2]). Il-Kummissjoni ffinanzjat ukoll l-istħarriġ Ewropew fuq l-internet dwar irġiel li jkollhom x'jaqsmu ma' rġiel oħra (European Men-WHO-Have-Sex-With-Men Internet Survey), li jipprovdi dejta dwar l-istigma u d-diskriminazzjoni b'relazzjoni ma' dan il-grupp f'riskju. Barra minn hekk, il-proġett Stigma Index jipprovdi dejta għal għadd ta' pajjiżi inklużi xi Stati Membri ([3]).

2. Il-Kummissjoni qed taħdem mill-qrib mal-partijiet interessati u mal-Istati Membri permezz tal-Grupp ta' Riflessjoni u l-Forum tas-Soċjetà Ċivili dwar l-HIV/AIDS sabiex tindirizza d-diskriminazzjoni ma' persuni bl-HIV/AIDS. Madankollu l-Kummissjoni ma tissorveljax lill-Istati Membri b'mod sistematiku, u għaldaqstant għandha tagħrif limitat.

3. Il-Kummissjoni hija impenjata bis-sħiħ fl-isfida kontra d-diskriminazzjoni fil-qasam tas-saħħa. Il-Kummissjoni tqis li kull forma ta' diskriminazzjoni relatata mal-HIV/AIDS hija inaċċettabbli. Kmieni f'Ottubru tal-2013, il-Kummissjoni organizzat sessjoni ta' ħidma dwar id-diskrimazzjoni fl-aċċess għall-kura tas-saħħa, u talbet biex fit-18 ta' Marzu 2014 issir konferenza ewlenija dwar il-ġlieda kontra d-diskriminazzjoni fil-qasam tas-saħħa. Barra minn hekk, bħalissa l-Kummissjoni qed taġġorna l-Pjan ta' Azzjoni dwar l-HIV/AIDS u mistennija tkompli tindirizza l-kwistjoni tad-diskriminazzjoni f'dan il-kuntest.

([1]) Il-monitoraġġ tal-implimentazzjoni tal-Komunikazzjoni u l-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea għall-ġlieda kontra l-HIV/AIDS fl-Unjoni Ewropea u l-pajjiżi ġirien, Rapport Finali 2009-2013 www.ecdc.europa.eu
([2]) http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inequalities-discrimination-healthcare_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.stigmaindex.org/?lid=155&s=6

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012942/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Action Plan on HIV/AIDS

The EU Action Plan on combating HIV/AIDS aimed to help reduce the number of new infections in all European countries by 2013, improving access to prevention, treatment, care and support and improving the quality of life for people living with, affected by or vulnerable to the virus. A key priority of the action plan was to promote and protect human rights.

The European Parliament's resolution of December 2011 took a rights-based approach, calling on Member States to take all necessary action to end discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, the action plan included a specific commitment to organise a conference on HIV and human rights, which was held in Brussels in May 2013. The particular objectives of the meeting were to reaffirm the EU's commitment to promote and protect human rights in the context of HIV by creating supportive legal environments which also ensure the right to health; to assess progress and challenges; to review evidence and best practice and to determine the next steps for the EU, its Member States, neighbouring countries and civil society in promoting and protecting human rights in the context of HIV ([1]).

1. Can the Commission provide statistics on levels of HIV/AIDS-based discrimination in the 28 Member States?

2. Can the Commission provide an updated analysis of actions taken by the Member States to reduce and end discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS?

3. What plans does the Commission have, in the near future, to help strengthen the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2014)

1. The Commission does not have comprehensive data on the occurrence of discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS in the Member States. However, the recent report 'Inequalities and multiple discrimination in access to and quality of healthcare' published by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights contains examples in different Member States ([2]). The Commission also funded the European Men-WHO-Have-Sex-With-Men Internet Survey, which provides data on stigma, and discrimination in relation to this risk group. Furthermore, the Stigma Index project provides data for selected countries including some Member States ([3]).

2. The Commission is working closely with stakeholders and Member States, through the HIV/AIDS Civil Society Forum and Think Tank to also address discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS. However the Commission does not systematically monitor Member States, and therefore has only limited information.

3. The Commission is fully committed to addressing discrimination in health. The Commission considers all forms of HIV/AIDS related discrimination as unacceptable. The Commission organised in early October 2013 a workshop on discrimination in access to healthcare, and is convening a major conference on fighting discrimination in health on 18 March 2014. In addition the Commission is currently updating the action plan on HIV/AIDS and intends to further address the issue of discrimination in this context.

([1]) Monitoring implementation of the European Commission Communication and Action Plan for combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries, 2009-2013 Final report www.ecdc.europa.eu
([2]) http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inequalities-discrimination-healthcare_en.pdf
([3]) http://www.stigmaindex.org/?lid=155&s=6

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012943/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Regímenes reglamentarios de la UE y los EE.UU. sobre aeronaves no pilotadas

El 7 de noviembre de 2013, la Administración Federal de Aviación (FAA) de los Estados Unidos publicó su primera hoja de ruta anual relativa a las medidas requeridas para una integración segura de las aeronaves no tripuladas en el espacio aéreo de los Estados Unidos. La hoja de ruta enuncia las políticas, normas reglamentarias, tecnologías y procedimientos que serán necesarios cuando la actual demanda evolucione del limitado uso discrecional de estos aparatos hacia su integración generalizada en el sistema aéreo en el futuro.

La principal meta que se ha fijado la FAA de cara a esta integración es la determinación de los requisitos que deben cumplir los operadores de este tipo de aeronaves para incrementar su acceso al espacio aéreo en el transcurso de los próximos cinco o diez años. En la hoja de ruta se pasa revista a cuestiones tales como las normas reglamentarias, políticas, procedimientos, instrucciones técnicas y acciones de formación y divulgación sobre sistemas y operaciones existentes o revisadas que permitan un uso más generalizado de estas aeronaves.

En su respuesta a mi pregunta escrita E-009942/2013, la Comisión informa de que está estudiando actualmente la elaboración de un marco regulador y de apoyo para usos no militares de este tipo de aeronaves.

¿Está la Comisión al corriente de la hoja de ruta de la FAA?

¿Tendrá la Comisión en cuenta los pasos promovidos por la FAA?

¿No considera la Comisión que para crear un marco reglamentario más homogéneo e integrado a ambos orillas del Atlántico sería conveniente que los legisladores de los Estados Unidos y de la Unión Europea coordinaran sus esfuerzos?

¿Qué pasos piensa dar la Comisión para promover esta coordinación?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de la publicación de la hoja de ruta de la FAA que se ocupa de la integración de los sistemas de aeronaves no tripuladas (RPAS, por sus siglas en inglés) en el espacio aéreo no segregado, donde este tipo de aeronaves pueden volar junto con aeronaves pilotadas. La Comisión también está trabajando en las próximas medidas a adoptar. Las cuestiones planteadas se han estudiado en el documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión titulado «Hacia una estrategia europea para el desarrollo de usos civiles de los sistemas de aeronaves no tripuladas» (SWD(2012)259). La «Hoja de ruta para la integración de los sistemas de aeronaves no tripuladas en el sistema europeo de aviación», elaborada en junio de 2013 por las principales partes interesadas europeas implicadas en las actividades relacionadas con dichos sistemas, supone otra aportación a este proceso. Asimismo, también contribuyen al mismo los requisitos globales definidos por la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional, el organismo de las Naciones Unidas responsable de la aviación civil, que se complementan con esfuerzos bilaterales de coordinación, en particular con los Estados Unidos, a través de los canales de comunicación y de diálogo ya existentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012943/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: EU and USA regulation schemes for drones

On 7 November 2013 the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) releases its first annual roadmap outlining the efforts needed to safely integrate unmanned aircraft systems (drones) into US airspace. The roadmap addresses policies, regulations, technologies and procedures that will be required as demand moves from current limited accommodation of drone operations to their extensive integration into the aviation system in the future.

The FAA's main goal for integration is to establish the requirements that drone operators will have to meet in order to increase access to airspace over the next five to 10 years. The roadmap discusses items such as new or revised regulations, policies, procedures, guidance material, training and understanding of systems and operations to support routine drone operations.

In its answer to my Written Question E-009942/2013, the Commission stated that it is currently considering the preparation of a supportive and enabling policy framework for the civilian use of drones.

Is the Commission familiar with the FAA roadmap?

Will the Commission take into account the steps taken by the FAA?

Does the Commission think that, in order to produce a more homogeneous and integrated regulation framework on both sides of the Atlantic, it is advisable for US and EU legislators to coordinate their efforts?

What steps will the Commission take to achieve such coordination?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the publication of the FAA Roadmap which addresses the integration of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) into non-segregated airspace, where RPAS can fly into the midst of 'piloted' aircraft. The Commission is also working on the next steps to take. Consideration to the issues involved has been given in the Staff Working Document 'Towards a European strategy for the development of civil applications of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems' (SWD(2012) 259). The 'Roadmap for the integration of civil Remotely-Piloted Aircraft Systems into the European Aviation System', drawn up by the major European stakeholders involved in the RPAS activities in June 2013, is another input to the process; as well as global requirements developed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation, the UN body in charge of civil aviation, complemented by bilateral coordination efforts, including with the US, using existing dialogue and communication channels.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012944/13
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Aeronaves no tripuladas y seguridad aérea

En su respuesta a mi pregunta escrita E-009942/2013, la Comisión declaró lo siguiente:

«La Comisión está estudiando actualmente la preparación de un marco de medidas que posibiliten y favorezcan el uso civil de los drones, también denominados sistemas de aeronaves dirigidas por control remoto.»

Algunos expertos piensan que la introducción de este tipo de aeronaves en el espacio aéreo puede crear serios problemas de seguridad. De hecho, hoy por hoy, garantizare su manejo por enlace inalámbrico representa un reto de vital importancia. Teóricamente, personas no autorizadas pueden aprovechar las deficiencias en el ámbito de la seguridad de las transmisiones de radio lograr su control y realizar con ellos actividades ilegales, delictivas o temerarias. Estas aeronaves existentes en la actualidad carecen de la tecnología necesaria para evitar señales disturbadoras o de interferencia.

Con respecto al marco reglamentario que considera elaborar, se ruega a la Comisión que conteste a las preguntas siguientes:

1. ¿Se ha fijado ya alguna fecha para lanzar este procedimiento?

2. ¿Existen planes para abrir el espacio aéreo europeo a este tipo de aeronaves no tripuladas?

3. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de las actuales carencias de seguridad relacionadas con estas aeronaves?

4. ¿Tiene la Comisión clara conciencia de la amenaza que estas aeronaves no tripuladas pueden representar para la seguridad aérea?

5. ¿Se tendrán en cuenta estas carencias de seguridad cuando se establezca el referido marco reglamentario?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión tiene previsto llevar a cabo una evaluación de impacto para determinar si un marco regulador europeo es el instrumento jurídico más eficaz para abordar esta cuestión, dentro del respeto a la proporcionalidad y la subsidiariedad. Este proceso estudiará la actual legislación en materia de seguridad y colmará cualquier laguna que sea identificada, si este fuera el caso. Asimismo, los actuales programas de I+D relativos a la introducción de los drones en el espacio aéreo europeo, de los que es responsable la empresa común SESAR, están integrando el factor de la seguridad en sus esfuerzos para desarrollar unos instrumentos tecnológicos seguros y protegidos. El sistema del espacio aéreo europeo se abrirá finalmente de un modo progresivo, empezando con operaciones bastante simples para poco a poco dar paso a operaciones más complejas, sobre la base de los conocimientos y competencias adquiridos. La integración de los drones no debe afectar a los elevados niveles de seguridad, protección y privacidad de los que se benefician actualmente los ciudadanos europeos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012944/13
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Drones and flying security

In answer to my Written Question E-009942/2013, the Commission stated:

'The Commission is currently considering the preparation of a supportive and enabling policy framework for the civilian use of drones, also known as Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS).'

Some experts fear that integrating drones (RPAS) into the airspace system could cause major security problems. In fact, securing the wireless connections of drones is currently a daunting challenge. For instance, a hijacker could exploit security weaknesses in radio transmissions in order to obtain control of the drone and operate it to do illegal, criminal or risky activities. Current drones lack the technological capabilities to avoid jamming or spoofing attempts.

In reference to the policy framework that the Commission is considering preparing,

1. Is there any deadline scheduled for the start of this process?

2. Are there any plans to open the European airspace system?

3. Is the Commission aware of the current security gaps relating to drones?

4. Is the Commission aware of the risks that drones could pose to flying security?

5. Will these gaps in security be taken into account when establishing the aforementioned framework?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

The Commission plans to conduct an impact assessment to assess whether a European regulatory framework is the most effective legal instrument to address the issue, whilst respecting proportionality and subsidiarity. This process will look into current security legislation, and fill any gaps identified if this were to be the case. In addition, current R&D programmes relating to the insertion of drones into the European airspace, under responsibility of the SESAR Joint Undertaking, are integrating the security dimension in their efforts to developing safe and secure technological enablers. The European airspace system will eventually be opened in a gradual process, starting with rather simple operations and steadily allowing more complex operations on basis of expertise gained. The integration of drones should not affect the high safety, security and privacy levels which the European citizens are enjoying.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012946/13
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Free movement of goods in Gibraltar

A recent announcement in the Spanish press warned that the Spanish Government may seek to interrupt vessels carrying building materials to Gibraltar.

Could the Commission clarify whether such a move would contravene the free movement of goods, as enshrined in the European Treaties?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2014)

The Court of Justice of the European Union ruled in Commission v United Kingdom (Gibraltar) ([1]) that the exclusion of Gibraltar from the customs territory of the Union implies that the Treaty rules on free movement of goods are not applicable to it. The Court stated that 'under Title I of the third part of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), concerning free movement of goods, Article 28(2) TFEU provides that Article 30, which prohibits customs duties and charges having equivalent effect, and the whole of Chapter 2 of that title, which concerns the prohibition on quantitative restrictions between Member States, apply to products originating in Member States and to products coming from third countries which are in free circulation in Member States. As products originating in Gibraltar fall within neither of those categories, they are not covered by the Treaty rules on free movement of goods and, in particular, those prohibiting quantitative restrictions between Member States'.

([1]) Case C-30/01 Commission v United Kingdom (Gibraltar) [2003] ECR I-9481, paras 58-59.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012954/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(14 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Soluții de infrastructură în Balcanii de Vest

La 5 noiembrie 2013, Comisia și instituțiile financiare internaționale au convenit „să-și intensifice cooperarea pentru soluții inovatoare în Balcanii de Vest". Pentru a realiza acest lucru, Comisia și-a anunțat intenția de a utiliza Cadrul de investiții pentru Balcanii de Vest (CIBV), cu o finanțare de până la 1 miliard EUR oferită de Fondul de asistență pentru preaderare.

În ultimii patru ani și jumătate, CIBV a furnizat o investiție totală estimată la 13,3 miliarde EUR. Proiectele de investiții sunt definite și propuse de țările beneficiare în orice sector care contribuie la dezvoltarea economică, socială și ecologică a Balcanilor de Vest.

Dat fiind volumul mare al fondurilor disponibile pentru susținerea Balcanilor de Vest,

1. ce măsuri se iau pentru a împiedica corupția și utilizarea frauduloasă a fondurilor Uniunii de către beneficiari?

2. care este calendarul pentru momentul în care miliardul de euro promis va fi disponibil pentru beneficiari?

Răspuns dat de Füle în numele Comisiei
(24 ianuarie 2014)

Cadrul de investiții pentru Balcanii de Vest (CIBV) este finanțat de o multitudine de donatori, nu numai de UE. În ultimii patru ani și jumătate, CIBV a acordat granturi de aproximativ 300 de milioane EUR pentru peste 140 de proiecte de investiții. Valoarea investițiilor potențiale totale este estimată la 13,3 miliarde EUR, cu cea mai mare parte a acestei finanțări constând în împrumuturi acordate de Banca Europeană de Investiții (BEI), Banca Europeană pentru Reconstrucție și Dezvoltare (BERD) și alte instituții financiare internaționale. Fondurile din cadrul Instrumentului de Asistență pentru Preaderare (IPA) sunt utilizate numai ca pârghie financiară.

Marile proiecte de investiții beneficiază de o atenție considerabilă și sunt monitorizate îndeaproape de toți partenerii implicați în cofinanțare. Toate proiectele care beneficiază de fonduri ale UE pentru preaderare (IPA) conțin dispoziții pentru aprobarea ex-ante a contractelor, evaluări la fața locului și controale efectuate de experți externi, precum și audituri ex-post.

În ceea ce privește angajamentul Comisiei privind transparența, o bază de date care cuprinde toate proiectele finanțate prin programe de asistență pentru preaderare este pusă la dispoziția publicului. Acest lucru este în conformitate cu Inițiativa internațională privind transparența ajutoarelor (IATI). Alinierea deplină la Standardul internațional privind transparența ajutoarelor va fi realizată până la sfârșitul anului 2015. Comisia va actualiza lunar baza de date.

Suma de 1 miliarde EUR, constând în fonduri IPA suplimentare, va deveni disponibilă în perioada următorului cadru financiar multianual (CFM), respectiv între 2014 și 2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012954/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Infrastructure solutions in the western Balkans

On 5 November 2013 the Commission and international financial institutions agreed to 'intensify their cooperation for innovative infrastructure solutions in the western Balkans'. In order to do this, the Commission announced its intention to use the western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), with funding of up to EUR 1 billion provided by the pre-accession assistance fund.

In the last four and a half years the WBIF has provided an estimated total investment of EUR 13.3 billion. Investment projects are defined and proposed by the beneficiary countries in any sector that contributes to the economic, social and environmental development of the western Balkans.

With such a large amount of funds available to support the western Balkans,

1. what measures are in place to prevent the possibility of corruption and misuse of Union funds by beneficiaries?

2. what is the timetable for when the committed EUR 1 billion will be available to the beneficiaries?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

The Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) is funded by a multitude of donors, not only the EU. Over the past four and a half years the WBIF allocated grants of around EUR 300 million to over 140 investment projects. The value of the potential total investments is estimated at EUR 13.3 billion with the bulk of the funding coming in the form of loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and other International Financial Institutions. Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) funds are only used as a lever.

Large investment projects receive substantial attention and are closely monitored by all involved co-financing partners. All projects benefiting from EU pre-accession funding (IPA) have provisions for *ex-ante* approval of contracts, on-site assessments and controls by independent experts, as well as *ex-post* audits.

Regarding the Commission's commitment to transparency, a database listing all of the projects funded under pre-accession assistance programmes is made publicly available. This is in line with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) requirements. Full alignment with the International Standard on Aid Transparency will be achieved by the end of 2015. The Commission will update the database on a monthly basis.

The EUR 1 billion in additional IPA funds will become available during the period of the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF), i.e. between 2014 and 2020.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012955/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(14 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Increderea cetățenilor UE în măsurile instituțiilor europene în domeniile ocupării forței de muncă, educației și formării

Rezultatele sondajului Eurobarometru „Un an până la alegerile europene din 2014", prezentate la 18 octombrie 2013, oferă câteva indicații importante cu privire la modul în care cetățenii europeni percep Uniunea Europeană. Aspectele legate de ocuparea forței de muncă, educație și formare sunt considerate de cetățenii UE drept priorități.

Cu toate acestea, sondajul subliniază faptul că șomerii și clasele de muncitori manuali, precum și grupurile care au cea mai mare nevoie de programe pentru locuri de muncă, educație și formare, sunt de fapt din ce în ce mai favorabile intervenției statelor membre individuale în aceste domenii, în comparație cu intervenția instituțiilor UE.

Ce măsuri de remediere poate propune Comisia pentru a combate deziluzia din ce în ce mai mare și lipsa de încredere în instituțiile UE în rândul populației dezavantajate din punct de vedere socioeconomic?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(27 ianuarie 2014)

Comisia este conștientă de faptul că ocuparea forței de muncă, educația și formarea profesională se numără printre principalele preocupări ale cetățenilor europeni. Conform celui mai recent sondaj bianual Eurobarometru, 90% dintre europeni afirmă că statele membre ar trebui să-și unească eforturile pentru a combate efectele crizei economice și financiare. Europenii din toate mediile socio-demografice își exprimă sprijinul pentru obiectivele strategiei Europa 2020 și peste jumătate dintre cetățeni consideră în continuare că țintele propuse de UE în ceea ce privește ocuparea forței de muncă, educația și formarea sunt cât se poate de ambițioase.

Soluționarea problemelor socio-economice este în primul rând responsabilitatea statelor membre. Cu toate acestea, Comisia a luat măsuri concrete prin care statele membre sunt sprijinite să încurajeze acțiuni la nivel național, regional și local în vederea susținerii persoanelor care se confruntă cu probleme de șomaj.

Adoptarea cadrului bugetar al UE pe următorii 7 ani reprezintă un pas foarte important, care poate accelera redresarea economică în plină desfășurare. Este vorba despre investiții de peste o mie de miliarde de euro direcționate către crearea de locuri de muncă și stimularea creșterii economice în UE, pentru perioada rămasă până la sfârșitul deceniului. Numai Fondul social european va oferi peste 10 miliarde de euro anual pentru investiții în beneficiul cetățenilor, iar cel puțin o cincime din fonduri for fi alocate incluziunii sociale și susținerii persoanelor aflate în situații dificile.

Printre acțiunile întreprinse se numără Garanția pentru tineret, al cărei scop este să ofere tuturor tinerilor cu vârste de până la 25 de ani posibilitatea de a beneficia de o ofertă de muncă, de continuare a studiilor, de ucenicie sau stagiu, de bună calitate, în termen de patru luni de la absolvirea studiilor sau de la intrarea în șomaj. ([1])

Garanția pentru tineret este finanțată din FSE și prin intermediul inițiativei privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor. ([2])

([1]) Comisia ajută statele membre să finanțeze Garanția pentru tineret prin intermediul Fondului social european (peste 10 miliarde de euro pe an în perioada 2014-2020).

([2]) În cadrul căreia sunt disponibili încă 3 miliarde de euro pentru perioada 2014-2015, pentru a contribui la finanțarea introducerii garanției pentru tineret în cele 20 de state membre cel mai puternic afectate de problema șomajului în rândul tinerilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012955/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Confidence of EU citizens in the actions of the European institutions in the areas of employment, education and training

The results of the Eurobarometer survey 'One year to go to the 2014 European elections', released on 18 October 2013, provide a few important indications of how European citizens view the European Union. Employment, education and training issues are considered by EU citizens to be top priorities.

However, the survey highlights the fact that the unemployed and manual labour classes, together with groups in most need of employment, education and training programmes, are in fact increasingly in favour of intervention in those areas from individual Member States rather than from the EU institutions.

What remedies can the Commission propose to address this growing disillusion and waning faith in EU institutions amongst the lower socioeconomic demographic?

Answer given by Ms Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission is aware that employment, education and training are among the main concerns of European citizens. According to the latest biannual 'Standard' Eurobarometer, 90% Europeans maintain the Member States should work together to tackle the financial and economic crisis. Europeans from all socio-demographic backgrounds show support for the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy and over half of Europeans continue to say that the targets the EU has set in relation to employment, education and training remain at the right level of ambition.

Addressing socioeconomic challenges is primarily the responsibility of the Member States. However, the Commission has taken concrete measures to support Member States to encourage action at national, regional and local level in particular to help people experiencing unemployment.

The adoption of the EU budget framework for the next 7 years is a major step which can further strengthen the recovery now underway. This means over a trillion euros of investment for jobs and growth in the EU over the remainder of the decade. The European Social Fund alone will provide more than 10 billion euro every year for investing in people with at least one fifth of this allocated to social inclusion and to help people in difficulties.

An example is the Youth Guarantee which seeks to ensure that all young people up to age 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, further education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. ([1])

The Youth Guarantee can be financially supported by the ESF and the 'Youth Employment Initiative'. ([2])

([1]) The Commission helps Member States to finance the Youth Guarantee through the European Social Fund (over EUR10 billion per year in the 2014-20 period).
([2]) Under which an extra 3 billion euros are available in 2014-15 to help to put in place the Youth Guarantee in the 20 Member States hardest hit by youth unemployment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012962/13
alla Commissione
Amalia Sartori (PPE)
(14 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Se la civiltà di un paese si misura dallo stato delle carceri, l'Europa può dirsi un paese civile

Anche a seguito della sentenza della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo dell'8 gennaio scorso relativa al sovraffollamento carcerario italiano, in Italia si stanno studiando le possibili vie da percorrere per la soluzione del problema.

Vista la grande importanza che la Commissione giustamente attribuisce al rispetto dei diritti fondamentali dei detenuti, si ritiene opportuno che essa studi la possibilità di presentare una relazione onnicomprensiva sulla situazione carceraria nell'Unione europea.

Tale analisi dovrebbe essere volta, innanzitutto, a fotografare la situazione carceraria nei 28 Stati membri rispetto a:

— numero di detenuti, classi di età, percentuali uomini/donne, cittadinanza; percentuale della tipologia dei reati, per categorie; morti e suicidi interni alle strutture;

— numero delle strutture carcerarie esistenti, con relativa capienza; diritti dei detenuti all'istruzione, al lavoro e alla socializzazione — se per tutti o solo per alcuni e in quale percentuale; in quali paesi sono previste pene alternative al carcere, di quale tipo e a quali condizioni; personale carcerario per detenuto;

— costo medio giornaliero per detenuto, paese per paese;

— esistenza della detenzione preventiva nei diversi paesi, sua durata, a quali condizioni e per quanto tempo è consentita; eventuale differenziazione delle strutture per sola carcerazione preventiva;

— strutture e condizioni per il carcere minorile;

— esistenza delle strutture denominate ospedali psichiatrici giudiziari in tutti i paesi, a quali condizioni;

— esistenza di strutture differenziate per i detenuti per reati legati al consumo di droga (comunità terapeutiche o altro).

1. Alla luce delle decisioni quadro 2008/909/GAI, 2008/947/GAI e 2009/829/GAI che, di fatto, creano uno spazio unico europeo per i problemi legati alla detenzione, e al libro Verde sulle condizioni di detenzione in Unione europea, non ritiene la Commissione che sia arrivato il momento di dare un seguito alle sue conclusioni, tracciando una panoramica della situazione carceraria esistente e persino immaginando un percorso volto a favorire il reinserimento sociale del reo e la sua possibilità di restituire il suo debito alla comunità con il suo impegno e il suo lavoro?

2. Esistono posizioni comuni tra gli Stati membri rispetto alla soluzione da dare ai problemi connessi all'attuale uso della detenzione preventiva? Non ritiene la Commissione opportuno studiare criteri per un'omologazione di principi onde disciplinare in maniera uniforme l'uso di tale strumento giuridico?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(29 gennaio 2014)

Le condizioni di detenzione sono di competenza degli Stati membri, che sono vincolati dalle pertinenti norme del Consiglio d'Europa. Tuttavia, nel giugno 2011 la Commissione ha pubblicato un libro verde sul rafforzamento della fiducia reciproca nel settore della detenzione ([1]), le cui risposte sono pubblicate in forma sintetica online ([2]).

Sulla base dei risultati del libro verde, la Commissione intende concentrarsi sulla corretta attuazione degli strumenti dell'UE in vigore in materia di riconoscimento reciproco nel settore della detenzione ([3]). In questo contesto, nei prossimi mesi la Commissione pubblicherà una relazione sull'attuazione dei pertinenti strumenti giuridici dell'UE.

([1]) Rafforzare la fiducia reciproca nello spazio giudiziario europeo — Libro verde sull'applicazione della normativa dell'UE sulla giustizia penale nel settore della detenzione, COM(2011) 327 def.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

([3]) La decisione quadro 2008/909/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze penali che irrogano pene detentive o misure privative della libertà personale, ai fini della loro esecuzione nell'Unione europea (GU L 327 del 5.12.2008 pag. 27), la decisione quadro 2008/947/GAI, del 27 novembre 2008, relativa all'applicazione del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle sentenze e alle decisioni di sospensione condizionale in vista della sorveglianza delle misure di sospensione condizionale e delle sanzioni sostitutive (GU L 337 del 16.12.2008 pag. 102), e la decisione quadro 2009/829/GAI, del 23 ottobre 2009, sull'applicazione tra gli Stati membri dell'Unione europea del principio del reciproco riconoscimento alle decisioni sulle misure alternative alla detenzione cautelare (GU L 294 dell'11.11.2009 pag. 20).

L'idea alla base delle decisioni quadro nel settore della detenzione è che la riabilitazione sociale della persona condannata sia più agevole nel paese di origine. La Commissione è convinta che la corretta attuazione di tali decisioni quadro da parte degli Stati membri possa contribuire a tale obiettivo e alla riduzione del sovraffollamento carcerario, oltre che a consentire risparmi nelle dotazioni di bilancio nazionali destinate alle carceri e alla loro gestione. La decisione quadro sulla sospensione condizionale e sulle sanzioni sostitutive e quella sulle misure cautelari fanno obbligo agli Stati membri di rendere disponibile nel loro ordinamento giuridico un'ampia serie di misure alternative alla detenzione. L'attuazione della decisione quadro sulle misure cautelari porterà a una riduzione della detenzione preventiva. Inoltre, di recente, la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di direttiva sul rafforzamento di alcuni aspetti della presunzione di innocenza e del diritto di presenziare al processo nei procedimenti penali ([4]) che promuoverà ulteriormente tra i professionisti una cultura che limiti il ricorso alla detenzione preventiva.

([4]) COM(2013) 821 def. del 27.11.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012962/13
to the Commission
Amalia Sartori (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: If the degree of civilisation in a society can be judged by entering its prisons, Europe can be said to be a civilised society

After the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights of 8 January 2013 on overcrowding in Italian prisons, possible ways of solving to the problem are being explored in Italy.

In view of the great importance that the Commission rightly attaches to respect for prisoners' fundamental rights, it should look into the possibility of presenting an all-inclusive report on the prison situation in the EU.

That analysis should, above all, aim to give an accurate picture of the prison situation in the 28 Member States in terms of:

— the number of prisoners, age groups, percentage of men/women, citizenship; percentage of types of crimes, per category; deaths and suicides in prisons;

— the number of existing prisons, with their capacities; prisoners' entitlements to education, work and socialising — whether all prisoners are entitled or only some, and what percentage; in which countries are their alternative punishments to prison, what are they and under what conditions; prison staff per inmate;

— average daily cost per inmate, country by country;

— pre-trial detention in the various countries, how long it lasts, under what conditions and for how long is it permitted; any separate facilities just for pre-trial detention;

— youth custody facilities and conditions;

— whether there are facilities known as secure psychiatric hospitals in all countries, and under what conditions;

— whether there are separate facilities for prisoners convicted of drug-related crimes (treatment communities or other).

1. In view of Framework Decisions 2008/909/JHA, 2008/947/JHA and 2009/829/JHA, which create a single European area for detention-related problems, and the Green Paper on detention conditions in the European Union, does the Commission not think that it is now time to follow up on their conclusions, giving an overview of the current prison situation and even envisaging a way to promote the social reintegration of ex-prisoners and their chance to repay their debt to society through commitment and work?

2. Are there any common positions between the Member States with regard to how to solve problems related to the current use of pre-trial detention? Does the Commission not think it should consider criteria to harmonise rules in order to standardise the way in which this legal instrument is used?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

Detention conditions fall under the competence of Member States who are bound by Council of Europe standards on the matter. Nevertheless, the Commission has issued, in June 2011, a Green Paper on strengthening mutual trust in the field of detention ([1]). A summary of the replies has been published online ([2]).

Based on the outcome of the Green Paper, the Commission intends to focus on the proper implementation of the existing EU mutual recognition instruments adopted in the field of detention ([3]). In this context it will publish an implementation report on the relevant EU legal instruments in the coming months.

([1]) Green Paper Strengthening mutual trust in the European judicial area — A Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention, COM/2011/0327 final.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/opinion/110614_en.htm

([3]) The framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27, the framework Decision 2008/947/JHA of 27 November 2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions, OJ 16.12.2008, L 337/102, and the framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention, OJ 11.11.2009, L 294/20.

The underlying idea of the framework Decisions in the field of detention is that the social rehabilitation of the person can be more easily achieved in his or her home country. The Commission is convinced that the proper implementation of these Framework Decisions by the Member States may thus contribute to that aim and to a reduction of prison overcrowding as well as allow for savings for the budgets spent by Member States on prisons and prison management. The framework Decisions on Probation and Alternative Sanctions and on the European Supervision Order will oblige Member States to make a large set of alternatives to detention available in their national legislation. Implementation of the framework Decision on the European Supervision Order will lead to a reduction of pre-trial detention. The Commission has also recently adopted a proposal for a directive on the strengthening of the presumption of innocence and of the right to be present at trial ([4]) which will further foster a culture amongst professionals limiting the recourse to pre-trial detention.

([4]) COM(2013) 821 final, 27.11.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012981/13
al Consiglio
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di chiarimenti sui controlli attivati in America sulle merci in arrivo dall'Italia

A partire dallo scorso mese di settembre, le autorità americane hanno disposto il controllo sistematico su alcuni prodotti in arrivo dall'Italia, in particolare salami, prosciutti, coppe e cotechini. Tali controlli comportano lo stazionamento di questi generi alimentari nei magazzini della dogana, dove le merci vengono campionate e analizzate; i tempi per effettuare queste operazioni sono molto lunghi e il costo che ne deriva, calcolato su base giornaliera, è ingente.

Per tali motivi, esportare prodotti alimentari di questo genere in America diventa sempre più svantaggioso per un paese come l'Italia.

È informato il Consiglio su quanto sta avvenendo per questi prodotti europei alla frontiera americana?

Cosa intende fare il Consiglio per far cessare questi comportamenti configurabili indubbiamente come barriere non tariffarie sull'ingresso di nostri prodotti nel territorio USA?

Alla luce dei negoziati TTIP avviati con grande entusiasmo di entrambe le parti tra Unione europea e USA, intendono i negoziatori del Consiglio cogliere l'occasione per inserire anche questo tema tra quelli oggetto della discussione con la controparte?

Risposta
(10 febbraio 2014)

Il Consiglio non ha discusso il tema specifico cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare, il quale rientra principalmente nella sfera di competenza della Commissione.

Il 14 giugno 2013 il Consiglio ha approvato un mandato che autorizza la Commissione a negoziare e concludere con gli Stati Uniti l'accordo intitolato «Partenariato transatlantico su commercio e investimenti» (TTIP). Pur spettando alla Commissione decidere, in consultazione con il comitato della politica commerciale, se cogliere l'opportunità per sollevare questioni specifiche con le controparti statunitensi, occorre osservare che la relazione finale del gruppo di lavoro UE-USA ad alto livello su occupazione e crescita, adottata l'11 febbraio 2013 ([1]), prevede un ambizioso capitolo sulle misure «SPS-plus», compresa l'istituzione di un meccanismo permanente per migliorare il dialogo e la cooperazione nell'ambito delle questioni SPS bilaterali.

Il Consiglio continuerà a seguire attentamente il processo negoziale relativo al TTIP, segnatamente in base alle informazioni fornite dalla Commissione.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012981/13
to the Council
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Request for clarification regarding the checks introduced in the United States on goods arriving from Italy

In September 2013, the US authorities introduced systematic checks on certain products arriving from Italy, especially salami, ham, coppa (air-cured pork meat) and cotechino (cooked pork sausage). As part of these checks, the foodstuffs in question are stored in customs warehouses, where samples are taken and analysed; it takes a very long time to conduct these procedures and the resulting costs, calculated on a daily basis, are huge.

As a result, exporting these kinds of food products to the United States is becoming increasingly less profitable for countries like Italy.

Is the Council aware of what is happening to these European products when they arrive in the United States?

What does the Council intend to do to prevent such measures, which clearly constitute non-tariff barriers to our products entering the United States?

In light of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations between the European Union and the United States, which have been launched with great enthusiasm on both sides, do the Council negotiators intend to seize the opportunity to include this subject among those discussed with their US counterparts?

Reply
(10 February 2014)

The Council has not discussed the specific issue to which the Honourable Member refers, which falls primarily within the Commission's sphere of competence.

On 14 June 2013, the Council approved a mandate for the Commission to negotiate the agreement with the United States entitled 'Transatlantic trade and investment partnership' (TTIP). While it is up to the Commission to consider, in consultation with the Trade Policy Committee, whether to take the opportunity to raise specific issues with the US counterparts, it is to be noted that the Final Report of the EU-US High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth adopted on 11 February 2013 ([1]), foresees an ambitious 'SPS-plus' chapter, including the establishment of an on-going mechanism for improved dialogue and cooperation on addressing bilateral SPS issues.

The Council will continue to closely follow the process of the TTIP negotiations, based notably on the information provided by the Commission.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/february/tradoc_150519.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012982/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di chiarimenti sui controlli attivati in America sulle merci in arrivo dall'Italia

A partire dallo scorso mese di settembre, le autorità americane hanno disposto il controllo sistematico su alcuni prodotti in arrivo dall'Italia, in particolare salami, prosciutti, coppe e cotechini. Tali controlli comportano lo stazionamento di questi generi alimentari nei magazzini della dogana, dove le merci vengono campionate e analizzate; i tempi per effettuare queste operazioni sono molto lunghi e il costo che ne deriva, calcolato su base giornaliera, è ingente.

Per tali motivi, esportare prodotti alimentari di questo genere in America diventa sempre più svantaggioso per un paese come l'Italia.

È informata la Commissione su quanto sta avvenendo per questi prodotti europei alla frontiera americana?

Cosa intende fare la Commissione per far cessare questi comportamenti configurabili indubbiamente come barriere non tariffarie sull'ingresso di nostri prodotti nel territorio USA?

Alla luce dei negoziati TTIP avviati con grande entusiasmo di entrambe le parti tra Unione europea e USA, intendono i negoziatori della Commissione cogliere l'occasione per inserire anche questo tema tra quelli oggetto della discussione con la controparte?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei problemi che gli operatori italiani incontrano quando spediscono carni e prodotti carnei negli USA a seguito dei controlli rafforzati e dei test di laboratorio eseguiti prima dell'importazione. Ciò è dovuto al reperimento di Listeria monocitogenes sui prodotti carnei alle frontiere degli USA.

I servizi della Commissione hanno già contattato le agenzie statunitensi responsabili dei controlli per chiarire i motivi che hanno portato a questi controlli rafforzati. Questi contatti hanno consentito di organizzare rapidamente una riunione con le autorità statunitensi e i rapprensentanti del Ministero italiano della Salute al fine di trovare una possibile soluzione nel breve termine.

La questione della tolleranza della Listeria monocitogenes sui prodotti di origine animale (carni e prodotti a base di carne nonché latticini) e i controlli rafforzati sulle carni e sui prodotti carnei prima dell'importazione negli USA sono già stati inclusi tra le questioni da affrontarsi prioritariamente ad opera della Commissione nel quadro dei negoziati in corso in merito al Partenariato transatlantico su commercio e investimenti (TTIP) tra l'UE e gli USA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012982/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Request for clarifications about the checks introduced in the United States on goods arriving from Italy

In September 2013, the US authorities introduced systematic checks on some products arriving from Italy, especially salami, ham, coppa (air-cured pork meat) and cotechino (cooked pork sausage). These checks require these foodstuffs to be stored in customs warehouses, where samples are taken and analysed. These procedures take a very long time and the resulting costs, calculated on a daily basis, are huge.

As a result, exporting these kinds of food products to the US is becoming increasingly less profitable for countries like Italy.

Is the Commission aware of what is happening to these European products when they arrive in the US?

What does the Commission intend to do to prevent such practices, which certainly constitute non-tariff barriers to our products entering the United States?

In light of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations between the European Union and the US, launched with great enthusiasm on both sides, do the Commission negotiators intend to take this opportunity to include this issue among those discussed with their American counterparts?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the problems encountered by Italian operators when sending their meat and meat products to the USA, as a result of re-inforced checks and laboratory tests carried out prior to the import. This was due to finding of Listeria monocytogenes at USA borders on meat products.

The Commission services have already been in contact with the USA Agencies responsible for those controls to clarify the reasons which have led to the reinforced checks. These contacts allowed to quickly set up a meeting between the USA authorities and reprensentatives of the Italian Ministry of Health aiming at finding a possible short term solution.

The question of the tolerance of Listeria monocytogenes on products of animal origin (meat and meat products and dairy products), and the re-inforced checks on meat and meat products prior to the import into the USA has been already included amongst the issues to be addressed as a matter of priority by the Commission in the framework of the ongoing EU/USA Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-012987/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(15 november 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Herziening van beperkende maatregelen tegen Iraniërs

De EU heeft beperkende maatregelen (sancties) opgelegd aan bepaalde Iraanse burgers, en wel om twee redenen: betrokkenheid bij en uitbreiding van het nucleaire programma van Iran, en betrokkenheid bij schendingen van de mensenrechten in Iran. Alleen de eerste van deze redenen betreft uitvoering van en/of aanvulling op VN-sancties tegen de Islamitische Republiek Iran.

De EU-sancties zijn: reisbeperkingen (of visumverbod) voor personen en hun familieleden en bevriezing van hun tegoeden binnen de jurisdictie van de EU. De sancties zijn wettelijk verplicht door een aantal verordeningen en besluiten van de EU.

De lijsten met personen die om een van de redenen aan sancties onderhevig zijn, kunnen politiek of juridisch getoetst worden. De betrokkenen kunnen de sancties aanvechten bij het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie. Verscheidene personen, organisaties en bedrijven zijn door het Hof in het gelijk gesteld, waarna de sancties zijn ingetrokken. In andere gevallen zijn sancties ingetrokken zonder dat het Hof uitspraak had gedaan.

1. Kan de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger uiteenzetten hoe personen worden geselecteerd en aangewezen voor opname in de bijlagen bij EU-verordeningen en -besluiten inzake individuele sancties (visumverbod en bevriezing van tegoeden)? Zo niet, waarom niet?

2. Kan de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger mededelen om welke redenen, afgezien van arresten van het Hof, personen van de lijsten zijn afgevoerd, zowel met betrekking tot het nucleaire programma als wat betreft schendingen van de mensenrechten? Zo niet, waarom niet?

3. Kan de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger bevestigen dat politieke en diplomatieke overwegingen ertoe kunnen leiden dat sancties tegen personen worden opgeheven, terwijl de oorspronkelijke redenen ervoor ongewijzigd zijn gebleven?

4. Is de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger van oordeel dat sancties, met name tegen personen wegens betrokkenheid bij schendingen van de mensenrechten, een rol kunnen spelen in de strategische en diplomatieke benadering van Iran in het kader van de besprekingen met de P5+1? Zo ja, waarom?

5. Kan de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger mededelen in hoeveel gevallen personen de gegrondheid van EU-sancties tegen hen met succes hebben aangevochten? Zo niet, waarom niet?

6. Kan de Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger aangeven in hoeverre de EU onafhankelijk van de VN kan optreden en daadwerkelijk optreedt, met name waar het gaat om sancties tegen personen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2014)

1. De EU past autonome beperkende maatregelen (sancties) toe bij het nastreven van de specifieke doelstelling van het gemeenschappelijk buitenlands en veiligheidsbeleid. Wanneer maatregelen vermeldingen omvatten, zoals in het geval van de beide sanctieregelingen voor Iran (nucleaire programma en mensenrechten), dan verwijzen die naar personen en entiteiten die verantwoordelijk zijn voor, of betrokken zijn bij het beleid of de acties waartegen de sancties gericht zijn. De sanctiebesluiten van de Raad bevatten daarom specifieke opnamecriteria op grond waarvan besluiten tot plaatsing op de lijst worden genomen. Als lidstaten of de HV/VV nauwkeurige, bijgewerkte en naar behoren gemotiveerde redenen hebben, kunnen zij voorstellen doen voor plaatsing op de lijst.

2. Voor de herziening van (autonome) vermeldingen op de lijst gelden dezelfde principes: de Raad moet bepalen of de personen of entiteiten die op de lijst staan, nog steeds aan de criteria voldoen die bepaald zijn in het respectieve sanctiebesluit. De Raad moet daarbij rekening houden met alle ontvangen aanvullende informatie ten aanzien van de betrokken persoon of entiteit en, indien van toepassing, ook met opmerkingen ingediend door de betrokken persoon of entiteit zelf.

3. De EU zal de beperkende maatregelen aanpassen in geval van ontwikkelingen in verband met de doelstellingen van het GBVB-sanctiebesluit. Het kan hierbij gaan om een gedeeltelijke of volledige schorsing of opheffing van de maatregelen, ook ten aanzien van vermeldingen, wanneer hun doelstellingen zijn bereikt.

4. In het geval van Iran past de EU twee verschillende sanctieregelingen toe met verschillende doelstellingen respectievelijk voor het nucleaire programma van Iran en de mensenrechtensituatie in Iran. Op 24 november werd in Genève het zogenaamde gezamenlijk actieplan goedgekeurd om tot een algemene oplossing te komen voor de bezorgdheid over het nucleaire programma van Iran. Alle maatregelen die de EU bereid is te nemen op het gebied van sancties in dat plan, gaan alleen over de nucleaire sancties tegen Iran.

5. In september 2013 heeft één Iraanse persoon met succes de rechtmatigheid van de EU-sancties aangevochten in verband met zijn vermelding op de lijst. De EU heeft deze persoon opnieuw op de lijst opgenomen en werkt ondertussen aan de wettelijke vereisten die het Hof had gesteld. Sinds november zijn er 12 vermeldingen op de lijst nietig verklaard. De Raad overweegt nog steeds welke maatregelen hij kan nemen.

6. De EU-lidstaten zijn verplicht om de resoluties van de VN-Veiligheidsraad uit te voeren. Maatregelen ter uitvoering van die resoluties worden genomen op EU-niveau. Als het onmogelijk is om (verdere) beperkende maatregelen aan te nemen in het kader van de VN, kan de EU toch beslissen om beperkendere maatregelen toe te passen, ofwel door de reikwijdte van de maatregelen te vergroten, en/of door meer vermeldingen toe te voegen aan de lijst.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012987/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Review of restrictive measures against Iranian individuals

The EU has imposed restrictive measures (sanctions) against certain Iranian citizens on two grounds: involvement in and proliferation of Iran's nuclear programme, and involvement in human rights abuses in Iran. Only the first of these two grounds implements and/or complements UN sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

EU sanctions consist of travel restrictions (or visa bans) on individuals and their extended families and the freezing of their assets within EU jurisdiction. Sanctions are legally imposed by the EU through a series of regulations and decisions.

The lists of persons subject to sanctions on either ground are subject to political or legal review. Those subject to EU sanctions have the right to contest their legitimacy before the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Several such individuals, entities and companies have successfully contested their designation and the sanctions have been lifted. In other cases there has been no court judgment to explain the lifting of sanctions.

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative explain how individuals are selected and designated for inclusion in annexes to EU regulations and decisions that impose individual sanctions (visa bans and asset freezes)? If it cannot do so, can it explain why not?

2. Can the Vice-President/High Representative explain on what grounds, other than ECJ judgments, individuals have previously been removed from these lists, both in relation to the nuclear programme and to human rights violations? If not, why not?

3. Can the Vice-President/High Representative confirm that political and diplomatic policies can lead to sanctions on individuals being lifted, whilst the grounds for the initial designation of these persons remain unchanged?

4. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that sanctions, especially those against individuals for involvement in human rights abuses, could form part of the EU's strategic and diplomatic policies towards Iran in the context of the P5+1 talks? If so, why?

5. Can the Vice-President/High Representative provide the number of cases in which individuals have successfully contested the lawfulness of the EU sanctions imposed on them? If not, why not?

6. Can the Vice-President/High Representative explain to what extent the EU can and does act autonomously from the UN regarding sanctions, particularly in the designation of individuals?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

1. The EU applies autonomous restrictive measures (sanctions) in pursuit of the specific objective of the common Foreign and Security Policy. Where measures include designations, as in the case of both Iran sanctions regimes (nuclear programme and human rights), they aim at persons and entities responsible for or associated with the policies or actions targeted by the sanctions. In that context, the Council's sanctions decisions include specific listing criteria on the basis of which listing decisions must be taken. Proposals for listing can be made by Member States or the HR/VP and must be acompanied by reasons that are accurante, up-to-date, and duly substantiated.

2. When reviewing (autonomous) listings, the same principles apply: the Council must determine whether or not the persons or entities listed still fulfill the criteria for listing as set out in the respective sanctions decision. When doing so, the Council must take account of any additional information received by it with regard to the person or entity concerned, including where applicable observations submitted by the person or entity concerned.

3. The EU will adapt the restrictive measures in case of developments in relation with the objectives of the CFSP sanction decision. This can include a partial or complete suspension or lifting of the measures, including with regard to designations, when their objectives have been met.

4. In the case of Iran, it is noted that the EU applies two separate sanctions regimes with different objectives in relation to Iran's nuclear programme and to the human rights situation in Iran respectively. In the so called Joint Plan of Action agreed in Geneva on 24 November to reach a comprehensive solution to the concerns over Iran's nuclear programme, all steps the EU has agreed to take in the area of sanctions concern the Iran nuclear-sanctions only.

5. In September 2013, one Iranian person successfully challenged the lawfulness of the EU sanctions as far as its listing was concerned. The EU has relisted that individual, while addressing the legal requirements the Court had pointed out. Since November, 12 listings have been annulled. The Council is still considering remedial action.

6. EU Member States are under an obligation to implement UNSC Resolutions. Measures implementing those Resolutions are taken at EU level. However, the EU may decide to apply measures that are more restrictive, either by extending the scope of the measures and/or by adding more listings, when the adoption of (further) restrictive measures in the framework of UN is not possible.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012995/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Objet: Croissance de la pénurie de médicaments

Le phénomène de la pénurie de médicaments ne cesse de croître dans l'Union européenne depuis maintenant cinq années.

À ce titre, l'Agence française de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé a signifié en août 2013 que les dossiers de ruptures et risques de ruptures en produits indispensables étaient de 44 en 2008, 173 en 2012 et 245 à la rentrée 2013, ceci entrainant des retards dans le traitement des patients ou, dans d'autres cas, une modification du traitement de ces derniers.

Les raisons de ce problème sont multiples mais ont un dénominateur commun: la délocalisation de la production. En avril 2013, l'Académie française pharmaceutique pointait du doigt le fait que de 60 à 80 % de la fabrication des matières actives à usage pharmaceutique avait lieu dans des pays tiers à l'Union européenne, principalement en Inde et en Asie, contre 20 % il y a trente ans.

Aujourd'hui, cette situation devient problématique pour le citoyen européen. Une perte quasi-complète d'indépendance de l'Europe en sources d'approvisionnement en matières actives pharmaceutiques, conjuguée à l'éventuelle perte du savoir-faire industriel, constitue un risque en matière sanitaire.

C'est pourquoi, au nom de l'impératif de santé publique, il devient urgent de relocaliser la production médicamenteuse dans l'Union européenne afin de mieux réguler la production et la circulation.

De la sorte, quelles solutions la Commission entend-elle appliquer afin de relocaliser la production dans l'Union, et dans quelle mesure pourrait-on envisager la création d'un répertoire européen recensant tous les sites de fabrication des matières actives à usage pharmaceutique?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(28 janvier 2014)

Un pourcentage élevé des principes pharmaceutiques actifs consommés en Europe provient d'Asie, principalement de Chine et d'Inde. Le recours à des sources non européennes suscite des inquiétudes. D'une part, la dépendance à l'égard de ces sources peut être problématique en ce qui concerne la sécurité des approvisionnements. D'autre part, des problèmes ont été constatés en ce qui concerne la qualité des ingrédients importés qui sont transformés en médicaments finis dans l'UE. Ces préoccupations relatives à la qualité ont conduit notamment à l'adoption de la directive sur les médicaments falsifiés ([1]). Cette nouvelle législation introduit des règles plus strictes en vue d'améliorer la protection de la santé publique et garantit que les médicaments sont sûrs et que leur commerce est rigoureusement contrôlé.

Cependant, il convient également de préciser qu'il incombe aux opérateurs économiques de prendre les décisions qui concernent leur chaîne d'approvisionnement et leurs investissements.

En ce qui concerne la création d'un répertoire européen recensant tous les sites de fabrication des substances actives à usage pharmaceutique, le réseau des agences des médicaments des États membres, conjointement avec l'Agence européenne des médicaments, grâce à ses activités en matière d'autorisation des sites de fabrication et des médicaments ainsi qu'à ses inspections, a une bonne vision d'ensemble des sites de fabrication au sein de l'UE et des sites qui approvisionnent l'UE. La base de données accessible au public «EudraGMDP» contient des informations à ce sujet.

([1]) Directive 2011/62/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 8 juin 2011 modifiant la directive 2001/83/CE instituant un code communautaire relatif aux médicaments à usage humain, en ce qui concerne la prévention de l'introduction dans la chaîne d'approvisionnement légale de médicaments falsifiés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012995/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Worsening shortage of medicinal products

The shortage of medicinal products in the EU has become ever more acute over the last five years.

In that connection, in August 2013 the French Agency for Medicines and Health Product Safety reported that the number of essential products which were unavailable or in dangerously short supply totalled 44 in 2008, 173 in 2012 and 245 at the beginning of 2013. Patients' treatment has been delayed or has had to be altered as a result.

This problem has many causes, but in the end they all boil down to one thing: the relocation of production facilities. In April 2013, the Académie française de pharmacie, a national advisory body on medicines and related matters, condemned the fact that between 60 and 80% of the production of active ingredients used in pharmaceuticals now takes place outside the European Union, mainly in India and in other Asian countries, as against 20% 30 years ago.

This situation is now starting to cause problems for people in Europe. Europe's almost complete dependence on foreign suppliers of active pharmaceutical ingredients, combined with the potential loss of industrial know-how, is posing a serious threat to the health sector.

That is why, for the sake of public health, it is vital that we bring pharmaceuticals manufacturing back to Europe, a move which will also make it possible to regulate production and marketing more effectively.

What action does the Commission therefore intend to take in order to bring production back to the Union? Will it contemplate introducing a European directory listing all the sites where active pharmaceutical ingredients are manufactured?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2014)

A large percentage of active pharmaceutical ingredients consumed in Europe originate from Asia, mainly China and India. The reliance on non-European sources has given rise to concerns. On the one hand the dependency on these sources may be problematic with regard to the security of supplies. On the other hand issues related to the quality of imports of these ingredients which are transformed into finished medicinal products in the EU have been identified. These quality-related concerns have notably led to the adoption of the Falsified Medicines Directive ([1]). This new legislation introduces more stringent rules so as to improve the protection of public health and ensures that medicines are safe and the trade in medicines is rigorously controlled.

However, it should also be stated that it is up to economic operators to take decisions concerning their supply chain and investments.

With regard to a European directory listing all active substance manufacturing sites, the network of European medicines agencies of the Member States, together with the European Medicines Agency has, in the context of its activities in authorising manufacturing sites and medicines, as well as inspections, a good overview of the manufacturing sites in the EU and those supplying to the EU. The publicly-accessible database 'EudraGMDP' contains information to this effect.

([1]) 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.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-012996/13
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(15. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Budućnost peradarskih farmi u Republici Hrvatskoj

Republika Hrvatska danas ima svega sedam poljoprivrednih proizvoda koje domaći proizvođači proizvode u dovoljnim količinama za zadovoljavanje potreba hrvatskog tržišta. Među tim rijetkim proizvodima su i jaja kokoši nesilica, što dovoljno govori o njihovoj važnosti za hrvatsku poljoprivredu.

U Hrvatskoj je trenutačno registrirano oko 170 farmi za proizvodnju kokošjih jaja s ukupnim kapacitetom od 2,4 milijuna nesilica. Zasad samo 9 farmi s ukupnim kapacitetom od 606 930 kokoši uzgaja nesilice u obogaćenom kaveznom uzgoju prema standardima EU-a.

Prijelazno razdoblje od samo godinu dana za prilagodbu novim standardima predstavlja najveći problem za hrvatske proizvođače jaja jer je u jeku teške ekonomske krize u Hrvatskoj gotovo nemoguće prilagoditi proizvodne kapacitete u tako kratkom roku.

Zagovaram poštovanje ugovorenog kroz proces pristupanja Republike Hrvatske Europskoj uniji, no svejedno smatram da moramo pomoći hrvatskim proizvođačima jaja kako bi bili u ravnopravnom položaju sa svojim europskim kolegama.

Stoga želim pitati Komisiju postoji li mogućnost da se prijelazno razdoblje za prilagodbu hrvatskih proizvođača jaja novim standardima ipak produži zbog teških ekonomskih uvjeta i značajnih tehničkih zahtjeva koji su stavljeni pred njih. Također me zanima može li Komisija preporučiti najbolji način za povlačenje novca iz fondova EU-a u takvim slučajevima.

Odgovor g. Borga u ime Komisije
(12. veljače 2014.)

Od 1. siječnja 2012. zabranjuje se, u skladu s člankom 5. stavkom 2. Direktive Vijeća 1999/74/EZ ([1]) o minimalnim uvjetima za zaštitu kokoši nesilica, uzgoj u neobogaćenim kavezima. Zahtjevi za obogaćene kaveze utvrđeni su člankom 6. Moguće prijelazno razdoblje za odstupanje od članka 6. bilo je jedna od točaka o kojima se raspravljalo tijekom pretpristupnih pregovora između Hrvatske i EU-a.

Dogovorom koji je postignut i unesen u odjeljak 5.I. Priloga V. Aktu o pristupanju Hrvatske dopušta se Hrvatskoj držanje kokoši nesilica koje su u fazi proizvodnje na dan pristupanja u kavezima koji nisu usklađeni s člankom 6. Direktive u trajanju od najviše 12 mjeseci nakon pristupanja, odnosno do 1. srpnja 2014.

Direktivom 1999/74/EZ nije predviđena mogućnost da države članice propisuju uvjete za zaštitu kokoši nesilica koji su blaži od uvjeta koje sadržava Direktiva. Bilo koju odluku kojom se država članica oslobađa pravnih obveza u okviru Direktive može donijeti samo zakonodavac.

Bude li uvrštena u program ruralnog razvoja Hrvatske 2014. — 2020., na temelju Uredbe o EPFRR-u ([2]), potpora poljoprivrednicima može se odobriti za ulaganja radi usklađivanja s propisima EU-a u razdoblju od najviše 12 mjeseci od dana kada ti propisi postanu obvezujući za poljoprivredno gospodarstvo.

([1]) SL L 203, 3.8.1999., str. 53.
([2]) SL L 347, 20.12.2013., str. 21.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012996/13
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Future of poultry farming in Croatia

There are currently seven agricultural products which Croatian farmers produce in sufficient quantities to satisfy demand on the Croatian marketplace. This short list of products includes hens' eggs, which illustrates their importance for the Croatian agricultural sector.

There are at present some 170 registered farms producing hens' eggs, with a total capacity of 2.4 million laying hens. Currently only nine farms, with a total capacity of 606 930 hens, are raising laying hens in enriched cages in accordance with EU standards.

The transition period of just one year for adapting to the new standards is the greatest problem facing Croatian egg producers, as it is almost impossible in the midst of the current economic crisis in Croatia to adapt production capacities in such a short timeframe.

I support adhering to what was agreed during Croatia's EU accession process, but I nonetheless feel that we must help Croatian egg producers to attain a level playing field with their counterparts in other Member States.

I therefore ask the Commission: is there a possibility of extending the transition period for Croatian egg producers to adapt to the new standards in view of the negative economic situation and the significant technical demands being made upon producers? Can the Commission recommend the best way to draw on EU funds in such circumstances?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2014)

According to Article 5(2) of Council Directive 1999/74/EC ([1]) laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, rearing in unenriched cages is prohibited from 1 January 2012. Article 6 of the directive lays down the requirements for enriched cages. A possible transitional period for a derogation from Article 6 was one of the items discussed between Croatia and the EU during the pre-accession negotiations.

The agreement reached and enshrined in Section 5(I) of Annex V to the Act of Accession of Croatia allows Croatia to keep laying hens in lay at the date of the accession in cages which do not comply with Article 6 of the directive for a period of maximum 12 months after accession, i.e. until 1 July 2014.

Directive 1999/74/EC does not provide for the possibility that Member States establish less stringent conditions for the protection of laying hens than the ones contained in the directive. Any decision to relieve Member States of their legal obligations under the directive can only be taken by the legislator.

Provided that it is inserted in the Croatian Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, under the EAFRD Regulation ([2]), support for farmers may be granted for investments to comply with EU legislation requirements for a maximum of 12 months from the date on which they become mandatory for the agricultural holding.

([1]) OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p.53.
([2]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p.21.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013002/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Caso Roberto Berardi: verifiche su violazione dei diritti fondamentali da parte della Guinea Equatoriale nei confronti dell'imprenditore italiano

Roberto Berardi, cittadino italiano e imprenditore edile in Africa da molti anni, vive da circa un anno un'esperienza drammatica nella Repubblica di Guinea Equatoriale dove ha fondato un'impresa, la Eloba Costruccion. Secondo quanto riferisce la famiglia, in base ad una consuetudine locale ogni imprenditore straniero deve associarsi con un partner locale, e in questo caso l'interesse verso la sua impresa è stato espresso da Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue, socio al 60 %, nonché figlio del Presidente della Guinea Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mbasogo. La situazione finanziaria dell'impresa non avrebbe presentato alcuna anomalia fino a quando il Sig. Berardi non ha notato irregolarità contabili e movimentazioni sui conti bancari, di cui non era a conoscenza. Pertanto, avrebbe richiesto chiarimenti al socio, senza ottenere nessuna risposta. Al contrario, nella notte del 19 gennaio 2013, è stato prelevato da casa sua e tradotto in carcere. Successivamente, il sig. Berardi ha beneficiato degli arresti domiciliari tra l'11 febbraio e il 6 marzo e infine è stato condannato e rinchiuso nella prigione di Bata. Il 26 agosto scorso, infatti, è stato condannato a 2 anni e 4 mesi di reclusione o al pagamento di 1,2 milioni di euro d'ammenda. Una cifra che il sig. Berardi e la sua famiglia non possiedono. Secondo quanto riferisce la famiglia, allo stato attuale il Sig. Berardi è detenuto in condizioni disumane, senza poter ricevere cure mediche né un'alimentazione sufficiente e risulterebbe persino sottoposto a maltrattamenti e abusi.

Ciò premesso, e considerando che, sulla base delle informazioni ricevute dalla famiglia, questa persona sembrerebbe in una situazione di palese violazione dei diritti fondamentali, si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante:

1. se è al corrente della situazione su esposta;

2. se intende intervenire in questa vicenda e chiedere delucidazioni al governo della Guinea Equatoriale;

3. se ritiene di intervenire, tenuto presente che un cittadino europeo in questo momento è vittima di trattamenti disumani e degradanti che violano la sua dignità, l'integrità fisica e psichica e la sua libertà e sicurezza.

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2014)

L'UE è al corrente della situazione del signor Berardi, ma non avendo una delegazione nella Guinea equatoriale deve fare affidamento sulle rappresentanze degli Stati membri in loco. Il Consolato Generale di Spagna a Bata (Guinea equatoriale) offre assistenza consolare al signor Berardi e ha organizzato numerose visite in carcere.

L'UE sta seguendo la vicenda e presterà particolare attenzione all'imparzialità di eventuali procedimenti giudiziari. L'Ambasciata d'Italia a Yaoundé (Camerun) rappresenta il punto di contatto per ulteriori informazioni specifiche in merito al caso del signor Berardi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013002/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The case of Roberto Berardi: the need to establish whether the Italian entrepreneur's fundamental rights have been violated by Equatorial Guinea

Roberto Berardi, an Italian citizen, has worked as a building contractor in Africa for many years. For about a year now, he has found himself in a terrible situation in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, where he set up a company, Eloba Costruccion. According to his family, a local custom dictates that every foreign entrepreneur must link up with a local partner, and in this case an interest was expressed in his company by Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue, a partner with a 60% holding and the son of the President of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mbasogo. There were no anomalies in the company's financial situation until Mr Berardi noticed accounting irregularities and bank account transactions of which he was unaware. He therefore asked for clarification from his partner, but received no response. Instead, he was taken from his home during the night of 19 January 2013 and put in prison. Mr Berardi was subsequently placed under house arrest from 11 February to 6 March before finally being convicted and jailed at the prison in Bata. On 26 August, the court ruled that he should serve 2 years and 4 months in prison or pay a EUR 1.2 million fine. Mr Berardi and his family simply do not have that kind of money. According to his family, Mr Berardi is currently being held in inhuman conditions, without sufficient food or access to medical treatment. They say that he is even being subjected to ill-treatment and abuse.

In light of the above, and given the information received from his family, which suggests that this person's fundamental rights are clearly being violated, could the High Representative state:

1. whether she is aware of the situation outlined above;

2. whether she intends to intervene in this situation and request clarification from the Government of Equatorial Guinea;

3. whether she believes it necessary to intervene, given that a European citizen is currently the victim of inhuman and degrading treatment which violates his dignity, physical and mental integrity, freedom and safety?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

The EU is aware of the situation of Mr Berardi. The EU has no Delegation in Equatorial Guinea and has to rely on Member States' representations locally. The Consulate General of Spain in Bata, Equatorial Guinea, has been granting Mr Berardi consular assistance and has paid him several visits in detention.

The EU is following the case and will pay particular attention to the fairness of any legal proceedings. The Embassy of Italy in Yaoundé, Cameroon, is the contact point for further specific information regarding the case of Mr Berardi.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013018/13
an die Kommission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(15. November 2013)

Betrifft: Anfrage zur Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2008/120/EG des Rates über Mindestanforderungen für den Schutz von Schweinen

1. Kann die Kommission Auskunft über den Sachstand der Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2008/120/EG über Mindestanforderungen bezüglich des Schutzes von Schweinen geben? Für den Bereich der Schweinehaltung/Sauenhaltung sind die Übergangsregelungen Ende 2012 ausgelaufen. Von daher wäre es interessant zu wissen, welche Mitgliedstaaten die Umsetzung noch immer nicht vorschriftsgemäß abgeschlossen haben.

2. Welche Maßnahmen hat die Kommission ergriffen/wird die Kommission ergreifen bezüglich derjenigen Mitgliedstaaten, die die Umsetzung noch nicht vollständig vollzogen haben?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(23. Januar 2014)

Alle Mitgliedstaaten haben die Richtlinie 2008/120/EG ([1]) vollständig in nationales Recht umgesetzt.

Bezüglich der Einhaltung der Richtlinie verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-9599/2013, E-10960/2013 und E-10593/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Richtlinie 2008/120/EG des Rates vom 18. Dezember 2008 über Mindestanforderungen für den Schutz von Schweinen (ABl. L 47 vom 18.2.2009, S. 5).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013018/13
to the Commission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Question concerning the transposition of Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs

1. Can the Commission provide information concerning the status of the transposition of Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs? The transitional arrangements relating to keeping pigs/sows expired at the end of 2012. It would therefore be interesting to know which Member States have not yet completed the transposition in accordance with the requirements.

2. What steps has the Commission taken/will it take in respect of those Member States that have not yet fully transposed the directive?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

All the Member States have transposed completely Directive 2008/120/EC ([1]) into their national legal orders.

As far as compliance with the directive is concerned, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-9599/2013, E-10960/2013 and E-10593/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC of 18 December 2008 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs, OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013019/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αξιολόγηση του μνημονίου συνεργασίας Frontex-Τουρκίας

Πριν από περίπου ενάμιση έτος (28.5.2012) υπογράφηκε μεταξύ της υπηρεσίας Frontex και της Τουρκίας Μνημόνιο κατανόησης το οποίο προέβλεπε αυξημένη συνεργασία των δύο μερών για την καταπολέμηση της παράνομης μετανάστευσης και περιλάμβανε μια σειρά από προβλέψεις όπως κοινές δράσεις, εκπαίδευση, ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών και άλλα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για το κατά πόσον αυτές οι διακηρύξεις έχουν μέχρι σήμερα πρακτική εφαρμογή; Μπορεί να μου παραθέσει συγκεκριμένες κοινές δράσεις που έλαβαν χώρα στο πλαίσιο του μνημονίου;

2. Δηλώνει ικανοποιημένη η Επιτροπή από την μέχρι σήμερα υλοποίηση του μνημονίου κατανόησης;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή ζήτησε από τον οργανισμό Frontex να απαντήσει στο ερώτημα που έθεσε ο κ. βουλευτής. Η Επιτροπή θα αποστείλει στον κ. βουλευτή την απάντηση του οργανισμού το συντομότερο δυνατόν.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013019/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Assessment of Frontex-Turkey memorandum of understanding on cooperation

Almost 18 months ago (28 May 2012), a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Frontex agency and Turkey, providing for increased cooperation between the two parties to combat illegal immigration, incorporating a series of provisions such as joint actions, training, information sharing and others.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Can it provide information on the extent to which these declarations have been implemented in practice? Can it provide information about specific joint actions that have taken place within the framework of the memorandum?

2. Can the Commission state whether it is satisfied with the implementation to date of the memorandum of understanding?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2014)

The Commission has asked Frontex to provide a response to the question raised by the Honourable Member. The Agency's reply will be sent by the Commission to the Honourable Member as soon as possible.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013020/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άξονας «Αειφόρος Ανάπτυξη και βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής» στο Π.Ε.Π. Αττικής

Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία της ειδικής Υπηρεσίας Ολοκληρωμένου Πληροφοριακού Συστήματος του Ελληνικού Υπουργείου Ανάπτυξης και Ανταγωνιστικότητας, η αξιοποίηση κοινοτικών πόρων για τον άξονα «Αειφόρος Ανάπτυξη και βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής» του Π.Ε.Π. Αττικής δεν ξεπερνά σήμερα το 30,23%.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τους λόγους της αναντιστοιχίας του ποσοστού αξιοποίησης των πόρων από το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα σε σχέση με τα υπόλοιπα περιφερειακά προγράμματα;

2. Στο πλαίσιο των ενεργειών της ομάδας δράσης που δραστηριοποιείται στην Ελλάδα. έχει υπάρξει συζήτηση και προσπάθειες προόδου για το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1. Με βάση τις τελευταίες πληροφορίες που έστειλαν οι ελληνικές αρχές, στις 30 Νοεμβρίου 2013, οι επιλέξιμες πληρωμές ανήλθαν σε 310 εκατ. ευρώ ή αλλιώς στο 36% των διαθέσιμων δημόσιων ταμείων. Οι ελληνικές αρχές αναμένουν ποσοστό αξιοποίησης των πόρων της τάξης του 40% κατά τα τέλη Δεκεμβρίου. Η κύρια αιτία για το χαμηλότερο ποσοστό απορρόφησης είναι η αργή πρόοδος πολλών έργων που αφορούν το περιβάλλον, τα στερεά απόβλητα και τα κέντρα επεξεργασίας αποβλήτων (ΚΕΑ) — ιδίως το ΚΕΑ στο Κορωπί, Παιανία. Η περαιτέρω βελτίωση των ποσοστών απορρόφησης αναμένεται κατά το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2014 όταν η κατασκευή του ΚΕΑ στο Κορωπί στην Παιανία θα είναι σε πλήρη εξέλιξη, όπως και τα έργα στον τομέα της αντιπλημμυρικής προστασίας.

2. Η ομάδα δράσης της Επιτροπής για την Ελλάδα παρέχει βοήθεια στις ελληνικές αρχές που έχουν άμεση επίδραση στην υλοποίηση των παρεμβάσεων του εθνικού στρατηγικού πλαισίου αναφοράς και δεν εμπλέκονται σε συγκεκριμένα προγράμματα ή έργα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013020/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: 'Sustainable development and improved quality of life' priority axis in Attica Regional Operational Programme

According to information from the Special Department of Integrated IT Systems at the Greek Ministry of Development and Competitiveness, the take-up of Community resources for the 'Sustainable development and improved quality of life' priority axis under the Attica Regional Operational Programme does not exceed 30.23% at present.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it able to explain why the take-up rate of resources for this particular programme does not correlate with the take-up rate for other regional programmes?

2. Has this particular programme been discussed and have efforts been made to achieve progress within the framework of action by the task force working in Greece?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

1. On the basis of the latest information received from the Greek authorities, on 30 November 2013 the eligible payments amounted to EUR 310 million or 36% of available public funds. The Greek authorities expect a take-up rate of 40% at the end of December. The main reason for the lower absorption rate is the slow progress of several projects concerning the environment and solid waste and waste water treatment plants (WWTP) — in particular the WWTP Koropi Peania. A further improvement in absorption rates is expected in the first half of 2014 when the construction of the WWTP Koropi Peania will be fully under way as well as projects in the field of flood protection works.

2. The Commission's Task Force for Greece is providing assistance to the Greek authorities that have a direct impact on the implementation of National Strategic Reference Framework interventions and is not necessarily involved in specific programmes or projects.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013022/13
do Komisji
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(15 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Pomoc finansowa dla Ukrainy

Obecna sytuacja budżetowa Ukrainy oraz rozwój stosunków tego kraju z Rosją w odniesieniu do kwestii gazowych wyraźnie pokazują, że bez dodatkowych środków Ukraina nie będzie w stanie rozwiązać swoich problemów finansowych. Zniweczy to nadzieje na układ o stowarzyszeniu, nawet jeżeli Ukraina spełni wszystkie odpowiednie wymagania.

Czy Komisja dostrzega możliwość zaangażowania międzynarodowych instytucji finansowych, takich jak Międzynarodowy Fundusz Walutowy oraz Europejski Bank Odbudowy i Rozwoju, w celu udzielenia Ukrainie pomocy finansowej, aby mogła ona wdrożyć reformy związane z podpisaniem układu o stowarzyszeniu? Jeżeli tak – jak wyglądałyby ramy czasowe w odniesieniu do takiego zaangażowania i pomocy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Štefana Fülego w imieniu Komisji
(22 stycznia 2014 r.)

Decyzja w sprawie zawieszenia procesu przygotowania do podpisania układu o stowarzyszeniu między UE a Ukrainą została podjęta przez rząd Ukrainy z własnej inicjatywy. Przyjmujemy do wiadomości wyjaśnienie przedstawione w stosownym dekrecie rządowym, że na decyzję tę wpłynęły względy bezpieczeństwa krajowego oraz chęć wznowienia stosunków handlowych z Federacją Rosyjską, które w ciągu ostatnich miesięcy uległy znacznemu pogorszeniu.

UE jest gotowa do podpisania układu o stowarzyszeniu z Ukrainą z chwilą wyrażenia przez Ukrainę takiej gotowości. W celu wsparcia tego procesu UE jest otwarta na omówienie różnych aspektów realizacji układu z Ukrainą oraz szczegółowego wyjaśnienia związanych z nim konkretnych, znacznych korzyści. Jednocześnie nie może być mowy o renegocjowaniu układu lub o przyznawaniu rekompensat Ukrainie.

Układ określa ramy niektórych inwestycji, które Ukraina będzie musiała podjąć, jeśli poważnie traktuje kwestię zobowiązań podjętych w zakresie modernizacji. Wszystkie modele ekonomiczne pokazują, że modernizacja i inwestycje idą w parze. UE jest gotowa do udzielenia Ukrainie pomocy i wsparcia w związku z modernizacją, w tym przez zwiększenie pożyczek MFW ze wsparciem makrofinansowym, jeśli warunki MFW zostaną spełnione, i intensyfikację programów pomocy finansowej UE mających na celu wsparcie Ukrainy w zakresie realizacji układu, jeżeli zostanie on podpisany. Działania te przyczyniłyby się to do poprawy stanu ukraińskiej gospodarki.

Podjęcie przez Ukrainę zobowiązania do podążania ścieżką modernizacji, którego odzwierciedleniem jest układ, stanowiłoby również wyraźny sygnał umacniający zaufanie międzynarodowych instytucji finansowych. Jesteśmy przekonani, że podpisanie układu przyczyniłoby się do zwiększenia tempa rozwoju ze względu na pożyczki i inwestycje na dużą skalę. Szczególne znaczenie ma nowa promesa kredytowa MFW, w odniesieniu do której Komisja popiera intensyfikację przygotowań ze strony MFW.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013022/13
to the Commission
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Financial help for Ukraine

The current situation with regard to the budget in Ukraine and developments in the country's relationship with Russia on gas issues show very clearly that without any additional funding Ukraine will not be able to resolve its financial problems. This will all but dash hopes for an association agreement, even if Ukraine meets all the relevant requirements.

Does Commission see a possibility for the involvement of international financial institutions such as the IMF and the EBRD with a view to providing financial assistance to help Ukraine implement reforms connected with the signing of the association agreement? If so, what would the timeframe for such involvement and assistance be?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2014)

The decision to suspend the process of preparation for signature of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was taken by the Ukrainian Government on its own initiative. We take note of the explanation provided in the relevant government decree that the decision was motivated by national security considerations and by the wish to renew the trade lost over the last months with the Russian Federation.

The EU is ready to sign the Association Agreement with Ukraine once Ukraine is ready. To support this process, the EU remains open to discuss various aspects of the implementation of the Agreement with Ukraine and explain in detail the very concrete substantial benefits it will bring. At the same time, there can be no talks about re-negotiating the Agreement or about giving compensation to Ukraine.

The Agreement is a framework for some of the investments that Ukraine will have to take if it is serious about its modernisation pledge. All economic models show that modernisation and investment go hand-in-hand. The EU stands ready to help and support Ukraine on its modernisation journey, including by topping up IMF loans with macro-financial assistance, if IMF conditions are met, and by stepping up the EU's financial assistance programmes to help Ukraine implement the Agreement, if it is signed. This would contribute to improve the Ukrainian economy.

Ukraine's commitment to the path of modernisation that the Agreement represents would also send a strong signal of confidence to International Financial Institutions. We are confident that the Agreement would bring momentum and result in significant, large-scale loans and investments. A new IMF Stand-By Arrangement is particular relevant and the Commission is supportive of the IMF to intensify preparations.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013025/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(15 november 2013)

Betreft: Plannen van de Commissie om Nederland onrechtmatig te straffen

Op 13 november 2013 publiceerde de Nederlandse krant *Trouw* een artikel ([1]) waarin bekend werd gemaakt dat de Commissie van plan is de Nederlandse economie te controleren, wegens de onevenwichtigheden die deze zou vertonen. Volgens de Commissie bestaat een van deze onevenwichtigheden in het grote handelsoverschot van het land, vooral het gevolg van de uitvoer van aardgas en van de positieve bijdrage van wederuitvoer. Het grote handelsoverschot kan evenwel in de eerste plaats worden verklaard door de aanwezigheid van de grootste Europese haven, Rotterdam, die niet kan worden verplaatst of ingekrompen. Voorts is het recht van de lidstaten om energiebronnen te exploiteren volledig gegarandeerd door artikel 194 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie (VWEU).

Kan de Commissie in het licht van het bovenstaande de volgende vragen beantwoorden:

1. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat een beperking van de Nederlandse uitvoer van aardgas en van de Nederlandse wederuitvoer van goederen een schending zou zijn van het fundamentele beginsel van vrij verkeer van goederen binnen de gemeenschappelijke markt, dat beschermd is door artikel 26 van het VWEU, alsmede door artikel 35 van het VWEU, op grond waarvan „kwantitatieve uitvoerbeperkingen en alle maatregelen van gelijke werking (…) tussen de lidstaten verboden [zijn]" ([2])?

2. Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat elke beperking van de Nederlandse uitvoer van aardgas daarentegen een negatief effect kan hebben op „het recht van een lidstaat de voorwaarden voor de exploitatie van zijn energiebronnen te bepalen", dat is beschermd door artikel 194 van het VWEU?

3. Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat elke beperking van de Nederlandse wederuitvoer ernstig de levensvatbaarheid zou ondermijnen van diverse economische sectoren, met name de transportsector, alsmede de welvaart van grote steden in Nederland, zoals Rotterdam?

4. Welke specifieke actie en/of initiatieven is de Commissie van plan te ondernemen? Zal zij voorstellen de grootste Europese haven, Rotterdam, te verplaatsen of in te krimpen?

5. Kan de Commissie verduidelijken of Nederland, net als Duitsland, wordt gestraft voor zijn economische succes?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(17 januari 2014)

De procedure bij macro-economische onevenwichtigheden is een toezichtmechanisme waarmee wordt beoogd potentiële risico's in een vroeg stadium te detecteren, het ontstaan van schadelijke macro-economische onevenwichtigheden te voorkomen, en bestaande onevenwichtigheden te corrigeren.

In de diepgaande evaluatie van 2013 voor Nederland ([3]) komt de Commissie tot de volgende conclusie: Nederland wordt *geconfronteerd met macro-economische onevenwichtigheden die in het oog moeten worden gehouden en een beleidsoptreden verdienen*. Met name bepaalde macro-economische ontwikkelingen ten aanzien van de schuld van de particuliere sector en de druk om deze af te bouwen, in combinatie met nog bestaande inefficiënties op de woningmarkt, verdienen aandacht. Hoewel aan het grote overschot op de lopende rekening geen risico's verbonden zijn die vergelijkbaar zijn met de risico's die met grote tekorten samenhangen, zal de Commissie ook de ontwikkeling van de lopende rekening van Nederland nauwlettend blijven volgen.

In het geactualiseerde scorebord voor Nederland dat in het waarschuwingsmechanismeverslag (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0790:FIN:NL:PDF) is opgenomen, overschrijdt een aantal indicatoren hun indicatieve drempelwaarde. Dat geldt onder meer voor het overschot op de lopende rekening.

([1]) http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4496/Buitenland/article/detail/3544111/2013/11/13/Brussel-gaat-Duits-handelsoverschot-onderzoeken.dhtml.

([2]) Arrest van het Hof van Justitie van de Europese Unie van 25 juni 1997, zaak C-114/96, Kieffer en Thill, Jurispr. blz. I-3629, punt 27: „Volgens vaste rechtspraak geldt het verbod van kwantitatieve beperkingen en maatregelen van gelijke werking niet enkel voor nationale maatregelen, maar evenzeer voor maatregelen die van de gemeenschapsinstellingen uitgaan (zie in deze zin, onder meer, arresten van 17 mei 1984, zaak 15/83, Denkavit Nederland, Jurispr. 1984, blz. 2171, r.o. 15, en 9 augustus 1994, zaak C-51/93, Meyhui, Jurispr. 1994, blz. I-3879, r.o. 11)".

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/op140_en.htm

De volgende diepgaande evaluatie van Nederland is gepland voor het voorjaar van 2014.

De Commissie staat hoe dan ook volledig achter het grondbeginsel van het vrije verkeer van goederen, diensten, kapitaal en personen binnen de EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013025/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: The Commission plans to punish the Netherlands illegally

On 13 November 2013 the Dutch newspaper *Trouw* published an article ([1]) stating that the Commission is set to monitor the Dutch economy owing to alleged imbalances within it. The Commission pointed out that one such imbalance is the large trade surplus the country has, which is mainly the result of natural gas exports and the positive contribution of re-exports. However, the large trade surplus can primarily be explained by the presence of the largest port in Europe, Rotterdam, which cannot be moved or downsized. Furthermore, the right of Member States to exploit energy resources is fully guaranteed under Article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

In the light of this:

1. Does the Commission agree that restricting Dutch exports of natural gas and re-exports of goods would violate the fundamental principle of free movement of goods in the internal market, as enshrined in Article 26 TFEU as well as Article 35 TFEU, according to which 'quantitative restrictions on exports, and all measures having equivalent effect, shall be prohibited between Member States' ([2])?

2. Is the Commission aware that any restriction of Dutch exports of natural gas could, in turn, actually have an adverse effect on a Member State's 'right to determine the conditions for exploiting its energy resources', as enshrined in Article 194 TFEU?

3. Is the Commission aware that any restriction on Dutch re-exports would seriously undermine the viability of several economic sectors, in particular transport, as well as the economic wellbeing of major cities in the Netherlands, such as Rotterdam?

4. What specific actions and/or initiatives is the Commission planning? Will the Commission propose moving or downsizing the largest port in Europe, Rotterdam?

5. Can the Commission clarify whether the Netherlands, like Germany, is being punished for its economic success?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) is a surveillance mechanism that aims to identify potential risks early on, prevent the emergence of harmful macroeconomic imbalances and correct existing imbalances.

In the 2013 in-depth review for the Netherlands ([3]), the Commission concludes that 'The Netherlands is experiencing macroeconomic imbalances, which deserve monitoring and policy action. In particular, macroeconomic developments regarding private sector debt and deleveraging pressures, also coupled with remaining inefficiencies in the housing market deserve attention. Although the large current account surplus does not raise risks similar to large deficits, the Commission will also continue monitoring the developments of the current account in the Netherlands.'

In the updated scoreboard of the Netherlands in the Alert Mechanism Report (http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/amr2014_en.pdf), a number of indicators are beyond their indicative thresholds, amongst which the current account surplus.

The next in-depth review for the Netherlands is due in spring 2014.

In any case the Commission fully underpins the fundamental principle of free movement of goods, services, capital and persons within the EU.

([1]) http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4496/Buitenland/article/detail/3544111/2013/11/13/Brussel-gaat-Duits-handelsoverschot-onderzoeken.dhtml

([2]) European Court of Justice, Case C-114/96 Criminal proceedings against Kieffer and Thill [1997] ECR I-3629, paragraph 27: 'It is settled law that the prohibition of quantitative restrictions and of all measures having equivalent effect applies not only to national measures but also to measures adopted by the Community institutions (see in particular to this effect Case 15/83 Denkavit NederUnd v Hoofdproduktschap voor Akkerbouwprodukten [1984] ECR 2171, paragraph 15, and Case C-51/93 Meyhui v Schott Zwiesel GUswerke [1994] ECR 1-3879, paragraph 11)'.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/op140_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-013028/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 november 2013)

Angående: Leasing eller köp för slutanvändare av exklusiv elektronik

Om det kom till kommissionens kännedom att användningen av en viss programvara skulle leda till att en apparat (eller en del av en apparat) som en slutanvändare har köpt endast skulle fungera om slutanvändaren går via en försäljare (eller via någon som står i förbindelse med en försäljare) av apparaten eller programvaran, via internet och mot ytterligare betalning för att använda apparaten, skulle kommissionen ändå anse att sådana apparater kan säljas som produkter till slutanvändare? Eller skulle kommissionen snarare anse att det i praktiken rör sig om ett leasingarrangemang, eftersom användaren inte har möjlighet att använda apparatens alla funktioner?

Svar från Viviane Reding på kommissionens vägnar
(20 januari 2014)

Kommissionen skulle betrakta ett sådant avtal som ett köpeavtal för en produkt, eftersom äganderätten till apparaten övergår till konsumenten. Ett köpeavtal kan mycket väl förutsätta att ett separat tjänsteavtal måste ingås för att produkten ska kunna användas. Detta är till exempel fallet när man köper en mobiltelefon.

Medlagstiftarna har definierat begreppet köpeavtal i artikel 2.5 i direktiv 2011/83/EU om konsumenträttigheter som ”varje avtal där näringsidkaren överlåter eller åtar sig att överlåta äganderätten till varan till konsumenten och där konsumenten betalar eller åtar sig att betala priset för denna, inbegripet avtal där avtalsföremålet är både varor och tjänster”.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013028/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Leasing or purchasing for end-consumers in high-end electronics

If it became known to the Commission that a particular software implementation would cause a device or component of a device purchased by an end-consumer to be usable only if the end-consumer goes through a vendor, or someone connected to a vendor, of the device or of the software implementation, via the Internet and subject to additional payment for using the device, would it still consider such devices to be saleable to end-consumers as products? Or would it, rather, consider that the lack of freedom for the user to make use of the full functionalities of the device had in fact created a leasing arrangement?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

The Commission would consider such a contract as one for the sale of a product, as the ownership of the device is transferred to the consumer. A sales contract may very well require the conclusion of a separate service contract in order for the product to be usable. This is for instance the case for purchases for a mobile telephone handset.

The co-legislators have indeed defined the notion of sales contract in Article 5(2) of the directive 2011/83/EU on Consumer Rights as 'any contract under which the trader transfers or undertakes to transfer the ownership of goods to the consumer and the consumer pays or undertakes to pay the price thereof, including any contract having as its object both goods and services'.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013029/13
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(15 november 2013)

Betreft: Duurzaamheid en efficiënt gebruik van hulpbronnen in de bouwsector

Het stappenplan van de Commissie voor een efficiënt hulpbronnengebruik in Europa omvat de volgende mijlpaal:

„Tegen 2020 zullen de renovatie en bouw van gebouwen en infrastructuur met grote efficiëntie verlopen. De levenscyclusbenadering zal overal worden toegepast; alle nieuwe gebouwen zullen bijna-energieneutrale gebouwen zijn en beleidsmaatregelen voor de renovatie van het bestaande woningbestand zullen beschikbaar zijn zodat bestaande woningen worden gerenoveerd aan een tempo van 2 % per jaar. 70 % van het niet-gevaarlijke bouw- en sloopafval zal worden gerecycled".

Ondanks deze mijlpaal lijkt de Commissie voor gebouwen en bouwproducten evenwel een aanpak te volgen op basis van producten. Tekenend in dit opzicht zijn initiatieven als de milieuvoetafdruk van producten, ecologisch ontwerp en de milieukeur. Hoewel zij belangrijk zijn om de diverse betrokkenen te helpen bij hun keuze voor duurzame producten, leiden deze initiatieven niet noodzakelijk altijd tot de meest duurzame gebouwen, als gevolg van het feit dat geen rekening wordt gehouden met de levenscyclus van het gebouw, maar in plaats hiervan wordt gefocust op de voor de bouw gebruikte producten.

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat gebouwen duurzamer zouden zijn, als we zowel rekening hielden met de gebruikte producten als met de levenscyclus van het gebouw? Is de Commissie van mening dat milieuproductverklaringen en milieuvoetafdrukken van producten complementaire instrumenten zijn, die naast elkaar kunnen functioneren? Zo ja, is zij bijgevolg niet van mening dat zij niet met elkaar verenigbaar zijn, wat de methode betreft en op het gebied van het gebruik van milieugegevens?

Als reactie op een in 2004 geformuleerd verzoek van DG Ondernemingen heeft het Europees Comité voor Normalisatie een reeks normen gepubliceerd (CEN TC350) om de duurzaamheid van gebouwen te beoordelen en de ecologische parameters van bouwproducten te bepalen die nodig zijn om gebouwen te beoordelen door middel van milieuproductverklaringen, op basis van het concept van de levenscyclusbeoordeling. Waarom worden deze bestaande Europese normen niet toegepast binnen de gemeenschappelijke Europese markt voor groene producten en in het kader van de activiteiten van de Commissie in verband met hulpbronnenefficiëntie in de bouwsector?

Is de Commissie bereid richtsnoeren op te stellen voor de vereisten in punt 7 van bijlage I bij de bouwproductenverordening (Verordening (EU) nr. 305/2011)? Zo nee, waarom niet? Zo ja, binnen welk tijdsbestek kunnen deze richtsnoeren worden verwacht?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(22 januari 2014)

De vermelde mijlpaal voor grote efficiëntie tegen 2020 wordt onderbouwd door EU-wetgeving. Meer in het bijzonder is in Richtlijn 2010/31/EU betreffende de energieprestatie van gebouwen (EPBD) bepaald dat alle nieuwe gebouwen tegen het einde van 2020 bijna-energieneutraal moeten zijn. Voor openbare gebouwen is de deadline eind 2018. Bovendien moeten op grond van de energie-efficiëntierichtlijn (Richtlijn 2012/27/EU) langetermijnstrategieën worden opgesteld voor de renovatie van het nationale gebouwenbestand. Dit beleid heeft zowel op gebouwen in het algemeen betrekking als op het nationale gebouwenbestand.

De Commissie werkt aan een initiatief inzake duurzame gebouwen om iets te doen aan het feit dat daarin op dit moment geen rekening wordt gehouden met de milieueffecten gedurende de levenscyclus, zoals de geïncorporeerde milieueffecten van bouwmaterialen of afvalpreventie en hergebruik. Met het initiatief worden gemeenschappelijke manieren voor de evaluatie van de milieuprestaties van gebouwen ontwikkeld en wordt de verzameling van betrouwbare en vergelijkbare gegevens vergemakkelijkt.

De Commissie erkent ook het belang van een efficiënt gebruik van hulpbronnen in de bouwsector. Het forum op hoog niveau van belanghebbenden en lidstaten is in het kader van de mededeling van de Commissie „Strategie voor het duurzame concurrentievermogen van de bouwsector en de ondernemingen in die sector" ([1]) bezig aanbevelingen op te stellen, onder meer ter verbetering van het efficiënt gebruik van hulpbronnen.

([1]) COM(2012) 433 final.

Het gebruik van Environmental Product Declarations (milieuverklaringen voor producten) wordt in de bouwproductenverordening ([2]) erkend en is gebaseerd op bestaande CEN-normen. De milieuvoetafdruk van producten is een meer recente methode die momenteel in de proeffase verkeert. Op de korte termijn, moeten milieuverklaringen voor producten en de betrokken Europese normen worden gebruikt als uitgangspunt voor de uitvoering van de betrokken bepalingen van de bouwproductenverordening.

([2]) Verordening (EU) nr. 305/2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013029/13
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Sustainability and resource efficiency in the construction sector

The Commission's Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe includes the following milestone:

'By 2020 the renovation and construction of buildings and infrastructure will be made to high resource efficiency levels. The Life-cycle approach will be widely applied; all new buildings will be nearly zero-energy and highly material efficient, and policies for renovating the existing building stock will be in place so that it is cost-efficiently refurbished at a rate of 2% per year. 70% of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste will be recycled.'

Despite this milestone, however, the Commission seems to be taking a product-based approach to buildings and construction products. This is reflected in initiatives such as the Product Environmental Footprint, Ecodesign, and the Ecolabel. Although important in helping the various stakeholders involved make sustainable product choices, these initiatives do not necessarily always result in the most sustainable buildings, as they do not take into account the life cycle of the building, focusing instead on the products used to build it.

Does the Commission agree that buildings would be more sustainable if we took into account both the products used and the life cycle of the building? Does the Commission think that Environmental Product Declarations and Product Environmental Footprints are complimentary tools that can function alongside each other? If so, does the Commission therefore not take the view that they are mutually incompatible in terms of method and in the use of environmental data?

In response to a request from DG Enterprise in 2004, the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) published a set of standards (CEN TC350) to assess the sustainability of buildings and to declare the environmental parameters of the building products necessary to assess buildings by means of Environmental Product Declarations, based on the life cycle assessment concept. Why are these existing European standards not applied in the European single market for green products and the Commission's activities connected with resource efficiency in the construction sector?

Is the Commission willing to provide guidance on the requirements laid down in point 7 of Annex I to the Construction Products Regulation ((EU) No 305/2011)? If not, why not? If so, within what timeframe can such guidance be expected?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2014)

The quoted milestone for high resource efficiency levels by 2020 is underpinned by EU legislation. More specifically, Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings (EPBD) requires all new buildings to be nearly zero-energy by the end of 2020. For public buildings, the deadline is end of 2018. In addition, the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) requires the definition of long term strategies for the renovation of the national buildings stock. These policies look at buildings as a whole and at the national building stock.

The Commission is working on an initiative on Sustainable buildings to tackle the current failure to consider life cycle environmental impacts such as embodied impacts in construction materials or waste prevention and reuse. The initiative will develop common ways of assessing the environmental performance of buildings and facilitate the development of reliable and comparable data.

The Commission also recognises the importance of resource efficiency in the construction sector. In the context of the Commission communication 'Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises' ([1]) the High Level Forum of stakeholders and Member States is preparing recommendations *inter alia* to improve resource efficiency.

The use of Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) is recognised in the Construction Products Regulation ([2]) and is based on established CEN standards. Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) is a more recent methodology currently in pilot phase. In the short term, EPDs and the respective European standards are to be used as the starting point for the implementation of the respective provisions of the Construction Products Regulation.

([1]) COM(2012) 433 final.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 305/2011.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013030/13
au Conseil
Jacky Hénin (GUE/NGL)
(15 novembre 2013)

Objet: Plateforme multimodale de Dourges

Comme l'a souligné le vif débat sur l'écotaxe en France, la nécessité de trouver des modes de transport alternatifs à la route pour le fret est au cœur des préoccupations. Pourtant le fret ferroviaire est en perte de vitesse à travers l'Union européenne du fait des différentes politiques de libéralisation menées de concert aux niveaux national et européen.

En France en 2002, 55 milliards de tonnes étaient transportées par le ferroviaire, en 2012 ce ne sont plus que 21,1 milliards de tonnes qui sont transportées, soit une baisse de plus de la moitié.

Après avoir laissé les entreprises ferroviaires verser des dividendes à leurs actionnaires, face à ces résultats désastreux, les pouvoirs publics se retrouvent dans l'obligation de renflouer le fret ferroviaire.

Mais la logique concurrentielle des politiques de libéralisation empêche à l'heure actuelle des investissements publics sur le fret menés de manière coordonnée par les États membres.

La plateforme de Dourges subit de plein fouet les conséquences de ces logiques concurrentielles.

Cette plateforme subit directement les impacts négatifs des politiques de libéralisation. Et elle est également victime d'une distorsion de la concurrence créée par l'infériorité des subventions françaises au fret ferroviaire (17 euros la tonne) par rapport aux subventions belges (80 euros la tonne).

Cette situation a pour effet de favoriser les transports d'Anvers, Zeebrugge et Rotterdam au détriment de Dunkerque. Ces distorsions ont en outre des effets négatifs pour l'environnement, créant une incitation à des trajets parfois plus longs mais moins coûteux pour le transporteur.

Face aux difficultés évidentes rencontrées par le fret ferroviaire et à l'impossibilité de mener des politiques de coopération dans le cadre des pratiques concurrentielles actuelles, qu'envisage le Conseil pour avancer vers une meilleure coopération des États permettant de rétablir le rôle crucial du ferroviaire dans le transport de fret?

Réponse
(27 janvier 2014)

Un règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil sur les orientations de l'Union pour le développement du réseau transeuropéen de transport (RTE-T) et un règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe (MIE) ont été adoptés le 5 décembre 2013.

Ces deux règlements amélioreront considérablement la coopération entre les États membres grâce à la création de corridors de réseau central qui mettront en œuvre le réseau central RET-T ainsi qu'au renforcement du rôle des coordonnateurs européens à cet égard.

En vertu du règlement relatif au MIE, il convient d'assurer, le cas échéant, l'alignement géographique des corridors pour le fret ferroviaire prévus par le règlement (UE) n° 913/2010 ([1]) et des corridors de réseau central afin de réduire la charge administrative et de rationaliser le développement et l'utilisation des infrastructures ferroviaires.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 913/2010 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 22 septembre 2010 relatif au réseau ferroviaire européen pour un fret compétitif (JO L 276 du 20.10.2010, p. 22).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013030/13
to the Council
Jacky Hénin (GUE/NGL)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Dourges multimodal terminal

As the lively debate on the eco-tax in France has highlighted, the need to find alternative modes of transport to road freight is a key concern. Rail freight, however, is losing momentum throughout the European Union due to the various liberalisation policies being pursued at both national and European level.

In 2002, 55 billion tonnes of freight were transported by rail in France. In 2012, it was just 21.1 billion tonnes, a decrease of more than half.

After having let the rail companies pay dividends to their shareholders, despite these disastrous figures, the public authorities find themselves forced to bail rail freight out.

However, the competitive nature of the liberalisation policies is currently preventing Member States from making public investments in freight in a coordinated manner.

The Dourges terminal has felt the brunt of this competitive approach.

This terminal has directly suffered from the negative impact of the liberalisation policies. It is also the victim of a distortion of competition created by French subsidies for rail freight (EUR 17 per tonne) being lower than Belgian subsidies (EUR 80 per tonne).

This situation has had the effect of favouring transportation from Antwerp, Zeebrugge and Rotterdam to the detriment of Dunkirk. These distortions are also having a detrimental effect on the environment, incentivising journeys which are sometimes longer but less costly for the haulage contractor.

In view of the obvious difficulties being encountered by rail freight and the impossibility of pursuing policies of cooperation in the context of current competitive practices, what does the Council plan to do in order to move towards better cooperation between Member States, to enable the crucial role of rail in freight transport to be re-established?

Reply
(27 January 2014)

A regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) and a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) were adopted on 5 December 2013.

Both these regulations will considerably improve the cooperation between Member States thanks to the creation of core network corridors which will implement the TEN-T core network, as well as the improved role of the European Coordinators in this respect.

According to the CEF regulation, the geographical alignment of rail freight corridors as provided for by Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 ([1]) and of core network corridors should be ensured, where appropriate, in order to reduce the administrative burden and streamline the development and use of the railway infrastructure.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight (OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 22).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013032/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Scuola di formazione «Nautilus Sub»: rilascio di attestati di qualifica professionale con validità europea

La «Nautilus Sub» è una scuola di formazione professionale fondata nel 1987, riconosciuta dalla legge quadro n. 845/1978 sulla formazione professionale, con sede a Roma (Italia), che rilascia il relativo attestato di qualifica professionale.

La suddetta scuola organizza molteplici corsi: subacquea, guarda spiaggia, operatore parchi marini, istruttore di nuoto, guardia parco, salvataggio, salvataggio con moto, archeologia subacquea, ecc.

La scuola tiene corsi, oltre che in Italia, in Gran Bretagna, Irlanda, Ungheria e in diversi paesi del nord Europa. Inoltre, ha ricevuto diversi riconoscimenti dalla Provincia di Roma e dalla Regione Lazio e intrattiene collaborazioni con diverse università tra cui l'Istituto Universitario di ricerca scientifica «Santa Rita».

Alla luce dell'importanza posta dall'Unione europea alla formazione professionale di qualità e ai princìpi sulla mobilità dei lavoratori, oltre che al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali (direttiva 2005/36/CE), può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se la scuola suddetta, considerato l'elevato livello di formazione offerta e i suoi elevati standard di qualità, possa essere abilitata a rilasciare una certificazione comunitaria e quindi direttamente valida sul territorio dell'UE;

2. Un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(28 gennaio 2014)

L'UE non ha il mandato per rilasciare qualifiche. Tuttavia, per aiutare i cittadini che desiderano studiare o lavorare oltre frontiera, essa ha promosso strumenti che consentono il raffronto e il riconoscimento delle qualifiche negli Stati membri. Ad esempio, il Quadro europeo delle qualifiche (QEQ) per l'apprendimento permanente rende possibile confrontare le qualifiche e attualmente questo strumento è stato posto in atto da ventuno Stati membri tra cui l'Italia.

Il riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali è disciplinato dalla direttiva 2005/36/CE ([1]), che è stata di recente ammodernata dalla direttiva 2013/55/UE (da attuarsi entro il 18 gennaio 2016) ([2]). Le due direttive si applicano al riconoscimento delle qualifiche con il fine di consentire l'accesso alle professioni regolamentate. Una professione è regolamentata quando l'accesso alla stessa è subordinato da leggi, regolamenti o disposizioni amministrative al possesso di una qualifica specifica. Pertanto, i detentori di qualifiche rilasciate dalla scuola «Nautilus Sub» che desiderino esercitare la loro professione in un altro Stato membro che regolamenta tale professione dovranno ottenere il riconoscimento delle loro qualifiche per essere autorizzati a praticare la loro professione in tale Stato membro. Se la professione non è regolamentata l'accesso è libero e non è necessario ottenere tale riconoscimento.

L'onorevole deputata sarà interessata a sapere che la Commissione ha avviato nel dicembre 2013 una consultazione pubblica sui problemi incontrati dai discenti e dai lavoratori. La consultazione riguarda la trasparenza e il riconoscimento delle abilità e delle qualifiche in relazione a trasferimenti tra i diversi Stati membri dell'UE, l'adeguatezza delle politiche e degli strumenti europei nel merito e i benefici potenziali che potrebbero derivare dallo sviluppo di uno «Spazio europeo delle abilità e delle qualifiche» ([3]).

([1]) Direttiva 2005/36/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 7 settembre 2005, relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali (GU L255/22 del 30/09/2005, pag. 22).

([2]) Direttiva 2013/55/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 novembre 2013, recante modifica della direttiva 2005/36/CE relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali e del regolamento (UE) n. 1024/2012 relativo alla cooperazione amministrativa attraverso il sistema di informazione del Mercato interno (regolamento IMI) (GU L354/132 del 28/12/2013, pag. 132).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/consult/skills-and-qualifications_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013032/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: The 'Nautilus Sub' training college: issuing of vocational certificates valid throughout Europe

The 'Nautilus Sub' is a vocational college founded in 1987 and recognised by Italian Framework Law No 845/1978 on vocational training. Its headquarters are located in Rome (Italy), from where the relevant vocational certificates are issued.

The college offers a range of courses, including scuba diving training, lifeguard training, marine park operator training, swimming instructor training, park ranger training, rescue training, PWC rescue training and underwater archaeology training.

It runs courses not only in Italy, but also in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Hungary and various countries in northern Europe. Furthermore, it has received several awards from the Province of Rome and the Lazio Region and has links with a range of universities, including the Santa Rita University Scientific Research Institute.

Given the importance the European Union attaches to high-quality vocational training and the principles of worker mobility, as well as the recognition of professional qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC), can the Commission:

1. say whether the aforementioned college could be authorised to issue a European Union certificate, valid throughout the EU, by virtue of the high level of training it offers and its high quality standards;

2. provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2014)

The EU does not have the mandate to award qualifications. Nevertheless, to support citizens who wish to study or work across borders, it has supported tools that enable the comparison and recognition of qualifications in Member States. For example, the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF) makes it possible to compare qualifications, and 21 Member States including Italy have implemented this tool by now.

The recognition of professional qualifications is regulated by Directive 2005/36/EC, ([1]) which has recently been modernised by Directive 2013/55/EU (to be implemented by 18 January 2016). ([2]) The two Directives apply to the recognition of qualifications with a view to enabling access to regulated professions. A profession is regulated when access to it is subordinated by law, regulation or administrative provisions to the possession of a specific qualification. Therefore, holders of qualifications awarded by the 'Nautilus Sub' college, who wish to exercise their profession in another Member State regulating this profession, will have to obtain recognition of their qualifications in order to be authorised to practise their profession in this Member State. If the profession is not regulated, access is free and there is no need to obtain such recognition.

The Honourable Member will be interested to know that the Commission launched in December 2013 a public consultation on the problems faced by learners and workers. The consultation concerns the transparency and recognition of their skills and qualifications when moving between EU Member States, the adequacy of related European policies and instruments, and the potential benefits of developing a 'European Area of Skills and Qualifications'. ([3])

([1]) Council Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications (OJ L255/22 of 30.9.2005).

([2]) Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 amending Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications and Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 on administrative cooperation through the internal market Information System ('the IMI Regulation') (OJ L354/132 of 28.12.2013).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/consult/skills-and-qualifications_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013034/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Divieto di coltivazione del mais MON 810

Con il decreto interministeriale adottato dal ministero della Salute di concerto con il ministero delle Politiche agricole e il ministero dell'Ambiente in data 12 luglio 2013, la coltivazione di varietà di mais geneticamente modificato MON 810 è vietata nel territorio nazionale italiano.

L'importazione, la commercializzazione e l'impiego di mais MON 810 sono autorizzate ai sensi del quadro normativo dell'Unione in materia (si veda anche la sentenza della Corte di giustizia europea dell'8 maggio 2013 relativamente alla causa C-542/12).

La produzione di MON 810 in Europa si svolge per l'80 % in Spagna e molti paesi dell'Unione hanno cercato di porre delle restrizioni o vietare la produzione di questa varietà di OGM.

Le produzioni europee coprono solo in minima parte la domanda di MON 810, soddisfatta quasi interamente facendo ricorso alle importazioni da paesi extra-UE.

Tutto quanto sopra considerato, si chiede alla Commissione di:

1. chiarire la sua posizione circa le summenzionate misure di restrizione alla commercializzazione di OGM;

2. indicare se ritiene che la frammentazione di fatto del mercato comune nel settore del MON 810, creata dagli interventi normativi a livello nazionale, introduca delle distorsioni competitive fra i produttori nazionali all'interno dell'Unione europea e se, in caso di riposta affermativa, ritiene di dover intervenire con misure adeguate;

3. indicare se reputa che la possibilità di importazione di MON 810, a fronte del divieto di coltura imposto nel territorio italiano, arrechi un pregiudizio commerciale ai produttori nazionali che vorrebbero mettere a coltura tale varietà di mais e se, in caso di riposta affermativa, ritiene di dover intervenire con misure adeguate;

4. in termini generali, specificare se ritiene necessario un adeguamento del quadro normativo attualmente in vigore in materia, affinché l'applicazione della legislazione comune assicuri, nel mercato degli OGM, una maggiore uniformità tra gli Stati membri e competitività a livello globale.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2014)

1. Gli OGM sono autorizzati per la coltivazione nell'UE conformemente alle disposizioni della legislazione unionale in tema di OGM ([1]). La Commissione ha chiesto all'EFSA ([2]) di esaminare gli elementi scientifici forniti dall'Italia per giustificare il proprio divieto di coltivazione del granturco MON810 sulla base dell'articolo 34 del regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003 (misure d'emergenza). Il 24 settembre 2013 l'EFSA è giunta alla conclusione che non vi erano prove scientifiche specifiche a convalida della notifica di queste misure d'emergenza tali da invalidare le sue precedenti valutazioni del rischio in relazione al granturco MON 810. La Commissione sta pertanto esaminando la linea d'azione da seguire.

2.-4. La Commissione è consapevole degli effetti negativi che i divieti nazionali di coltivazione di OGM non fondati su motivazioni scientifiche esercitano sul mercato interno e sui produttori siti negli Stati membri in cui tali misure sono poste in atto. In forza della vigente legislazione unionale l'unico strumento di cui l'UE dispone per reagire a divieti nazionali ingiustificati consiste nell'adozione ad opera della Commissione di una decisione di esecuzione con cui si chiede allo Stato membro interessato di togliere tali divieti. Quando nel 2009 la Commissione è intervenuta all'uopo in relazione ai divieti di coltivazione di granturco GM introdotti in Austria e in Ungheria, le misure proposte sono state respinte dal Consiglio ([3]). Nel 2011 la Corte di giustizia europea ([4]) ha consentito ai tribunali nazionali di controllare la legalità dei divieti nazionali di coltivazione adottati sulla base dell'articolo 34 del regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003. A partire da ciò, il Conseil d'Etat francese ha annullato a due riprese, nel 2011 ([5]) e nel 2013 ([6]), i divieti francesi di coltivazione del granturco MON 810.

([1]) Direttiva 2001/18/CE e regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003.
([2]) Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare.
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/envir/106430.pdf
([4]) Cause da C-58/10 a C-68-10.
([5]) http://www.conseil-etat.fr/fr/communiques-de-presse/arrete_ogm_mais.html
([6]) http://www.conseil-etat.fr/fr/communiques-de-presse/arrete-sur-les-ogm-.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013034/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Ban on growing MON 810 maize

An interministerial decree adopted by the Ministry of Health, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agricultural Policy and the Ministry of the Environment, dated 12 July 2013, prohibited the growing of the genetically modified variety of maize MON 810 on Italian national territory.

The importing, marketing and use of MON 810 maize are authorised in line with the relevant EU legal framework in force (see also the European Court of Justice judgment of 8 May 2013 in Case C-542/12).

In Europe, 80% of MON 810 production takes place in Spain and many EU countries have sought to impose restrictions on or prohibit production of this variety of genetically modified organism (GMO).

European production only meets a minimal portion of the demand for MON 810, which is almost entirely met through imports from non-EU countries.

1. Can the Commission clarify its position on the aforementioned measures restricting the marketing of GMOs?

2. Does it believe that the de facto fragmentation of the common market in the MON 810 sector, resulting from national legislative measures, creates distortions in competition between national producers within the European Union and, if so, does it believe it should take appropriate action?

3. Does it believe that the possibility of importing MON 810, in view of the ban on growing this crop imposed in Italy, causes commercial damage to national producers that wish to grow this variety of maize and, if so, does it believe it should take appropriate action?

4. In general terms, does it consider it necessary to adjust the relevant legal framework in force, so that the application of common legislation ensures greater uniformity among the Member States and global competitiveness in the GMO market?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

1. GMOs are authorised for cultivation in the EU according to the provisions of the EU GMO legislation ([1]). The Commission has requested EFSA ([2]) to examine the scientific elements provided by Italy to justify their MON810 cultivation ban on the basis of Article 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 (emergency measures). EFSA concluded on 24 September 2013 that there is no specific scientific evidence that would support the notification of this emergency measure and that would invalidate its previous risk assessments of maize MON 810. The Commission is therefore considering actions to be taken.

2-4. The Commission is aware of the negative impacts of scientifically unfounded national GMO cultivation bans on the internal market and on producers situated in the Member States where these measures are in place. Under existing EU legislation, the only way for the EU to act against unjustified national bans is adoption by the Commission of an implementing decision asking the Member State concerned to lift these bans. When the Commission acted accordingly in 2009 with respect to GM maize cultivation bans in Austria and Hungary, the proposed measures were rejected by the Council ([3]). In 2011, the European Court of Justice ([4]) allowed national judges to control the legality of national cultivation bans adopted on the basis of Article 34 of Regulation (EC) No1829/2003. On this basis, the French Conseil d'Etat annuled twice French cultivation bans on MON 810 in 2011 ([5]) and 2013 ([6]).

([1]) Directive 2001/18/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003.
([2]) The European Food Safety Authority.
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/envir/106430.pdf
([4]) Cases C-58/10 to C-68-10.
([5]) http://www.conseil-etat.fr/fr/communiques-de-presse/arrete_ogm_mais.html
([6]) http://www.conseil-etat.fr/fr/communiques-de-presse/arrete-sur-les-ogm-.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013035/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(15 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Contaminación en España y la UE

El 19 de noviembre de 2002, el petrolero *Prestige* de la Compañía Universal Marítima se hundía ante la costa gallega, vertiendo 63 000 toneladas de crudo, afectando a 2 900 km de costa y a 1 777 playas y ocasionando una de las mayores catástrofes ambientales de España y de Europa. Dicho vertido ocasionó graves impactos ambientales en los ecosistemas, principalmente los marinos y costeros.

Once años después de la catástrofe, tanto la Administración como los tres acusados han resultado absueltos de los delitos contra el medio ambiente, daños en espacios naturales protegidos y daños provocados por el hundimiento y solo el capitán del petrolero, Apostolos Mangouras, ha sido condenado a nueve meses por un delito de desobediencia grave a la autoridad (que no deberá cumplir debido a sus 78 años de edad).

La sentencia, publicada el día 13 de noviembre de 2013, perjudica la prevención de los accidentes marinos, no repara el daño causado a las víctimas y demuestra que en España existe impunidad ante delitos ecológicos que ni se persiguen ni se castigan.

Resulta imposible fijar de modo concreto la responsabilidad civil como consecuencia de la falta de tribunales especializados en medio ambiente y debidamente dotados. Además, hace más de treinta años que España debería contar con ellos, de acuerdo a las recomendaciones del Consejo de Europa.

La Directiva europea sobre responsabilidad medioambiental (2004/35/CE) defiende el claro principio de «quien contamina paga», uno de los principios rectores del Derecho comunitario de medio ambiente, desde sus orígenes. No podemos olvidar tampoco los casos de otros vertidos como los del Exxon Valdez en Alaska o el *Erika* en Bretaña, en los que se pagaron grandes indemnizaciones incluyendo el valor del patrimonio natural afectado.

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre la sentencia publicada el 13 de noviembre de 2013 y citada anteriormente?

2. ¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para garantizar que, por parte de los órganos competentes y responsables, se exija el cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria en términos de responsabilidad ambiental?

3. ¿Piensa la Comisión recurrir la sentencia por incumplimiento del principio de «quien contamina paga»?

4. ¿Está prevista una modificación de la Directiva europea sobre responsabilidad medioambiental para que los delitos contra el medio ambiente no queden impunes?

5. ¿Se pretende modificar la Directiva Europea de Responsabilidad Ambiental para acabar con sus vacíos legales?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión no se pronuncia sobre las sentencias de los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales.

En la secuencia de este trágico accidente, la UE ha adoptado una extensa legislación sobre la seguridad marítima, incluida una Directiva relativa a la contaminación procedente de buques y la introducción de sanciones para las infracciones ([1]), que incluye sanciones penales para los delitos de contaminación.

La Directiva 2004/35/CE sobre responsabilidad medioambiental en relación con la prevención y reparación de daños medioambientales (DRM) ([2])también fue adoptada tras el accidente del Prestige. En el marco de la DRM, el accidente del Prestige podría encajar en las excepciones del artículo 4, apartado 2, y del anexo IV, según los cuales la aplicación de los convenios de responsabilidad civil de 1992 ([3]) y de los convenios de los fondos FIDAC ([4]) excluye la aplicación de la DRM.

([1]) Directiva 2005/35/CE, modificada por la Directiva 2009/123/CE, DO L 280 de 27.10.2009, p. 52.
([2]) Directiva sobre responsabilidad medioambiental — «DRM» (DO L 143 de 30.4.2004).
([3]) Convenio internacional sobre Responsabilidad Civil Nacida de Daños Debidos a la Contaminación por Hidrocarburos, adoptado el 27 de noviembre de 1992 («CLC 1992»).
([4]) Convenio internacional de Constitución de un Fondo Internacional de Indemnización de Daños Debidos a la Contaminación por Hidrocarburos, adoptado el 27 de noviembre de 1992.

Para garantizar que las autoridades competentes nacionales cumplen con los requisitos que imponen estas Directivas, la Comisión tiene varias posibilidades: puede iniciar investigaciones, entablar un diálogo con el Estado miembro, iniciar un procedimiento de infracción, y llevar al Estado miembro ante el Tribunal de Justicia.

La Comisión no es parte en este procedimiento y, por lo tanto, no puede impugnar esta sentencia.

Los delitos ambientales a nivel de la UE están sujetos a la Directiva 2008/99/CE relativa a la protección del medio ambiente mediante el Derecho penal ([5]).

La DRM está actualmente siendo objeto de una evaluación sobre su eficacia, basándose en su cláusula de revisión y en el marco del programa REFIT. En su informe, la Comisión también señalará los ámbitos que requieran nuevas mejoras o adaptaciones legales en el futuro. La justificación de las excepciones y su posible repercusión negativa en la eficacia de la Directiva será examinada en profundidad.

([5]) DO L 328 de 6.12.2008, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013035/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Contamination in Spain and the EU

On 19 November 2002, the oil tanker *Prestige* belonging to the Universal Maritime Company sank just off the coast of Galicia, spilling 63 000 tonnes of crude oil, which affected 2 900 km of coastline and 1 777 beaches and caused one of the worst environmental disasters in Spain and Europe. This spill had serious environmental consequences on the ecosystems, especially the marine and coastal ones.

Eleven years after the disaster, both the Spanish Government and the three people accused were acquitted of all crimes against the environment, damage to natural protected areas and damage caused by the wreck. Only the captain of the oil tanker, Apostolos Mangouras, was sentenced to nine months for serious disobedience against the authorities (which he will not be required to serve as he is 78 years old).

The verdict, published on 13 November 2013, undermines the prevention of marine accidents, does not repair the damage caused to the victims and demonstrates that in Spain there is impunity for ecological crimes, the perpetrators of which are neither prosecuted nor punished.

In practice it is impossible to establish civil liability due to the lack of courts specialising in environmental matters and adequately equipped to do so. Furthermore, they should have been set up in Spain more than 30 years ago in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe.

The European Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) defends the clear 'polluter pays' principle, one of the leading principles of Community Environmental Law since its creation. Neither can we forget the cases of other oil spills such as the Exxon Valdez in Alaska or the *Erika* in Brittany, where significant compensation was paid, including the value of the natural heritage affected.

1. What is the Commission's opinion on the aforementioned verdict published on 13 November 2013?

2. What mechanisms does the Commission have to ensure that competent and responsible bodies require compliance with EU regulations on environmental liability?

3. Does the Commission intend to contest the ruling passed in breach of the 'polluter pays' principle?

4. Is the European Environmental Liability Directive likely to be amended so as crimes against the environment do not go unpunished?

5. Will the European Environmental Liability Directive be amended to put an end to its legal vacuums?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

The Commission does not comment on judgments of national courts.

In the follow-up to this tragic accident the EU has adopted extensive legislation on maritime safety, including a directive on ship-source pollution and on the introduction of penalties, including criminal penalties, for pollution offences ([1]).

Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage (ELD) ([2]) was also adopted after the Prestige accident. Under the ELD, the Prestige accident would fall under the exemptions of Article 4(2) and Annex IV, according to which the application of the 1992 CLC ([3]) and IOPC Funds ([4]) Conventions exclude the application of the ELD.

([1]) Directive 2005/35/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/123/EC, OJ L 280, 27.10.2009, p. 52-55.
([2]) Environmental Liability Directive — 'ELD', OJ L 143, 30.4.2004.
([3]) International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, adopted 27/11/1992 ('CLC 1992').
([4]) International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, adopted 27/11/1992.

To ensure that national competent authorities comply with the requirements under these Directives, the Commission has several possibilities at hand: It can open investigations; enter into a dialogue with the Member State; launch an infringement case; and bring the Member State before the Court.

The Commission is not a party to these proceedings and, thus, cannot challenge this ruling.

The environmental crimes are at EU level subject to Directive 2008/99/EC on the protection of the environment through criminal law ([5]).

The ELD is currently subject to an evaluation of its effectiveness, based on its review clause and under the REFIT programme. The Commission will in its report also identify areas needing further improvements and/or legal adaptations in the future. The justification for exemptions and whether these negatively affect the effectiveness of the directive will be looked at in detail.

([5]) OJ L 328, 6.12.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013036/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Bidireccionalidad en el túnel de Bielsa-Aragnouet

La Comisión de Obras Públicas de las Cortes de Aragón (España), en sesión celebrada el pasado 6 de noviembre de 2013, solicitó entre otras cuestiones que «se siga avanzando, con el consenso de todos, para cerrar la fecha con el Gobierno francés para que, por el túnel de Bielsa-Aragnouet, se pueda circular en ambas direcciones de forma simultánea».

La mejora de la interconexión entre España y Francia supone el desarrollo de redes transfronterizas de transporte de personas y permite un incremento de la movilidad de los ciudadanos europeos. Esta movilidad también tiene un impacto económico positivo para Aragón, que podría incrementar los ingresos del sector turístico gracias al incremento de la circulación de ciudadanos franceses y de otros Estados miembros de la Unión Europea.

Esta iniciativa se aprueba después de que en diciembre de 2012 se realizaran, al parecer de manera satisfactoria, las pruebas de simulacro de seguridad para implantar la bidireccionalidad de turismos en el túnel, según informaron diferentes medios de comunicación. Se trata de una mejora sustancial de la conexión transfronteriza entre España y Francia sin realizar inversión alguna, que ha superado las pertinentes pruebas requeridas para su puesta en funcionamiento. Pese a cumplir con todas las normas de seguridad, el túnel no se ha abierto en las dos direcciones para vehículos ligeros.

¿Conoce la Comisión el proyecto de bidireccionalidad en el túnel Bielsa-Aragnouet?

¿Dispone la Comisión de información sobre los motivos por los que, pese a cumplir con las normas requeridas, no ha comenzado la doble circulación en el túnel?

¿Dispone la Comisión de alguna fecha aproximada de apertura de la bidireccionalidad del túnel?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de enero de 2014)

La infraestructura mencionada no forma parte de la red transeuropea de transporte (RTE-T); la Comisión no dispone de información detallada sobre esta conexión transfronteriza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013036/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Two-way road in the Bielsa-Aragnouet tunnel

At a meeting on 6 November 2013, the Public Works Commission of the Court of Aragon (Spain), requested among other issues, that 'further progress be made, with the agreement of all parties, to set a date with the French Government to enable simultaneous traffic flow in both directions in the Bielsa-Aragnouet tunnel'.

Improving the interconnection between Spain and France implies the development of cross-border passenger transport networks and permits increased mobility for EU citizens. This mobility also has a positive economic impact on Aragon, allowing it to raise its revenue in the tourism sector due to the increased movement of French citizens and those of other European Union Member States.

According to various media reports, this initiative was approved following the apparently successful safety simulation tests in December 2012 to introduce the two-way system for ordinary cars in the tunnel. This is a significant improvement, without any investment, in the cross-border connection between Spain and France, which has passed all relevant tests necessary for it to become operational. Despite compliance with all the safety standards, the tunnel has not been opened in both directions for light vehicles.

Is the Commission aware of the two-way project in the Bielsa-Aragnouet tunnel?

Does the Commission have any information about the reasons for which, despite compliance with all the required standards, two-way traffic in the tunnel has not begun?

Does the Commission know of any approximate date for opening the two-way system in the tunnel?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(9 January 2014)

The infrastructure mentioned does not belong to the Transeuropean Transport Network (TEN-T); the Commission does not have detailed information about this cross-border connection.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013037/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Pescadores palestinos atacados por Israel

El pasado domingo 10 de noviembre, la armada israelí capturó a dos pescadores que realizaban su actividad en las aguas costeras pertenecientes a la Franja de Gaza. Fruto de dicha operación de detención de civiles desarmados, uno de los pescadores fue herido por un disparo en su abdomen.

Los pescadores, dos jóvenes hermanos, ciudadanos de la vecina ciudad de Jabaliya, Saddam Abu Warda y Mahmud Abu Warda, de 23 y 18 años, fueron liberados después de la detención, pero su pequeña barca fue confiscada por el ejército israelí. Los pescadores afirmaron haber sido tiroteados en su barca sin motor por tres embarcaciones militares de Israel, produciéndose de esta forma la herida de uno de los hermanos, por haber excedido el límite marino en 500 metros. Sus confesiones sobre su tiroteo y posterior detención dejan un escalofriante testimonio de las violaciones que el ejército israelí ejecuta impunemente en la Franja de Gaza y en todos los Territorios Ocupados de Palestina. Esta detención presenta la imagen de la brutalidad con la que actúa Israel en la imposición de condiciones, unilateralmente impuestas, a la población civil de Gaza.

El ejército de Israel comete este tipo de violaciones sobre población civil de manera continuada, sin que esta pueda acudir a ninguna instancia política internacional para defenderse. Pese a esto, la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de la diplomacia de la Unión Europea continúa considerando que Israel «no está incumpliendo el artículo 2 del acuerdo de asociación». La señora Ashton argumenta que con respecto al Estado de Israel «la UE no es partidaria del uso de sanciones en el contexto de las relaciones bilaterales», mientras ella misma fue una de las primeras instigadoras del fracasado intento de invasión de Siria. Esta doble moral de la señora Ashton en las relaciones internacionales permite que Israel continúe el genocidio que está llevando a cabo en los Territorios Ocupados y especialmente en la Franja de Gaza.

¿Conoce la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante la detención arbitraria y el tiroteo de los citados civiles palestinos? ¿Considera que dichos hechos se ajustan al Derecho internacional, a los derechos humanos o a lo estipulado en el artículo 2 del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Israel?

En diversas respuestas ha negado rotundamente que Israel esté cometiendo un «genocidio» contra el pueblo palestino. ¿Podría argumentar dicha conclusión? ¿Considera suficiente solicitar a Israel información sobre los hechos sin solicitar persecución alguna de los crímenes contra la humanidad expuestos? ¿Piensa congelar el Acuerdo de Asociación hasta que Israel cumpla lo dispuesto en dicho artículo?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de febrero de 2014)

La UE está al corriente de los casos de los señores Saddam y Mahmoud Abu Warda. El informe semanal sobre la protección de los civiles (5-11 de noviembre de 2013), elaborado por la Oficina de Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios (OCAH) de las Naciones Unidas, se refiere al incidente, pero afirma que no se produjeron lesiones. La Unión Europea seguirá estando muy atenta a la evolución de este caso a través de la Delegación de la UE en Tel Aviv y la Oficina de Representación de la Comisión en Jerusalén Oriental.

Por lo que se refiere al Derecho humanitario internacional, el artículo 27, apartado 4, del Cuarto Convenio de Ginebra permite a la potencia ocupante prohibir el acceso a determinadas zonas como medida de seguridad. No obstante, esta justificación por motivos de seguridad no elimina la obligación de la potencia ocupante de garantizar el bienestar de la población ocupada.

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta de la Comisión rechaza enérgicamente la alegación de que Israel esté cometiendo genocidio contra el pueblo palestino. Según se define en el artículo 2 del texto de la Convención para la Prevención y la Sanción del Delito de Genocidio, se entiende por genocidio los actos perpetrados con la intención de destruir, total o parcialmente, a un grupo nacional, étnico, racial o religioso. El Gobierno de Israel nunca ha cometido actos de esta índole.

La UE sigue planteando importantes aspectos relacionados con los derechos humanos y la conducta de Israel como potencia ocupante en su diálogo político con este país sobre la base del Acuerdo de Asociación. Por consiguiente, la congelación del Acuerdo que sugiere Su Señoría impediría a la UE plantear estos temas de preocupación. La UE seguirá aprovechando todas las oportunidades que brinda el diálogo entablado a diferentes niveles en el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013037/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Palestinian fishermen attacked by Israel

On Sunday 10 November, the Israeli navy captured two fishermen who were carrying out their activity in the coastal waters of the Gaza Strip. As a result of this arrest operation of unarmed civilians, one of the fishermen was injured by a gunshot to the abdomen.

The fishermen, two young brothers, citizens of the nearby town of Jabaliya, Saddam Abu Warda and Mahmud Abu Warda, aged 23 and 18 years, were released after the arrest, but their small boat was confiscated by the Israeli navy. The fishermen reported to have been shot at in their rowing boat by three Israeli military vessels, which caused one of the brothers to be injured, for having exceeded the sea boundary by 500 metres. Their accounts about the shooting and subsequent arrest provide chilling evidence of the violations committed with impunity by the Israeli military in the Gaza Strip and all the Palestinian occupied territories. These arrests display the brutality used by Israel to enforce conditions unilaterally imposed on the civilian population in Gaza.

The Israeli military repeatedly commit such violations against the civilian population, who have no international political institution to turn to for protection. Despite this, the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy still considers that Israel 'is not in breach of Article 2 of the association agreement'. Baroness Ashton argues that with regard to the State of Israel 'the EU does not promote the use of sanctions in the context of bilateral … relations', while she herself was one of the first instigators of the failed attempt to invade Syria. Baroness Ashton's double standard in international relations makes it possible for Israel to continue the genocide that it is carrying out in the Occupied Territories and particularly in the Gaza Strip.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the arbitrary detention and shooting of the abovementioned Palestinian civilians? Does she consider that these facts are consistent with international law, human rights or the provisions of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement?

In a number of answers she has strongly denied that Israel is committing 'genocide' against the Palestinian people. Could she explain this conclusion? Does she consider it sufficient to request information from Israel about the facts without requesting the prosecution of these crimes against humanity? Does she intend to freeze the Association Agreement until Israel complies with the provisions of this article?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

The EU is aware of the case of Messrs. Saddam and Mahmoud Abu Warda. The Protection of Civilians Weekly Report (5-11 November 2013) prepared by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), refers to the incident but states that no injuries were reported. The EU will continue to follow closely developments regarding this case through the EU Delegation in Tel Aviv and the Representative Office in East Jerusalem.

With regards to International Humanitarian Law, Article 27(4) of the Fourth Geneva Convention authorises the occupying power to prohibit access to certain areas as a security measure. Such security justifications do not, however, dismiss the occupying power's responsibility for ensuring the well-being of the occupied population.

The HR/VP of the Commission strongly rejects the implication that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people. As defined in Article II of the text of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, genocide means actions with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. No actions of the sort have ever been undertaken by the government of Israel.

The EU keeps raising important points related to human rights and the conduct of Israel as occupying power in its political dialogue with Israel on the basis of the Association Agreement. Freezing the agreement as suggested by the Honourable member would therefore deny the EU the possibility to raise such issues of concern. The EU will continue to seize all opportunities afforded by the dialogue that takes place at different levels within the framework of the association Agreement.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013038/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre de la Radiotelevisión Valenciana

El Gobierno de la Generalitat Valenciana tomó la discutida decisión, el pasado 5 de noviembre de 2013, de clausurar la Radiotelevisión Valenciana (RTVV), medio de comunicación público de la Comunidad Autónoma que desarrolla lo establecido en su Estatuto de Autonomía.

El Gobierno alude a su incapacidad de afrontar los pagos del medio de comunicación debido a que la Justicia ha anulado el Expediente de Regulación de Empleo presentado el pasado agosto de 2012. La sentencia del Tribunal Superior de Justicia de la Comunidad Valenciana obliga al Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana a readmitir a los trabajadores despedidos, a lo que el Gobierno ha respondido con el cierre completo de la radiotelevisión pública. De esta forma las autoridades valencianas han incumplido la ley con los despidos realizados, como ha quedado demostrado, y posteriormente sancionan a los trabajadores y a la ciudadanía clausurando por completo la emisora y expulsando a todos sus trabajadores. La sociedad valenciana se está movilizando en defensa de dicho servicio con grandes manifestaciones celebradas el pasado 10 de noviembre, con la afluencia masiva de personas en todas las capitales de provincia de la Comunidad Valenciana. Los trabajadores que van a ser despedidos han seguido cumpliendo con su trabajo y la televisión sigue emitiendo, respetando la voluntad del pueblo valenciano. Además dicha radiotelevisión es reconocida como el principal medio para la difusión y el mantenimiento de la lengua propia, que no goza de ningún otro canal público de difusión, lo que supone que el cierre de la televisión es una condena que limitará el alcance público del valenciano. RTVV es el único medio público tanto para la lengua valenciana como para la industria audiovisual valenciana.

¿Considera la Comisión que el cierre se ajusta a lo establecido en la Directiva 2007/65/CE, especialmente en lo concerniente a la pluralidad de los medios de comunicación?

¿Considera que dicho cierre sin aviso a los trabajadores cumple lo establecido por la Directiva 2002/14/CE relativa a la información y a la consulta de los trabajadores?

Respuesta del Sr Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de enero de 2014)

1. La Comisión concede especial importancia al papel del sistema dual de radiodifusión pública y privada para preservar el pluralismo de los medios de comunicación y fomentar los valores europeos con independencia de las circunstancias económicas. No obstante, no está en posición de cuestionar el mandato de un gobierno de adoptar decisiones relativas a su sistema público de radiodifusión, ni siquiera en los casos en los que repercute en la información disponible en una lengua específica. De hecho, de conformidad con el Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, el uso de lenguas mayoritarias y minoritarias en los Estados miembros pertenece a su jurisdicción y es competencia exclusiva de estos.

Si bien la libertad y el pluralismo de los medios de comunicación son valores contemplados en la Directiva sobre servicios de medios audiovisuales, la Comisión no tiene la intención de comentar la decisión de cerrar un canal público de radiodifusión, ya que el Tratado establece expresamente que la gobernanza y las decisiones políticas sobre el servicio público de radiodifusión competen a los Estados miembros.

2. En lo que se refiere a la segunda pregunta, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-012678/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013038/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Closure of Radiotelevisión Valenciana

On 5 November 2013, the Valencian Regional Government took the controversial decision to close down Radiotelevisión Valenciana (RTVV), the autonomous community's public media service, the role of which is established under the Valencian Statute of Autonomy.

The Government has cited its inability to cover the cost of the media organisation following the High Court's annulment of the workforce reduction plan presented in August 2012. The ruling by the High Court of Valencia forced the Valencian Government to reinstate the employees who had been laid off, to which the Government responded by closing down RTVV. This means that the Valencian authorities not only broke the law with the initial round of redundancies, but subsequently punished the workers and general public by completely closing down the broadcasting station and firing its whole workforce. The Valencian population has mobilised in defence of this service and mass demonstrations were held on 10 November 2013, with huge numbers of people taking part in all the Valencian Community's provincial capitals. The workers being laid off have continued to perform their duties and the television channel carried on broadcasting, respecting the wishes of the Valencian people.

Furthermore, RTVV is recognised as the main medium for promoting and maintaining the Valencian language, which is not broadcast on any other public channel, so that its closure will seriously limit the public visibility of the Valencian language. RTVV is the only public medium for both the Valencian language and the Valencian audiovisual industry.

Does the Commission consider that the closure of RTVV complies with the provisions of Directive 2007/65/EC, particularly with respect to media pluralism?

Does it consider that this closure, which employees were not informed about in advance, complies with Directive 2002/14/EC on informing and consulting employees?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

1. The Commission attaches special importance to the role of the dual system of public and commercial service broadcasters in preserving media pluralism and promoting European values in all economic circumstances. However, it is not in a position to question a government's mandate to take decisions regarding their public service broadcasting system even in cases where this impacts on the available information in a specific language. In fact, under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the use of majority or minority languages in the Member State remains within their jurisdiction and under their sole responsibility

While media freedom and pluralism are indeed values underpinning the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the Commission does not intend to comment on the decision to close down a public service broadcaster, as the Treaty makes it clear that the governance and strategic choices on public service broadcasting lie with the Member States.

2. As regards the second question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-012678/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Eestikeelne versioon)

Kirjalikult vastatav küsimus E-013039/13
komisjonile
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE) ja Kristiina Ojuland (ALDE)
(15. november 2013)

Teema: Interpoli punaste hoiatuste kuritarvitamine

Üha enam mõistetakse, et mõned riigid kuritarvitavad Interpoli „punaste hoiatuste" süsteemi, et väljastada poliitilistel põhjustel nõudeid rahumeelsete teisitimõtlejate vastu.

OSCE Parlamentaarne Assamblee ning ÜRO Pagulaste Ülemvoliniku Amet on juhtinud sellele tähelepanu seoses isikutega, kellele on antud pagulase staatus. Mitu isikut, keda ELi liikmesriigid tunnistavad pagulastena (nt Pjotr Silajev), kuid keda samas otsitakse Interpoli süsteemide kaudu, on pidanud vahistamise kartuses loobuma reisimisest teise ELi liikmesriiki, mis tähendab neile ELi õigusega tagatud põhiõiguste faktilist rikkumist.

Edasikaebamismehhanismid on väga puudulikud. ELi liikmesriikides puudub selleks tulemuslik meetod. Ainus edasikaebamismehhanism on Interpoli failide kontrollikomisjon (CCF) – Interpoli sisene väidetav andmekaitsepaneel, mille ükski liige ei ole kriminaal- ja väljasaatmisõiguse tunnustatud asjatundja. CCFi menetlused ei ole läbipaistvad ja tema otsuseid ei põhjendata ega avaldata, nii et jääb selgusetuks, kuidas ta kaebusi käsitleb. CCFil võib kuluda tulemuseni jõudmiseks kuid või aastaid ja tema otsuseid ei saa edasi kaevata.

Küsimused komisjonile 21.–24. oktoobril 2013 toimunud Interpoli peaassamblee valguses:

1. Kas komisjon võiks selgitada, milliseid meetmeid ta võtab, et ELi kodanikud ja ELi liikmesriikides seaduslikult elavad isikud, sh pagulased, ei langeks Interpoli süsteemide poliitilise kuritarvitamise ohvriks?

2. Kas komisjon on veendunud, et sellistel isikutel on juurdepääs tulemuslikule menetlusele, mille abil vaidlustada nii Interpoli punased hoiatused kui ka nendest tulenevad piirangud nende isikute liikumisvabadusele ja muudele ELi õigusega tagatud vabadustele?

3. Kuidas kavatseb komisjon tagada, et liikmesriigid ei hiili mööda andmesubjekti juurdepääsuõigustest, mis on ette nähtud kavandatavas Europoli määruses, vahetades teavet hoopis Interpoli kaudu, kus andmete avaldamise nõuded on palju piiratumad?

Komisjoni nimel vastanud Cecilia Malmström
(30. jaanuar 2014)

Euroopa Komisjon juhib parlamendiliikmete tähelepanu vastustele, mis ta on andnud küsimustele E-011457/2013, E-011458/2013 ja E-011707/2013.

Komisjon jälgib, et liikmesriigid peaksid täielikult kinni nii ELi õiguses sätestatud tagasi- ja väljasaatmise lubamatuse põhimõttest kui ka ELi andmekaitse-eeskirjadest, ning kasutab vajaduse korral selle tagamiseks talle aluslepinguga antud volitusi. Eelkõige tagab komisjon, et liikmesriigid peavad kinni ELi põhiõiguste hartast, sealhulgas selle artiklitest 19 ja 47, kui nad kohaldavad ELi õigust.

Teabe vahetamine Interpoliga võib anda kuritegevuse ärahoidmisel ja selle vastu võitlemisel lisaväärtust. Samal ajal märgib komisjon, et ELi liikmesriikide ja kolmandate riikide ametiasutustel on rahvusvaheliste, ELi ja siseriiklike õigusaktidega kehtestatud piires kaalutlusõigus selles osas, milliseid meetmeid nad Interpoli hoiatuse alusel võtavad. Seda märgib ka Interpol. Komisjon ei ole erinevalt ELi liikmesriikidest Interpoli liige ja võtab seetõttu Interpoliga ühendust liikmesriikide kaudu, et arutada olemasolevaid Interpoli hoiatuste väljaandmise menetlusi. Seejuures arutatakse, kas mehhanisme on vaja veelgi tugevdada, et hoida ära poliitilistel põhjustel esitatud taotlusi. Komisjon hoiab Euroopa Parlamenti nende arutelude käiguga kursis.

Komisjon soovitab kasutada liikmesriikide teabevahetuse põhikanalina Europoli, nagu ta on märkinud oma teatises „Õiguskaitsealase koostöö tugevdamine ELis: Euroopa teabevahetusmudel (EIXM)" ([1]) ja ettepanekus Europoli volituste reformimiseks ([2]).

([1]) COM(2012) 735 (final), 7. detsember 2012.
([2]) Ettepanek: määrus, mis käsitleb Euroopa Liidu õiguskaitsealase koostöö ja -koolituse ametit (Europol) ning millega tunnistatakse kehtetuks otsused 2009/371/JSK ja 2005/681/JSK (COM(2013) 173 (final), 27. märts 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013039/13
to the Commission
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE) and Kristiina Ojuland (ALDE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Abuses of Interpol Red Notices

There is growing recognition that the system of 'Red Notices' operated by Interpol is being abused by some countries to issue politically motivated requests against peaceful dissidents.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has raised such concerns, as has the UNHCR regarding persons granted refugee status. Several people who are recognised as refugees by EU Member States (e.g. Petr Silaev) but who are also targeted through Interpol's systems have had to refrain from travelling to other EU Member States for fear of arrest, resulting in a de facto contravention of their fundamental rights guaranteed by EC law.

Channels of redress are totally inadequate. There is no effective avenue within EU Member States. The only way to seek redress is through the Commission for the Control of Interpol's Files (CCF), a supposed data protection panel within Interpol of which no member is a recognised specialist in crime and extradition law. Proceedings before the CCF are not transparent and its decisions are not reasoned or published, so it is unclear how it handles complaints. It may take many months or years to reach an outcome and decisions are not subject to appeal.

In the wake of the recent Interpol General Assembly held on 21-24 October 2013:

1. Can the Commission explain what action it is taking to prevent EU citizens, and persons legally resident in EU Member States, including recognised refugees, from falling victim to political abuses of Interpol's systems?

2. Is the Commission satisfied that such persons have access to an effective procedure through which to challenge both Interpol Red Notices and the resultant restrictions to their freedom of movement and other rights guaranteed by EC law?

3. How does the Commission propose to prevent Member States circumventing the subject access rights envisaged in the proposed Europol regulation by exchanging information through Interpol instead, where disclosure requirements are much more limited?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The European Commission refers the Honourable Members to its replies to Questions E-011457/2013, E-011458/2013 and E-011707/2013.

The Commission monitors the compliance by Member States with the principle of non-refoulement enshrined in EC law as well as EU data protection rules and, if necessary, will make use of the powers conferred to it under the Treaty to ensure their full respect. In particular, the Commission will ensure that the Charter of Fundamental Rights — which includes Articles 19 and 47 — is respected by Member States when they implement EC law.

The exchange of information with Interpol can be of added value in the prevention of and fight against crime. However, the Commission notes, as does Interpol itself, that EU Member States and third country authorities, within the limits set out in international, EU and national legislation, have discretion on what action to take on the basis of an Interpol notice. In liaison with EU Member States, as Members of Interpol, the Commission — not itself being a Member of Interpol — will raise with Interpol the existing procedures for the issuance of Interpol notices. This will include the possible need for action to further strengthen mechanisms to avoid politically motivated requests. The Commission will keep the European Parliament informed of those discussions.

The Commission recommends the use of Europol as the default channel for Member States to exchange information, as stated in its communication 'Strengthening law enforcement cooperation in the EU: the European Information Exchange Model (EIXM)' ([1]) and its proposal for reform of the mandate of Europol. ([2])

([1]) COM(2012) 735 final of 7 December 2012.
([2]) Proposal for a regulation on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation and Training (Europol) and repealing Decisions 2009/371/JHA and 2005/681/JHA COM(2013) 173 final of 27 March 2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013043/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(15 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Recapitalização do Millennium/BCP com fundos públicos

O processo de recapitalização do Millennium/BCP, apoiado pelo governo português, prevê a transferência de mais 3 000 milhões de euros do fundo para a recapitalização da banca para este Banco.

Em lugar de serem os acionistas do Banco a assumir integralmente a recapitalização do BCP, já que ao longo dos anos receberam milhares de milhões de euros em lucros e dividendos — só entre 2004 e 2009 os lucros do BCP atingiram cerca de 3 500 milhões de euros — dinheiro que em grande parte foi transferido para o estrangeiro, é o Estado que vem resolver alguns dos problemas que só aos acionistas caberia resolver. O mesmo Estado, que corta nos salários dos trabalhadores; que corta nas pensões de velhice, de invalidez e de sobrevivência; que promove despedimentos na administração pública; que asfixia as famílias e as empresas com um autêntico assalto fiscal; que ataca direitos dos trabalhadores; que desqualifica e desmantela os serviços públicos; que desbarata o património público nas privatizações — este mesmo Estado vem agora, mais uma vez, resolver os problemas dos banqueiros.

Se este envolvimento do Estado nos processos de recapitalização dos bancos, só por si é condenável, o facto de a Administração do Millennium/BCP estar a fazer chantagem sobre os trabalhadores, anunciando a intenção de reduzir os salários entre 5 % e 10 %, transforma mais esta benesse num escândalo político.

Tendo em conta o envolvimento da Comissão em todo este processo, solicitamos que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que condições concretas foram impostas pela Comissão e aceites pelo Governo português, relativamente ao despedimento de trabalhadores, ao corte de direitos laborais e ao encerramento de balcões do Millennium/BCP?

2. Tem a chantagem que está a ser exercida pela Administração do Millennium/BCP sobre os trabalhadores alguma cobertura por parte da Comissão? Como a justifica?

3. Que disposições estão previstas para que este e os outros Bancos que usufruíram do apoio do Estado sejam obrigados a aumentar o valor das linhas de crédito às micro, pequenas e médias empresas, fazendo chegar desta forma o dinheiro à economia real e impedindo a sua canalização para a atividade especulativa?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(22 de janeiro de 2014)

A recapitalização do setor bancário português faz parte do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal. Os bancos que receberam auxílios estatais foram obrigados a apresentar planos de reestruturação à Comissão em que se estabeleciam as medidas destinadas a restabelecer a viabilidade a longo prazo sem o apoio de auxílios estatais. A Comissão aprovou um auxílio ao BCP em 30 de agosto de 2013, concluindo que o plano de restruturação irá garantir a viabilidade do BCP sem apoio estatal contínuo, contribuição própria suficiente para os custos de reestruturação e salvaguardas limitando as distorções da concorrência criadas pelos auxílios estatais. De acordo com o plano de reestruturação, o BCP irá melhorar a sua rendibilidade, nomeadamente reduzindo os custos relativos ao pessoal e a redes de sucursais. O BCP reforçará o seu modelo empresarial e garantirá a continuidade da concessão de crédito à economia portuguesa.

O papel da Comissão consiste em avaliar as condições dos auxílios estatais e os requisitos necessários para decidir se os auxílios são compatíveis com o mercado interno. A Comissão fiscaliza o cumprimento dos compromissos acordados com o Governo português, sendo a sua execução uma decisão de gestão do banco em causa. A decisão da Comissão e a monitorização incidem especialmente sobre a viabilidade do banco, tendo também em vista assegurar que o auxílio se limita ao mínimo necessário para restabelecer a sua viabilidade. Juntamente com outros bancos, o BCP comprometeu-se com o Governo português a afetar anualmente um determinado montante para um fundo de investimento em capitais próprios de PME e empresas de média capitalização portuguesas, em conformidade com a decisão ministerial que estabelece as condições para a recapitalização nos termos da legislação nacional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013043/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Recapitalisation of the bank Millennium/BCP using public funds

The Millennium/BCP recapitalisation process, which is supported by the Portuguese Government, provides for the bank to receive a further EUR 3 billion from the bank recapitalisation fund.

It is not the bank's shareholders who are being made to foot the bill for recapitalising BCP, as they have received billions of euros in profits and dividends over the years — between 2004 and 2009 alone BCP's profits were around EUR 3.5 billion — money that has largely been sent abroad; rather it is the State that is fixing problems that it should be down to shareholders alone to fix. This is the same State that is cutting workers' wages; cutting old-age, invalidity and survivors' pensions; promoting public-sector redundancies; inflicting an oppressive tax onslaught on families and companies; attacking workers' rights; doing away with and dismantling public services; wasting public money on privatisations — this same State is now, once again, bailing out bankers.

While the State being involved in the recapitalisation of banks is reprehensible in itself, the fact that Millennium/BCP management is blackmailing workers, announcing that it intends to cut pay by between 5% and 10%, is turning this bailout into a political scandal.

Considering that the Commission is deeply involved in this process:

1. What specific conditions have been imposed by the Commission and accepted by the Portuguese Government with regard to layoffs, decreased labour rights and branch closures at Millennium/BCP?

2. Is the management of Millennium/BCP's blackmailing of its workers being supported in any way by the Commission? How can it be justified?

3. What measures are planned so that this and other banks that receive State support are forced to increase how much credit they extend to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, putting this kind of money into the real economy and stopping it being channelled into speculation?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2014)

The recapitalisation of the Portuguese banking sector is part of the economic adjustment programme for Portugal. Banks that received state aid were obliged to submit restructuring plans to the Commission setting out measures to restore long-term viability without reliance on State support. The Commission approved BCP's aid on 30 August 2013 concluding that the restructuring plan will ensure BCP's viability without continued State support, sufficient own contribution to the restructuring costs and safeguards limiting competition distortions created by State support. According to the restructuring plan, BCP will improve its profitability, in particular by reducing costs related to staff and the branch networks. BCP will strengthen its business model and ensure continued lending to the Portuguese economy.

The Commission's role consists of assessing the conditions for state aid and the requirements needed to find aid compatible with the internal market. The Commission monitors compliance with the commitments agreed with the Portuguese Government, and the implementation is a decision of the bank's management. The Commission's decision and monitoring focuses on the viability of the bank and on assuring the aid is limited to the minimum necessary to return to viability. Together with other banks, BCP committed to the Portuguese Government to allocate yearly a certain amount to a fund investing in equity of Portuguese SMEs and mid-cap corporates, complying with the Ministerial Decision setting the terms for the recapitalization under national law.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-013044/13
til Kommissionen
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Anna Rosbach (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) og Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(15. november 2013)

Om: Vold mod kvinder

Vold mod kvinder udgør fortsat en af de mest alvorlige globale og strukturelle krænkelser af menneskerettighederne og er et fænomen, som berører ofre og gerningsmænd i alle aldre, uanset uddannelsesmæssig baggrund, indkomst og position i samfundet, og den er både en følge af og en årsag til ulighed mellem kvinder og mænd;

Denne form for vold antager forskellige former, f.eks. fysisk, seksuel og psykologisk vold samt talrige former for strukturel vold over for kvinder såsom begrænsning af deres ret til selv at vælge, af retten til deres egen krop og legemlig integritet, af deres ret til uddannelse og selvbestemmelse samt fratagelse af fulde borgerlige og politiske rettigheder.

Et samfund, hvor kvinder og mænd ikke er sikret lige rettigheder, fastholder en strukturel form for vold mod kvinder og piger.

På baggrund af denne situation bedes Kommissionen besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Har Kommissionen modtaget og agter den at offentliggøre det udkast, som Den Europæiske Unions Agentur for Grundlæggende Rettigheder har udarbejdet om vold mod kvinder i de forskellige medlemsstater?

2. Kan Kommissionen gøre rede for gennemførelsen af direktivet om gensidig anerkendelse af beskyttelsesforanstaltninger i civilretlige spørgsmål, ifølge hvilket kvinder, der er offer for kønsbestemt vold, har ret til samme beskyttelse som i deres eget land i alle andre EU-stater?

3. Agter Kommissionen at undersøge muligheden for ved hjælp af lovgivningsmæssige foranstaltninger også at inddrage tredjelande samt vore økonomiske og politiske partnere, der er knyttet til Unionen gennem associerings-, frihandels- eller partnerskabsaftaler, i overensstemmelse med EU's bestemmelser om fysisk vold mod kvinder?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(16. januar 2014)

Bekæmpelse af vold mod kvinder er en af Kommissionens prioriteter, som det fremgår af handlingsplanen for gennemførelse af Stockholmprogrammet, kvindechartret og strategien for ligestilling mellem kvinder og mænd, 2010-2015. Tallene fra den undersøgelse, som Den Europæiske Unions Agentur for Grundlæggende Rettigheder har foretaget om kvinders erfaringer med vold i de 28 medlemsstater ([1]), offentliggøres i begyndelsen af 2014.

Ved forordning nr. 606/2013 om gensidig anerkendelse af beskyttelsesforanstaltninger i civilretlige spørgsmål, der blev vedtaget den 6. juni 2013, sikres det, at ofre for vold i hjemmet er sikret af beskyttelsesordrer udstedt i deres hjemland, hvis de rejser eller flytter til et andet land. Forordningen supplerer et direktiv om gensidig anerkendelse af beskyttelsesforanstaltninger i civilretlige spørgsmål, der blev vedtaget i december 2011. For at sikre, at disse foranstaltninger fuldt ud og effektivt gennemføres i begyndelsen af 2015, bistår Kommissionen medlemsstaterne aktivt gennem gensidig dialog, vejledende dokumenter og møder mellem eksperter.

Hvad angår tredjelande kan medlemsstaterne i henhold til artikel 19 i direktiv 2011/99/EU fortsat anvende og indgå bilaterale eller multilaterale aftaler, for så vidt disse giver mulighed for at udvide nævnte direktivs mål og lette procedurerne for at træffe beskyttelsesforanstaltninger. I overensstemmelse med EU's retningslinjer vedrørende vold mod kvinder og piger og bekæmpelse af alle former for diskrimination mod dem ([2]) indgår vold og diskrimination mod kvinder i politiske dialoger og menneskerettighedsdialoger. Der foregår også et samarbejde inden for rammerne af det europæiske instrument for demokrati og menneskerettigheder, som forbedrer adgangen til behandling og retlige tjenester, som forebygger vold, og som styrker de nationale administrationers, civilsamfundsorganisationers og andre aktørers kapacitet.

([1]) Information om den igangværende undersøgelse findes på webstedet: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe.
([2]) Vedtaget ved Rådet for Almindelige Anliggender den 8. december 2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013044/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Anna Rosbach (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) e Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(15 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Violenza contro le donne

La violenza contro le donne resta una delle forme più gravi di violazione strutturale dei diritti umani a livello mondiale, ed è un fenomeno che coinvolge vittime e aggressori di ogni età, livello d'istruzione, reddito e posizione sociale, e che costituisce sia una conseguenza che una causa della disuguaglianza tra donne e uomini.

Tale forma di violenza assume forme diverse, vale a dire violenza fisica, sessuale e psicologica, alle quali si aggiungono numerose forme di violenza strutturale nei confronti delle donne, quali la limitazione del loro diritto di scelta, del loro diritto al proprio corpo e alla sua integrità, del loro diritto all'istruzione, e del loro diritto all'autodeterminazione, e la negazione dei loro pieni diritti civili e politici.

Una società che non garantisce la parità dei diritti delle donne e degli uomini non fa altro che perpetuare una forma strutturale di violenza contro le donne e le ragazze.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. ha già ricevuto e intende rendere pubblico il progetto redatto dall'Agenzia europea sui diritti fondamentali in materia di violenza contro le donne nei diversi Stati membri?

2. Può fornire informazioni sull'attuazione della direttiva relativa al riconoscimento reciproco delle misure di protezione in materia civile, nella quale si prevede che le donne vittime di violenza di genere abbiano diritto alla stessa protezione di cui godono nel proprio paese, in qualsiasi altro stato dell'UE?

3. Intende esaminare la possibilità di coinvolgere, attraverso un'attività normativa, anche i paesi terzi, nostri partner economici e politici, uniti all'Unione attraverso accordi di associazione, di libero scambio o di partenariato, nel rispetto delle clausole europee in materia di violenza fisica nei confronti delle donne?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(16 gennaio 2014)

Combattere la violenza contro le donne rientra tra le priorità della Commissione, come dimostrato dal piano d'azione per l'attuazione del programma di Stoccolma, dalla Carta delle donne e dalla strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015. I dati dell'indagine dell'Agenzia per i diritti fondamentali relativi alle forme di violenza sulle donne nei 28 Stati membri ([1]) saranno pubblicati all'inizio del 2014.

Il regolamento n. 606/2013 relativo al riconoscimento reciproco delle misure di protezione in materia di diritto civile, adottato il 6 giugno 2013, garantirà che le vittime di violenza domestica possano fare affidamento sugli ordini di protezione emessi nel loro Stato membro d'origine anche quando si recano o si trasferiscono in un altro Stato membro. Il regolamento integra una direttiva sul reciproco riconoscimento delle misure di protezione in materia penale adottata nel dicembre 2011. Per garantire che questi strumenti normativi dell'UE siano pienamente ed effettivamente recepiti all'inizio del 2015, la Commissione sostiene in modo fattivo gli Stati membri attraverso il dialogo reciproco, la formulazione di documenti orientativi e l'organizzazione di riunioni di esperti.

Per quanto riguarda i paesi terzi, la direttiva 2011/99/UE prevede all'articolo 19 che gli Stati membri possono continuare ad applicare o a concludere accordi bilaterali o multilaterali che consentano di andare oltre gli obiettivi della presente direttiva e contribuiscano ad agevolare le procedure di adozione delle misure di protezione. In conformità con gli orientamenti dell'UE sulla violenza contro le donne e la lotta contro tutte le forme di discriminazione nei loro confronti ([2]), la lotta contro la violenza contro le donne e la discriminazione è integrata nell'elaborazione delle politiche e nei dialoghi in materia di diritti umani. La cooperazione su questi temi ha luogo anche nell'ambito dello strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani, mediante la promozione dell'accesso alla giustizia e ai servizi di assistenza, la prevenzione della violenza e il rafforzamento delle capacità delle amministrazioni nazionali, delle organizzazioni della società civile e delle altre parti interessate.

([1]) Le informazioni sull'indagine in corso dell'Agenzia per i diritti fondamentali sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe

([2]) Adottato in occasione del Consiglio «Affari generali» dell'8 dicembre 2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013044/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Anna Rosbach (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) and Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Violence against women

Violence against women is still one of the most serious human rights violations worldwide and this phenomenon involves victims and aggressors of every age, level of education, income and social standing; it is both a consequence and cause of gender inequality.

This kind of violence takes various forms, i.e. physical, sexual and psychological violence, as well as various forms of structural violence against women, such as limiting their freedom of choice, their rights to their own body and its integrity, their right to education, their right to self-determination and denial of their full civic and political rights.

A society which does not guarantee equal rights between women and men only perpetuates a structural form of violence against women and girls.

1. Has the Commission already received and does it intend to make public the project drafted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights concerning violence against women in the various Member States?

2. Can it provide information about the implementation of the directive on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters, which stipulates that female victims of violence have the right to the same protection they enjoy in their own country in every other EU Member State?

3. Does it intend to look into the possibility of also involving, through the drafting of legislation, third countries, our economic and political partners, bound to the European Union through association, free trade or partnership agreements, in accordance with European provisions concerning physical violence against women?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

Combating violence against women is a priority of the Commission, as shown in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015. Figures from the FRA's survey on women's experiences of violence in the 28 Member States ([1]) will be published in early 2014.

Regulation No 606/2013 on the mutual recognition of civil law protection measures adopted on 6 June 2013 will ensure that victims of domestic, violence can rely on protection orders issued in their home Member State if they travel or move to another. It completes a directive on the mutual recognition of criminal law protection measures adopted in December 2011. In order to ensure that these instruments are fully and effectively transposed at the beginning of 2015, the Commission is actively assisting Member States through mutual dialogue, issuing guidance documents and organising experts' meetings.

Concerning third countries, Directive 2011/99/EU foresees in Article 19 that Member States may continue to apply or conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements in so far as they extend the objectives of this directive and facilitate procedures for taking protection measures. In accordance with EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them ([2]), violence against women and discrimination are included in policy and human rights dialogues. Cooperation also takes place under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, promoting access to justice and care services, preventing violence and strengthening the capacities of national administrations, civil society organisations and other stakeholders.

([1]) Information on the ongoing FRA survey can be found at: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe
([2]) Adopted at General Affairs Council of 8 December 2008.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-013045/13
til Kommissionen
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Anna Rosbach (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) og Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(15. november 2013)

Om: Gensidig anerkendelse af beskyttelsesforanstaltninger i tilfælde af vold

I maj vedtog Parlamentet sammen med Rådet en beslutning om gensidig anerkendelse af beskyttelsesforanstaltninger i civilretlige spørgsmål (KOM(2011)0276), som navnlig beskytter kvinder, der er ofre for vold på EU-niveau, ved at udvide enhver beskyttelse, der fastsættes af domstolene i et enkelt land, til at omfatte alle medlemsstaterne.

1. Kan Kommissionen i betragtning af de stadig hyppigere tilfælde af vold mod kvinder og mindreårige gøre rede for, hvordan situationen med hensyn til anvendelse af dette direktiv er?

2. Kan Kommission i forbindelse med Dafne-projektet angive, hvor mange kvinder der er blevet dræbt eller kvæster i de enkelte medlemsstater fra 2000-2013, samt hvor mange kvinder der er tvunget til at holde sig skjult, og hvor mange forældreløse børn af dræbte kvinder der findes?

3. Kan Kommissionen oplyse, hvilke medlemsstater der yder retshjælp til kvinder, som er offer for vold, og om der findes en interventionsordning, der sikrer kvinderne og deres børn et sikkert opholdssted, modtagelsesfaciliteter og de nødvendige betingelser for at genopbygge et eget liv?

4. Har Kommissionen statistiske oplysninger om vold over for kvinder fra tredjelande, som opholder sig i medlemsstaterne?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(8. januar 2014)

Bekæmpelsen af vold mod kvinder er en prioritet for Kommissionen, som det fremgår af handlingsplanen om gennemførelse af Stockholmprogrammet, kvindechartret og strategien for ligestilling mellem kvinder og mænd 2010-2015.

Forordning (EU) nr. 606/2013 om gensidig anerkendelse af beskyttelsesforanstaltninger i civilretlige spørgsmål, der blev vedtaget i juni 2013, supplerer direktiv 2011/99/EU af 13. december om den europæiske beskyttelsesordre, der finder anvendelse på beskyttelsesforanstaltninger, som er truffet i straffesager. For at sikre, at begge EU-instrumenter er fuldt ud og effektivt gennemført i starten af 2015, bistår Kommissionen medlemsstaterne gennem gensidig dialog, udarbejdelse af vejledninger og tilrettelæggelse af ekspertmøder.

Der foreligger ingen sammenlignelige data på EU-plan om vold mod kvinder. I det første kvartal af 2014 offentliggøres resultaterne af en undersøgelse, som Agenturet for Grundlæggende Rettigheder er ved at foretage om kvinders erfaringer med vold ([1]) i de 28 EU-medlemsstater. Derudover samarbejder Kommissionen med Det Europæiske Institut for Ligestilling mellem Mænd og Kvinder (EIGE) for at forbedre indsamlingen af sammenlignelige administrative data. Kommissionen er også ved at undersøge mulighederne for at udnytte de nuværende Eurostat-undersøgelser.

I en rapport fra EIGE ([2]), der bekræfter Rådets konklusioner om vold mod kvinder fra december 2012, og som understøtter udvekslingen af god praksis, der blev tilrettelagt af Kommissionen i april 2013 ([3]), gives der et overblik over de hjælpetjenester, der er til rådighed i medlemsstaterne for ofre for kønsbaseret vold.

([1]) Oplysninger om den igangværende undersøgelse fra Agenturet for Grundlæggende Rettigheder kan findes på: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe.
([2]) Se http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/violence-against-women-victim-support-report.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/review-seminars/seminars_2013/vaw_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013045/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Anna Rosbach (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) e Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(15 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Riconoscimento reciproco delle misure di protezione in caso di violenza

A maggio il Parlamento ha approvato una risoluzione con il Consiglio relativa al riconoscimento reciproco delle misure di protezione in materia civile (COM(2011)0276) che tutela in particolare le donne vittime di violenza in un'ottica comunitaria, allargando a tutti gli Stati membri le misure di tutela eventualmente previste dal tribunale di un singolo paese.

A fronte dei casi sempre più frequenti di violenza ai danni di donne e minori:

1. può la Commissione riferire qual è lo stato di applicazione della direttiva?

2. È in grado di quantificare, visto il progetto Dafne, il numero di donne uccise e ferite per ogni singolo Stato membro dal 2000 al 2013, nonché il numero di donne costrette a nascondersi e quello degli orfani di donne uccise?

3. Può specificare in quali Stati membri esiste il gratuito patrocinio per donne succubi di violenza e se sia in vigore un sistema di intervento che garantisca a loro e ai figli una casa sicura, accoglienza e condizioni per ricostruire la propria vita?

4. È in possesso di dati statistici relativi alle violenze sulle donne extracomunitarie presenti all'interno degli Stati membri?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

Combattere la violenza contro le donne rientra tra le priorità della Commissione, come dimostrato dal piano d'azione per l'attuazione del programma di Stoccolma, dalla Carta delle donne e dalla strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015.

Il regolamento (UE) n. 606/2013 relativo al riconoscimento reciproco delle misure di protezione in materia civile, adottato nel giugno 2013, integra la direttiva 2011/99/UE, del 13 dicembre 2011, sull'ordine di protezione europeo, la quale si applica alle misure di protezione adottate in materia penale. Per garantire che entrambi questi strumenti normativi dell'UE siano pienamente ed effettivamente recepiti all'inizio del 2015, la Commissione sostiene gli Stati membri attraverso il dialogo reciproco, la formulazione di documenti orientativi e l'organizzazione di riunioni di esperti.

Non vi sono dati comparabili disponibili a livello dell'UE sulla violenza contro le donne. Nel primo trimestre del 2014, saranno pubblicati i risultati dell'indagine dell'Agenzia per i diritti fondamentali sulle donne vittime di violenza ([1]) nei 28 Stati membri dell'UE. Inoltre, al fine di migliorare la raccolta di dati amministrativi comparabili, la Commissione collabora con l'Istituto europeo per l'uguaglianza di genere (EIGE) e sta studiando le possibilità di utilizzare anche i sondaggi Eurostat disponibili.

La relazione dell'EIGE ([2]), che ribadisce le conclusioni del Consiglio sulla violenza contro le donne adottate nel dicembre 2012 e sostiene lo scambio di buone pratiche organizzato dalla Commissione nell'aprile 2013 ([3]), fornisce una panoramica dei servizi di sostegno disponibili negli Stati membri per le vittime della violenza di genere.

([1]) Le informazioni sull'indagine in corso svolta dall'Agenzia per i diritti fondamentali sono disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe
([2]) Cfr. http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/violence-against-women-victim-support-report
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/review-seminars/seminars_2013/vaw_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013045/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Anna Rosbach (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE) and Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Mutual recognition of protection measures in cases of violence

In May, Parliament adopted a resolution with the Council on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters (COM(2011)0276), which protects, in particular, female victims of violence at European Union level, extending any protection measures laid down by the court of any one country to all the Member States.

In view of the increasingly frequent cases of violence against women and children:

1. Can the Commission say what the state of the play is as regards implementation of the directive?

2. Having regard to the Daphne project, is it able to put a figure on the number of women injured or killed per Member State between 2000 and 2013, as well as the number of women forced into hiding and the number of orphans of murdered women?

3. Can it specify which Member States provide free support for women who suffer from violence and whether an intervention system is in place to ensure that they and their children can have access to a safe house, treatment and the conditions they need to rebuild their lives?

4. Does it have any statistical data concerning violence against non-EU women living in the Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

Combating violence against women is a priority of the Commission, as shown in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015.

Regulation (EU) No 606/2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters adopted in June 2013 supplements Directive 2011/99/EU of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order, which applies to protection measures adopted in criminal matters. In order to ensure that both EU instruments are fully and effectively transposed at the beginning of 2015, the Commission is assisting Member States by mutual dialogue, issuing guidance documents and organising experts meetings.

There are no comparable data available at EU-level on violence against women. In the first quarter of 2014, the results of the Fundamental Rights Agency's survey on women's experiences of violence ([1]) in the 28 EU Member States will be published. Moreover, in order to improve the collection of comparable administrative data, the Commission is collaborating with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The Commission is also exploring possibilities to exploit current Eurostat surveys.

The report of the EIGE ([2]), which upholds the Council conclusions on violence against women adopted in December 2012 and the exchange of good practices organised by the Commission in April 2013 ([3]) gives an overview of support services for victims of gender-based violence available in Member States.

([1]) Information on the ongoing FRA survey can be found at: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe
([2]) See http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/violence-against-women-victim-support-report
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/review-seminars/seminars_2013/vaw_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013046/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(15 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti in merito allo scandalo italiano nel settore delle slot machine, con uno sconto di 98 miliardi da parte dello Stato italiano alle società coinvolte

Dal 2002 lo Stato italiano ha regolarizzato il settore del gioco d'azzardo attraverso il sistema telematico di controllo della Sogei, società di Information and Communication Technology del Ministero dell'economia e delle finanze, con l'obiettivo di raggiungere un mercato interno regolamentato e controllato del gioco d'azzardo.

Secondo un'indagine della Finanza, alcune concessionarie di slot machine hanno un debito di 98 miliardi di euro verso lo Stato. Le società in questione sono: Atlantis World Giocolegale limited, Snai S.p.A., Sisal S.p.A., Gmatica S.r.l., Cogetech S.p.A., Gamenet S.p.A., Lottomatica Videolot Rete S.p.A., Cirsa Italia S.r.l., H.b.G. S.r.l. e Codere. In primo grado, il processo della Corte dei Conti ha multato le società di soli 2 miliardi e mezzo con uno sconto di pena di 96 miliardi di euro (oltre il 90 %). La guerra all'evasione in un settore come il gioco d'azzardo dovrebbe essere sancita da leggi e multe severe, invece con questo sconto fiscale si andrebbero a legittimare comportamenti illegali.

I giochi d'azzardo rientrano nell'ambito di applicazione dell'articolo 56 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE (TFUE) e sono disciplinati dalle norme sulla prestazione dei servizi.

La Commissione individua tre obiettivi di interesse pubblico che possono essere validi per gli Stati membri in termini di politica nazionale in materia di gioco d'azzardo: la tutela dei consumatori, l'ordine pubblico e il finanziamento di attività d'interesse pubblico.

Visti la sua recente comunicazione dal titolo «Verso un quadro normativo europeo approfondito relativo al gioco d'azzardo on-line» (COM(2012)0596) e gli articoli 51, 52 e 56 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (TFUE), può la Commissione esprimere il suo giudizio sul processo in questione? In considerazione del fatto che vicende come questa contribuiscono a far sì che Stati membri come la Repubblica italiana perdano ingenti risorse finanziarie e si allontanino dagli obiettivi di risanamento dei conti pubblici, nonché dalla possibilità di stanziare parte di queste entrate nel contrasto e nella prevenzione del gioco illegale e nella cura delle ludopatie, in quale modo intende agire?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione prende atto delle informazioni trasmesse dall'onorevole deputato. La Commissione non può pronunciarsi sui procedimenti giudiziari in sospeso negli Stati membri. Inoltre, la questione riguarda l'applicazione di norme nazionali che, in mancanza di un'armonizzazione a livello dell'UE, compete principalmente agli Stati membri. Nella situazione attuale, entro i limiti stabiliti dalla Corte di giustizia dell'UE, gli Stati membri possono definire gli obiettivi delle proprie strategie in materia di gioco d'azzardo e il livello di tutela richiesto. Tuttavia, per assicurare il conseguimento degli obiettivi di interesse generale delle loro politiche in materia di gioco d'azzardo è fondamentale che gli Stati membri attuino la legislazione nazionale in modo efficace, cosa che presuppone, tra l'altro, la conformità al diritto dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013046/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Clarifications concerning the Italian slot machine scandal, with a reduction of EUR 98 billion in the debt owed to the Italian State by the companies involved

Since 2002, the Italian State has regulated the gambling sector through the telematic monitoring system developed by Sogei, an information and communication technology company run by the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, with the goal of achieving a regulated and monitored internal market for gambling.

According to an investigation conducted by the tax police, slot machine operators owe the State EUR 98 billion in debt. The companies in question are: Atlantis World Giocolegale limited, Snai spa, Sisal spa, Gmatica srl, Cogetech spa, Gamenet spa, Lottomatica Videolot Rete spa, Cirsa Italia srl, H.b.G. Srl and Codere. In an initial ruling, the Italian Court of Auditors imposed a fine of only EUR 2.5 billion on the companies, reducing their penalty by EUR 96 billion (over 90%). The war on tax evasion in a sector such as gambling should be backed up by laws and severe fines; instead, this tax break only serves to legitimise unlawful behaviour.

Gambling falls within the scope of Article 56 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and is governed by legislation covering the provision of services.

The Commission identifies three objectives of public interest which may be valid for the Member States in terms of national policy regarding gambling: protecting consumers, public order and the financing of activities in the public interest.

In view of its recent communication, entitled 'Towards a comprehensive European framework for online gambling' (COM(2012)0596), and Articles 51, 52 and 56 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), can the Commission say what it thinks of the trial in question? Considering the fact that cases such as this mean that Member States like Italy lose considerable financial resources and find it harder to achieve the objectives of budgetary consolidation, as well as losing the possibility of allocating some of this income to the fight against and prevention of illegal gambling and the treatment of gambling addiction, how does the Commission intend to react?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The Commission takes note of the information provided by the Honourable Member. The Commission cannot take a position on pending court cases in the Member States. In addition, the issue concerns enforcement of national rules which, in the absence of EU harmonisation, is primarily the responsibility of the Member States. In the current situation, Member States may, within the limits established by the Court of Justice of the EU, set out the objectives of their gambling policy and the level of protection sought. Nonetheless, effective enforcement by Member States of their national legislation — a prerequisite of which is compliance with EC law — is essential for the attainment of the public interest objectives of their gambling policy.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013048/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 november 2013)

Betreft: Investor-state dispute settlement in het Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

De Europese Commissie is volop met de Verenigde Staten aan het onderhandelen over het Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Aan het TTIP zijn onmiskenbaar voordelen verbonden. Ik kan echter niet anders dan bezorgd zijn over een aantal aspecten.

Het TTIP voorziet in een „investor-state dispute settlement". Hierdoor kunnen Amerikaanse bedrijven Europese landen die hun niveau van sociale bescherming willen behouden, dagvaarden door „discriminatie" in te roepen of „oneerlijke concurrentie" wanneer zij aan bijvoorbeeld de Belgische sociale wetgeving moeten voldoen, terwijl een Belgisch bedrijf dat in een deelstaat zoals Arizona, waar vakbonden verboden zijn, niet aan de Belgische sociale wetgeving zal hoeven voldoen. Bovendien zal dat bedrijf daarvoor niet langs de Belgische rechtbank moeten passeren maar langs een „investor-state dispute settlement"-tribunaal waar hele andere regels gelden dan degene die we in nationale rechtssystemen gewend zijn.

In andere vrijhandelsakkoorden die de Verenigde Staten afsloten (bv. VS — Australië, VS — Zuid-Amerika) werd ook voorzien in zo'n „investor-state dispute settlement" en daar is duidelijk geworden dat dit staten met hun rug tegen de muur zet als zij hun inwoners willen beschermen, bv. door het niveau van sociale bescherming te behouden of bepaalde producten te reguleren.

Deelt de Commissie mijn mening dat de „investor-state dispute settlement" een reëel gevaar voor het niveau van sociale bescherming in de EU inhoudt? Zo ja, welke maatregelen gaat de Commissie nemen om dit te voorkomen? Op welke wijze gaat zij deze problematiek meenemen in de verdere onderhandelingen over het TTIP?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(27 januari 2014)

In het kader van de investeringsbescherming hebben staten een beperkt aantal verplichtingen jegens buitenlandse investeerders op hun grondgebied. De lidstaten hebben reeds 1400 overeenkomsten gesloten waarin een mechanisme voor geschillenbeslechting tussen investeerders en staten („investor-state dispute settlement", ISDS) is opgenomen, en desondanks bieden zij een van de hoogste niveaus van sociale bescherming in de wereld. Investeerders die de bescherming van een dergelijke overeenkomst willen genieten, moeten de wetgeving van hun gastland in acht nemen, ook die inzake sociale bescherming.

De overeenkomsten bieden geen bescherming tegen oneerlijke mededinging. Zij leggen wel verplichtingen inzake niet-discriminatie en eerlijke en billijke behandeling op. De Commissie zal trachten zorgvuldig duidelijk te maken dat deze volgens haar inhouden dat zolang België investeerders uit de Verenigde Staten op zijn grondgebied op dezelfde wijze behandelt als zijn eigen investeerders, het recht op een eerlijke rechtsbedeling niet met voeten treedt, zich niet schuldig maakt aan rechtsweigering en niet op een kennelijk willekeurige wijze handelt, vorderingen in het kader van het ISDS-mechanisme geen kans op slagen hebben.

ISDS brengt geen concurrerend rechtsstelsel tot stand waarmee bedrijfsjuristen de nationale wetgeving kunnen overtroeven. ISDS biedt een forum voor aangelegenheden van internationaal recht waarvoor de plaatselijke rechters niet bevoegd zijn. Alle vrijhandelsovereenkomsten die de EU sluit, bevestigen duidelijk het vaste beginsel dat de partijen het recht hebben om regels in te stellen en doelstellingen van overheidsbeleid, zoals doelstellingen van sociaal beleid, na te streven. In het kader van het TTIP zou het noch de EU noch haar lidstaten onmogelijk — of zelfs maar moeilijker — mogen worden gemaakt regels in te stellen om legitieme doelstellingen van overheidsbeleid, zoals sociale bescherming, na te streven.

Investeringsbescherming en ISDS vormen derhalve geen bedreiging voor het niveau van sociale bescherming in Europa. Bedrijven uit de Verenigde Staten die in België investeren en in België personeel in dienst hebben, moeten de Belgische wetgeving in acht nemen, ook die inzake sociale bescherming, en dit zal het geval blijven.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013048/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Investor-state dispute settlement in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

The Commission is right in the midst of negotiating the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States. There are obvious benefits associated with the TTIP. However, I cannot help but be concerned about a number of aspects.

The TTIP includes an 'investor-state dispute settlement'. This allows US companies to take European countries wishing to maintain their social protection level to court by claiming 'discrimination' or 'unfair competition' if they need, for instance, to comply with Belgian social legislation, while a Belgian company in a US state like Arizona, where trade unions are banned, will not need to comply with Belgian social legislation. Furthermore, the company will not have to take the matter to the Belgian courts but to an investor-state dispute settlement tribunal where completely different rules apply to those we are used to in national legal systems.

Other free trade agreements signed by the United States (e.g. US-Australia, US-South America) also included this investor-state dispute settlement, which made it clear that it puts states with their back against the wall if they want to protect their inhabitants, for instance, by maintaining the social protection level or regulating certain products.

Does the Commission agree that the investor-state dispute settlement poses a real danger to the social protection level in the EU? If so, what measures will the Commission adopt to prevent this happening? How will it include this issue in the subsequent negotiations on the TTIP?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

Investment protection consists of a limited number of obligations that a state undertakes vis-à-vis foreign investors in their territory. Member States already have 1400 such agreements with investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), and this has not prevented them from having among the highest standard of social protection in the world. Such investors, in order to benefit from the protection of the agreement, must obey the laws of their host country, including on social protection.

The agreements do not contain protection against unfair competition. There are obligations for non-discrimination and fair and equitable treatment, which the Commission will seek to clarify carefully to mean that as long as Belgium treats US investors in its territory in the same way that it treats its own investors, does not abuse due process, deny justice or behave in a manifestly arbitrary manner, there can be no successful claim in ISDS.

ISDS does not create a competing legal system whereby domestic laws can be trumped by corporate lawyers. ISDS provides a forum for addressing issues under international law over which local courts have no jurisdiction. All of the EU's Free Trade Agreements clearly confirm, as a standing principle, the Parties' right to regulate and to pursue public policy objectives such as social policy. In the context of the TTIP, neither the EU nor its Member States should be prevented — or even inhibited — from regulating to pursue legitimate public policy such as social protection.

Investment protection and ISDS does not therefore pose a danger to the level of social protection in Europe. US companies investing in Belgium and employing personnel in Belgium must comply with Belgian law, including on social protection, and this will remain so.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013051/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(15 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W związku z odnalezieniem kolekcji zrabowanych przez III Rzeszę dzieł sztuki

Zasłaniając się prawem podatkowym, władze Niemiec odmawiają opublikowania listy zrabowanych w okresie hitlerowskim, a odzyskanych w ubiegłym roku, dzieł sztuki. Sprawa dotyczy zbioru 1406 obrazów, odnalezionych w mieszkaniu Corneliusa Gurlitta. Stanowisko niemieckiego rządu stoi w sprzeczności z zobowiązaniami wynikającymi z przedmiotowej konwencji waszyngtońskiej, którą Berlin podpisał w 1998 r.

Jak zaznacza konsul generalna RP w Niemczech, Justyna Lewańska: „Istnieje duże prawdopodobieństwo, że wśród dzieł sztuki mogą znajdować się też zrabowane przez Niemców eksponaty pochodzące z polskich zbiorów". Tymczasem Niemcy konsekwentne odmawiają nawet wglądu do ww. listy przedstawicielom innych państw, w tym polskim dyplomatom.

Kierując się interesem publicznym wyrażanym bezwzględną koniecznością ujawnienia listy odzyskanych dzieł oraz mając na względzie dobrosąsiedzkie stosunki Polski i Niemiec, zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź:

Czy, uwzględniając uprawnienia krajów członkowskich oraz ich obywateli do odzyskania utraconych obrazów, Komisja wyraża zainteresowanie problemem i rozważy swoje zaangażowanie dla jego pozytywnego rozwiązania? W szczególności, czy możliwe jest dyplomatyczne wsparcie krajów członkowskich domagających się upublicznienia listy oraz, w dalszej kolejności, wspomożenie ich działań zmierzających do odzyskania zrabowanych dóbr kultury?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(30 stycznia 2014 r.)

Z zasady uprawnienia Komisji w odniesieniu do działań i zaniechań państw członkowskich ograniczają się do nadzoru nad stosowaniem prawa Unii pod kontrolą Trybunału Sprawiedliwości. Państwa członkowskie powinny same określić zasady zwrotu majątku skonfiskowanego przed przystąpieniem do Unii Europejskiej.

Wobec braku elementów stanowiących powiązanie z prawem unijnym w opisywanym przypadku, to władze krajowe powinny dokonać oceny, o którą wnosi Pan Poseł, zgodnie z odpowiednim prawem krajowym i międzynarodowym.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013051/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: The discovery of a collection of art plundered by the Third Reich

Using tax legislation as an excuse, the German authorities are refusing to publish a list of the works of art that were plundered during the Nazi period and discovered this year. This issue concerns the collection of 1406 paintings found in a flat occupied by Cornelius Gurlitt. The German Government's position goes against its obligations arising from the Washington Convention, which Germany signed in 1998.

According to the Polish Consul General in Germany, Justyna Lewańska, 'It is highly likely that these works of art could also include items which were stolen by the Germans from Polish collections'. Meanwhile, Germany is consistently refusing to let representatives of other states, including Polish diplomats, see this list.

Guided by considerations of public interest and the absolute necessity of revealing the list of the works which have been recovered, and in view of the need for good neighbourly relations between Poland and Germany, I should like to ask the following questions:

Considering the rights of Member States and their citizens to recover lost paintings, is the Commission interested in the problem and is it considering getting involved in order to resolve this in a positive way? In particular, is it possible to have diplomatic support for the Member States which are requesting publication of this list and, subsequently, to support their efforts to recover their stolen cultural property?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

As a matter of principle, the Commission's powers regarding acts and omissions by Member States are limited to overseeing the application of Union law, under the control of the Court of Justice. In particular, it is for Member States to determine the modalities of restitution of assets confiscated prior to the accession to the European Union.

In the absence of elements disclosing any link with EC law in the present case, it is for national authorities to make the assessment requested by the Honourable Member, in conformity with relevant national and international law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013062/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Fiducia dei cittadini nelle istituzioni europee

Numerosi esperti hanno analizzato le cifre e i dati forniti dall'ultimo sondaggio promosso da Eurostat riguardo la fiducia dei cittadini nelle istituzioni nazionali ed europee.

Da queste analisi emerge la fotografia poco rosea di un'Europa in cui esiste ormai un vero e proprio divario ideologico e politico tra paesi del «Nord» e paesi del «Sud», come è evidente anche che il divario si sta allargando. Dal 2008 ad oggi la fiducia riposta nelle istituzioni europee è diminuita in tutti i paesi europei, ma più drasticamente nel Sud, e più nettamente a partire dal 2010, anno in cui fu concluso l'accordo sul primo programma di aggiustamento macroeconomico con la Grecia. Ma i dati dell'Eurobarometro suggeriscono che benché la fiducia sia diminuita considerevolmente, le istituzioni europee continuano a sembrare più affidabili delle istituzioni nazionali agli occhi dei cittadini. Questo è particolarmente evidente proprio in quei paesi che hanno conosciuto il volto più «severo» dell'Europa, ovvero i tre paesi attualmente coinvolti in programmi di aggiustamento macroeconomico (Grecia, Irlanda e Portogallo) nonché Spagna e Italia. L'instabilità delle situazioni economiche di questi paesi mette però a rischio questo patrimonio acquisito di fiducia. Nei paesi del Nord, al contrario, i dati rivelano che prima della crisi i cittadini erano soliti fidarsi delle istituzioni europee e di quelle nazionali pressoché nella stessa misura, con una leggera preferenza per le istituzioni europee, andata perduta con l'intensificarsi della crisi nel 2011-12.

Considerato che, in previsione delle importanti elezioni europee che si terranno a maggio 2014, gli ultimi mesi hanno visto crescere il dibattito sulla possibilità di un rafforzamento dell'integrazione europea e di un possibile passo verso una «Unione politica», e che i sostenitori del progetto additano la mancanza di una completa integrazione politica come uno dei fattori che hanno ostacolato la gestione e la risoluzione della crisi, può la Commissione far sapere:

se ritiene sia il caso di prendere in analisi programmi di carattere economico/culturale di respiro nazionale o comunque macroregionale Nord/Sud per venire incontro alle differenti sensibilità riscontrate?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2014)

L'Unione europea s'impegna in una serie di azioni svolte lungo le linee direttrici suggerite dall'onorevole parlamentare.

I programmi di adeguamento economico citati nell'interrogazione sono riesaminati regolarmente con le autorità nazionali per garantire che rispettino le esigenze e le sensibilità specifiche di ogni paese. Essi, unitamente alle raccomandazione del semestre europeo e a quelle specifiche per paese, costituiscono la soluzione adeguata per uscire dalla crisi e garantire una ripresa sostenibile. L'ultima indagine Eurobarometro ([1]) mostra che la percezione pubblica dell'unione economica e monetaria (UEM) e dell'euro nell'UE28 rimane positiva [52 % a favore, + 1 dalla primavera del 2013; 67 % nell'area dell'euro (AE17)].

L'attenzione dedicata all'occupazione, all'istruzione e all'inclusione nel semestre europeo dimostra l'importanza attribuita dall'UE a tali questioni, cui fanno da riscontro gli investimenti del FSE in tema di disoccupazione, competenze, istruzione e inclusione sociale.

Anche i Fondi ESI ([2]) rappresentano la solidarietà verso le regioni e gli Stati membri meno sviluppati. Saranno resi disponibili 366,8 miliardi di euro per conseguire gli obiettivi di Europa 2020 ossia la crescita e l'occupazione, la gestione dei cambiamenti climatici, nonché la riduzione della dipendenza energetica, della povertà e dell'esclusione. Nell'ambito del FESR ([3]) si sono fissate varie priorità tra le quali le PMI: Stati membri e regioni avranno, tra l'altro, la possibilità di sostenere, in tale ambito, azioni nel settore delle industrie culturali e creative. Inoltre il programma Europa creativa sosterrà il settore culturale nel raggiungimento del pubblico di altri paesi, rafforzando in tal modo la diversità culturale e linguistica e promuovendo l'identità comune e la fiducia nel processo d'integrazione europea.

Tra le altre azioni UE di rilievo si annoverano: l'anno europeo dei cittadini 2013, gli incontri con i commissari nell'ambito dei «dialoghi con i cittadini» in tutta l'UE, e il programma in corso di finanziamenti UE «Europa per i cittadini».

([1]) (Numero 80, sondaggio di novembre 2013).
([2]) Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei.
([3]) Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013062/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Citizens' confidence in EU institutions

Countless experts have analysed the figures and data provided by Eurostat's latest survey into the level of citizens' confidence in national and EU institutions.

These analyses paint a gloomy picture of a Europe with a true ideological and political gap between northern and southern countries, and it is clear that this gap is widening. Since 2008, citizens' confidence in EU institutions has fallen in all European countries, most sharply in southern Europe and most clearly since 2010 when the first macroeconomic adjustment programme was agreed with Greece. Eurobarometer data suggest, however, that although confidence has declined significantly, citizens continue to view EU institutions as being more trustworthy than national institutions. This is particularly apparent precisely in those countries which have seen Europe's 'sterner' side, namely the three countries currently subject to macroeconomic adjustment programmes (Greece, Ireland and Portugal), as well as in Spain and Italy. The unstable economic situation in these countries nevertheless threatens this legacy of trust. On the other hand, the data show that prior to the crisis, citizens in the northern countries tended to trust EU and national institutions more or less to the same extent, with a slight preference for EU institutions which was lost as the crisis deepened in 2011 and 2012.

With a view to the important European elections to be held in May 2014, recent months have seen a growing debate over the possibility of strengthening EU integration and a possible move towards a 'political Union'. Proponents of this project point to the lack of full political integration as one of the factors hindering the management and resolution of the crisis.

Does the Commission believe that economic/cultural programmes on a national scale, or at the very least a north/south macro-regional scale, should be examined to take account of the different sensitivities identified?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The European Union undertakes a range of actions along the lines suggested by the Honourable Member.

The economic adjustment programmes mentioned in the question are regularly reviewed with national authorities to ensure they respect country-specific needs and sensibilities. Alongside the European semester and country-specific recommendations, they constitute the appropriate way to exit the crisis and secure sustainable recovery. The latest Eurobarometer ([1]) shows that public perception of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the euro in EU28 remains positive (52% support, +1 since spring 2013; 67% in the euro area (EA17).

The focus on employment, education and inclusion in the European semester shows the importance attached by the EU to such issues, backed up by ESF investment on unemployment, skills, education and social inclusion.

The ESIF ([2]) further acts of solidarity with less developed Member States and regions. EUR366.8 billion will be available to meet Europe 2020 goals of growth and jobs, climate change, energy dependence, and reducing poverty and exclusion. The ERDF ([3]) will target priorities such as SMEs, with the possibility that Member States and regions support, *inter alia*, related actions in the field of culture and creative industries. The culture sector will also be helped by the Creative Europe programme to reach audiences in other countries, thereby strengthening cultural and linguistic diversity, and promoting shared identity and trust in European integration.

Other relevant EU actions include: the European Year of Citizens 2013, the current town-hall- -style 'Citizens' Dialogues' with Commissioners across the EU, and the ongoing EU funding programme, 'Europe for Citizens'.

([1]) (Number 80, fieldwork in November 2013).
([2]) European Structural and Investment Funds.
([3]) European Regional Development Fund.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013066/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Precauzioni nell'utilizzo di prodotti contenenti parabeni

I parabeni sono una vasta classe di composti chimici, utilizzati da molto tempo nell'industria cosmetica, farmaceutica e alimentare per le loro proprietà battericide e fungicide. La loro funzione è impedire che nei prodotti, dopo la produzione ma soprattutto dopo che sono stati aperti per l'utilizzo, si sviluppino muffe o batteri che ne alterino la qualità. È possibile trovare questa tipologia di conservanti in numerosissimi prodotti di uso comune: cosmetici, prodotti per la rasatura, farmaci, creme per le mani, bagnoschiuma, salviette per i bambini, detergenti per la casa, ecc.

Sebbene i parabeni più utilizzati (il metil e l'etil-parabene) abbiano un peso molecolare minore e risultino alquanto sicuri, il problema principale è rappresentato dal fatto che, a causa della sua ampia diffusione, l'esposizione a questa sostanza risulta continuata nel tempo. Inoltre esiste un ulteriore problema: non si è in grado di valutare l'entità dell'assorbimento per i prodotti che non prevedono il risciacquo.

Il rischio maggiore è quello allergico, mentre il rischio tumorale è stato ridimensionato dal comitato scientifico per la sicurezza dei consumatori dell'UE. Per quanto riguarda la diffusione di allergie, si calcola che quasi il 10 % delle persone che si recano in un centro allergologico ha una reazione a cosmetici e profumi.

Occorre considerare tre aspetti:

— la cute dei bambini presenta un maggior assorbimento cutaneo e il loro sistema endocrino è in via di sviluppo, mentre gli anziani hanno una pelle caratterizzata da maggior fragilità;

— la Danimarca ha vietato l'inserimento dei parabeni in tutti i prodotti destinati ai bambini sotto i 3 anni e la Francia sta valutando se applicare lo stesso divieto;

— come precedentemente indicato, non si è in grado di valutare l'entità dell'assorbimento dei parabeni e allo stesso tempo il loro utilizzo è molto frequente.

Alla luce di quanto illustrato, ritiene la Commissione che siano necessari ulteriori studi per valutare l'impatto sulla salute dei prodotti contenenti parabeni che penetrano nella cute per assorbimento?

Risposta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(23 gennaio 2014)

Il comitato scientifico della sicurezza dei consumatori ha fornito sette pareri scientifici sui parabeni. ([1]) Nei pareri più recenti il comitato ha confermato che il metilparabene e l'etilparabene sono considerati sicuri al limite attuale dello 0,8 % (come acidi), a condizione che nessun singolo parabene raggiunga concentrazioni superiori allo 0,4 % (come acidi). Per il propilparabene ed il butilparabene, il comitato ha raccomandato di abbassare il limite ad una concentrazione massima totale di parabeni dello 0,19 % (come estere). Tuttavia il comitato ha concluso che non era possibile escludere il rischio nell'applicazione di prodotti cosmetici da non sciacquare, destinati alla cura della zona pannolino nei bambini di età inferiore ai sei mesi. Per altri parabeni (isopropil-, isobutil-, fenil-, benzil- e pentilparabene), erano disponibili solo informazioni limitate o non erano disponibili informazioni e quindi non è stato possibile valutare il rischio potenziale.

Nei suoi ultimi pareri, il comitato ha sottolineato che la tossicocinetica dei parabeni nei ratti differisce notevolmente dalla tossicocinetica dei parabeni nell'uomo e ha chiesto un miglioramento dei dati, in particolare per quanto riguarda l'esposizione dell'uomo, compresi i bambini, al propilparabene e al butilparabene nei prodotti cosmetici e la tossicocinetica del propilparabene e del butilparabene nell'uomo.

La Commissione concorda sul fatto che questi dati potrebbero consentire una più precisa valutazione del rischio. La Commissione ritiene tuttavia che non siano necessari ulteriori studi prima di attuare le raccomandazioni di cui sopra, dato che il comitato ha tenuto conto di tutti gli altri fattori di incertezza nel calcolo del margine di sicurezza e ha adottato un'impostazione molto prudente. ([2]) Attualmente, la Commissione sta elaborando i provvedimenti necessari per attuare i pareri più recenti del comitato.

([1]) SCCP/0874/05, SCCP/0873/05, SCCP/1017/06, SCCP/1183/08, SCCS/1348/10, SCCS/1446/11 e SCCS/1514/13.
([2]) SCCS/1446/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013066/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Precaution with products containing parabens

Parabens are a very large group of chemical compounds which have been used for many years in the cosmetics, pharmaceutical and food industries for their bactericidal and fungicidal properties. Their function is to prevent mould or bacteria from developing in products and affecting their quality after production, especially once they have been opened to use. This type of preservative can be found in a whole host of commonly used products, such as cosmetics, shaving products, medicines, hand creams, bubble bath, baby wipes and household detergents.

While the parabens most often used (methylparaben and ethylparaben) have a lower molecular weight and are therefore somewhat safer, the main problem lies in the fact that people are exposed to these substances on an ongoing basis because they are so widely used. A further problem lies in the fact that the quantity of the substance absorbed through products that are not rinsed off cannot be calculated.

The greatest risk is that of allergic reactions, although the cancer risk has been downgraded by the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety. As regards the increased incidence of allergies, it is estimated that around 10% of people who attend allergy clinics have had a reaction to cosmetics and perfumes.

There are three aspects to consider:

— children's skin is more absorbent and their endocrine systems are less developed, while in elderly people the skin becomes more fragile;

— Denmark has banned the use of parabens in all products for children under three years and France is considering whether to introduce a similar ban;

— as stated above, the amount of parabens we absorb cannot be measured, added to which they are used very frequently.

In the light of this information, does the Commission consider that further studies are needed to assess the health effects of paraben-containing products which are absorbed through the skin?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

The Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety provided seven scientific opinions on parabens ([1]). In the most recent opinions, the Committee confirmed that the methyl- and ethyl paraben are considered safe at the current limit of 0.8% (as acids), with no single paraben having a higher concentration than 0.4% (as acids). For propyl- and butyl paraben, the Committee recommended to lower the limit to a maximum total concentration of parabens to 0.19% (as ester). However it concluded that a risk could not be excluded for the application of leave-on cosmetic products designed for the nappy area on children below the age of six months. For other parabens (isopropyl-, isobutyl-, phenyl-, benzyl- and pentylparaben), only limited or no information was available, and the potential risk could not be assessed.

In its latest opinions, the Committee highlighted that toxicokinetics of parabens in rats and humans differ considerably and asked for an improvement of the data, in particular on the exposure of humans including children to propyl- and butylparaben in cosmetic products and the toxicokinetics of propyl- and butylparaben in humans.

The Commission agrees that these data would allow a more refined risk assessment. However, the Commission considers that it does not need further studies before implementing the recommendations described above, given that the Committee took into account all the remaining uncertainty factors while calculating the margin of safety and took a very conservative approach ([2]). *At present*, the Commission is preparing measures to implement the latest Committee opinions.

([1]) SCCP/0874/05, SCCP/0873/05, SCCP/1017/06, SCCP/1183/08, SCCS/1348/10, SCCS/1446/11 and SCCS/1514/13.
([2]) SCCS/1446/11.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013070/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(18 november 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — IntCen — wettelijk kader en toezicht

IntCen (het EU-Centrum voor de analyse van inlichtingen) is een centrum voor het verzamelen en analyseren van inlichtingen waaraan lidstaten vrijwillig inlichtingengegevens kunnen overdragen. Het centrum kan ook gegevens uit open bronnen en „veldobservaties" ten tijde van een crisis verwerven en analyseren.

1. Wat is de rechtsgrond voor de organisatorische structuur en de activiteiten van IntCen?

2. Wat is de formele wettelijke status van IntCen? Hoe verhoudt de wettelijke status ervan zich tot die van de Europese Dienst voor extern optreden?

3. Met welke partijen deelt IntCen de vergaarde inlichtingengegevens en de analyses daarvan?

4. Wat voor soort toezicht — parlementair, gerechtelijk, door deskundigen of eventuele andere vormen van toezicht — is er ingesteld met betrekking tot de activiteiten van IntCen, aangezien die bestaan uit de verwerking en de analyse van inlichtingengegevens?

5. Heeft het Hof van Justitie rechtsbevoegdheid over de inlichtingenactiviteiten van IntCen in het geval van een schending van het mandaat, de rechtsgrond of de EU-wetgeving? En zo niet, waarom niet?

6. Verwerkt IntCen persoonsgegevens binnen de reikwijdte van zijn inlichtingenwerkzaamheden? Zo ja, hoe is het toezicht op de verwerking van persoonsgegevens geregeld?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(21 januari 2014)

SITCEN, de voorganger van INTCEN, is door de Raad opgezet om 24 uur per dag waakzaam te kunnen zijn en de Raad en andere EU-instanties strategische analyses te kunnen bieden. Aangezien SITCEN geen inlichtingen of persoonsgegevens verzamelde, en slechts op basis van vrijwilligheid input kreeg van de inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdiensten van de lidstaten, werd het opgezet als integrerend onderdeel van het secretariaat-generaal van de Raad.

In 2010 bepaalde de Raad dat SITCEN rechtstreeks onder het gezag van de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter zou worden geplaatst, en daartoe zou worden overgebracht naar de Europese Dienst voor extern optreden (EDEO). Dat bracht geen verandering in de wettelijke status van SITCEN, dat een integrerend onderdeel van de EDEO werd en bijgevolg een normale afdeling daarvan. Voor INTCEN gelden dan ook alle toezichtmaatregelen die van toepassing zijn op de EDEO. Alle EU-voorschriften en -procedures zijn op INTCEN van toepassing. De EU-voorschriften betreffende de bescherming van personen in verband met de verwerking van persoonsgegevens door de instellingen en organen van de Unie ([1]) en betreffende de toegang tot documenten zijn volledig van toepassing. De Europese Toezichthouder voor gegevensbescherming, de Ombudsman en het Hof van Justitie zijn bevoegd ten aanzien van de activiteiten van INTCEN. Ook het Europees Parlement kan langs parlementaire weg, zoals door vragen te stellen, toezicht houden op INTCEN.

In 2012 heeft SITCEN bij besluit de naam INTCEN gekregen en zijn de taken die geen verband houden met analyse naar een andere afdeling verplaatst. Deze verandering had geen gevolgen voor de wettelijke basis of de structuur en de aard van de analysewerkzaamheden (zo worden er nog steeds geen persoonsgegevens verzameld). Er waren evenmin gevolgen wat betreft de partners waarmee INTCEN producten deelt (verschillende diensten van de EDEO, de Raad, de Commissie, de lidstaten en op ad-hocbasis ook andere EU-instanties, zoals Europol en Frontex).

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 45/2001 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 18 december 2000 betreffende de bescherming van natuurlijke personen in verband met de verwerking van persoonsgegevens door de communautaire instellingen en organen en betreffende het vrije verkeer van die gegevens (PB L 8 van 12.1.2001, blz. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013070/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — IntCen — legal framework and oversight

IntCen (the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre) is an intelligence gathering and analysis centre to which Member States can voluntarily transmit intelligence information. It can also obtain and analyse open-source information and on-the-ground observations in crisis.

1. What is the legal basis for, respectively, IntCen's organisation and its activities?

2. What is the formal legal status of IntCen? How does its legal status relate to that of the European External Action Service?

3. With what parties does IntCen share the intelligence information gathered by it and its analyses?

4. Given that IntCen's activities concern intelligence information processing and analysis, what kind of oversight of it — parliamentary, judicial, expert, or other possible forms of oversight — has been put in place?

5. Does the Court of Justice have jurisdiction over IntCen's intelligence activities in case of breach of its mandate, of its legal basis or of EU legislation? If not, why not?

6. Does IntCen process personal data within the scope of its intelligence work? If so, how is the supervision or oversight of its processing of personal data organised?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

INTCEN's predecessor SITCEN has been set up by the Council in order to establish a 24 hour watch-keeping capability and to provide strategic analysis to the Council and other EU bodies. Considering that it did not gather intelligence, nor collect personal data and only received input from the intelligence and security services of the Member States on voluntary basis, was thus set up as an integral part of the General Secretariat of the Council.

In 2010 the Council provided that the SITCEN is placed under the direct authority of the HR/VP and as such transferred to the European External Action Service (EEAS). The legal status of SITCEN did not change: it became an integral part of the EEAS and thus a normal department of the EEAS. INTCEN is therefore subject to all means of oversight applicable to the EEAS and all EU rules and procedures apply to INTCEN. The EU rules relating to the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies ([1]), and on access to documents apply in full and the European Data Protection Supervisor, the Ombudsman and the Court of Justice are competent as regards activities of INTCEN. Also, the European Parliament is entitled to supervise INTCEN through parliamentarian means, such as EP questions.

By Decision 2012, SITCEN was renamed into INTCEN and its non-analytical tasks were moved to another department. This change had no impact on its legal basis nor on the structure and nature of the analytical work (e.g. excluding the collection of personal data) nor on the partners it shares it products with (various services in the EEAS, the Council, the Commission, the Member States as well as on an ad hoc basis with various EU agencies and bodies such as Europol and Frontex).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1-22.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013073/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Cancelación de un proyecto de residuos financiado por el BCI

La Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa ha destinado más de 13 millones de euros para compensar a las empresas que resultaron adjudicatarias de la construcción de una planta de valorización energética de los residuos no reciclables incorporada al plan de residuos de aquel territorio, y financiada por el Banco Europeo de Inversiones. La decisión es parte de un «plan alternativo» de gestión de residuos que sustituye la planta de valorización por dos centros de tratamiento de residuos orgánicos, apuesta por retrasar el cierre de los vertederos actualmente abiertos y por crear depósitos permanentes de balas de residuos no reciclables que ni siquiera tienen estudios sobre alternativas para su ubicación. Estas previsiones no responden a las necesidades actuales (tratar más de 200 000 toneladas de residuos al año, cifras correspondientes a lo depositado en vertedero en 2012) no cuentan con proyectos conocidos, plazos de ejecución, ni fórmulas de financiación y se suman a un cambio en la mecánica de recogida de los residuos sólidos urbanos impuesta contra la opinión de los usuarios. El plan alternativo tampoco ha sido aprobado por el Parlamento de Gipuzkoa, por lo que vulnera la normativa local vigente. A la vista de estos datos:

1. ¿Está la Comisión al corriente de que el Gobierno de Gipuzkoa ha impuesto modificaciones unilaterales de su plan de gestión de tratamiento de residuos que inciden directamente en un proyecto de valorización energética financiado por el BEI?

2. ¿Ha sido informado el BEI de la decisión unilateral de rescindir el contrato con la empresa adjudicataria? Si no es así, ¿qué medidas se pretenden adoptar para reconducir o rescindir la financiación concedida desde el BEI y cuál puede ser el coste para Gipuzkoa?

3. ¿Cómo valora la Comisión las decisiones adoptadas sin consenso social y en contra de la normativa vigente?

4. ¿Cumplen las autoridades públicas competentes de Gipuzkoa con la obligación de comunicar sus planes de tratamiento en las debidas condiciones de transparencia y con las especificaciones presupuestarias y técnicas que requiere la normativa comunitaria?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de enero de 2014)

1. No se ha notificado a la Comisión ninguna modificación sustancial del plan de gestión de residuos de Gipuzkoa para el período 2002-2016 en virtud del artículo 33 de la Directiva 2008/98/CE ([1]), sobre los residuos (Directiva marco sobre residuos).

2. Con vistas a la financiación del proyecto de gestión de residuos de Gipuzkoa, en febrero de 2011, el prestatario firmó un primer contrato de financiación con el BEI y un segundo con dos bancos comerciales. Posteriormente, este prestatario realizó un desembolso de un importe relativamente bajo.

En diciembre de 2012, la entonces nueva Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa anunció la interrupción de las obras, que no se han retomado desde esa fecha. En febrero de 2013, la Diputación informó verbalmente al BEI de su intención de no seguir adelante con las inversiones y de negociar con las empresas constructoras la rescisión de los contratos de obra. El BEI no ha recibido ninguna comunicación del prestatario en cuanto al resultado de dichas negociaciones.

3. y 4. La Comisión va a investigar si las capacidades de eliminación y valorización de la provincia son suficientes para garantizar el cumplimiento del artículo 16 de la Directiva marco sobre residuos, relativo a la autosuficiencia, así como de su artículo 4, relativo a la jerarquía de residuos.

([1]) DO L 312 de 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013073/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Cancellation of waste project funded by the EIB

The Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa has allocated more than EUR 13 million to compensate the companies who were the successful tenderers for the construction of an energy recovery plant for non-recyclable waste. The project was part of the waste plan for the area and funded by the European Investment Bank. The decision falls under an 'alternative waste management plan' to replace the energy recovery plant with two organic waste treatment facilities in a bid to delay the closure of the current landfill sites and create permanent depots of bales of non-recyclable waste, alternative locations for which have not even been investigated. These provisions do not meet current requirements (to treat more than 200 000 tonnes of waste a year, the amount of waste deposited in landfill sites in 2012), nor do they have known projects, timescales for their execution or methods of financing, and they amount to a change in the mechanism for collecting urban solid waste imposed contrary to the opinion of the users. Furthermore, the alternative plan has not been approved by the Gipuzkoa Provincial Council and is thus in violation of the local regulations in force. In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware that the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa has imposed unilateral changes to its waste treatment management plan that have a direct bearing on an energy recovery project financed by the EIB?

2. Has the EIB been informed of the unilateral decision to rescind the contract with the successful tenderer? If not, what measures does it intend to adopt to extend or cancel the funding awarded by the EIB and what could the cost be for Gipuzkoa?

3. What is the Commission's assessment of the decisions taken without social consensus and contrary to the regulations in force?

4. Are the relevant public authorities in Gipuzkoa complying with the obligation to communicate their waste treatment plans in accordance with the due conditions of transparency and with the budgetary and technical specifications required by EU regulations?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

1. No substantial modification to the Gipuzkua waste management plan with validity 2002-2016 has been notified to the Commission under Article 33 of Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) on Waste Framework Directive — WDF.

2. For the financing of the project 'Gipuzkoa Waste Management', in February 2011 the borrower signed one finance contract with the EIB, and a second finance contract with two commercial banks. Subsequently, the borrower made one disbursement of a relatively small amount.

In December 2012, the then new provincial Government of Guipúzcoa announced the interruption of the works which have since then not been restarted. In February 2013, the provincial Government informed the EIB verbally of their intention not to go ahead with the investments, and to negotiate with the construction companies the cancellation of the construction contracts. The EIB has not received any communication from the borrower on the outcome of these negotiations.

3 and 4. The Commission will investigate whether the disposal and recovery capacities in the Province are sufficient to ensure compliance with Article 16 of WFD on self-sufficiency and with Article 4 of WFD on the waste hierarchy.

([1]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013074/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(18 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Осигуряване на равно заплащане на учените в Европа при работа по проекти, финансирани от програмите на ЕС за научни изследвания и иновации

„Хоризонт 2020“ предвижда разширяване участието на по-слабо представящи се в иновативно отношение държави и региони, както и стимулиране кандидатстването по програмата за първи път. За целта още при прилагането на Седма рамкова програма успешно са въведени мерки за намаляване на административната тежест по проектите, опростяване на финансовите правила чрез разширено прилагане на плоските ставки при отчитане на преки и непреки разходи, премахване на банковите гаранции, по-разширено прилагане на електронните платформи за комуникация с бенефициентите и др. Наред с тези мерки, за да се засили участието на потенциалните бенефициенти от новите държави членки и да се привлекат повече млади учени, е необходимо да се постигне постепенно изравняване на заплащането на учените за една и съща категория труд в ЕС. Разликата в заплащането е сред причините младите учени от новите държави членки да търсят реализация, придвижвайки се от периферията (новите държави членки) към центъра (старите държави членки), а все по-често и извън рамките на ЕС.

Какви мерки е предприела Европейската комисия, за да постигане отворен и привлекателен европейски пазар на труда за учените — с гъвкава мобилност, равностойно заплащане за работа по проекти с европейско финансиране и преодоляване на опасността от „изтичане на мозъци“ извън Европа? Може ли ЕК да предостави справка по държави членки за средните разходи за заплащане на персонал по завършени и изпълнявани в момента научно-изследователски проекти?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Гейгън-Куин от името на Комисията
(20 януари 2014 г.)

В своя доклад за напредъка от 2013 г. относно европейското научноизследователско пространство (ЕНП) ([1]) Комисията посочва редица мерки, взети в партньорство с държави членки и с институции и насочени към постигането на открит, привлекателен европейски трудов пазар за научните изследователи. Това включва разработването на EURAXESS ([2]) в подкрепа на мобилността при научните изследователи и стратегия в областта на управлението на човешките ресурси при научните изследователи за гарантиране на по-добри условия на труд. Комисията също така постави началото на инициативата „Председатели на ЕНП“ ([3]) за преодоляване на дълбоките различия в Европа в областта на развойната дейност и иновациите и за по-широко участие в европейското изследователско пространство. За тази цел в рамките на програмата „Хоризонт 2020“ бяха предвидени 240 милиона EUR. Комисията продължава успешните дейности по програмата „Мария Склодовска-Кюри“ (MSCA), посветена на развитието на научноизследователската кариера и за осигуряване на привлекателни нива на възнаграждение.

Комисията наскоро публикува доклад относно възнаграждението на научните изследователи в 45 страни по света, включително във всички държави членки. Стандартна практика е, по-специално сред заинтересованите страни в ЕС-13, към основните възнаграждения на техния персонал, участващ в научноизследователски проекти, да се изплащат надбавки, за осигуряване на привлекателни условия за научни изследователи на високо равнище. Добавяните суми често представляват много значителен дял от общото възнаграждение. Правилата за участие по програмата „Хоризонт 2020“ позволяват финансиране от ЕС на това допълнително възнаграждение до максимум 8000 EUR на човек годишно. MSCA ([4]) се бори срещу „изтичането на мозъци“ чрез осигуряване на първокласни възможности на научните изследователи да градят кариера в цяла Европа. MSCA осигурява средства за издръжка, мобилност и семейни надбавки, които трябва да се изплащат на научните изследователи по ставките за млади и опитни научни изследователи. Разходите за издръжка варират според корекционния коефициент за всяка страна по данни на Евростат ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/era-chairs_en.html
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/.
([5]) Коефициентите целят постигането на еквивалентна покупателна способност при определено номинално възнаграждение и Брюксел като референтен град.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013074/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Ensuring equal pay for scientists in Europe working on projects funded by EU programmes for scientific research and innovation

Horizon 2020 aims to increase participation of the poorest-performing states and regions in relation to innovation, and also to encourage first-time applications to the programme. To this end, measures to reduce the administrative burden on projects, simplify the financial rules by extending flat rates while taking direct and indirect costs into account, eliminating bank guarantees, extending electronic platforms for communicating with beneficiaries etc. have already been successfully introduced during the implementation of the Seventh Framework Programme. Along with these measures, in order to increase the participation of potential beneficiaries from new Member States and to attract more young scientists it is necessary to achieve a gradual equalisation of pay for scientists in the same employment category in the European Union. The pay gap is one of the reasons young scientists from new Member States seek opportunities by moving from the periphery (new Member States) to the centre (old Member States), and increasingly by moving outside the EU.

What measures have been taken by the European Commission to achieve an open and attractive European labour market for scientists — with flexible mobility, equal pay for work on projects with European funding and addressing the risk of a 'brain drain' from Europe? Can the Commission provide a report on Member States' average cost of paying staff for completed and ongoing research projects?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

In its 2013 Progress Report on the European Research Area (ERA) ([1]), the Commission sets out a series of measures taken, in partnership with Member States and institutions, to help achieve an open, attractive European labour market for researchers. This includes the development of EURAXESS ([2]) to support mobile researchers and an HR Strategy for Researchers to ensure better working conditions. The Commission also launched an 'ERA Chairs' initiative ([3]) to help to close the R&I divide in Europe and widen participation in ERA. To this end, EUR 240 million was foreseen under Horizon 2020. The Commission continues its successful Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MCSA) dedicated to research careers development and promotion of attractive levels of remuneration.

The Commission has recently published a report on the remuneration of researchers in 45 countries worldwide including all Member States. It is common practice, in particular among EU-13 stakeholders, to complement the standard remuneration of its staff when participating in research projects in order to offer attractive conditions for high-quality researchers. This often accounts for a very significant share of the total salary. Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation provide for the eligibility for EU funding of that additional remuneration, up to a maximum ceiling of EUR 8000 per person per year. The MSCA ([4]) tackle 'brain drain' by providing high-quality opportunities for researchers to pursue their careers throughout Europe. The MSCA provide a living, mobility and family allowances that must be paid to researchers according to the rates defined for early-stage and experienced researchers. The living allowance is adjusted by a correction coefficient per country, as provided by Eurostat ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/era-chairs_en.html
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/
([5]) The coefficients are designed to achieve equivalence of purchasing power of a given amount of nominal remuneration by reference to Brussels.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013075/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(18 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Осигуряване на синергия между „Хоризонт 2020“ и европейските структурни и инвестиционни фондове

В предложението на Европейската комисия за политика на сближаване за периода 2014—2020 г. разработването на Иновационна стратегия за интелигентна специализация е задължително предварително условие за програмния период 2014—2020 г. по отношение на оперативните програми. „Интелигентната специализация“ следва да концентрира усилията на държавите членки в ключови приоритети за развитие на всеки регион на база на неговия специфичен икономически потенциал.

От друга страна, „Хоризонт 2020“ предвижда допълняемост с други програми и източници на финансиране на ЕС, вкл. по отношение на Структурните и инвестиционни фондове, основно в две направления — „нагоре по веригата“ за изграждане на капацитет и „надолу по веригата“ за демонстрационни дейности с оглед пазарната реализация на проектите.

В тази връзка, по какъв начин Комисията следи за осигуряването на синергия между мерките, предвидени в „Хоризонт 2020“ и програмирането на оперативните програми от страна на държавите членки в сферата на научните изследвания и иновациите? Разполага ли Комисията с данни кои държави членки са в най-напреднал етап от програмирането на тези мерки и могат ли да бъдат споделени най-добри практики?

Отговор, даден от г-н Hahn от името на Комисията
(27 януари 2014 г.)

Комисията осигурява взаимодействието между програма „Хоризонт 2020“ и изготвянето на програмите на държавите членки по линия на европейските структурни и инвестиционни фондове (ЕСИ фондове) в областта на научните изследвания и иновациите чрез тясно сътрудничество между съответните служби на Комисията, по-специално в процеса на разработване на работните програми и инструментите за прилагане на „Хоризонт 2020“, както и при преговорите с държавите членки относно проектопрограмите по ЕСИ фондовете.

Комисията ще предостави насоки за създателите на политики и изпълнителните органи за това как най-добре може да се постигне взаимодействие, които ще включват теоретични примери, свързани със съответния нов период на финансиране, основани на добри практики от миналото. Все още няма информация относно настоящия процес на програмиране или новите добри практики от държавите членки, тъй като официалното представяне на програмите се очаква едва три месеца след представянето на споразуменията за партньорство, а срокът за представянето на споразуменията от държавите членки е до месец април.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013075/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Ensuring synergy between Horizon 2020 and European Structural and Investment Funds

In the European Commission's proposal for a cohesion policy for the period 2014-2020, developing an innovation strategy for smart specialisation is a precondition for the programming period 2014-2020 in relation to operational programmes. 'Smart specialisation' should focus the Member States' efforts on key development priorities for each region based on its specific economic potential.

On the other hand, Horizon 2020 complements other EU programmes and sources of funding, including in relation to Structural and Investment Funds, in mainly two directions: 'upstream' for capacity building, and 'downstream' for demonstration activities with a view to commercialising projects.

How is the Commission ensuring synergy between the measures stipulated in Horizon 2020 and the programming of Member States' operational programmes in the research and innovation field? Does the Commission have data available on which Member States are at the most advanced stage of programming these measures, and can best practices be shared?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission is ensuring synergy between Horizon 2020 and the programming of Member States' European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) programmes in the field of research and innovation through close cooperation among the relevant Commission services, in particular in the process of developing Horizon 2020 work programmes and implementation tools and in the negotiation of the draft ESIF programmes with the Member States.

The Commission will issue guidance for policy-makers and implementing bodies on how synergies could best be achieved, including theoretical examples relevant for the new funding period, based on good practices from the past. Data on the current programming process or new good practices from Member States are not yet available as the formal submission of programmes is only due three months after the submission of the partnership agreements and the Member States have until April to submit their partnership agreements.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013076/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(18 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Интернационализация на европейското висше образование

В своето съобщение относно европейското висше образование в световен план (COM(2013)0499) ЕК отбелязва, че висшето образование е в центъра на реализиране на стратегията „Европа 2020“ за постигане на устойчив, интелигентен и приобщаващ растеж и развитие. Същевременно глобалната „надпревара за таланти“ превръща интернационализацията на европейското висше образование в необходимост. Добавената стойност на участието на ЕС в усилията за интернационализиране на европейското висше образование се състои в осигуряването на по-силна подкрепа на държавите членки и институциите за висше образование в областта на образователната политика и финансови стимули за стратегиите за придаване на световно измерение на европейското образование.

В този контекст и с оглед на факта, че участието на ЕС следва да се осъществява в сътрудничество с държавите членки и при пълно зачитане на автономията на институциите за висше образование:

1. Смята ли ЕК, че е възможно създаването на статут на „университети на ЕС“ (Union Universities) за висши учебни заведения, с цел да се стимулира интернационализацията, като се повиши привлекателността им за студенти от трети държави?

2. Смята ли ЕК, че нивото на признаване от трети държави на дипломи от висши учебни заведения, придобити в ЕС, е задоволително? Ако отговорът е отрицателен, счита ли, че това е спънка за интернационализирането на европейските университети?

3. Счита ли ЕК, че има допирни точки между процеса от Болоня и образователните компоненти на програмата „Хоризонт 2020“? Ако отговорът е положителен, смята ли ЕК, че това би допринесло за процеса на интернационализация на висшето образование, и как би се случило това на практика?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Василиу от името на Комисията
(17 януари 2014 г.)

1. В Договора за функционирането на Европейския съюз се посочва, че организацията на образователните системи е отговорност на държавите членки. Следователно създаването на „ЕС университети“ би било несъвместимо с принципа на субсидиарност.

ЕС съдейства за това европейските университети да бъдат привлекателни чрез различни мерки, не на последно място като подкрепя сътрудничеството между университетите с цел те да предлагат двойни академични степени и съвместни магистратури и докторантури в рамките на съответните програми „Еразъм+“ и „Мария Склодовска-Кюри“.

2. Качеството на механизмите за признаването на дипломи е различно в страните извън ЕС. Непризнаването на дипломи е значителна пречка пред интернационализацията и поради това е тема, която периодично се разглежда в рамките на диалога ни с държавите партньорки по въпросите на образованието. Чрез програмата „Еразъм+“ и въз основа на принципите на Хартата за висшето образование „Еразъм“ участващите институции са длъжни да признават кредитите, придобити по време на мобилност.

3. Процесът от Болоня, „Хоризонт 2020“ и други инициативи от рода на програмата „Еразъм+“ съвкупно допринасят по различни начини за интернационализацията на европейското образование. Програмите са допълнителни средства в подкрепа на висшите учебни заведения и отделните лица, а от своя страна Процесът от Болоня е междуправителствен процес, който улеснява структурните реформи на национално равнище и допринася системите да бъдат по-лесно сравними и по-съвместими, а това улеснява трансграничното сътрудничество.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013076/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: The internationalisation of European higher education

In its communication regarding European higher education in the world (COM(2013)0499), the European Commission noted that higher education is at the heart of the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy to achieve sustainable, smart and inclusive growth and development. At the same time, the global 'race for talent' has made the internationalisation of European higher education a necessity. The added value of the European Union's involvement in efforts to internationalise European higher education is to provide stronger support to Member States and higher education institutions in the field of education policy and financial incentives for internationalisation strategies for European education.

In this context, and in view of the fact that the EU should work in collaboration with Member States while fully respecting the autonomy of higher education institutions:

1. Does the EC believe it is possible to create an 'EU Universities' status for higher education institutions in order to promote internationalisation, making them more attractive to students from third countries?

2. Does the EC believe that the level of recognition by third countries of higher education diplomas acquired in the EU is satisfactory? If not, does the EC think that this is an obstacle to the internationalisation of European universities?

3. Does the EC think that there is an overlap between the Bologna process and the education components of the Horizon 2020 programme? If so, does the EC believe that this would contribute to the process of internationalising European education, and how would this happen in practice?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

1. The Treaty on the functioning of the European Union states that the organisation of education systems is the responsibility of Member States. 'EU universities' would therefore be incompatible with subsidiarity.

The EU promotes the attractiveness of European universities through various measures, not least by supporting cooperation between universities in the delivery of double degrees and joint masters and doctorates within the respective frameworks of the Erasmus+ programme and Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions.

2. The quality of mechanisms for the recognition of diplomas varies in non-EU countries. Lack of recognition of diplomas is a significant obstacle to internationalisation and therefore a recurrent topic in our education dialogue with partner countries. Through the Erasmus+ programme and the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, participating institutions are obliged to recognise credits gained during a mobility period.

3. The Bologna Process, Horizon 2020, and other initiatives such as the Erasmus+ programme all contribute to internationalising European education in different ways. The programmes are complementary means of support for HEIs and individuals, whereas the Bologna Process is an intergovernmental process that facilitates structural reforms at national level and makes systems more comparable and compatible-which facilitates cooperation across national borders.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-013077/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(18. november 2013)

Om: Opfølgende spørgsmål til Kommissionen omkring chauffører fra tredjelande

I svar til mig den 3. september skriver Kommissionen, at mangel på arbejdskraft og høj arbejdsløshed ikke nødvendigvis udelukker hinanden. Men Kommissionen henviser bl.a. til arbejdsløshedstal i chaufførbranchen fra 2008 for at begrunde sin påstand om, at der mangler chauffører i hele EU.

Men i et land som f.eks. Danmark har der ifølge arbejdsmarkedets parter netop været en dramatisk stigning i antallet af ledige chauffører fra 2008 og fremefter. Det forhold, at 2/3 af vejtransport i EU foregår ad indenlandske ruter og varetages af lokale vognmænd, burde ikke have indflydelse på anvendelsen af kriteriet om EU-præference, der giver præference til nationale arbejdstagere eller arbejdstagere fra andre EU-lande.

At der relativt set ikke er lige så mange chauffører, der udfører international transport som national transport, ændrer heller ikke ved, at der er en udfordring i, at chauffører fra tredjelande får adgang til en medlemsstats arbejdsmarked, hvor der muligvis er mangel på chauffører, men i kraft af den mobile karakter kan komme til at arbejde i en anden medlemsstat, hvor der er et overskud af ledige chauffører.

På baggrund af ovenstående — og eventuelt nyere arbejdsløshedstal — vil Kommissionen svare på, hvorvidt medlemsstaterne, når de giver arbejdstagere fra tredjelande adgang til deres arbejdsmarked under hensyntagen til princippet om EU-præference, ikke bør vurdere jobsituationen i EU mere generelt?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Cecilia Malmström
(31. januar 2014)

Der er ikke gennemført en EU-dækkende undersøgelse om manglen på erhvervschauffører siden 2008. Men mediereportager ([1]) og nationale undersøgelser ([2]) bekræfter, at manglen stadig er et problem, særligt set i lyset af chaufførernes høje gennemsnitsalder og forventede pensioneringer. Kommissionen er ikke i besiddelse af oplysninger, der tyder på, at et overskud af chauffører i Danmark skyldes konkurrence på det danske indenlandske vejgodstransportmarked. Faktisk tegner ikke-bosiddende chauffører sig stadig for under 4 % af den samlede vejtransportvolumen i Danmark.

Princippet om fri adgang til markedet for international godskørsel (fastsat i forordning (EF) nr. 1072/2009 ([3]), som åbner markedet for international godskørsel for transportvirksomheder med en fællesskabstilladelse og om nødvendigt en førerattest) gælder, uanset om arbejdsløsheden blandt chauffører er høj eller ej.

Det er de enkelte medlemsstater, som afgør, om arbejdstagere fra lande uden for EU kan få adgang til deres arbejdsmarked under hensyntagen til princippet om EU-præference. Rådet har gentagne gange givet udtryk for sin forpligtelse til at anvende dette princip. ([4]) Det er et politisk princip, ikke en juridisk bindende forpligtelse. Det åbner mulighed for at give forrang efter en undersøgelse af situationen på arbejdsmarkedet. Én måde at gøre dette på er gennem en arbejdsmarkedstest. Sådanne test anvendes over hele EU, og resultaterne kan hjælpe med at afgøre, om en tredjelandsstatsborgers anmodning om arbejdstilladelse kan godkendes. I de fleste medlemsstater kan en arbejdsgiver ikke afvise en kvalificeret ansøger fra det nationale arbejdsmarked/EU's arbejdsmarked til fordel for en tilsvarende kvalificeret tredjelandsstatsborger, medmindre det kan begrundes. ([5])

([1]) F.eks. Wanted in Europe: More Truck Drivers, Wall Street Journal, 17. september 2012.
([2]) F.eks. A Looming Driver Shortage? — the evidence behind the concerns, Skills for Logistics, april 2012 eller: ZF-Zukunftsstudie Fernfahrer. Der Mensch im Transport- und Logistikmarkt, Institut für Nachhaltigkeit in Verkehr und Logistik, Stuttgart 2012.
([3]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1072/2009 af 21. oktober 2009 om fælles regler for adgang til markedet for international godskørsel, EFT L 300 af 14.11.2009, s. 72-87.
([4]) F.eks. Rådets resolution af 20. juni 1994 om begrænsning af tredjelandsstatsborgeres indrejse på medlemsstaternes område med henblik på beskæftigelse som lønmodtagere, EFT C 274 af 19.9.1996.
([5]) Se EMN Inform »Approaches and tools used by Member States to identify labour market needs«, december 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-informs/emn_inform_on_labour_market_tests_5dec2013_final.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013077/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question to the Commission concerning drivers from third countries

In its reply to me on 3 September, the Commission states that labour shortages and high unemployment can coexist. The Commission refers, however, to unemployment figures in the driver sector from 2008 to justify its claim that there is a shortage of drivers throughout the EU.

However, in a country like Denmark, for example, there has actually been a dramatic rise in the number of unemployed drivers from 2008 onwards, according to the social partners. The fact that two thirds of road transport volumes in the EU are carried on domestic routes by local hauliers should not influence the application of the principle of Union preference, which gives preference to national workers or workers from other EU Member States.

The fact that, relatively speaking, there are not as many drivers engaged in international transport as in national transport is not altered by the challenge posed by the fact that drivers from third countries gain access to the labour market of one Member State where there may be a shortage of drivers, but because of the mobile nature of the work, they may end up working in another Member State where there is a surplus of unemployed drivers.

On the basis of the above — and any more recent unemployment figures — can the Commission say whether, having regard to the principle of Union preference, the Member States should not assess the job situation in the EU in more general terms when granting labour market access to workers from third countries?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

Since 2008 no EU-wide study has been carried out on the shortage of professional drivers. However media reports ([1]) and national studies ([2]) confirm that this shortage is still problematic, particularly given the high average age of drivers and expected volumes of retirement. The Commission has no evidence to suggest that a surplus of drivers in Denmark would result from competition on the Danish domestic road haulage market. Indeed participation of non-resident drivers remains less than 4% of total road transport volumes in Denmark.

The principle of free access to the international road haulage market (as set out in Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 ([3]) which opens up the international road haulage market to hauliers possessing a Community Licence and if needed a driver attestation) applies regardless of the existence of a surplus of unemployed drivers.

Individual Member States decide whether to grant non-EU workers access to their labour market taking into account the principle of Union preference. The Council has repeatedly expressed its commitment to apply this principle. ([4]) It is a political principle, not a legally binding obligation: it provides for a possibility of giving priority after an examination of the labour market situation. One way of doing this is via a labour market test. Its use is widespread in EU Member States and its results help to determine whether or not an application for a work permit can be granted to a third-country national. In the majority of Member States, a suitably qualified employee from within the national/EU labour market may not be rejected by an employer in favour of similarly qualified third-country national, unless a justification can be made. ([5])

([1]) e.g. Wanted in Europe: More Truck Drivers, Wall Street Journal, 17 September 2012.

([2]) e.g. A Looming Driver Shortage? — the evidence behind the concerns, Skills for Logistics, April 2012 or: ZF-Zukunftsstudie Fernfahrer. Der Mensch im Transport- und Logistikmarkt, Institut für Nachhaltigkeit in Verkehr und Logistik, Stuttgart 2012.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market; OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 72-87.

([4]) e.g. Council Resolution of 20 June 1994 on limitation on admission of third-country nationals to the territory of the Member States for employment; OJ C 274, 19.9.1996.

([5]) See EMN Inform 'Approaches and tools used by Member States to identify labour market needs', December 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-informs/emn_inform_on_labour_market_tests_5dec2013_final.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013079/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Martin (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Living and working conditions of migrant workers on Saadiyat Island (Abu Dhabi)

A constituent has brought to my attention his concerns about the living and working conditions of migrant workers on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative tell me:

1. How many migrant workers have been injured during construction on Saadiyat in the past two years? What injuries did they suffer? What medical treatment are they receiving?

2. What will the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) do to ensure that injured workers are treated fairly and compensated by their employers?

3. How many migrant workers are living in camps other than the Saadiyat accommodation village? What checks have the Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC) carried out to ensure that those other camps are safe and sanitary?

4. How many of the workers involved in the strike on Saadiyat earlier this year have been deported? Why have they been deported? This is an apparent violation of the International Labour Organisation labour rules.

5. How many migrant workers from Saadiyat have been arrested in the past year? How many were charged? How many were imprisoned — and still are in prison?

6. Why has PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) not yet published its second annual monitoring report on conditions on Saadiyat? When does the VP/HR expect this to be published?

7. How does the TDIC intend to improve and better monitor workers' conditions on the island?

8. What more will the UAE do to ensure that international labour rules are upheld?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The HR/VP is well aware of the issue of migrant workers' rights in the United Arab Emirates and more broadly in the Gulf region. The EU Delegations in the United Arab Emirates and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (accredited to the other five Gulf Cooperation Council countries) and EU diplomatic missions in the GCC coutries are closely following the human rights situation, including the situation of migrant workers' rights, as part of their regular reporting. The situation on Saadiyat island is one of many examples demonstrating that more needs to be done to effectively improve labour rights in the United Arab Emirates.

The respect of human dignity is at the core of EU values, and the EU has consistently advocated for more decisive legislation and enforcement measures to be taken by our Gulf partners to address the situation of migrant workers, which, in spite of undeniable progress in recent years, still deserves improvements in accordance with international ILO conventions (in particular convention No 111 on elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation and convention No 81 on labour inspection which have been ratified by United Arab Emirates) and in collaboration with the countries of origin of foreign workers, in particular as regards implementation of existing legislation.

The EU Delegation in Abu Dhabi will continue to closely liaise with United Arab Emirates authorities on these developments. The Honourable Member is kindly referred to the United Arab Emirates Mission in Brussels and to the United Arab Emirates authorities for additional factual details.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013082/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE) e Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Etichettatura dei prodotti a base di tartufo

Il regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, e il regolamento (CE) N. 1334/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, relativo agli aromi e ad alcuni ingredienti alimentari con proprietà aromatizzanti destinati a essere utilizzati negli e sugli alimenti, disciplinano l'etichettatura dei prodotti alimentari.

In essi non vi è traccia di indicazioni specifiche riguardanti le varie specie fungine, siano esse ipogee o epigee.

Ritiene la Commissione che una normativa nazionale che vietasse l'utilizzo della parola «tartufo» nella denominazione di vendita di un prodotto nella cui preparazione vi sono sia tartufo che aroma possa essere compatibile con la citata normativa?

Che cosa pensa la Commissione dell'introduzione, discussa in sede nazionale, della dicitura «contiene aromi di sintesi», relativa al solo tartufo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(10 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non può pregiudicare ora la propria analisi di una misura nazionale che sarebbe chiamata a esaminare nel contesto di una procedura di notifica. Tale esame non serve soltanto a valutare la compatibilità della misura proposta con le pertinenti disposizioni unionali, ma anche la sua proporzionalità rispetto agli obiettivi che si prefigge.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013082/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE) and Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Labelling of products based on truffles

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers, and Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in and on foods, govern the labelling of food products.

These contain no specific instructions whatsoever concerning the various fungus species, whether growing below ground or above ground.

Does the Commission believe that a national law that prohibits the use of the word 'truffle' in the sales description of a product in the preparation of which both truffle and flavourings are used can be compatible with the said EU legislation?

What is the Commission's view on the introduction of the wording 'contains artificial flavourings', solely in relation to truffles, as has been discussed at the national level?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2014)

The Commission cannot prejudge its analysis of a national measure that it would have to scrutinise in the context of a notification procedure. Such scrutiny does not only evaluate the compatibility of the proposed measure with relevant Union provisions but also its proportionality to achieve its aims.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013083/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE) e Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Riconoscimento di alcuni prodotti agricoli

Al regno dei funghi (*fungi* nella classificazione di Linneo) appartengono molti organismi, solo alcuni dei quali sono commestibili. La comunicazione della Commissione europea pubblicata, ai sensi dell'articolo 9, paragrafo 1, del regolamento (CEE) n. 2658/87 del Consiglio, del 23 luglio 1987, relativo alla nomenclatura tariffaria e statistica e alla tariffa doganale comune, rinvenibile sulla G.U. L 256 del 7 settembre 1987, ne cita solo cinque specie (*Cantharellus cibarius Fries*, *Cantharellus friesii Quélet*, *Clitocybe aurantiaca*, *Craterellus cornucopioides* e *Boletus edulis*).

Considerando che già al momento della pubblicazione di questo elenco la legislazione di alcuni paesi membri, tra cui l'Italia, riconosceva la possibilità che altre specie fungine potessero essere coltivate benché in forma sperimentale, e considerando che la Commissione, in altri contesti, tende a promuovere l'innovazione scientifica e tecnologica, si chiede quanto segue:

1. ritiene la Commissione che tale elenco debba essere aggiornato, in particolare per prendere in considerazione quelle colture sperimentali che hanno preso piede negli ultimi trenta anni circa?

2. poiché tale elenco è alla base dell'ambito di applicazione della politica agricola comune, non ritiene la Commissione che tale limite possa essere discriminante, ad esempio nei confronti dei coltivatori di tartufi?

3. ritiene la Commissione che si debbano individuare delle misure per stimolare e proteggere l'innovazione e la ricerca in agricoltura come in tutti gli altri comparti? In caso affermativo, quali?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(27 gennaio 2014)

Le domande di modifica della nomenclatura combinata (NC) devono essere inoltrate in base al codice di condotta per la gestione della nomenclatura combinata ([1]) e saranno esaminate secondo le procedure ivi descritte.

Per quanto riguarda l'attuazione della Politica agricola comune, non vi è alcuna discriminazione fra tartufi ed altre varietà di funghi selvatici, in quanto i funghi selvatici non fruiscono di alcun sostegno nell'ambito del regime ortofrutticolo.

La Commissione è del parere che, per affrontare le crescenti sfide del settore agricolo e forestale, sia di fondamentale importanza far progredire la ricerca e l'innovazione a livello dell'UE. È in questo contesto che la Commissione ha dato vita al partenariato europeo per l'innovazione «Produttività e sostenibilità dell'agricoltura» (PEI AGRI ([2])). Le colonne portanti di questo PEI sono state tracciate dalla comunicazione COM(2012) 79 final del 29.2.2012, relativa alla strategia Europa 2020. Lo scopo del PEI AGRI è incentivare un settore agricolo e forestale competitivo e sostenibile in grado di «ottenere più con meno» combinando ricerca e azioni pratiche per trovare soluzioni innovative.

La politica di sviluppo rurale è tradizionalmente ricca di innovazioni stimolanti. Pertanto, il nuovo regolamento del Parlamento e del Consiglio sullo sviluppo rurale menziona l'innovazione in vari punti e la definisce un obiettivo trasversale al cui raggiungimento devono contribuire tutte le politiche di sviluppo rurale.

([1]) Comunicazione della Commissione (2000/C 150/03), GU C 150 del 30.5.2000.
([2]) Si possono ottenere ulteriori informazioni circa il PEI AGRI consultando la home page del PEI-AGRI http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eip/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013083/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE) and Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Recognition of certain agricultural products

There are many organisms belonging to the fungus kingdom (*fungi* in the Linnaeus classification), only some of which are edible. The communication by the European Commission published, pursuant to Article 9(1) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2658/87 of 23 July 1987 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff, in OJ L 256, 7 September 1987, lists only five species of fungi (*Cantharellus cibarius Fries*, *Cantharellus friesii Quélet*, *Clitocybe aurantiaca*, *Craterellus cornucopioides* and *Boletus edulis*).

When this list was published, the legislation in certain Member States, including Italy, recognised the possibility that other fungi species could be cultivated, albeit on an experimental basis. In other contexts, the Commission tends to promote scientific and technological innovation.

1. Does the Commission think that this list should be updated, specifically to take into consideration those experimental cultures that have been established over the last 30 years or so?

2. Since this list is at the basis of the scope of application of the common agricultural policy, does the Commission not believe that such a restriction could be discriminatory, for instance towards growers of truffles?

3. Does the Commission believe that steps should be identified to stimulate and protect innovation and research in agriculture, as in all other sectors? If so, what steps should these be?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

Requests to amend the Combined Nomenclature (CN) have to be introduced according to the code of conduct for the management of the Combined Nomenclature ([1]) and will be examined according to the procedures described.

Concerning the application of the common agricultural policy, there is no discrimination between truffles and other varieties of wild mushrooms as wild mushrooms do not receive support under the Fruit and Vegetables regime.

The Commission believes that, in order to address the increasing challenges that the agriculture and forestry sector is facing, it is crucial to advance EU research and innovation. It is in this context that the Commission established the European Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' (EIP AGRI ([2])). The main building blocks of this EIP have been outlined by Communication COM(2012) 79 final of 29.02.2012, referring to the Europe 2020 strategy. The aim of the EIP AGRI is to foster a competitive and sustainable agriculture and forestry sector that 'achieves more from less' by linking research and practice to find innovative solutions.

Rural development policy has indeed a long-standing record of stimulating innovations. Consequently, the new Parliament and Council Regulation on Rural Development refers to innovation in many places and establishes innovation as a cross-cutting objective to which all rural development priorities must contribute.

([1]) Commission Communication (2000/C 150/03), OJ C 150,30.5.200.
([2]) More information on the EIP AGRI can be found on the EIP-AGRI homepage http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eip/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013084/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Germania e Sharia

In Germania, nello specifico a Berlino, a Brema, in Bassa-Sassonia e in Nordreno-Vestfalia, per regolare conflitti tra comunità di migranti si è diffusa una giustizia parallela informale che si rifà alla sharia, la legge islamica. Sono soprattutto le grandi famiglie di origini libanesi, palestinesi e curde, che si affidano a misure parallele gestite da mediatori.

È recente il caso di una richiesta di risarcimento informale ricevuta da un cittadino tedesco dopo che, quattro anni prima, aveva investito il figlio 17enne di una famiglia di origini libanesi. Nonostante il giudice avesse scagionato l'autista dalle accuse, il caso è stato risolto «secondo la sharia». L'Imam di una moschea berlinese è stato chiamato a fare da arbitro e mediatore e dopo una serie di minacce velate si è arrivati alla richiesta dei cento cammelli.

Considerato che il diffondersi di questi fenomeni testimonia le possibili difficoltà di integrazione degli immigrati di fede musulmana rispetto allo Stato di diritto delle nazioni che li ospitano; preso atto che non sono rari i casi in cui le autorità, solo per aver tenuto fede al proprio dovere, diventano esse stesse bersaglio della sete di vendetta privata dei clan, in alcuni casi legati ad attività criminali;

la Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza di questo fenomeno?

2. È a conoscenza di fenomeni analoghi in altri Stati membri? Se sì, come valuta il dilagare di sistemi di giustizia parallela in Europa?

3. Quali misure intende mettere in atto per garantire che lo Stato di diritto di ciascuno Stato membro sia rispettato?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2014)

Secondo le informazioni di cui dispone la Commissione, la Sharia contiene norme concernenti molti aspetti di competenza del diritto secolare, quali la criminalità, il matrimonio, il divorzio e le successioni e l'interpretazione di tali norme varia a seconda delle diverse culture nonché tra differenti scuole di pensiero e dottrine.

La Commissione non è a conoscenza del caso concreto cui l'onorevole deputato fa riferimento.

Come stabilisce l'articolo 17 del trattato sull'Unione europea, le competenze della Commissione si limitano alla vigilanza sull'applicazione del diritto dell'Unione sotto il controllo della Corte di giustizia europea.

Spetta alle autorità nazionali valutare se e in quale misura i fatti menzionati dall'onorevole deputato sono compatibili con l'insieme dei principi e delle norme che mira a garantire il rispetto dello Stato di diritto a livello nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013084/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Germany and Sharia

In Germany, and specifically in Berlin, Bremen, Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia, an informal parallel justice based on Sharia, the Islamic law, has become widespread in the resolution of conflicts between migrant communities. Most of those who use these parallel measures, managed by mediators, are large families of Lebanese, Palestinian and Kurdish origin.

Recently there was a case of an informal request for compensation received by a German citizen who, four years earlier, had run over the 17-year-old son of a family of Lebanese origin. Although the court had cleared the driver of the charges, the case was resolved 'according to Sharia law'. The Imam of a Berlin mosque was called upon to act as arbiter and mediator, and after a series of veiled threats a request was made for a hundred camels.

Cases such as these are becoming widespread, providing evidence of possible difficulties in integrating Muslim immigrants into the rule of law of the nations hosting them; there are not infrequent cases in which the authorities, by virtue merely of having carried out their duties, themselves become the target of private vendettas by clans that are, in some cases, linked to criminal activities.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Is it aware of similar situations in other Member States? If so, what view does it take of the spread of parallel justice systems in Europe?

3. What steps does it intend to take to ensure that the rule of law within each Member State is complied with?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

According to information available to the Commission, 'Sharia' includes rules on many issues addressed by secular law, such as crime, marriage, divorce and inheritance, and the interpretation of these rules vary between cultures as well as between different schools of thought and scholarship.

The Commission is not aware of the concrete case mentioned by the Honourable Member.

As stated in Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union, the powers of the Commission are limited to overseeing the application of Union law under the control of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

It is up to national authorities to assess whether and to what extent the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member are in compliance with the set of principles and rules which aims to ensure the rule of law at national level.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013085/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Parassita minaccia la produzione di castagne in Veneto

In Veneto è molto sviluppata la produzione di castagne, in particolar modo nella zona pedemontana trevigiana, in quella veronese e nei Colli Euganei. Vi sono inoltre produzioni tutelate da denominazioni geografiche protette: l'IGP Marrone di Combai e di Monfenera e le produzioni DOP di San Zeno.

Fra il 2007 e il 2008 nei castagneti di questi territori si è insediato il Cinipede Galligeno del castagno Dryocosmus Kuriphilus Yasumatsu compromettendo fortemente la produzione di castagne. Quest'anno sulle Prealpi trevigiane si stima che il 90 % del potenziale raccolto sia andato perso a causa della presenza del parassita.

Questo parassita è estremamente diffuso in Cina, Corea e Giappone ed è arrivato in Italia nel 2002 colpendo prima il Piemonte e poi diffondendosi nel resto del territorio. Attualmente l'unico metodo consentito per contrastarne l'azione è attraverso l'introduzione nell'ambiente di un'altra vespa, la Torymus sinensis ma, oltre ad essere molto costoso, il processo è anche estremamente lento.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Come intende sostenere i produttori veneti così duramente colpiti dalla presenza di questo parassita?

3. Intende prevedere eventuali deroghe sui metodi di contrasto di questo parassita per i produttori di castagne DOP ed IGP?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(9 gennaio 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che il «Dryocosmus kuriphilus» provoca danni nei castagneti di diverse zone dell'Unione, nonostante le misure di emergenza adottate dall'UE per il suo contenimento (decisione 2006/464/CE ([1])).

2. Nel contesto del regime fitosanitario dell'UE stabilito dalla direttiva 2000/29/CE ([2]), i produttori non possono ricevere direttamente un sostegno. Tuttavia, gli Stati membri possono ricevere un contributo finanziario dall'Unione a titolo di «controllo fitosanitario» per finanziare le misure necessarie adottate dalle autorità pubbliche al fine di eradicare o contenere certi organismi nocivi. A determinate condizioni potrebbe essere ammissibile il cofinanziamento di certe misure dell'Italia contro il «Dryocosmus kuriphilus».

3. Le organizzazioni dei produttori del settore ortofrutticolo possono includere tra le misure di prevenzione e gestione della crisi del loro programma operativo l'assicurazione del raccolto e la costituzione di fondi mutualistici ([3]).

4. I produttori potrebbero ricevere un sostegno finanziario a valere sulla misura 121 del Programma di sviluppo rurale per ripristinare le colture di castagni in seguito alle perdite causate dal parassita. Ciò però non era previsto nel Programma di sviluppo rurale del Veneto per il periodo 2007-2013.

([1]) Decisione 2006/464/CE della Commissione, del 27 giugno 2006, che stabilisce misure d'emergenza provvisorie per impedire l'introduzione e la diffusione nella Comunità di Dryocosmus kuriphilus Yasumatsu (GU L183 del 05/07/2006, pag. 29).

([2]) Direttiva 2000/29/CE del Consiglio, dell'8 maggio 2000, concernente le misure di protezione contro l'introduzione nella Comunità di organismi nocivi ai vegetali o ai prodotti vegetali e contro la loro diffusione nella Comunità (GU L 169 del 10.7.2000, pag. 1).

([3]) Cfr. gli articoli da 88 a 90 del regolamento esecutivo (UE) n. 543/2011 della Commissione del 7 giugno 2011 (GU L 157 del 15.6.2011, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013085/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Parasite threatens chestnut production in the Veneto Region

The Veneto Region has a highly developed chestnut production sector, particularly in the Treviso area at the foot of the mountains, in the Verona area and in the Euganean Hills. There are also products covered by protected geographical indications: the PGI 'Marrone di Combai' and 'Marrone di Monfenera' and the PDO products of San Zeno.

Between 2007 and 2008 the oriental chestnut gall wasp *Dryocosmus kuriphilus* Yasumatsu settled in the chestnut trees of these areas, seriously compromising chestnut production. This year it is estimated that 90% of the potential harvest in the Alpine foothills near Treviso will be lost due to the existence of this parasite.

The parasite is extremely common in China, Korea and Japan and arrived in Italy in 2002, first affecting Piedmont and then spreading through the rest of the country. Currently the only method permitted for combating it involves introducing another wasp, the *Torymus sinensis*, into the environment. However, not only is the process very expensive, it is also very slow.

1. Is the Commission aware of the facts described above?

2. How does it intend to support producers from the Veneto Region that have been so seriously affected by the presence of this parasite?

3. Does it intend to lay down any derogations from the methods for combating this parasite for producers of PDO and PGI chestnuts?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 January 2014)

1. The Commission is aware that 'Dryocosmus kuriphilus' causes damage, in many areas of the Union where chestnuts are grown, in spite of the EU emergency measures against it (Decision 2006/464/EC ([1])).

2. Under the EU plant-health regime, established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC ([2]), producers cannot be directly supported. However, Member States may receive a 'plant health control' financial contribution from the Union for necessary measures taken by official authorities to eradicate or contain certain harmful organisms. Under conditions, co-financing for certain measures of Italy against 'Dryocosmus kuriphilus' could be eligible.

3. Producer organisations in the fruit and vegetables sector may include among the crisis prevention and management measures of their operational programme harvest insurance and setting up of mutual funds ([3]).

4. Producers might receive financial support under measure 121 of the Rural Development Programme to reconstruct chestnut cultivations following losses caused by the parasite. However this was not foreseen in the Rural Development Programme of Veneto for 2007-2013.

([1]) Commission Decision 2006/464/EC of 27 June 2006 on provisional emergency measures to prevent the introduction into and the spread within the Community of Dryocosmus kuriphilus Yasumatsu (OJ L183/29, 05/07/2006, p 1).
([2]) Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000 on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community (OJ L 169, 10.7.2000, p 1).
([3]) See Articles 88 to 90 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 543/2011 of 7 June 2011 (OJ L 157, 15.6.2011, p. 1).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013086/13
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Corridoio umanitario per i rifugiati

Le ultime tragedie verificatesi al largo di Lampedusa hanno fatto risuonare, ancora una volta, l'allarme su un fenomeno, quello della migrazione di massa attraverso il Mar Mediterraneo che, secondo stime dell'organizzazione internazionale per le migrazioni, ha causato almeno 20 000 morti.

Questa tragedia umanitaria, di proporzioni enormi, causata dalla fuga da zone di conflitto, come per esempio Siria ed Eritrea, coinvolge sempre di più aventi diritto all'asilo politico e impone un intervento immediato delle istituzioni europee.

A tal proposito l'articolo 78 del TFUE disciplina lo status dei rifugiati, in conformità a quanto stabilito dalla convenzione di Ginevra del 28 luglio 1951 e dal protocollo del 31 gennaio 1967. In virtù di tale norma gli aventi diritto all'asilo hanno diritto a stabilirsi in uno degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

D'altro canto il citato articolo del TFUE attribuisce all'UE la potestà di adottare le misure relative a un sistema comune di asilo che includa, tra l'altro, uno status uniforme in materia di asilo e di protezione sussidiaria per i cittadini extracomunitari che necessitano di protezione internazionale ma anche, e in questo caso soprattutto, il partenariato e la cooperazione con paesi terzi per gestire i flussi di richiedenti asilo o protezione sussidiaria o temporanea.

A ciò si aggiunga che il diritto derivato dell'Unione (direttiva 2003/9/CE, direttiva 2011/95/UE, regolamento (CE) n. 1560/2003 e regolamento (UE) n. 439/2010) ha di fatto istituito uno status uniforme per i rifugiati o per le persone aventi titolo a beneficiare della protezione sussidiaria e ha definito il contenuto della protezione riconosciuta, che prevede, fra le altre cose, la possibilità di rilasciare il permesso di soggiorno e i documenti di viaggio e, non ultimo, di riconoscere la libertà di circolazione.

Tutto ciò premesso

si chiede come intenda la Commissione affrontare il fenomeno alla radice e, in particolare, se intenda adottare le opportune misure, sia de jure condito sia de jure condendo, atte a costituire un corridoio umanitario dal Nord Africa, in favore dei rifugiati, per interrompere o quanto meno scongiurare lo stillicidio delle tragedie nel Mediterraneo.

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(28 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è profondamente preoccupata per i tragici eventi verificatisi al largo di Lampedusa, come hanno testimoniato il Presidente Barroso e la Commissaria Malmström recandosi sull'isola il 9 ottobre 2013. In tale occasione la Commissione ha ribadito il suo pieno sostegno agli Stati membri che devono intraprendere difficili operazioni di ricerca e salvataggio e accogliere numerosi migranti, offrendo fra l'altro un importo totale di 30 milioni di euro per rafforzare il pattugliamento e il sistema di asilo in Italia.

Tali iniziative immediate sono state integrate da una gamma completa di azioni discusse nel contesto della task force per il Mediterraneo, creata all'indomani della tragedia. Questa task force, presieduta dalla Commissione e composta da tutti i 28 Stati membri e dalle pertinenti agenzie dell'UE, ha presentato una relazione al Consiglio Giustizia e affari interni del 5 e 6 dicembre 2013. Il Consiglio europeo ha fatto riferimento ai suoi lavori nel dicembre 2013. La relazione sui lavori della task force è stata adottata dalla Commissione sotto forma di comunicazione ([1]). Le azioni ivi individuate mirano a ridurre significativamente il rischio di tragedie simili in futuro.

La strategia globale delineata nella comunicazione copre diversi settori, dal potenziamento delle operazioni di pattugliamento delle frontiere al rafforzamento del dialogo con i paesi terzi. La comunicazione indica inoltre, specificatamente, soluzioni per rafforzare i canali legali di accesso all'Unione europea, tra cui un maggiore impegno dell'UE in materia di reinsediamento, e per elaborare nuove possibilità di ingresso protetto nel contesto della riflessione sulle priorità future nel settore degli affari interni dopo la scadenza del programma di Stoccolma.

([1]) COM(2013) 869 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013086/13
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Humanitarian corridor for refugees

The latest tragedies that have occurred off Lampedusa have once again sounded the alarm concerning mass migration across the Mediterranean Sea, which, according to estimates by the International Organisation for Migration, has caused at least 20 000 deaths.

This humanitarian tragedy of enormous proportions, caused by flight from conflict zones, such as Syria and Eritrea, involves growing numbers of people eligible for political asylum and requires immediate action by the European institutions.

On this point, Article 78 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) governs the status of refugees, in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol of 31 January 1967. Under this provision, people eligible for asylum have the right to settle in one of the Member States of the European Union.

Furthermore, the abovementioned article of the TFEU authorises the EU to adopt measures for a common European asylum system comprising, *inter alia*, a uniform status of asylum and a uniform status of subsidiary protection for nationals of third countries who are in need of international protection, but above all in this case, partnership and cooperation with third countries for the purpose of managing inflows of people applying for asylum or subsidiary or temporary protection.

In addition to this, EU secondary legislation (Directive 2003/9/EC, Directive 2011/95/EU, Regulation (EC) No 1560/2003 and Regulation (EU) No 439/2010) has in fact established a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and has defined the content of the protection granted. This includes the possibility of a residence permit and travel documents being issued and, not least, the recognition of freedom of movement.

In view of the above, how does the Commission intend to tackle the problem at its root and, in particular, will the Commission take the appropriate steps, on the basis of both existing law and law in the process of being developed, to set up a humanitarian corridor from North Africa for refugees, in order to curb or, preferably, end the spate of tragedies in the Mediterranean?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 January 2014)

The Commission is deeply concerned by the events happened off the coast of Lampedusa, as demonstrated by the visit President Barroso and Commissioner Malmström paid to the island on the 9 of October 2013. On that occasion, the Commission reiterated its support to Member States having to undertake complex Search and Rescue operations and receiving a large number of migrants, including by pledging a total of EUR 30 million for the reinforcement of patrolling and the strengthening of the asylum system in Italy.

These immediate initiatives have been complemented by a comprehensive package of actions that has been discussed in the context of the Task Force for the Mediterranean that was created in the aftermath of the tragedy. This Task Force, which was chaired by the Commission and comprised all 28 Member States and relevant EU Agencies, reported to the Justice and Home Affairs Council held on 5-6 December 2013. The European Council referred to its proceedings in December 2013. The report of the work of the Task Force has been adopted by the Commission in the form of a communication ([1]). Actions identified aim at significantly reducing the risk of another similar tragedy to happen in the future.

The comprehensive strategy outlined in the communication covers several fields from the strengthening of our border patrolling to the streamlining of our dialogue with third countries. The communication also specifically points at solutions to reinforce legal channels to access the European Union, including by increasing the EU commitment on Resettlement, as well as to develop possible new avenues for protected entry in the context of the reflection on the future priorities in the Home Affairs area after the expiry of the Stockholm programme.

([1]) COM(2013) 869 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013087/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: «Ferriera di Trieste»: dati allarmanti sulla concentrazione di benzo(a)pirene e di altri idrocarburi policiclici aromatici (IPA) e sversamenti sospetti

Si fa seguito all'interrogazione E-007319/2013 per sottoporre all'attenzione della Commissione ulteriori aspetti relativi alla problematica ambientale e sanitaria ivi esposta. Un cittadino residente nel quartiere in cui si trova la «Ferriera di Trieste», infatti, ha inviato allo scrivente deputato e a un quotidiano italiano i dati relativi alla contaminazione della sua abitazione e della sua persona, che sono stati messi a confronto con quelli emersi da analoghi rilievi compiuti su un soggetto di controllo posizionato nel quartiere in cui si trova l'Università di Trieste (a qualche chilometro di distanza) ([1]). Si riportano di seguito i risultati emersi, in base ai quali la contaminazione in prossimità dello stabilimento sembrerebbe essere ancor più grave rispetto a quanto riferito nella prima interrogazione: in prossimità dell'abitazione del cittadino residente nel quartiere in cui si trova la «Ferriera di Trieste», la concentrazione di benzo(a)pirene rilevata è pari a 127 ng/m3 (nanogrammi per metro cubo) ([2]), per un totale di IPA cancerogeni presenti di 431 ng/m3; nell'area in cui è stato posizionato il soggetto di confronto, nel quartiere in cui si trova l'Università, la concentrazione di benzo(a)pirene rilevata è invece pari a 0,00 ng/m3, per un totale di IPA cancerogeni presenti di 0,24 ng/m3. I valori di idrossipirene e idrossinaftalene (due metaboliti degli IPA) presenti nelle urine del cittadino residente vicino allo stabilimento, infatti, superano anche del triplo quelli del cittadino-campione posizionato vicino all'Università. Il quotidiano summenzionato, inoltre, ha pubblicato un filmato che sarebbe stato girato di nascosto da un operaio dell'impianto impegnato in sospetti sversamenti all'aperto di una sostanza scura. Nel filmato il giornalista riferisce altresì di aver mostrato lo spezzone al direttore del Dipartimento di Trieste dell'ARPA FVG ([3]), il quale ha ritenuto opportuno notiziare di ciò la competente Procura della Repubblica ([4]). Nella risposta alla prima interrogazione, la Commissione riferiva che i contributi messi a disposizione dalla BEI nel contesto del Piano UE per la siderurgia dovranno essere subordinati al rispetto da parte degli impianti della direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali.

Tutto ciò premesso, la Commissione:

1. Che giudizio dà sulla contaminazione in atto, sulla scorta dei nuovi dati?

2. Non intende contattare le competenti autorità in ordine alla probabile sistematica violazione della direttiva 2010/75/UE, in prospettiva dell'eventuale concessione dei noti contributi?

3. Non ritiene che il caso necessiti della stessa attenzione riservata all'analogo caso della più tristemente nota ILVA di Taranto?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 febbraio 2014)

1. Il valore obiettivo di 1 ng/m^3 fissato dalla direttiva 2004/107/CE ([5]) per il benzo(a)pirene, il marker per gli idrocarburi aromatici policiclici, è stato superato nel 2012 in due delle cinque stazioni di monitoraggio nelle vicinanze dell'impianto ([6]). Dal 31 dicembre 2012 gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad adottare tutte le misure necessarie, che non comportano costi sproporzionati, per assicurare che la concentrazione nell'aria ambiente non superi il valore obiettivo. Per quanto riguarda la protezione della salute dei lavoratori, le sostanze cancerogene sono disciplinate dalla direttiva 2004/37/CE ([7]) che prevede, tra l'altro, l'obbligo generale del datore di lavoro di assicurare che il livello di esposizione dei lavoratori sia ridotto al più basso valore tecnicamente possibile.

([1]) Analisi commissionate dall'ASS (Azienda per i Servizi Sanitari) n. 1 di Trieste al Professor Urbani Ranieri del Dipartimento di Scienza della Vita dell'Università degli Studi di Trieste. Rilevi effettuati in data 8-9.8.2011.

([2]) A fronte del limite di 1 ng/m^3 imposto dalla direttiva 2004/107/CE concernente l'arsenico, il cadmio, il mercurio, il nickel e gli idrocarburi policiclici aromatici nell'aria.

([3]) Agenzia regionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente del Friuli Venezia Giulia.

([4]) Per la visione del filmato si veda il link presente nel sito web del quotidiano nazionale «Il Fatto Quotidiano»: http://tv.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2013/10/22/ferriera-di-trieste-operai-ecco-immagini-degli-sversamenti-inquinanti/250227/

([5]) Direttiva 2004/107/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 15 dicembre 2004, concernente l'arsenico, il cadmio, il mercurio, il nickel e gli idrocarburi policiclici aromatici nell'aria ambiente (GU L 23 del 26.1.2005, pag. 3).

([6]) Medie annuali misurate: 0,4 ng/m^3, 0,8 ng/m^3, 1,6 ng/m^3, 0,8 ng/m^3 e 3,4 ng/m^3

([7]) Direttiva 2004/37/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, sulla protezione dei lavoratori contro i rischi derivanti da un'esposizione ad agenti cancerogeni o mutageni durante il lavoro (GU L 158 del 30.4.2004, pag. 50).

2. L'11 giugno 2013 la Commissione ha adottato la comunicazione «Piano d'azione per una siderurgia europea competitiva e sostenibile» ([8]), nella quale ribadisce che i finanziamenti della Banca europea per gli investimenti (BEI) possono essere usati per aiutare gli impianti a conformarsi alla direttiva 2010/75/UE ([9]), compresa l'attuazione delle conclusioni sulle migliori tecniche disponibili (BAT) per la produzione di ferro e acciaio ([10]) entro il marzo 2016. I finanziamenti della Banca europea per gli investimenti non sono considerati comportare aiuti di Stato.

3. La Commissione contatterà le autorità italiane, prima del termine per la presentazione della loro relazione annuale 2013 sul rispetto dei valori obiettivo, al fine di ottenere informazioni sulle zone in cui tale valore è stato superato nel 2013, sulle fonti che contribuiscono a tali eccedenze e sulle misure prese per ridurre le emissioni di tali fonti, in particolare attraverso l'applicazione delle BAT nella Ferriera di Trieste.

([8]) COM(2013) 407 dell'11.6.2013.
([9]) Direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali (GU L 334 del 17.12.2010, pag. 17).
([10]) Decisione di esecuzione della Commissione, del 28 febbraio 2012, che stabilisce le conclusioni sulle migliori tecniche disponibili (BAT) per la produzione di ferro e acciaio ai sensi della direttiva 2010/75/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa alle emissioni industriali (GU L 70 dell'8.3.2012, pag. 63).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013087/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: 'Ferriera di Trieste' ironworks: alarming figures on the concentration of benzo[a]pyrene and other polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and suspected leaks

This Question follows on from Question E-007319/2013 to bring to the Commission's attention further aspects relating to the environmental and health issues raised in that question. A resident living in the area in which the Trieste ironworks are located, has sent me and an Italian newspaper data relating to the contamination of his home and himself, as compared with data obtained from similar tests conducted on a control subject in the area in which the University of Trieste is located (several kilometres away) ([1]). Below are the results, which appear to show that the contamination near the ironworks is even more serious compared with the figures given in the first question: near the home of the resident living in the area in which the Trieste ironworks are located, the detected concentration of benzo[*a*]pyrene is 127 ng/m^3 (nanograms per cubic metre) ([2]), with total carcinogenic PAHs of 431 ng/m^3; in the area in which the control subject lives, in the area where the University is located, the detected concentration of benzo[*a*]pyrene is 0.00 ng/m^3, with total carcinogenic PAHs of 0.24 ng/m^3 The levels of hydroxypyrene and hydroxynaphthalene (two PAH metabolites) detected in the urine of the resident living near the ironworks are more than triple those of the control subject living near the University. Moreover, the aforementioned newspaper has published an apparently secretly taken film, which appears to show a worker from the plant openly dumping a dark substance. In the film, the journalist also mentions that he showed the clip to the director of the Trieste Department of the ARPA FVG ([3]), who thought the competent Public Prosecutor ([4]) should be informed. In its answer to the first question, the Commission stated that financing made available by the European Investment Bank as part of the EU plan for the steel industry should be conditional upon plants' compliance with Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions.

1. What is the Commission's opinion of the ongoing contamination, in the light of these new data?

2. Does it plan to contact the competent authorities regarding the likely systematic violation of Directive 2010/75/EU, in view of any of financing being granted?

3. Does it think that this case deserves the same level of attention as was given to the similar case involving the more notorious ILVA plant in Taranto?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

1. The target value of 1 ng/m^3 set by Directive 2004/107/EC ([5]) for benzo(a)pyrene, the marker for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, was exceeded in 2012 at two out of the five monitoring stations in the vicinity of the installation ([6]). As from 31 December 2012, Member States had to take all necessary measures not entailing disproportionate costs to ensure that the concentration in ambient air does not exceed the target value. As regards workers' health protection, carcinogenic substances are regulated by Directive 2004/37/EC ([7]), which states, among others, the general obligation of the employer to ensure that the level of exposure of workers is reduced to as low a level as is technically possible.

2. The Commission adopted on 11 June 2013 its communication setting out an Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe ([8]), in it the Commission reinstates that the provision of funding by the European Investment Bank may be used to help installations comply with Directive 2010/75/EU ([9]), including for implementing the Best Available Techniques (BAT) conclusions for iron and steel production ([10]) by March 2016. Funding by the European Investment Bank is not considered to involve state aid.

([1]) Tests commissioned by the Trieste Health Authority No 1 with Professor Urbani Ranieri of the Life Sciences Department of the University of Trieste. Samples taken on 8-9 August 2011.
([2]) Compared with the limit of 1 ng/m3 imposed by Directive 2004/107/EC relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air.
([3]) Friuli-Venezia Giulia Regional Environmental Protection Agency.
([4]) To watch the film, see the link on the website of the national newspaper Il Fatto Quotidiano: http://tv.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2013/10/22/ferriera-di-trieste-operai-ecco-immagini-degli-sversamenti-inquinanti/250227/
([5]) Directive 2004/107/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air, OJ L 023, 26.1.2005.
([6]) The measured annual means were 0.4 ng/m3, 0.8 ng/m3, 1.6 ng/m3, 0.8 ng/m3 and 3.4 ng/m3
([7]) Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 april 2004 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work, OJ L 229, 29.6.2004.
([8]) COM(2013) 407, 11.6.2013.
([9]) Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions, OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.
([10]) Commission Implementing Decision 2012/135/EU of 28 February 2012 establishing the best available techniques (BAT) conclusions under Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on industrial emissions for iron and steel production, OJ L 70, 8.3.2012

3. The Commission will contact the Italian authorities ahead of the deadline for submission of their 2013 annual report on compliance with the target values, in order to obtain information on the zones where the target value was exceeded in 2013, the sources contributing to any such exceedances and the measures taken to reduce emissions from those sources, in particular through the application of BAT in the Ferriera di Trieste ironworks.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013088/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Grave episodio di sversamento di carburante JP8 a Padernello di Paese (provincia di Treviso) con contaminazione della sottostante falda acquifera

In un deposito militare di carburante di Padernello di Paese in provincia di Treviso — utilizzato dal 51° Stormo dell'Aeronautica Militare Italiana con base nel vicino comune di Istrana — si è verificato lo sversamento di una grossa quantità di carburante JP8 ([1]), emerso solo grazie a un controllo contabile. La fuoriuscita risalirebbe al 1° agosto 2013, ma la notizia è stata comunicata dai vertici militari ai sindaci della zona solo nel mese di ottobre 2013. Le analisi dei campioni di terreno e dell'acqua prelevata in falda a una profondità di circa 27 metri avrebbero evidenziato la presenza di idrocarburi. Trattasi di falda il cui uso era già vietato, essendo il territorio dov'è avvenuto lo sversamento già pesantemente compromesso dal punto di vista ambientale.

Il deposito fa parte del sistema NATO POL (Petroleum Oil and Lubricant), oleodotto realizzato sul finire degli anni '60 del secolo scorso allo scopo di alimentare di carburante alcuni aeroporti militari del nord/nord est dell'Italia, in particolare quelli di Ghedi (BS), Villafranca (VR), Istrana (TV), Aviano (PN), Rivolto (UD) e Cervia (RA). Secondo quanto riferito dall'ARPAV (Agenzia regionale per la prevenzione e protezione ambientale del Veneto), non si tratta del primo caso di sversamento dal deposito di Padernello, essendosi già verificato un episodio analogo nel giugno del 2011 ([2]). Nel 2008, inoltre, si è verificato un analogo episodio di falla nelle condutture dell'oleodotto NATO POL nei pressi di Vicenza, che ha comportato anche in tal caso la fuoriuscita di diverse migliaia di litri di carburante con contaminazione delle falde acquifere e delle acque dei fiumi Bacchiglione e Astichello ([3]). Si segnala infine alla Commissione che l'impianto in questione è gestito e manutentato da una società privata che lo utilizza anche per il trasporto di carburante a uso civile ([4]).

Sulla base di quanto esposto, può la Commissione:

1. chiarire la composizione chimica del carburante militare per velivoli JP8 e i conseguenti rischi per la salute della popolazione civile a causa dello sversamento descritto;

2. riferire se si siano verificati casi analoghi di contaminazione e, in caso affermativo, come siano stati affrontati e risolti dalle competenti autorità;

3. confermare che esso rientri nella competenza dell'UE, stante che l'impianto è gestito da una società privata ed è a uso promiscuo militare e civile?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(30 gennaio 2014)

1. La Commissione non è a conoscenza né della composizione chimica precisa del carburante JP8 né dei rischi per la salute della popolazione civile causati dallo sversamento avvenuto a Padernello. Tuttavia, in caso di contaminazione delle falde acquifere ad opera di componenti di combustibile, sarà vietato l'uso di acqua potabile per gli effetti che tali componenti hanno sull'odore e sul gusto dell'acqua.

2. La Commissione non è a conoscenza di casi analoghi di contaminazione.

3. La direttiva 96/82/CE relativa al controllo dei pericoli di incidenti rilevanti connessi con determinate sostanze pericolose ([5]) non si applica a stabilimenti, impianti o depositi militari. Sono esclusi dall'applicazione della direttiva gli stabilimenti posseduti e gestiti da autorità militari, indipendentemente dal tipo di attività che vi si svolgono. Le società private, non possedute e non gestite da autorità militari, che trasportano e forniscono servizi alle autorità militari non a scopo specificamente militare, non sono escluse dall'ambito d'applicazione della direttiva.

([1]) Cfr. articolo del quotidiano locale «La Tribuna» di Treviso: http://goo.gl/ainWbo
([2]) Comunicazione dell'ARPAV alla Direzione Regionale Tutela Ambiente della Regione del Veneto prot. n. 0109205 del 21.10.2013.
([3]) Cfr. http://greenreport.it/web/archivio/show/id/12420
([4]) In base al contratto di appalto rep. n. 526/2009 stipulato per la durata di nove anni tra la Direzione Generale per gli armamenti aeronautici del Ministero della Difesa italiano e una società privata.
([5]) GU L 10 del 14 gennaio 1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013088/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Serious incident involving the leakage of JP8 fuel in Padernello di Paese, in the province of Treviso, contaminating the underlying aquifer

A large quantity of JP8 fuel ([1]) has leaked from a military fuel storage depot in Padernello di Paese, in the province of Treviso, used by the 51st Squadron of the Italian Air Force, which is based in the nearby municipality of Istrana. This only came to light during an audit. The leak appears to have occurred on 1 August 2013, but local military commanders were only informed of it on October 2013. Tests on soil samples and water taken from the aquifer, at a depth of approximately 27 metres, show hydrocarbon contamination. Use of the aquifer was already prohibited, as the area in which the leak happened had already suffered significant environmental damage.

The depot is connected to the NATO POL (Petroleum Oil and Lubricant) system, an oil pipeline built at the end of the 1960s to supply fuel to several military airbases in northern and north-eastern Italy, particularly those at Ghedi (province of Brescia), Villafranca (province of Verona), Istrana (province of Treviso), Aviano (province of Pordenone), Rivolto (province of Udine) and Cervia (province of Ravenna). According to the Veneto Regional Agency for Environmental Prevention and Protection (ARPAV), this is not this first time fuel has leaked from the Padernello depot, as there was a similar incident in June 2011 ([2]). Moreover, in 2008 there was a similar incident when pipes on the NATO POL oil pipeline leaked near Vicenza; on that occasion too, several thousand litres of fuel leaked, contaminating aquifers and the Bacchiglione and Astichello rivers ([3]). Lastly, it is worth noting that the depot in question is managed and run by a private company which also uses it for transporting fuel for civilian use ([4]).

1. Can the Commission clarify the chemical composition of JP8 fuel used for military aircraft and the consequent risks to public health as a result of the above leak?

2. Can it say whether there have been similar contamination incidents and, if so, how were they dealt with and resolved by the competent authorities?

3. Can it confirm whether this falls within the competence of the EU, given that the installation is managed by a private company for both military and civilian use?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

1. The Commission has neither been informed of the precise composition of the JP8 fuel nor of an incident in Padernello and of related public health risks. However, any pollution by fuel components can make the use of water for human consumption impossible because of the effects on odour and taste.

2. The Commission is not aware of similar contamination incidents.

3. The Seveso II Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances ([5]) does not apply to military establishments, installations or storage facilities. This exclusion applies to establishments owned or controlled by the military, irrespective of the type of activities taking place. Private companies, not owned or controlled by the military, which supply products or provide services to the military not intended for specifically military purposes, are not excluded from the scope of the directive.

([1]) See article in La Tribuna (local newspaper in Treviso): http://goo.gl/ainWbo
([2]) ARPAV communication to the Veneto Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection ref. No 0109205 of 21 October 2013.
([3]) See http://greenreport.it/web/archivio/show/id/12420.
([4]) In accordance with procurement contract No 526/2009, drawn up for nine years between the Directorate-General for Aeronautical Armaments of the Italian Ministry of Defence and a private company.
([5]) OJ L 10 of 14 January 1997.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013089/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(18 november 2013)

Betreft: Subsidies fossiele energie

Om het Europese energielandschap verder te ontwikkelen en de doelstellingen inzake energie en klimaat te halen zijn gepaste, flexibele en doelgerichte ondersteuningsmechanismen noodzakelijk. Hernieuwbare energie verdient, gezien de jonge leeftijd van de technologieën en met het oog op de realisatie van bovengenoemde doelstellingen, duidelijk de meeste ondersteuning. Uit studies, zoals die vanuit het Internationaal Energie Agentschap en het Internationaal instituut voor duurzame ontwikkeling, is echter onlangs alweer gebleken dat de subsidies voor fossiele energie nog steeds veel hoger zijn dan die voor hernieuwbare energie.

1. Vindt de Commissie dat de ondersteuning van fossiele energie, vanuit een klimatologisch en economisch oogpunt nog te verantwoorden is?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat de ondersteuning van fossiele brandstoffen de prijzen van energie kunstmatig laag houdt wat de terugverdientijd van investeringen inzake hernieuwbare energie verlengt?

3. Plant de Commissie de geleidelijke afbouwing van subsidies voor fossiele energie?

4. Indien ja, op welke termijn?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(27 januari 2014)

De Commissie en de meeste andere internationale organisaties, waaronder het IEA en de G20, hebben opgeroepen om subsidies voor fossiele brandstoffen geleidelijk af te schaffen. Uit milieu- of klimaatoverwegingen zijn dergelijke subsidies in het algemeen onverantwoord. Ook kunnen zij de energieprijzen uit balans brengen, onder meer doordat zij ervoor zorgen dat hernieuwbare energie relatief gezien duurder wordt. In bepaalde gevallen zijn subsidies voor fossiele brandstoffen echter toegestaan als staatssteun ten behoeve van de herstructurering van de industrie en de arbeidsmarkt. Deze subsidies moeten in 2018 geheel zijn afgeschaft.

In de mededeling van de Commissie over overheidsinterventie in de energiesector ([1]) wordt uiteengezet dat subsidies in de energiesector verantwoord zijn als zij noodzakelijk zijn met het oog op beleidsdoelstellingen. Het is mogelijk dat subsidies voor elektriciteitsopwekking, met inbegrip van elektriciteitsopwekking uit fossiele brandstoffen, ook in de toekomst nodig zijn ten behoeve van de voorzieningszekerheid of andere beleidsdoelstellingen. Met het oog op het geleidelijk afschaffen van milieuschadelijke subsidies, met name voor fossiele brandstoffen, dienen de lidstaten vooral alternatieve manieren in overweging te nemen om toereikende elektriciteitsopwekking te bereiken, zoals bevordering van het beheer aan de vraagzijde en uitbreiding van de interconnectiecapaciteit. De Commissie verleent alleen toestemming voor dergelijke hulp als deze aantoonbaar noodzakelijk en evenredig is en slechts een minimaal effect op de energiemarkt heeft. De maatregel mag er in beginsel niet toe leiden dat investeringen in elektriciteitsopwekking in met fossiele brandstoffen gestookte centrales wordt bevorderd, tenzij kan worden aangetoond dat er geen minder schadelijk alternatief bestaat om toereikende elektriciteitsopwekking te bereiken. Daarnaast bereidt de Commissie momenteel een studie voor over de mate waarin in de EU energiesubsidies worden verstrekt.

([1]) C(2013) 7243 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013089/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Fossil energy subsidies

In order to develop the energy landscape in Europe further and achieve the energy and climate targets, suitable, flexible and targeted support mechanisms are required. Renewable energy obviously deserves to receive the most support, given the recent development of these technologies and with achieving the abovementioned targets in mind. However, studies, such as those carried out by the International Energy Agency and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, have recently highlighted again that fossil energy subsidies are still much higher than those for renewable energy.

1. Does the Commission feel that, from a climate and economic perspective, support for fossil energy can still be justified?

2. Does the Commission think that support for fossil fuels keeps energy prices artificially low, thereby prolonging the time for recovering the investment costs for renewable energy?

3. Does the Commission intend to phase out fossil energy subsidies?

4. If so, by what date?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission has been calling for the phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies along with most international organisations, such as the IEA and the G20. In general, such subsidies are not justified on environmental or climate grounds. They can also distort energy prices, including by rendering renewable energy relatively more expensive. However there are specific instances where fossil fuel subsidies have been authorised as state aid to facilitate industrial and labour market restructuring. These subsidies are required to be phased out by 2018.

The Commission's Communication on government interventions in the energy sector ([1]) explains that subsidies in the energy sector may be justified on grounds of public policy objectives. It may be that subsidies for power generation, including fossil fuel power generation, may also be necessary in the future to meet security of supply or other policy objectives. In view of the objective of phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies notably for fossil fuels, Member States should primarily consider alternative ways of achieving generation adequacy, such as facilitating demand side management and increasing interconnection capacity. The Commission requires that whenever such aid is granted it must be demonstrably necessary and proportionate and that the impact on the energy market must be minimal. The measure should in principle not reward investments in generation from fossil fuel plants unless it can be shown that a less harmful alternative to achieving generation adequacy does not exist. The Commission is also currently preparing a study to review the extent of energy subsidies in the EU.

([1]) C(2013) 7243.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013090/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Presos políticos en Corea del Norte

Son preocupantes las noticias relativas a violaciones de los derechos humanos en Corea del Norte. En otras ocasiones he trasladado a la Comisión mi inquietud (pregunta E-000323/2012) sobre este delicado asunto.

Hemos conocido algunos detalles gracias a la difusión de la terrible historia de Shin Dong-Hyuk recogida en el libro *Flucht aus Lager 14*, así como en el documental que ganó el primer premio del Festival de Cine de Ginebra sobre Derechos Humanos. Hace unos días se denunciaron las ejecuciones de más de ochenta personas y el confinamiento de sus familiares en campos de concentración.

Por ello pregunto:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión alguna noticia más concreta acerca de esas graves denuncias?

2. ¿Promoverá la Comisión alguna acción de condena?

3. ¿Se están estudiando medidas específicas, además de las derivadas de las Resoluciones 1718 y 1874 del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, con el fin de ejercer presión sobre el Gobierno de Corea del Norte y conseguir el desmantelamiento de esos campos de concentración?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de enero de 2014)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta tiene conocimiento del informe aparecido en un medio de comunicación relativo a las supuestas ejecuciones masivas en la República de Corea. No está en situación de confirmar o desmentir tal informe.

La UE sigue estando muy preocupada por las continuas y sistemáticas violaciones de los derechos humanos, incluidos los derechos políticos, en la República Popular Democrática de Corea. Estas preocupaciones son expresadas siempre que se presenta la ocasión por los representantes de la UE, que se reúnen con las autoridades de la República Popular Democrática de Corea. La UE plantea también de manera reiterada el asunto a nivel bilateral con sus socios en la región y fuera de ella, así como en foros multilaterales, incluidas las Naciones Unidas, en los que la UE ha promovido una actividad coherente de compromiso internacional sobre esta cuestión, en particular mediante las resoluciones de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas en las que se condenan las violaciones de los derechos humanos en el país.

En 2013, la UE copromovió una resolución conjunta en el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas por la que se creó una comisión de investigación sobre los derechos humanos en la República Popular Democrática de Corea, cuyo informe final está previsto para marzo de 2014. La UE ha apoyado el trabajo y la metodología de esta Comisión. Además de sus actividades diplomáticas, la UE financia las actividades humanitarias sobre el terreno con el fin de aliviar los sufrimientos de la población más vulnerable de la República Popular Democrática de Corea.

La UE ha aplicado con firmeza las sanciones establecidas por el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas contra la República Popular Democrática de Corea, que incluyen nuevas medidas restrictivas autónomas. Estas medidas restrictivas se centran en la producción de armas de destrucción masiva y en los programas de misiles balísticos de la República Popular Democrática de Corea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013090/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Political prisoners in North Korea

The news regarding violations of human rights in North Korea is worrying. I have raised my concerns regarding this delicate matter with the Commission on other occasions (Question E-000323/2012).

We have become aware of some of the details as a result of the terrible story of Shin Dong-Hyuk, recounted in the book *Escape from Camp 14*, as well as in the documentary that won first prize at the Human Rights Film Festival in Geneva. Several days ago, the executions of more than 80 people were denounced along with the detainment of their relatives in concentration camps.

I would therefore like to ask:

1. Whether the Commission has any more concrete information regarding these serious accusations?

2. Whether the Commission will support any act of condemnation?

3. Whether any specific measures are being considered, in addition to those derived from United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874, to exert pressure on the Government of North Korea and ensure that these concentration camps are dismantled?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The HRVP is aware of the report appeared in one media based in the Republic of Korea concerning alleged mass executions. It is not in a position to confirm or deny such report.

The EU remains very concerned about the continuing and systematic violations of human rights in the DPRK, including political rights. These concerns are expressed at every occasion by EU representatives meeting with DPRK authorities. The EU also consistently raises the issue bilaterally with its partners in the region and beyond as well as multilaterally, including in the United Nations, where the EU has fostered a consistent international engagement on the issue, including in terms of UN General Assembly resolutions condemning the human rights abuses in the country.

In 2013 the EU co-initiated a resolution in the UN Human Rights Council that established a commission of inquiry on human rights in the DPRK, the final report of which is scheduled for March 2014. The EU has been supportive of the work and methodology of this Commission. In addition to its diplomatic activities, the EU finances humanitarian activities on the ground that ease the sufferings of the most vulnerable in DPRK's society.

The EU has robustly implemented the sanctions established by the United Nations Security Council against the DPRK, including additional autonomous restrictive measures. These restrictive measures are targeted at the weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes of the DPRK.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013091/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Protección de los consumidores en el mercado interior

Asociaciones de consumidores europeos han difundido encuestas y estudios sobre la aplicación de las normas que garantizan la adquisición de bienes. Se resalta que los derechos reconocidos, como el de optar por la reparación o por el cambio por otro producto, quedan a la voluntad del vendedor; de otro lado, no se precisa el período máximo de reparación, tiempo durante el cual el consumidor queda privado de su uso; en fin, las informaciones que se facilitan confunden el régimen de las garantías legales y comerciales.

Conozco las Directivas existentes y también sé que han impulsado en la buena dirección el mercado interior de la Unión Europea. Sin embargo, las últimas reformas (caso de la modificación de la Directiva 1999/44/CE, de 25 de mayo de 1999, llevada a cabo mediante la Directiva 2011/83/UE, de 25 de octubre de 2011) no han incidido en estos aspectos.

Pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿Ha realizado recientemente alguna encuesta sobre la aplicación práctica de los derechos de los consumidores ante las denuncias relativas a la reparación de productos defectuosos?

2. ¿Tiene algún estudio sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 1999/44/CE citada?

3. ¿No considera la Comisión que sería preferible, para asegurar la igualdad de trato de los consumidores dentro del mercado único, la aprobación de un Reglamento en lugar de estas Directivas que tantas diferencias crean?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión adoptó en 2007 una Comunicación ([1]) específica sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 1999/44/CE.

En el marco de su control sistemático de la eficacia del funcionamiento de esta Directiva, la Comisión es consciente del hecho de que alrededor de un 10 % de las 32 000 reclamaciones relacionadas con las compras transfronterizas y recibidas en los centros europeos de los consumidores en 2012 estaban relacionadas con la aplicación de la Directiva 1999/44/CE ([2]). La base de datos de las reclamaciones de los consumidores recogidas por los órganos de gestión de reclamaciones que actúan como terceros con arreglo a la metodología armonizada establecida en la Recomendación ([3]) y comunicada por primera vez sobre la base de informes en el 8° Cuadro de Indicadores de los Mercados de Consumo ([4]) también incluye las reclamaciones relativas a las garantías ([5]).

Como consecuencia de ello, la Comisión es consciente de que la elección de medidas correctivas, obligación de reparar o de sustituir el bien en un plazo razonable, así como algunos plazos, pueden ocasionar problemas a los consumidores, especialmente por lo que se refiere a las pruebas exigidas en caso de litigio.

Por lo tanto, la Comisión está preparando la puesta en marcha de un estudio de los mercados de consumo en 2014 en el ámbito de las garantías legales de los consumidores. Uno de los objetivos de este estudio será evaluar las dificultades que tienen los consumidores para reclamar sus derechos en determinados casos. Los resultados de dicho estudio se tendrán en cuenta en la evaluación, anunciada en la reciente Comunicación «REFIT» ([6]), de esta y otras directivas del acervo de la UE sobre protección de los consumidores en cuanto a su idoneidad reglamentaria y las posibilidades de simplificación de las mismas.

([1]) COM(2007) 210.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/docs/report_ecc-net_2012_en.pdf, p. 12
([3]) Recomendación de la Comisión sobre el uso de una metodología armonizada para la clasificación y notificación de las reclamaciones y consultas de los consumidores (C(2010)3021), http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/complaints/policy_framework_en.htm
([4]) 8° Cuadro de Indicadores de los Mercados de Consumo, Comisión Europea, DG SANCO, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/cms8_en.htm
([5]) Aproximadamente el 3,5 % de los 133 000 casos.
([6]) COM(2013) 685.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013091/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Consumer protection in the internal market

European consumer associations have released surveys and studies on the application of the rules guaranteeing the purchase of goods. It is made clear that recognised rights, such as opting to have the item repaired or exchanged for another, are left to the seller's discretion. Furthermore, the maximum time period for repairs to be carried out — time during which the consumer is deprived use of the item — is not specified. In short, the information provided confuses the system of legal and commercial guarantees.

I am familiar with the existing Directives and am also aware that they have pushed the EU internal market in the right direction. However, the latest reforms (such as the amendment to Directive 1999/44/EC of 25 May 1999, implemented through Directive 2011/83/EU of 25 October 2011) have had no bearing on these aspects.

I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Whether it has recently conducted any surveys into the practical application of consumer rights in light of complaints relating to the repair of defective products?

2. Whether it has conducted any studies relating to the application of the abovementioned Directive 1999/44/EC?

3. Whether the Commission does not consider it preferable, to ensure equal treatment of consumers within the single market, that a regulation be adopted in the place of these directives that create so many discrepancies?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

A specific Communication on the implementation of Directive 1999/44/EC was adopted by the Commission back in 2007 ([1]).

In the framework of its systematic monitoring on the effective functioning of this directive, the Commission is aware of the fact that about 10% of the 32 000 complaints related to cross-border purchases and received by European Consumer Centres in 2012 were related to the application of Directive 1999/44/EC ([2]). The database of consumer complaints collected by national third-party complaint bodies according to the harmonised methodology set out in the recommendation ([3]) and reported on for the first time in the 8th Consumer Markets Scoreboard ([4]) also includes complaints related to guarantees ([5]).

As a result, the Commission is aware that the choice of remedies, obligation to repair or replace the good within a reasonable time and some time limits may cause problems to consumers, especially as regards the required evidence in case of a dispute.

Therefore, the Commission is planning to launch a consumer market study in 2014 in the area of consumer legal guarantees. One of the objectives of this study will be to evaluate the difficulty for consumers to claim their rights in certain instances. The outcomes of this study will feed into the evaluation, announced by the recent 'REFIT' Communication ([6]), of this and a few other Directives of the EU consumer *acquis* in terms of their regulatory fitness and in order to explore the simplification potential.

([1]) COM(2007) 210.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/docs/report_ecc-net_2012_en.pdf page 12.
([3]) Commission Recommendation on the use of a harmonised methodology for classifying and reporting consumer. complaints and enquiries (C(2010)3021), http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/complaints/policy_framework_en.htm
([4]) 8th Consumer Markets Scoreboard, 2012, European Commission, DG SANCO, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/cms8_en.htm
([5]) about 3.5% of the 133 000 cases.
([6]) COM(2013) 685.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013092/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha contra la corrupción en el sector privado

Hace dos años me interesé por el Informe de la Comisión sobre la aplicación de la Decisión Marco 2003/568/JAI relativa a la lucha contra la corrupción en el sector privado (pregunta E-006183/2011).

Soy consciente de que serán muchos los documentos y trabajos que prepara la Comisión, del mismo modo que el Parlamento Europeo también ha aprobado otros informes con ese fin (entre los últimos, cito las Resoluciones de 11 de junio y 8 de octubre de este mismo año sobre la delincuencia organizada y la referida a su impacto en los derechos humanos).

Me gustaría contar con la siguiente información:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión nuevos datos sobre la aplicación de la Decisión Marco citada y tiene prevista su conversión en Derecho positivo directamente aplicable?

2. ¿Ha valorado la posibilidad de incorporar como nuevas previsiones de lucha contra la corrupción la extensión de la responsabilidad por las prácticas fraudulentas cometidas por los anteriores dueños a los nuevos propietarios que adquieran empresas? Como se sabe, tal es el caso de las previsiones de la ley norteamericana anticorrupción de 1977.

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión no tiene previsto proponer en un futuro próximo modificación legislativa ni acto legislativo alguno en materia de lucha contra la corrupción en el sector privado. En lugar de ello, la Comisión se propone centrarse en analizar el impacto de las herramientas y del marco anticorrupción ya existentes, a través del mecanismo de información sobre anticorrupción de la UE (Informe anticorrupción de la UE). El primer informe está previsto para principios de 2014, y a este seguirá la presentación de los subsiguientes informes cada dos años.

El Informe anticorrupción de la UE es un instrumento que pretende impulsar la voluntad política cuando la lucha contra la corrupción se quede regazada, así como promover ejemplos de éxito, si bien señala asimismo las vulnerabilidades y las posibles futuras medidas necesarias para resolver los problemas y animar a los Estados miembros a mantener las normas internacionalmente acordadas. En el Informe anticorrupción de la UE también se destacarán retos relacionados con el sector privado, teniendo en cuenta las características específicas de cada Estado miembro y apuntando a determinados problemas pendientes, entre los cuales se encuentra, cuando sea necesaria, la aplicación de la Decisión Marco 2003/568/JHA. Se tomarán en consideración los resultados obtenidos en este ámbito para seguir reflexionando sobre posibles futuras medidas legislativas o políticas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013092/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Combating corruption in the private sector

Two years ago, I inquired about the Commission Report concerning the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA on combating corruption in the private sector (Question E-006183/2011).

I am aware that the Commission will be preparing many documents and texts, in the same way as Parliament has also approved other reports to this effect (among the most recent, I cite the European Parliament resolutions of 11 June and 8 October of this year, the former on organised crime and the latter referring to its impact on human rights).

I would like to ask the following:

1. Does the Commission have any new data on the implementation of the abovementioned Council Framework Decision and does it anticipate it being converted into directly enforceable positive law?

2. Has it assessed the option of incorporating new provisions for combating corruption such as extending the responsibility for fraudulent practices committed by previous owners to the new proprietors when they acquire companies? As is known, this is the case as regards the provisions of the 1977 US anti-corruption law.

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2014)

The Commission does not plan to propose any legislative amendment or a new legislative act for combating corruption in the private sector in the near future. Instead, the Commission intends to focus on analysing the impact of the already existing anti-corruption framework and tools through the EU anti-corruption reporting mechanism (EU Anti-corruption Report). The first report is planned for early 2014, with subsequent reports every two years.

The EU Anti-Corruption Report is an instrument which aims at boosting political will where the fight against corruption is lagging behind, promoting success stories, while equally pointing to vulnerabilities and possible future steps to address them and encouraging Member States to maintain the internationally-agreed standards. The EU Anti-Corruption Report will also highlight challenges related to the private sector, taking account of the specifics of each Member State and pointing to particular outstanding issues, including, where necessary, in relation to the implementation of Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA. The findings in this area will be considered for further reflection on potential future policy or legislative steps.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013093/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αναγνώριση μέσω ερευνητικών κονδυλίων ΕΕ

Το ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα με τίτλο: Cypriot Civil Society in Action IV, με κωδικό Europeaid/134660/C/ACT/CY και με συνολικό προϋπολογισμό που αγγίζει τα 5,4 εκατομμύρια ευρώ, θέτει ως προϋπόθεση οι συμμετέχοντες να είναι εγγεγραμμένοι στις «αρχές» του ψευδοκράτους. Στη σελίδα 6, η εν λόγω ερευνητική πρόσκληση, μεταξύ των σκοπών που αναφέρει είναι «Η βελτίωση της δημοκρατικής ζωής στα κατεχόμενα», χωρίς όμως να διευκρινίζει τι εννοεί με αυτό. Στη σελίδα 9, της σχετικής πρόσκλησης τονίζεται ξεκάθαρα πως για να μπορεί κανείς να συμμετέχει στο πρόγραμμα, πρέπει να είναι εγγεγραμμένος στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου ή σε κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Αναγνωρίζει τις «αρχές» του ψευδοκράτους και νομιμοποιεί εμμέσως πλην σαφώς, ένα παράνομο καθεστώς μη αναγνωρισμένο από τον ΟΗΕ και καταδικασμένο από τα ψηφίσματα του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας και όχι μόνον;

2. Προς τι η αναφορά σε «Βόρεια Κύπρο»; Μήπως αναγνωρίζει τις διοικητικές ή οποιεσδήποτε άλλες «αρχές» του ψευδοκράτους;

3. Αντιλαμβάνεται πως με τέτοιες ενέργειες υποσκάπτει την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία χώρα-μέλος της ΕΕ και δημιουργεί νέα διχοτομικά τετελεσμένα για το Κυπριακό;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(22 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Ο κ. βουλευτής αναφέρεται σε πρόσκληση υποβολής προτάσεων που κοινοποιήθηκε στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος βοήθειας προς την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα, βάσει του κανονισμού αριθ. 389/2006 του Συμβουλίου ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στο άρθρο 1 του κανονισμού αριθ. 389/2006 του Συμβουλίου, το οποίο ορίζει τον γενικό στόχο και τους δικαιούχους του προγράμματος βοήθειας, στους οποίους περιλαμβάνονται «οι τοπικοί φορείς, οι συνεταιρισμοί και οι εκπρόσωποι της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, και ιδίως οι οργανώσεις των κοινωνικών εταίρων, οι οργανισμοί στήριξης των επιχειρηματικών δραστηριοτήτων, οι φορείς που εκτελούν λειτουργίες κοινής ωφελείας στις περιοχές, οι τοπικές ή παραδοσιακές κοινότητες, οι ενώσεις, τα ιδρύματα, οι μη κερδοσκοπικοί οργανισμοί, οι μη κυβερνητικές οργανώσεις, και τα φυσικά και νομικά πρόσωπα.»

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 1 παράγραφος 3, «η παροχή της βοήθειας αυτής δεν συνεπάγεται αναγνώριση άλλης δημόσιας αρχής στις περιοχές πλην της κυβέρνησης της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας.»

Η πρόσκληση υποβολής προτάσεων δεν κάνει λόγο περί «βόρειας Κύπρου».

Το ζήτημα που θίγει ο κ. βουλευτής καταδεικνύει για μία ακόμη φορά την ανάγκη ταχείας και συνολικής διευθέτησης του κυπριακού προβλήματος.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:065:0005:0008:EL:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013093/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Recognition through EU research funding

The research programme entitled Cypriot Civil Society in Action IV, under the code Europeaid/134660/C/ACT/CY and with a total budget of EUR 5.4 million, sets a precondition that the participants are registered with the 'authorities' of the pseudo-state. On page 6 of the above research call, the aims mentioned include 'the enhancement of democratic life in the occupied territories', but without clarifying what is meant by that. On page 9 of the call, it is very clearly pointed out that participation in the programme requires registration in the northern part of Cyprus or in a Member State of the EU.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it recognise the 'authorities' of the pseudo-state, and is it legitimising — indirectly but nonetheless clearly — an unlawful regime not recognised by the United Nations and condemned in Security Council resolutions, among other measures?

2. What is the purpose of the reference to 'Northern Cyprus'? Does it perhaps recognise the administrative or any other 'authorities' of the pseudo-state?

3. Does it realise that such actions undermine the Republic of Cyprus, a Member State of the EU, creating a new dichotomous *fait accompli* in the Cypriot question?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 January 2014)

The Honourable Member refers to a call for proposals under the Aid Programme to the Turkish Cypriot community based on Council Regulation 389/2006 ([1]).

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to Article 1 of Council Regulation 389/2006 setting out the overall objective of the Aid Programme as well as its beneficiaries that include 'local bodies, cooperatives and representatives of civil society, in particular organisations of the social partners, business support organisations, bodies carrying out functions in the general interest in the areas, local or traditional communities, associations, foundations, non-profit organisations, non-governmental organisations, and natural and legal persons.'

In its third paragraph, Article 1 states that 'The granting of such assistance shall not imply recognition of any public authority in the areas other than the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.'

The call for proposals does not make reference to 'Northern Cyprus'.

The issue raised by the Honourable Member emphasises once again the urgency of reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:065:0005:0008:EN:PDF

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013095/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποιήσεις Ημικρατικών Οργανισμών στην Κύπρο

Η τρόικα στα πλαίσια εφαρμογής του Μνημονίου, ασκεί αφόρητες πιέσεις για ταχύτατη ιδιωτικοποίηση Ημικρατικών Οργανισμών στην Κύπρο. Μεταξύ αυτών περιλαμβάνονται η Αρχή Τηλεπικοινωνιών (ΣΥΤΑ), η Αρχή Ηλεκτρισμού (ΑΗΚ) και η Αρχή Λιμένων (ΑΛΚ). Πολιτικά κόμματα, οργανωμένα σύνολα αλλά και έγκυροι οικονομικοί αναλυτές αντιδρούν. Προβάλλουν σοβαρά οικονομικά και άλλα επιχειρήματα, μεταξύ των οποίων και τα πιο κάτω:

— Και οι τρεις πιο πάνω οργανισμοί είναι οικονομικά υγιείς και κερδοφόροι.

— Δεν αποτελούν βάρος στα δημόσια οικονομικά. Την τελευταία δεκαετία συνεισέφεραν στα κρατικά έσοδα υπό μορφή φορολογίας πέραν του 1 δις ευρώ.

— Είναι σημαντικοί δανειστές του κράτους αφού κατέχουν ένα σημαντικό ποσοστό του δημοσίου χρέους.

— Με εξαίρεση την ΑΛΚ, οι άλλοι δύο οργανισμοί ευρίσκονται σε απευθείας ανταγωνισμό με ιδιωτικές εταιρείες και δεν υπάρχει θέμα νόθευσης του ανταγωνισμού.

— Και για τους τρεις οργανισμούς συντρέχουν σοβαροί οικονομικοί λόγοι και θέματα εθνικής ασφάλειας που δεν συνηγορούν υπέρ της ιδιωτικοποίησης.

— Η όλη οικονομική κατάσταση και η σπουδή με την οποία επιδιώκεται η ιδιωτικοποίηση δεν αναμένεται να εξασφαλίσουν μια δίκαιη τιμή πώλησης.

— Η ιδιωτικοποίηση, με βάση και την εμπειρία, δεν έχει πάντοτε θετικά αποτελέσματα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ασπάζεται τα πιο πάνω επιχειρήματα εναντίον της ιδιωτικοποίησης;

2. Αν ναι, ως μέλος της τρόικα, γιατί επιμένει σε μια απόφαση που δικαιολογημένα προκαλεί σοβαρές πολιτικές, οικονομικές και κοινωνικές αντιδράσεις;

3. Μήπως βρισκόμαστε ενώπιον μιας νέας περίπτωσης ιδεολογικής αγκύλωσης, σύμφωνα με την οποία θεωρεί ότι «καθετί το δημόσιο είναι κακό και καθετί το ιδιωτικό είναι καλό»;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Στην ανακοίνωση υιοθετείται ουδέτερη θέση σχετικά με την ιδιοκτησία από τον δημόσιο ή τον ιδιωτικό τομέα, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ. Τον Μάρτιο του 2013, οι κυπριακές αρχές επιβεβαίωσαν εκ νέου «τη δέσμευσή τους να εντείνουν τις προσπάθειές τους στους τομείς της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων και των ιδιωτικοποιήσεων»: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136487.pdf. Το Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης βασίστηκε σε αυτή τη δέσμευση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013095/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Privatisation of semi-governmental organisations in Cyprus

Within the framework of the Memorandum implementation, the Troika is exerting heavy pressure for the speediest possible privatisation of semi-governmental organisations in Cyprus. Among these are the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority (CYTA), the Electricity Authority of Cyprus (EAC) and the Cyprus Ports Authority (CPA). Political parties, organised groups and also established financial analysts have responded, putting forward serious economic and other arguments, including the following:

— All three of abovementioned organisations are financially healthy and profitable.

— They are not a burden on public finances. Over the last decade, they have contributed more than EUR 1 billion to state revenues in taxation.

— They are important state lenders, since they hold a significant percentage of public debt.

— With the exception of the CPA, the other two organisations are in direct competition with private companies, and there is no problem with distortions of competition.

— For all three organisations, there are serious economic reasons and national security issues that argue against privatisation.

— Due to the overall economic situation and the process under which the privatisation is being pursued, a fair sale price cannot be ensured.

— Experience shows that privatisation does not always have positive results.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it embrace the above arguments against privatisation?

2. If so, why does it insist as a member of Troika on a decision which, justifiably, is causing a serious political, economic and social backlash?

3. Are we perhaps seeing a new ideological obsession, under which it believes that 'everything public is bad and everything private is good'?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The communication has a neutral position on the public or private ownership, in accordance with Article 345 of TFEU. In March 2013 the Cypriot authorities reaffirmed 'their commitment to step up efforts in the areas of fiscal consolidation, structural reforms and privatisation': http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136487.pdf the memorandum of understanding has followed from this.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013096/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κυπριακό μνημόνιο και μέτρα ισοδύναμου αποτελέσματος για δημόσια οικονομικά

Δεδομένων των σοβαρών αντιδράσεων που σημειώνονται στην Κύπρο, λόγω της επιμονής της τρόικα για ιδιωτικοποίηση κερδοφόρων Δημόσιων (Ημικρατικών) Οργανισμών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Υπάρχουν — κατά την άποψή της — και θα ήταν αποδεκτά από τους δανειστές, άλλα μέτρα ισοδύναμου αποτελέσματος για τα δημόσια οικονομικά της Κύπρου, που θα μπορούσαν να ληφθούν, αντί της ιδιωτικοποίησης των Ημικρατικών Οργανισμών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή θα ήθελε να παραπέμψει την κυρία βουλευτή στην πολιτική συμφωνία που επετεύχθη τον Μάρτιο του 2013 μεταξύ της Κύπρου και της Ευρωομάδας ως προς τα βασικά στοιχεία ενός μελλοντικού προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δέσμευσης της Κύπρου να εντείνει τις προσπάθειες που καταβάλλει σχετικά με τις ιδιωτικοποιήσεις ([1]).

Οι κυπριακές αρχές θα θέσουν σε εφαρμογή σχέδιο ιδιωτικοποιήσεων το οποίο μπορεί να συμβάλει τόσο στη βελτίωση της οικονομικής αποδοτικότητας με την ενίσχυση του ανταγωνισμού και την ενθάρρυνση της εισροής κεφαλαίων, όσο και στην αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του χρέους.

Το μνημόνιο αναφέρει ρητώς ότι ένα κατάλληλο ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο αποτελεί προϋπόθεση για την ιδιωτικοποίηση των φυσικών μονοπωλίων. Η παροχή των βασικών δημόσιων αγαθών και υπηρεσιών από ιδιωτικοποιημένες κλάδους θα διασφαλίζεται πλήρως, σύμφωνα με τους εθνικούς στόχους πολιτικής και όπως προβλέπεται από τη Συνθήκη ΕΕ και τους σχετικούς κανόνες του παράγωγου δικαίου.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136487.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013096/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: The Cyprus Memorandum and measures with equivalent effects on public finances

Given the serious backlash in Cyprus to the Troika's insistence on the privatisation of profit-making state (semi-governmental) organisations, will the Commission say:

In its view, are there any measures acceptable to lenders and with an equivalent effect on the public finances of Cyprus which could be taken instead of privatising the semi-governmental organisations?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the political agreement reached between Cyprus and the Eurogroup in March 2013 on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme including a commitment by Cyprus to step up efforts in the privatisation ([1])

The Cypriot authorities will implement a privatisation plan that can help to improve economic efficiency through enhanced competition and encouragement of capital inflows, as well as to restore debt sustainability.

The MoU is also explicit that an appropriate regulatory framework is a prerequisite for the privatisation of natural monopolies. The provision of basic public goods and services by privatised industries will be fully safeguarded, in line with the national policy goals and in compliance with the EU Treaty and appropriate secondary legislation rules.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136487.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013099/13
à la Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Objet: Obligation pour les véhicules de disposer d'un limiteur de vitesse

Selon certains journaux britanniques, repris dans la presse européenne, la Commission étudierait actuellement la possibilité d'imposer l'installation de limiteurs de vitesse embarqués dans tout le parc automobile européen.

Les résultats de cette étude seraient publiés dans le courant de l'automne.

La Commission peut-elle confirmer ces allégations, et en tout état de cause préciser ses intentions à ce sujet?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(17 janvier 2014)

Contrairement à ce qui ressort de certains articles de presse, la Commission n'étudie pas actuellement la possibilité d'imposer l'installation de limiteurs de vitesse embarqués dans tout le parc automobile européen. La Commission n'a, en particulier, aucun projet d'installation obligatoire de limiteurs de vitesse embarqués dans les voitures particulières.

Faisant suite à la demande que lui a adressée le Parlement européen ([1]) «*d'élaborer une proposition sur l'équipement des véhicules en systèmes intelligents d'assistance à la vitesse, comprenant un calendrier, la procédure d'autorisation et l'infrastructure routière nécessaire à cet effet*» et conformément à l'article 6 bis de la directive 92/6/CEE concernant les limiteurs de vitesse sur certaines catégories de véhicules à moteur ([2]), la Commission a évalué les répercussions sur la sécurité et la circulation routières de ladite directive. En 2013, un consortium dirigé par *Transport & Mobility Leuven* a analysé dans une évaluation ex post indépendante ([3]) les répercussions de la directive 92/6/CEE sur la sécurité routière, l'environnement et l'économie, en ce compris la possibilité d'étendre les règles existantes aux véhicules utilitaires légers. En ce qui concerne ces derniers, l'étude a conclu que les systèmes volontaires d'adaptation intelligente de la vitesse peuvent avoir plus d'effet sur la sécurité routière que les limiteurs de vitesse.

Il est envisagé de réaliser une analyse d'impact en 2014 afin d'évaluer plus en détail les effets d'une éventuelle application des systèmes intelligents d'adaptation de la vitesse aux véhicules utilitaires légers. Ce n'est qu'à l'issue de cette analyse que la Commission décidera quelles mesures, le cas échéant, pourraient être proposées pour améliorer la sécurité de ce type de véhicules.

([1]) Rapport sur la sécurité routière au niveau européen pour la période 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI)): http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2011-0264+0+DOC+XML+V0//FR
([2]) JO L 57 du 2.3.1992, p. 27, telle que modifiée par la directive 2002/85/CE (JO L 327 du 4.12.2002, p. 8).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/vehicles/speed_limitation_evaluation_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013099/13
to the Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Compulsory fitting of speed limiters to vehicles

According to some British newspapers, whose reports have been repeated in the European press, the Commission is currently studying the possibility of making it compulsory to fit speed limiters to every motor vehicle in Europe.

The results of the study are to be published this autumn.

Can the Commission confirm these claims and in any case make clear what its intentions are in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

Contrary to what appear to report some press articles, the Commission is not studying the possibility of making it compulsory to fit every motor vehicle in Europe with speed limitation devices. Particularly, the Commission is not working on any plans concerning compulsory installation of speed limitation devices in private cars.

In line with the call of the European Parliament on the Commission ([1]) to 'draw up a proposal to fit vehicles with "intelligent speed assistance systems" which incorporate a timetable, details of an approval procedure and a description of the requisite road infrastructure' and in compliance with Article 6a of Directive 92/6/EEC ([2])on speed limitation devices of heavy commercial vehicles, the Commission has assessed the road safety and road traffic implications of this directive. In 2013, a consortium led by Transport & Mobility Leuven carried out an *ex-post* evaluation study ([3]) providing an independent evaluation of the road safety, environmental and economic effects of the application of Directive 92/6/EEC, including possible extension of existing rules to light commercial vehicles. As regards light commercial vehicles, the study concluded that voluntary intelligent speed adaptation systems have a stronger road safety potential than speed limitation devices.

An impact assessment study is envisaged in 2014 to further evaluate impacts of possible application of intelligent speed adaptation systems and speed limitation devices, and only then the Commission will decide, whether at all, and if so what further steps could be proposed to enhance the safety of commercial vehicles.

([1]) Report on European road safety 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI)) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2011-0264&language=EN.
([2]) OJ L 57, 2.3.1992, p.27 as amended by Directive 2002/85/EC (OJ L 327, 4.12.2002).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/vehicles/speed_limitation_evaluation_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013100/13
à la Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE) et Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Objet: Taux de financement du projet de tunnel transfrontalier France-Italie dans le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe (MIE)

Le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe (MIE) a été voté à la quasi majorité en commission des transports et du tourisme le 7 octobre dernier.

Le projet de rapport avalise les propositions de la Commission concernant le taux de financement des projets à valeur ajoutée européenne, et alloue en particulier un financement plus important aux travaux à l'échelle transfrontalière.

Le Parlement européen votera en session plénière du mois de novembre le rapport tel qu'adopté en trilogue et confirmé par le vote de la commision des transports et du tourisme. Dans le cas où les points concernés ne sont pas modifiés par la voie des amendements déposés en plénière, la Commission peut-elle confirmer que, selon les dispositions du MIE, le projet de tunnel transfrontalier entre la France et l'Italie pourra se voir allouer 40 % de taux de cofinancement par l'Union européenne, si les deux États confirment leurs engagements?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(20 janvier 2014)

La Commission peut confirmer que selon les dispositions du MIE, le projet de tunnel transfrontalier entre la France et l'Italie se verra allouer 40 % de taux de cofinancement par l'Union européenne.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013100/13
alla Commissione
Michel Dantin (PPE) e Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Tasso di finanziamento del progetto di galleria transfrontaliera Francia-Italia del MIE

Il meccanismo per l'interconnessione in Europa (MIE) è stato approvato quasi alla maggioranza in commissione Trasporti e turismo il 7 ottobre scorso.

Il progetto di relazione avalla le proposte della Commissione per quanto riguarda il tasso di finanziamento dei progetti con valore aggiunto europeo e assegna in particolare un finanziamento più congruo per i lavori su scala transfrontaliera.

Il Parlamento europeo approverà nella plenaria di novembre la relazione approvata nel corso del Trigolo e confermata dal voto della commissione TRAN.

Qualora i punti interessati non venissero modificati attraverso emendamenti presentati in plenaria, può la Commissione confermare che stando alle disposizioni del MIE, il progetto di galleria transfrontaliera tra Francia e Italia potrà vedersi assegnato un tasso di cofinanziamento al 40 % da parte dell'Unione europea, nel caso in cui i due Stati membri confermassero i rispettivi impegni?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(20 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è in grado di confermare che, in conformità alle disposizioni del meccanismo per collegare l'Europa, il progetto per la galleria transfrontaliera Francia-Italia potrà beneficiare del cofinanziamento dell'Unione europea per una quota del 40 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013100/13
to the Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE) and Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Rate of financing for the France-Italy cross-border tunnel project within the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

On 7 October 2013 the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) was approved almost unanimously by the Committee on Transport and Tourism.

The draft report endorses the Commission's proposals on the rate of financing for projects with European added value and in particular allocates more substantial financing for cross-border projects.

In its November plenary session, Parliament will vote on the report as it was passed in trialogue and endorsed by the Committee on Transport and Tourism. As long as the items in question are not amended by amendments tabled in plenary, can the Commission confirm that, in accordance with the provisions of the CEF, the France-Italy cross-border tunnel project will be eligible for European Union co-financing at a rate of 40%, if the two States confirm their commitments?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 January 2014)

The Commission can confirm that, in accordance with the provisions of the CEF, the France-Italy cross-border tunnel project will be eligible for European Union co-financing at a rate of 40%.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013101/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(18 november 2013)

Betreft: Verordening inzake geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie

Met het oog op de voorbereiding van een rapport inzake de toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 betreffende geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie (ATMP), heeft de Commissie eind 2012 een openbare raadpleging gehouden. In mei 2013 is een samenvatting gepubliceerd van de reacties op deze publieke raadpleging van zowel belanghebbenden als van individuele respondenten.

Reacties op deze publieke raadpleging hebben aangetoond dat er binnen Europa geen sprake is van een geharmoniseerde aanpak betreffende zaken zoals de classificatie van producten of de toepassing van de „ziekenhuisuitzondering". De respondenten uit de sector stellen dat er grote verschillen zijn tussen de lidstaten met betrekking tot de tenuitvoerlegging van de Richtlijn weefsels en cellen (2004/23/EG) die een groot aantal voorwaarden voor ATMP's omvat. Deze verschillen dragen bij aan het creëren van een gefragmenteerde markt voor deze producten. De meeste respondenten meenden dat er wijzigingen dienen te worden aangebracht in de verordening, dit varieerde echter van een grondige herziening tot enkel geringe wijzigingen.

1. Kan de Commissie meedelen wanneer zij van plan is om de verordening inzake geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie (ATMP) te herzien?

2. Met het oog op het feit dat de Richtlijn cellen en weefsels veel voorwaarden voor ATMP's omvat, is de Commissie van plan om de Richtlijn cellen en weefsels 2004/23/EG tegelijkertijd met de verordening inzake geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie (ATMP) te herzien?

3. Is de Commissie bereid om te overwegen om het wetgevingsinstrument inzake cellen en weefsels van een richtlijn in een verordening te veranderen om zodoende binnen Europa geharmoniseerde voorwaarden te creëren?

4. Is de Commissie van plan om de voorwaarden voor de „ziekenhuisuitzondering", zoals de omvang en de voorwaarden op het gebied van kwaliteit, verder te verbeteren om zodoende de toepassing hiervan in de verschillende lidstaten te harmoniseren?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(23 januari 2014)

De Commissie is in december 2012 een openbare raadpleging gestart om belanghebbenden de gelegenheid te geven zich uit te spreken over de toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 betreffende geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie ([1]) („ATMP-verordening"). Deze raadpleging was een voorbereidende stap in de richting van de publicatie van het verslag over de toepassing van de verordening, zoals voorzien in artikel 25 daarvan.

De Commissie legt momenteel de laatste hand aan het verslag, waarin ze haar analyse van de toepassing van de ATMP-verordening zal geven. Het is nog te vroeg om vooruit te lopen op specifieke maatregelen die zouden kunnen worden genomen naar aanleiding van deze beoordeling, met inbegrip van een eventuele herziening van het regelgevingskader.

Hierbij moet worden opgemerkt dat de openbare raadpleging en het verslag niet specifiek betrekking hebben op de aspecten van de toepassing van Richtlijn 2004/23/EG die verband houden met weefsels en cellen. ([2]) De Commissie is momenteel bezig met een analyse van de informatie die de lidstaten hebben aangeleverd over de tenuitvoerlegging van Richtlijn 2004/23/EG. Deze informatie zal worden opgenomen in het volgende verslag van de Commissie aan het Europees Parlement en de Raad over de tenuitvoerlegging van deze richtlijn, waarin een uitvoerig overzicht van de tenuitvoerlegging van de richtlijn en de verschillen van lidstaat tot lidstaat zal worden gegeven.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie en tot wijziging van Richtlijn 2001/83/EG en Verordening (EG) nr. 726/2004 (PB L 324 van 10.12.2007, blz. 121).

([2]) Richtlijn 2004/23/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad tot vaststelling van kwaliteits- en veiligheidsnormen voor het doneren, verkrijgen, testen, bewerken, bewaren en distribueren van menselijke weefsels en cellen (PB L 102 van 7.4.2004, blz. 48).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013101/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products Regulation

With a view to drawing up a report on the application of Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 on Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (the ATMP Regulation), the Commission launched a public consultation at the end of 2012. A summary of the responses from stakeholders to this public consultation was published in May 2013, along with a number of individual contributions.

Responses to the consultation revealed that there is no harmonised approach across Europe on aspects such as the classification of products or the application of the hospital exemption. Industry respondents stated that the way in which the Cells and Tissues Directive (2004/23/EC) is implemented across the Member States varies significantly. Since that directive lays down many of the requirements relating to ATMPs, the situation with regard to its implementation means that the market for AMTPs is very fragmented. Most contributors thought that the regulation needed to be amended, with some calling for a major overhaul and others suggesting only limited changes.

1. Can the Commission clarify when it intends to review the ATMP Regulation?

2. Given that the Cells and Tissue Directive lays down many of the requirements relating to ATMPs, does the Commission intend to review it at the same time as the ATMP Regulation?

3. Would the Commission be prepared to consider changing the legislative instrument relating to cells and tissues from a directive to a regulation with a view to harmonising requirements across Europe?

4. Does the Commission intend to further define requirements for the hospital exemption, such as its scope and the relevant quality requirements, in order to harmonise its application in the different Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

The Commission launched a public consultation to seek the views of stakeholders on the application of the regulation 1394/2007 on Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products ([1]) ('ATMP Regulation') in December 2012. This consultation was a preparatory step towards the publication of the report on the application of the ATMP Regulation, which is foreseen under Article 25 thereof.

The Commission is currently finalising the report, which will contain the Commission's analysis of the application of the ATMP Regulation. It is too early to anticipate specific measures that could follow as a consequence of this assessment, including a possible revision of the regulatory framework.

It is important to note that neither the public consultation nor the report focuses on aspects related to the application of the directive 2004/23/EC on Tissues and Cells. ([2]) However, the Commission is currently in the process of analysing information gathered from the Member States concerning the implementation of Directive 2004/23/EC. This information will feed into the next Commission's report to the European Parliament and Council on the implementation of this directive which will provide a comprehensive overview on the implementation of the directive including variations across Member States.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on advanced therapy medicinal products and amending Directive 2001/83/EC and Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 (OJ L324, 10.12.2007, p.121).

([2]) Directive 2004/23/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on setting standards of quality and safety for the donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of human tissues and cells (OJ L 102, 07.04.2004, p. 48).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013102/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(18 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Napięta sytuacja na szczytach władzy w Uzbekistanie

Pogłębiający się konflikt wewnątrz sprawującej autorytarną władzę w Taszkiencie koterii politycznej nie pozostaje bez wpływu na sytuację międzynarodową tego kraju. Szczególnego wymiaru nabiera coraz bardziej brutalna rywalizacja o wpływy prezydenta Islama Karimowa i jego córki Gulnary. Chociaż społeczeństwo Uzbekistanu poddawane jest od wielu lat totalnej kontroli państwa i służb specjalnych, trwałość reżimu gwarantowała dotychczas spokój wewnętrzny i przewidywalność polityki państwa. Tymczasem bieżąca sytuacja – w opinii obserwatorów – zagraża rozchwianiem sytuacji wewnętrznej, co w konsekwencji doprowadzić może do zaburzenia stabilności w całym regionie, którego Uzbekistan pozostaje istotnym graczem. Nie trzeba dodawać, że rozwojowi wydarzeń z pewnością bacznie przygląda się Rosja.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o informacje:

1. Czy europejska dyplomacja przygotowana jest na możliwy, niepokojący scenariusz ewentualnej destabilizacji w regionie Azji Środkowej? Czy europejskie interesy polityczne będą właściwie zabezpieczone, w szczególności w obliczu potencjalnego zaangażowania Moskwy na tym obszarze?

2. Jakie czynności podejmuje Unia Europejska w zakresie demokratyzacji systemu w Uzbekistanie i poprawy sytuacji rządzonego twardą ręką społeczeństwa?

3. Czy i jakie działania realizowała w bieżącym roku ESDZ w zakresie normalizacji napiętych (z uwagi na graniczny konflikt etniczny) stosunków uzbecko-kirgiskich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(27 stycznia 2014 r.)

Jednym z głównych celów strategii UE wobec Azji Środkowej jest promowanie stabilności w tym krytycznym obszarze, na którym aktywnych jest większość mocarstw. Spory dotyczące regionalnej gospodarki wodnej, wycofanie sił ISAF i napięcia wywołane przemianami politycznymi w niektórych krajach stanowią wystarczające powody, dla których UE powinna śledzić rozwój sytuacji z coraz większą uwagą. Na drodze współpracy na rzecz rozwoju i dyplomacji, UE niezmiennie zachęca do współpracy regionalnej i dialogu, jak ostatnio podczas dorocznego spotkania ministrów UE i krajów Azji Środkowej (listopad 2013 r.). Ponadto w 2013 r. odbyła się pierwsza sesja dialogu wysokiego szczebla między UE a Azją Środkową w sprawach bezpieczeństwa. Sytuacja regionalna w Azji Środkowej jest również regularnie omawiana w ramach dialogu politycznego, który UE prowadzi z partnerami strategicznymi, w tym Federacją Rosyjską.

W ramach swojej polityki zaangażowania w Uzbekistanie, UE nakłania ten kraj do zintensyfikowania procesu reform wewnętrznych i otworzenia się na współpracę regionalną. Odnotowano już spore postępy w obu dziedzinach, a UE będzie się starać o kolejne, w szczególności poprzez wspieranie uzbeckiej reformy wymiaru sprawiedliwości w sprawach karnych oraz rozwijanie swojej regionalnej inicjatywy w dziedzinie praworządności.

Oprócz długotrwałego Programu zarządzania granicami w Azji Środkowej (BOMCA), UE uruchomiła Instrument na rzecz Stabilności w celu wsparcia projektów budujących zaufanie w Kirgistanie, działając na rzecz praw mniejszości. Ułatwia też dostęp do wymiaru sprawiedliwości w celu łagodzenia napięć granicznych i etnicznych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013102/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Tensions among the ruling elite in Uzbekistan

The conflict playing out between members of the political coterie which wields authoritarian power in Tashkent is worsening, with knock-on effects for the country's international situation. The increasingly brutal rivalry between President Islam Karimov and his daughter Gulnara is a particularly good example of these power struggles. Although the Uzbek people have been under the total control of the state and the secret services for many years, the stability of the regime has so far acted as a guarantee of peace within the country and predictable state politics. However observers believe that the current situation risks upsetting this internal balance, and the significant influence that Uzbekistan still holds means that the entire region could be destabilised. It goes without saying that Russia is sure to be following these developments closely.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Are European diplomats prepared for a potential and worrying destabilisation of the Central Asian region? Will Europe's political interests be properly protected, particularly in view of Moscow's potential involvement?

2. What action will the European Union take with a view to democratising the system in Uzbekistan and improving the situation of a people ruled with a firm hand?

3. Has the EEAS taken any action this year to improve relations between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, which have been blighted by ethnic conflict and border disputes?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

One of the key objectives of the EU strategy for Central Asia is to promote stability in this critical area, where most of the great powers are active. Regional water disputes, the withdrawal of ISAF forces and political transition tensions in some countries are as many reasons why the EU needs to follow developments with increasing attention. Both through development cooperation and diplomacy, the EU has kept encouraging regional cooperation and dialogue, most recently during the EU-Central Asia annual Ministerial meeting (November 2013). In addition, the first session of the EU-Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue was held in 2013. The regional situation in Central Asia is also regularly addressed under the political dialogue that the EU maintains with its strategic partners, including the Russian Federation.

As part of its engagement policy with Uzbekistan, the EU has been pushing this country to step up its internal reform process and open up to regional cooperation. Some significant progress has already been recorded in both respects and the EU will keep pressing ahead, notably by developing its Criminal Justice Reform project in Uzbekistan and its regional Rule of Law initiative.

On top of the EU long-standing regional border management programme (BOMCA), the EU has mobilised its Instrument for Stability to support confidence building projects in Kyrgyzstan addressing minorities' rights, and access to justice in order to appease border and ethnic tensions.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013103/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(18 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Incydenty podczas wyborów lokalnych w Kosowie

Przeprowadzone w dniu 3 listopada br. wybory do władz samorządowych na terenie Kosowa nie obyły się bez lokalnych incydentów. Do najpoważniejszych zakłóceń przebiegu głosowania doszło w serbskiej enklawie – Mitrowicy – gdzie elekcja prawdopodobnie zostanie powtórzona. Wydarzenia te pokazały, że, pomimo zaangażowania władz Serbii i Kosowa oraz międzynarodowych sił porządkowych i misji obserwacyjnych, nie udało się zapewnić bezpieczeństwa głosującym.

W związku z akcesyjnymi staraniami zarówno Belgradu, jak i Prisztiny oraz bezpośrednim zaangażowaniem Wspólnoty w procesie zacieśniania relacji z tymi krajami, zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź na poniższe pytania:

1. Jaka jest ocena Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel przebiegu wyborów lokalnych w Kosowie, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem obszarów zamieszkałych przez mniejszość serbską?

2. Czy działania względem Kosowa, podejmowane za pośrednictwem europejskiej dyplomacji w zakresie zarówno promowania demokracji i praworządności, jak też zabezpieczenia prawidłowości głosowania były wystarczające?

3. Wybory uwidoczniły, że niedawne porozumienie rządów obydwu krajów nie rozwiązuje problemów społeczności Serbów w Kosowie. Czy i w jaki sposób Unia Europejska zamierza wpłynąć na poprawę sytuacji serbskiej mniejszości oraz zminimalizowanie skutków konfliktu etnicznego w Mitrowicy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(29 stycznia 2014 r.)

Pomyślne przeprowadzenie wyborów lokalnych w Kosowie jest kluczowym elementem porozumienia zawartego w kwietniu 2013 r. między Kosowem a Serbią oraz dużym krokiem w kierunku normalizacji ich stosunków. Wybory te przeprowadzono w całym Kosowie, w tym w czterech gminach leżących na północy. UE wysłała misję obserwacji wyborów (EU EOM) prowadzoną przez Pana Posła Roberta Gualtieriego. Zgodnie z jej wstępnym oświadczeniem wybory stanowiły pozytywny krok naprzód na rzecz demokracji w Kosowie. Sprawozdanie końcowe EU EOM zostanie wydane w styczniu 2014 r. i będzie zawierać zalecenia dotyczące reformy systemu wyborczego.

Wspieranie dalszej demokratyzacji i praworządności ma kluczowe znaczenie dla pracy biura UE w Kosowie, mandatu Specjalnego Przedstawiciela UE i misji UE w zakresie praworządności EULEX. Reforma systemu wyborczego jest również priorytetem dla studium wykonalności Komisji w sprawie układu o stowarzyszeniu z Kosowem. Przy okazji tych wyborów lokalnych kwestia reformy wyborczej po raz kolejny została nagłośniona.

UE nieprzerwanie podejmuje działania wspierające ochronę praw mniejszości serbskiej, w tym ochronę dziedzictwa kulturowego i religijnego oraz używania języka. Działania UE mają również na celu łagodzenie konfliktów etnicznych. UE zamierza nawiązywać dalsze kontakty i podejmować działania z serbskimi społecznościami Kosowa w 2014 r. i w kolejnych latach. UE będzie także kontynuować działania mające na celu ułatwienie powrotu Serbów. Zorganizowała ponadto wspólne przedsięwzięcia dla zamieszkałej w Kosowie serbskiej młodzieży z północy oraz albańskiej młodzieży z południa, by stworzyć platformę do współpracy. Uwaga zostanie też poświęcona poprawie komunikacji i współpracy między nowo wybranymi władzami gmin zamieszkanych przez serbską większość a centralnymi instytucjami rządowymi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013103/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Incidents during the local elections in Kosovo

The local government elections held on 3 November 2013 in Kosovo were marred by local incidents. Voting was disrupted most severely in the Serbian enclave of Mitrovica, where the elections will probably be re-run. It is clear from these events that the attempts to ensure voter safety failed, despite the involvement of the Serbian and Kosovan authorities and international peacekeeping forces and observation missions.

In view of the fact that both Belgrade and Pristina are keen to open accession negotiations with the EU, and given the latter's direct involvement in the process of building relations with the two countries, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's assessment of the local elections in Kosovo, in particular those held in the areas inhabited by the Serbian minority?

2. Have European diplomats taken sufficient action both to promote democracy and the rule of law in Kosovo and to ensure the regularity of the elections?

3. The elections made it clear that the recent agreement reached between the governments of the two countries has not put an end to the problems faced by the Serbian people in Kosovo. Does the European Union intend to take any action to improve the situation of the Serbian minority and to mitigate the impacts of ethnic conflict in Mitrovica, and if so how?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The successful holding of the local elections in Kosovo is a key element of the April 2013 Agreement between Kosovo and Serbia and a major step in the normalisation of relations. These elections were held Kosovo-wide, including in the four northern municipalities. The EU deployed an EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) led by Honourable Member Roberto Gualtieri. According to its preliminary statement, elections represented a positive step forward for democracy in Kosovo. The final report of the EU EOM will be issued in January 2014 and will also include recommendations on electoral reform.

Promoting further democratisation and the rule of law are central to the work of the EU Office in Kosovo, the mandate of the EU Special Representative and the EU Rule of Law Mission EULEX. Electoral reform is also a priority of the Commission's Feasibility Study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo. Following these local elections, electoral reform has once again become prominent.

The EU has continued in activities supporting the protection of the rights of the Serbian minority, including the protection of religious and cultural heritage, the use of language and addressing inter-ethnic conflict. The EU intends to carry out further outreach and project activities with the Kosovo Serb communities in 2014 and beyond. The EU will also continue activities aimed at facilitating the return of Serbs and started activities with Kosovo Serb youth from the north and Kosovo Albanian in the South to create fora for cooperation. Attention will also be given to improving the communication and cooperation between the newly-elected authorities in the Serb majority municipalities and central government institutions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013105/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: Arbeitsschutzrecht und Arbeitsplatzsicherheit

Am 2. und 3. Dezember 2012 ereignete sich in Spanien einer der schlimmsten europäischen Zwischenfälle der letzten 30 Jahre in Verbindung mit Quecksilber. 49 Leiharbeiter der Firma Asturiana de Zinc, S.A. erlitten schwere Quecksilbervergiftungen. Da die Zinkverarbeitung in einem geschlossenen Raum stattfand anstatt im offenen Gelände, atmeten die Arbeiter so viel Quecksilber ein, so dass ihre Blutwerte 90 Mal den Normalwert überstiegen. Sie leiden nun an systematischer Amnesie, Leber- und Nierenschäden und schwerwiegenden neurologischen Problemen. Da die Arbeitgeber-Firma den Zwischenfall jedoch nicht als Arbeitsunfall anerkennt, werden die schwer erkrankten Arbeiter als „möglicherweise vergiftet" anstatt „vergiftet" angesehen, und die notwendige und angemessene Behandlung bei Quecksilbervergiftung bleibt somit aus.

1. Laut dem 23. Jahresbericht über die Durchführung der Strukturfonds (Durchführungsjahr 2011) gehört Asturiana de Zinc, S.A. zu einem aus den Strukturfonds und den Kohäsionsfonds unterstützen Großprojekt. Wird diese Firma, der grobe Fahrlässigkeit im Bereich Arbeiterschutz nachgesagt wird, immer noch auf EU-Ebene subventioniert?

2. Wie wird in Zeiten der Finanz- und Wirtschaftskrise die Sicherheit am Arbeitsplatz gewährleistet und kontrolliert, um solchen Zwischenfällen vorzubeugen?

3. Wie werden KMUs (kleine und mittlere Unternehmen) in wirtschaftlich und finanziell schwierigen Zeiten dabei unterstützt, ausreichende Sicherheitsvorkehrungen zu treffen?

4. Wie gewährleistet die Kommission die Sicherheit von Leiharbeitern, deren Anzahl in Krisenzeiten stetig zunimmt?

Antwort von László Andor im Namen der Kommission
(27. Januar 2014)

1. Den verfügbaren Informationen zufolge, die die spanischen Behörden übermittelt haben, wurde die Firma „Asturiana de Zinc S.A." mit 75 760,37 EUR aus dem EFRE-Programm für Asturien gefördert.

2. Artikel 4 Absatz 2 der Richtlinie 89/391 ([1]) verpflichtet die Mitgliedstaaten, für eine angemessene Kontrolle und Überwachung zu sorgen. Die Mitgliedstaaten sollten die Vorschriften über Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz am Arbeitsplatz unabhängig von der wirtschaftlichen Lage durchsetzen. Den verfügbaren Angaben zufolge gibt es in Spanien 1 865 Arbeitsaufsichtsbeamte ([2]).

3. Die Europäische Agentur für Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz am Arbeitsplatz ([3]) bietet praktische Hilfsmittel und Informationen zur Verbesserung der Prävention in Unternehmen, insbesondere in KMU, an, beispielsweise eine kostenlose Web-Anwendung für die Online-Gefährdungsbeurteilung (Online Interactive Risk Assessment Tool), die kleinen und Kleinstunternehmen ermöglicht, maßgeschneiderte Instrumente zur Gefährdungsbeurteilung zu entwickeln. Darüber hinaus haben die Dienststellen der Kommission mehrere nicht bindende Leitfäden erarbeitet, die Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern bei der Anwendung von EU-Vorschriften helfen sollen ([4]).

4. Leiharbeitnehmer werden durch die Richtlinie 91/383/EWG ([5]) geschützt, die die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet dafür zu sorgen, dass festangestellte Mitarbeiter und Mitarbeiter mit einem Leiharbeitsverhältnis hinsichtlich Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz am Arbeitsplatz gleichbehandelt werden, insbesondere hinsichtlich des Zugangs zu persönlicher Schutzausrüstung. Konkret müssen die Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, dass das „Entleihunternehmen" während der Dauer der Beschäftigung der Leiharbeitnehmer für deren Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz verantwortlich ist. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen für die korrekte Umsetzung, Anwendung und Durchsetzung dieser Maßnahmen sorgen ([6]).

([1]) Richtlinie 89/391/EWG des Rates vom 12. Juni 1989 über die Durchführung von Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Sicherheit und des Gesundheitsschutzes der Arbeitnehmer bei der Arbeit, ABl. L 183 vom 29.6.1989.
([2]) Daten aus dem Jahr 2011.
([3]) https://osha.europa.eu/de?set_language=de
([4]) Beispielsweise nicht verbindliche Leitfäden zur Richtlinie 92/57/EWG über Baustellen, zur Richtlinie 2006/25/EG über künstliche optische Strahlung und zum Schutz von Sicherheit und Gesundheit der in Land- und Forstwirtschaft beschäftigten Arbeitskräfte http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=148&langId=de&furtherPubs=yes
([5]) Richtlinie 91/383/EWG des Rates vom 25. Juni 1991 zur Ergänzung der Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Sicherheit und des Gesundheitsschutzes von Arbeitnehmern mit befristetem Arbeitsverhältnis oder Leiharbeitsverhältnis, ABl. L 206 vom 29.7.1991.
([6]) Zur Bewertung der Umsetzung durch die Mitgliedstaaten siehe Arbeitsunterlage der Kommissionsdienststellen SEK(2011)982.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013105/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Occupational health and safety law and safety at work

One of the worst incidents in Europe in the last 30 years in connection with mercury happened in Spain on 2-3 December 2012. Forty-nine temporary agency workers at the company Asturiana de Zinc, S.A. suffered severe mercury poisoning. As the zinc processing was carried out in an enclosed space instead of an open area, the workers breathed in so much mercury that 90 times the normal value was found in their blood. They are now suffering from systematic amnesia, liver and kidney damage and severe neurological problems. Since the company employing these workers does not recognise the incident as an industrial accident, the severely ill workers are regarded as 'possibly poisoned' rather than 'poisoned' and the necessary and appropriate treatment for mercury poisoning is therefore not provided.

1. According to the 23rd Annual Report on the Implementation of the Structural Funds (implementation year 2011), Asturiana de Zinc, S.A. is one of the major projects supported by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. Is this company, which is said to have been grossly negligent in the area of health and safety at work, still being subsidised at EU level?

2. At a time of financial and economic crisis, how is safety in the workplace being ensured and monitored in order to prevent incidents like this?

3. What support is given to SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) during economically and financially difficult times to enable them to take adequate safety measures?

4. How does the Commission ensure the safety of temporary agency workers, the numbers of which constantly increase during times of crisis?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

1. According to available information received from the Spanish authorities, the firm 'Asturiana de Zinc S.A.' has benefitted from an aid of 75 760.37 EUR under the ERDF programme for Asturias

2. Article 4(2) of Directive 89/391 ([1]) requires Member States to ensure adequate controls and supervision. Member States should enforce the occupational health and safety legislation irrespective of the economic circumstances. According to the available information, there are 1 865 labour inspectors in Spain ([2]).

3. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work ([3]) makes available practical tools and materials to improve prevention in companies, in particular in SMEs, such as the Online Interactive Risk Assessment tool, a cost-free web application which allows to develop tailor-made risk assessment tools for micro-enterprises and small enterprises. In addition, the Commission services have drawn up several non-binding guides to help employers and workers with the implementation of EU legislation ([4]).

4. Temporary Agency Workers are protected by Directive 91/383/EEC ([5]), which requires Member States to ensure that fixed-term staff and temporary agency workers have the same treatment as permanent staff with respect to health and safety at work, especially as regards access to personal protective equipment. In particular, Member States must ensure that the 'user-undertaking' of such workers is responsible during the assignment for their safety and health. It is for the Member States to ensure the correct transposition, application and enforcement of these measures ([6]).

([1]) Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.
([2]) Data from 2011.
([3]) https://osha.europa.eu/en
([4]) Eg. non-binding guides on the Construction Sites Directive 92/57/EEC, the Artificial Optical Radiation Directive 2006/25/EC and on health and safety of workers in agriculture and forestry (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=148&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes).
([5]) Council Directive 91/383/EEC of 25 June 1991 supplementing the measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of workers with a fixed-duration employment relationship or a temporary employment relationship, OJ L 206, 29.07.1991.
([6]) For an assessment of the implementation by Member States, see the Commission Staff Working Paper SEC(2011) 982.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013106/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Leitlinien für Israel 2014

Im Nahost-Konflikt sind die neuen EU-Leitlinien zu den internationalen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen, die im Januar 2014 in Kraft treten sollen, ein internationaler Brennpunkt. In den Leitlinien wird festgestellt, dass die finanziellen Förderungen an die Israelischen Grenzen vor 1967 gebunden werden sollen und nicht einschließlich an die seit dem Sechstagekrieg durch Israel besetzten Gebiete. Damit soll verhindert werden, dass finanzielle Mittel Israel und den besetzten Gebieten zugutekommen.

1. Werden die Leitlinien zur Gänze umgesetzt, insbesondere in Bezug auf Ost-Jerusalem, da sich dort das vordergründige Baugebiet befindet?

2. Wie gedenkt die Kommission den Einsatz der entsprechenden finanziellen Mittel zu kontrollieren?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(4. Februar 2014)

Diese Leitlinien bestätigen den bereits seit langer Zeit von der Union vertretenen Standpunkt, dass bilaterale Abkommen mit Israel keine Hoheitsgebiete einschließen, die seit Juni 1967 unter israelischer Verwaltung stehen (die Golanhöhen, der Gazastreifen und das Westjordanland einschließlich Ost-Jerusalem).

Die EU wird die Leitlinien im vollen Umfang und im Einklang mit den politischen Standpunkten der EU im Nahostkonflikt und mit ihrer Verantwortung für die gewissenhafte Ausführung des Haushaltsplans der EU umsetzen. Alle Antragsteller, einschließlich der israelischen, müssen sich verpflichten, die in den Leitlinien festgelegten Förderkriterien zu erfüllen. Diese Anforderung muss in allen EU-Programmen im Einklang mit der Haushaltsordnung der EU erfüllt werden. Die Einhaltung der Verpflichtung wird im Rahmen der üblichen Verwaltungsverfahren für erfolgreiche Projekte überprüft, einschließlich Audits soweit notwendig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013106/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: EU guidelines for Israel 2014

In the Middle East conflict, the new EU guidelines on international economic relations, which are due to enter into force in January 2014, are the focus of international attention. The guidelines state that financial assistance is to be tied to the pre-1967 Israeli borders, and the territories occupied by Israel since the Six-Day War are not included. This is intended to prevent financial resources from benefiting Israel and the occupied territories.

1. Will the guidelines be implemented in full, in particular in relation to East Jerusalem, as that is where the primary construction zone is?

2. How does the Commission intend to monitor the use of the relevant financial resources?

Answer given by High-Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2014)

These guidelines reiterate the long-held Union position that bilateral agreements with Israel do not cover the territory that came under Israel's administration in June 1967 (the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem).

The EU will implement the guidelines in full and in accordance with the EU's political positions on the Middle East conflict as well as its responsibility to diligently implement the EU budget. All applicants, including the Israeli applicants will be required to commit to comply with the eligibility criteria formulated in the guidelines; this is a requirement followed in all EU programmes in conformity with the EU Financial Regulation. Compliance with commitment will be monitored through the usual management procedures — including audit where necessary — applied to successful projects.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013107/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — EU-Leitlinien für Israel 2014

Im Nahost-Konflikt sind die neuen EU-Leitlinien zu den internationalen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen, die im Januar 2014 in Kraft treten sollen, ein internationaler Brennpunkt. In den Leitlinien wird festgelegt, dass die finanziellen Förderungen an die Israelischen Grenzen vor 1967 gebunden werden sollen und die seit dem Sechstagekrieg durch Israel besetzten Gebiete nicht darin eingeschlossen sind. Damit soll verhindert werden, dass finanzielle Mittel Israel und den besetzten Gebieten zugutekommen.

1. Die Hohe Vertreterin der Union für die Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik, Catherine Ashton, hat sich zur Durchsetzung der adäquaten Produktkennzeichnung bei den aus den besetzen Gebieten stammenden Waren geäußert und als Zeitrahmen Ende des Jahres 2013 genannt. Wird dieses Ziel auch weiterhin verfolgt werden?

2. Wird sich Catherine Ashton ebenfalls, wie angekündigt, für die uneingeschränkte Umsetzung der Leitlinien einsetzen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(30. Januar 2014)

Die EU-Leitlinien zu den Programmen wurden im Juli veröffentlicht und treten im Januar 2014 in Kraft. Der EAD und die Kommissionsdienststellen haben bei dem Programm „Horizont 2020“ bereits mit deren Umsetzung begonnen. Sie werden künftig umfassend und wirksam in allen EU-Programmen angewandt.

Im Mai und Dezember 2012 wurde in den Schlussfolgerungen des Rates „Auswärtige Angelegenheiten“ die Entschlossenheit der EU bekräftigt, die geltenden EU-Rechtsvorschriften und bilateralen Vereinbarungen, die auf Siedlungsprodukte anwendbar sind, kontinuierlich, umfassend und wirksam umzusetzen.

Die Ausarbeitung EU-weiter Leitlinien für die Kennzeichnung von Siedlungsprodukten ist sehr aufwändig, da die einschlägigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften sehr detailliert und komplex sind. Bei diesen Rechtsvorschriften sind die Zuständigkeiten zum Teil auf verschiedenen Ebenen angesiedelt (teils auf Ebene der EU, teils auf Ebene der Mitgliedstaaten) und es bestehen unterschiedliche Anforderungen an die Ursprungskennzeichnung (Kennzeichnung teils verbindlich, teils auf freiwilliger Basis).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013107/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU guidelines for Israel 2014

In the Middle East conflict, the new EU guidelines on international economic relations, which are due to enter into force in January 2014, are the focus of international attention. The guidelines state that the financial assistance is to be tied to the pre-1967 Israeli borders, and the territories occupied by Israel since the Six-Day War are not included. This is intended to prevent financial resources from benefiting Israel and the occupied territories.

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Baroness Ashton, expressed her views concerning the enforcement of adequate product labelling for goods originating from the occupied territories, and specified a deadline of the end of 2013. Will this objective continue to be pursued?

2. Will the High Representative also, as announced, push for the full implementation of the guidelines?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

EU guidelines on programmes were published in July and will enter into force in January 2014. EEAS and Commission services already started their implementation with the H2020 programme. They will be fully and effectively implemented in all EU programmes.

The May and December 2012 Foreign Affairs Council conclusions reiterated the EU's commitment to ensure continued, full and effective implementation of existing EU legislation and bilateral arrangements applicable to settlement products.

Developing EU-wide guidelines on the labelling of settlement products is complex because the relevant EU legislation is very detailed and elaborate. This legislation involves mixed competences (at EU and Member States level) and different requirements for origin labelling (both mandatory and voluntary).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013108/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: Radioaktiver Giftmüll in Italien

Das Geständnis eines Ex-Mafiabosses hat erschreckende Enthüllungen zum Vorschein gebracht: Tonnen von Industrie- und Giftmüll sind in Italien vergraben worden. Ein nicht unwesentlicher Teil davon ist radioaktiver Müll aus Deutschland.

1. Zieht die Kommission in Betracht, die Regelungen für die Entsorgung von radioaktivem Müll weiter zu verschärfen und strengere Sanktionen für die unsachgemäße Entsorgung zu verhängen?

2. Welche Sanktionen haben die Verantwortlichen vonseiten der EU zu erwarten?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(24. Januar 2014)

1. Nein. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind dafür zuständig, radioaktive Abfälle im Einklang mit EU-Vorschriften zu entsorgen. Die Richtlinie über nukleare Abfälle ([1]), die die Mitgliedstaaten bis zum 23. August 2013 umzusetzen hatten, verpflichtet sie zur Erstellung nationaler Abfallentsorgungsprogramme. Diese Programme müssen unter anderem Ziele für eine sichere Entsorgung radioaktiver Abfälle, maßgebliche Zwischenetappen, Zeitpläne für die Erreichung dieser Ziele sowie Pläne für den Umgang mit Abfällen von der Erzeugung bis zur Endlagerung enthalten.

2. Die Kommission kann bei fehlender oder unvollständiger Umsetzung sowie bei fehlerhafter Anwendung der einschlägigen Richtlinien Vertragsverletzungserfahren gegen Mitgliedstaaten einleiten, die zu Sanktionen führen können. Für die Verhängung von Sanktionen gegen Personen und Unternehmen z. B. aufgrund einer rechtswidrigen Abfallentsorgung sind dagegen weiterhin die Mitgliedstaaten zuständig.

([1]) Richtlinie 2011/70/Euratom des Rates vom 19. Juli 2011 über einen Gemeinschaftsrahmen für die verantwortungsvolle und sichere Entsorgung abgebrannter Brennelemente und radioaktiver Abfälle.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013108/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Radioactive toxic waste in Italy

The confession of a former Mafia boss has brought horrifying revelations to light: tonnes of industrial and toxic waste have been buried in Italy. A significant proportion of this is radioactive waste from Germany.

1. Is the Commission considering tightening the rules for the disposal of radioactive waste further and imposing more stringent penalties for improper disposal?

2. What penalties can those responsible expect from the EU?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

1. No. Member States have the responsibility for radioactive waste management, within the framework provided by EU legislation. The Nuclear Waste Directive ([1]), that Member States were obliged to transpose by 23 August 2013, requires Member States to draw up national waste management programmes. These should set out, amongst others, objectives in respect of safe radioactive waste management, milestones and timeframes for the achievement of the objectives, as well as plans for the management of waste from generation to final disposal.

2. The Commission may infringe and eventually seek sanctions against Member States in case non-transposition, incomplete transposition or bad application of the relevant Directives. Sanctions against individuals and organisations, for example in relation to illegal waste disposal, remain a Member State competence.

([1]) Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom of 19 July 2011 establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013109/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: Unterstützung für die Opfer des Taifuns auf den Philippinen

Der verheerende Taifun „Haiyan" auf den Philippinen hat bereits mehr als 2 000 Todesopfer gefordert. Die Zerstörung im Land nimmt ungeahnte Ausmaße an. Der Wiederaufbau wird ohne Unterstützung nicht funktionieren.

1. In welchem Ausmaß gedenkt die Kommission, den Opfern des Taifuns finanzielle Hilfe zukommen zu lassen?

2. Welche Kontrollgremien werden geschaffen, um zu gewährleisten, dass die Hilfen auch dort ankommen, wo sie gebraucht werden?

3. Aus welchen finanziellen Ressourcen gedenkt die Kommission, die Hilfeleistungen zu zahlen? (Bitte um Nennung der Budgetlinien.)

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(4. Februar 2014)

Die EU stellte am 10. November im beschleunigten Verfahren finanzielle Soforthilfe in Höhe von 3 Mio. EUR bereit. Kommissar Piebalgs kündigte in Manila die Bereitstellung von EU-Hilfen in Höhe von 10 Mio. EUR für den Wiederaufbau an. Nach dem Besuch von Kommissarin Georgieva in den betroffenen Gebieten wurden weitere 27 Mio. EUR für humanitäre Hilfe bereitgestellt. Insgesamt beläuft sich die Unterstützung der EU in Verbindung mit einer massiven Unterstützung durch die Mitgliedstaaten nun auf rund 178,6 Mio. EUR. Die EU ist eng in die Ermittlung des Bedarfs für die kommenden Jahre eingebunden. Im Rahmen des Jahresaktionsprogramms 2014 könnten weitere Hilfen bereitgestellt werden.

Das Katastrophenschutzverfahren der EU wurde sofort aktiviert, um die Unterstützung durch die Mitgliedstaaten zu koordinieren. Das regionale Unterstützungsbüro der GD ECHO in Bangkok hat dem ECHO-Team in Manila Verstärkung zur Verfügung gestellt und die EU-Delegation koordiniert die diplomatischen Vertretungen der Mitgliedstaaten vor Ort.

Auf philippinischer Seite ist der National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council als übergeordnete Stelle verantwortlich für die Koordinierung der Katastrophenhilfe und für die Zusammenarbeit mit dem UN-Amt für die Koordinierung humanitärer Angelegenheiten (OCHA), das einen wirksamen Koordinierungsmechanismus für alle Entwicklungspartner, einschließlich der EU, aufgebaut hat. Die Regierung hat mehreren Ministern spezifische Aufgaben zugewiesen und die Einführung neuer Mechanismen wird in Betracht gezogen, um sicherzustellen, dass der Wiederaufbau, der bis zu 5 Jahre dauern könnte, zu den gewünschten Ergebnissen führt.

Die Hilfe der EU wurde als Kombination aus den Haushaltslinien für unmittelbare humanitäre Hilfe (23 02 01) und Entwicklungshilfe (19 10 01 01) bereit gestellt. Die Unterstützung des Wiederaufbaus wird aus dem DCI-Haushalt für Asien finanziert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013109/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Support for the victims of the typhoon in the Philippines

The devastating typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines has already claimed more than 2 000 lives. The destruction in the country is assuming unprecedented proportions, and reconstruction will not be possible without support.

1. To what extent does the Commission intend to provide the victims of the typhoon with financial assistance?

2. What supervisory bodies are being set up to ensure that the assistance actually gets to where it is needed?

3. From which financial resources does the Commission intend such assistance to come? (Please specify the budget lines.)

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2014)

The EU provided immediate emergency support on 10 November by releasing a fast-track financial aid of EUR 3 million. Commissioner Piebalgs has announced in Manila EUR 10 million of EU aid for the rehabilitation and following Commissioner Georgieva's visit to affected areas and additional EUR 27 million have been allocated for humanitarian aid. Overall, EU assistance combined with massive support by Member States has reached some EUR 178.6 million. The EU is also closely involved in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment process and further contributions could be provided from the 2014 Annual Action Programme.

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism has been immediately activated to coordinate the assistance provided by Member States. In Manila, reinforcement from DG ECHO's Regional Support Office in Bangkok has been provided to support the ECHO Team on the ground and the EU Delegation has been coordinating with diplomatic offices of Member States present in the country.

On the Philippine side, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council is the overall coordinating body for this disaster and liaising with the UN OCHA which has set-up an effective coordination mechanism for all development partners, incl. the EU. The Government has assigned several Ministers with specific tasks and new mechanisms are under consideration to make sure that the reconstruction period that might last up to 5 years will lead to the desired results.

EU assistance has been provided as a combination of immediate humanitarian assistance (23 02 01) and development support (19 10 01 01) budget lines. For the reconstruction support, the DCI budget for Asia will be used.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013110/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: Nicht-öffentliche Schiedsgerichtsbarkeit

Aufgrund von Investitionsschutzabkommen werden Konflikte zwischen davon betroffenen Firmen und Staaten häufig vor internationalen nicht-öffentlichen Schiedsgerichten ausgetragen, was durchaus sehr kritisch gesehen werden kann:

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Tatsache, dass sich einheimische Firmen bei identischen Problemstellungen an nationale Gerichte (unter Anwendung nationalen Rechts) wenden müssen und dadurch nachteiligeren Regelungen (beispielsweise an einen weniger weit gehenden Eigentumsschutz) unterliegen?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Begrenztheit des Personals von Schiedsgerichten und die Tatsache, dass der Richter bei einem Verfahren beim nächsten der Ankläger sein kann und umgekehrt? Wie ist dies insbesondere im Hinblick auf die richterlichen Tugenden der Unabhängigkeit, Unabsetzbarkeit und Unversetzbarkeit zu bewerten?

3. Wie beurteilt die Kommission, dass durch diese Vorgehensweise nationale Verbote (beispielsweise von Fracking) auf dieser Ebene ausgehebelt werden können und eine demokratische Legitimation der Gerichte nicht vorhanden ist?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(11. Februar 2014)

1. Internationale Investitionsabkommen können normalerweise von Investoren nicht vor nationalen Gerichten durchgesetzt werden, weil die Länder in der Regel nicht zulassen, dass internationale Abkommen vor nationalen Gerichten unmittelbar geltend gemacht werden. Ohne Schiedsgerichte wären die Pflichten aus solchen Abkommen somit nicht durchsetzbar. Die Investitionsschutzstandards, die in Investitionsabkommen enthalten sind, spiegeln die Praxis der Union und ihrer Mitgliedstaaten wider (Nichtdiskriminierung, Entschädigung für Enteignung) und gestehen ausländischen Anlegern nicht mehr materielle Rechte zu als inländischen Investoren.

2. Die Kommission kennt die Bedenken in Bezug auf potenzielle Interessenkonflikte der Schiedsrichter bei Investitionsstreitigkeiten. Sie nimmt deshalb einen Verhaltenskodex in die Investitionsabkommen der EU auf, um sicherzustellen, dass solche Interessenkonflikte nicht entstehen.

3. Die Kommission stimmt der Auffassung, dass Investitionsschutzvorschriften das Regulierungsrecht der Staaten nicht beeinträchtigen sollten, uneingeschränkt zu. Das Regulierungsrecht der EU und der einzelnen Staaten wird in allen EU-Abkommen ausdrücklich geschützt, so dass gemäß den EU-Investitionsabkommen gegen keine im öffentlichen Interesse durchgeführte Regelungsmaßnahme erfolgreich geklagt werden kann, sofern diese ausländische und inländische Investoren nicht unterschiedlich behandelt. Es sei daran erinnert, dass die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten Vertragspartei von 1 400 Investitionsabkommen sind, die zum Teil schon 1959 geschlossen wurden, und dass sie im öffentlichen Interesse einheitlich regulieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013110/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Private arbitration

On the basis of investment protection agreements, conflicts between companies and states to which these agreements apply are often settled before international private arbitration tribunals, a situation which can certainly be subject to a great deal of criticism.

1. What is the Commission's view of the fact that, in the event of identical problems, local companies have to turn to national courts (with the application of national law) and as a result are subject to less advantageous rules (with less extensive property protection, for example)?

2. What is its view on the limited number of arbitration tribunal staff and the fact that the judge in one set of proceedings could be the prosecutor in the next, and vice versa? How should this be viewed, in particular with regard to the principles of judicial independence and the irremovability of judges?

3. What is the Commission's view of the fact that this approach could result in national bans (on fracking, for example) being undermined at this level, and a lack of democratic legitimacy for the courts?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

1. International Investment agreements cannot normally be enforced by investors in domestic courts because countries usually do not allow international agreements to be directly invoked in domestic courts. Therefore, without arbitration, the obligations under such agreements would remain unenforceable. The investment protection standards that are included in investment agreements reflect the practice of the Union and its Member States (non-discrimination compensation for expropriation) and grant no more substantive rights for foreign investors as opposed to domestic ones.

2. The Commission is aware of the concerns raised as to potential conflicts of interest of arbitrators in investment arbitration. It is thus including a code of conduct in the EU investment agreements, to ensure that such conflicts of interest do not arise.

3. The Commission fully agrees with the view that investment protection rules should not undermine the states right to regulate. The EU's and states right to regulate will be explicitly protected in all EU agreements, so that any regulation in the public interest, as long as it does not discriminate between foreign and local investors, cannot be successfully challenged under the EU's investment agreements It is recalled that Member States are party to 1400 investment agreements, some of them dating back to 1959, and have consistently regulated in the public interest.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013112/13
adresată Comisiei
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(18 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Industria siderurgică din Uniunea Europeană și sistemul UE de comercializare a certificatelor de emisii

În planul său de acțiune din iunie 2013 destinat sectorului siderurgic, Comisia prezintă măsuri de sprijinire a acestui sector prin punerea accentului asupra competitivității sale pe o piață globală și asupra susținerii locurilor de muncă, a creșterii și a inovării.

Totodată, Comisia propune însă o reformă a sistemului de comercializare a certificatelor de emisii (ETS), prin introducerea unui mecanism de concentrare, care crește în mod artificial prețurile certificatelor, intervenind astfel într-un instrument gândit a fi pe deplin un instrument piață.

1. Ce părere are Comisia despre această contradicție dintre politici într-un moment în care industria siderurgică din Europa se confruntă cu tendințe de scădere în ceea ce privește toate categoriile sale principale de clienți, începând cu sectorul autovehiculelor și al ingineriei mecanice și terminând cu sectorul construcțiilor și cu cel al producției de produse casnice?

2. Având în vedere că aceste creșteri de costuri nu există și în cazul concurenților industriei siderurgice europene, cum intenționează Comisia să elimine acest dezavantaj concurențial?

3. Având în vedere efectele crizei economice asupra tuturor sectoarelor, și în special asupra industriilor cu niveluri ridicate de consum cum sunt cele din sectorul siderurgic, ce planuri are Comisia pentru a încuraja acest sector să crească și să evite relocarea?

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(7 februarie 2014)

1. Comisia nu consideră că există o contradicție între politicile sale. Politica industrială și lupta împotriva schimbărilor climatice merg mână în mână, o dovadă în acest sens fiind adoptarea, la 22 ianuarie 2014, a două comunicări, una privind un cadru pentru politica privind clima și energia pentru 2030 ([1]) și alta privind renașterea politicii industriale ([2]). Ambele politici se bazează pe agenda pentru creștere economică și locuri de muncă.

2. Comisia este conștientă de faptul că prețurile mari ale energiei afectează sectorul oțelului și, în general, toate industriile mari consumatoare de energie. Toate scenariile pentru viitor indică faptul că va exista o presiune în sensul creșterii costurilor energiei în UE, nu în ultimul rând din cauza necesității de a înlocui infrastructura învechită, a tendințelor de creștere a prețurilor pentru combustibilii fosili și a prețului mai mare al carbonului. Politicile actuale pentru a împiedica relocarea emisiilor de carbon, cum ar fi alocarea de certificate gratuite de emisii în cadrul schemei UE de comercializare a certificatelor de emisii, au reușit să compenseze industriile mari consumatoare de energie și să împiedice relocarea lor. Prin urmare, Comisia intenționează să prezinte comitetului de reglementare competent un proiect de decizie pentru revizuirea listei privind riscul de relocare a emisiilor de carbon, care să mențină criteriile actuale și ipotezele existente. Acest lucru ar garanta continuitatea în ceea ce privește componența listei până în 2020.

3. Într-o comunicare recentă ([3]), Comisia și-a prezentat opinia privind o industrie siderurgică competitivă și durabilă. Este vorba despre o abordare cuprinzătoare care propune peste 40 de acțiuni specifice în toate domeniile de politică importante ale UE, menite să contribuie la competitivitatea industriei siderurgice. De asemenea, a fost publicată „o foaie de parcurs” pentru punerea în aplicare a planului de acțiune în domeniul siderurgiei, cu termene-limită de punere în aplicare a măsurilor ([4]).

([1]) COM(2014) 15 final, COM(2014) 21.
([2]) COM (2014) 14/2.
([3]) COM (2013) 407.
([4]) Disponibilă la adresa: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/metals-minerals/steel/high-level-roundtable/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013112/13
to the Commission
Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: European Union steel industry and the EU emissions trading system

In its June 2013 action plan for the steel sector, the Commission presents measures to support the sector by focusing on its competitiveness in a global market and on fostering jobs, growth and innovation.

At the same time, however, the Commission proposes to reform the emissions trading system (ETS) by introducing a mechanism for 'back-loading', which artificially raises prices for allowances, thereby intervening in an instrument that was intended to be fully market-based.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of this contradiction between policies at a time when the European steel industry faces downward trends in all its main customer groups, from automotive and mechanical engineering to construction and domestic goods production?

2. Given that the European steel industry's competitors do not have to face such cost increases, how does the Commission plan to tackle this competitive disadvantage?

3. Given the effects of the economic crisis in all sectors, and especially on high-consumption industries such as those in the steel sector, how is the Commission planning to encourage this sector to grow and avoid relocation?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

1. The Commission does not think that there is a contradiction between its policies. The industrial policy and the fight against climate change go hand in hand, as shown with the adoption, on 22 January 2014 of two Communications, one on a framework for Climate and Energy for 2030 ([1]) and another on the Renaissance of Industrial policy ([2]). Both policies build on the agenda for Growth and Jobs.

2. The Commission is aware of high energy prices affecting the steel sector and, in general, all Energy-Intensive Industries (EEI). All future scenarios suggest there will be upward pressure on energy costs in the EU, not least because of the need to replace aging infrastructure, upward trends in fossil fuel prices and a higher carbon price. Current policies to prevent carbon leakage, such as the allocation of free allowances in the ETS, have been successful in compensating energy intensive industries and preventing their relocation. That is why the Commission intends to present a draft decision on the review of the carbon leakage list to the appropriate Regulatory Committee which would maintain the current criteria and existing assumptions. This would guarantee continuity in the composition of the list until 2020.

3. The Commission has recently set out its views for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in a communication ([3]). It is a comprehensive approach where over 40 specific actions in all major EU policies areas contribute to the competitiveness of the steel industry. A 'Roadmap' for the implementation of the Steel Action Plan, with a timeline for the implementation of the measures has been made public ([4]).

([1]) COM(2014) 15 final, COM(2014) 21.
([2]) COM(2014) 14/2.
([3]) COM(2013) 407.
([4]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/metals-minerals/steel/high-level-roundtable/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013114/13
al Consiglio
Lara Comi (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Procedura per l'indetraibilità dell'Imposta sul Valore Aggiunto

Il comma 109 dell'art. 1 della legge n. 311 del 30 dicembre 2004 introduce, nell'ordinamento italiano, una deroga alla normativa vigente in Italia in merito alla detrabilità dell'Imposta sul Valore Aggiunto (IVA). La direttiva 2004/7/CEE prevede, in questi casi, che il Consiglio approvi tali deroghe all'unanimità.

Può il Consiglio confermare di aver approvato la citata deroga?

In caso affermativo, può il Consiglio spiegare le motivazioni sottostanti tale scelta?

Risposta
(10 febbraio 2014)

Le autorizzazioni a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare sono adottate dal Consiglio su proposta della Commissione. Nessuna proposta in tal senso è stata presentata al Consiglio dalla Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013114/13
to the Council
Lara Comi (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Procedure for non-deductible value added tax

Article 1(109) of Italian Law No 311 of 30 December 2004 introduces into Italian law a derogation from the country's existing legislation on value added tax (VAT) deduction. Directive 2004/7/EEC stipulates, in such cases, that derogations of this kind must be approved unanimously by the Council.

Can the Council confirm whether it has approved the abovementioned derogation?

If it has approved it, can it explain the reasons behind this decision?

Reply
(10 February 2014)

The authorisations referred to by the Honourable Member are adopted by the Council on a proposal from the Commission. No such proposal has been submitted to the Council by the Commission.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013115/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(18 novembre 2013)

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Può la Commissione verificare che tale procedura sia stata rispettata?

Può la Commissione accertarsi che alla data di promulgazione della citata legge si applicasse già la direttiva 2004/7/CEE e non si applicasse più la direttiva 77/388/CEE?

Nel caso in cui si applicasse la direttiva del 2004, può la Commissione fornire informazioni sullo stato di recepimento di tale direttiva nell'ordinamento italiano?

In caso contrario, può la Commissione certificare il rispetto della procedura dalla normativa precedente?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(21 gennaio 2014)

La direttiva 2004/7/CE del Consiglio ha modificato, ma non sostituito, la direttiva 77/388/CEE (sesta direttiva IVA) per quanto riguarda la domanda e l'adozione di misure speciali di semplificazione e antifrode in deroga alle normali disposizioni in materia di IVA. Pertanto, le disposizioni dell'UE riguardo alla deroga in questione erano di applicazione quando è stata introdotta la legge italiana.

In effetti, tale procedura prevede che, su proposta della Commissione, il Consiglio debba approvare all'unanimità la misura di deroga. Ovviamente, ciò significa che lo Stato membro che vuole derogare dalle norme consuete, deve innanzitutto presentare una domanda alla Commissione. In questo contesto, la Commissione non ha ricevuto alcuna domanda relativa alla legge italiana cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare e che sembra riguardare una misura antifrode che introduce un obbligo di autofatturazione per i soggetti imponibili che acquistano tartufo da raccoglitori dilettanti od occasionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013115/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Procedure for non-deductible value added tax

Article 1(109) of Italian Law No 311 of 30 December 2004 introduces into Italian law a derogation from the country's existing legislation on value added tax (VAT) deduction. Directive 2004/7/EEC stipulates, in such cases, that derogations of this kind must be approved unanimously by the Council.

Can the Commission confirm that this procedure has been adhered to?

Can the Commission verify that, on the date the abovementioned law was promulgated, Directive 2004/7/EEC was already being applied, and that directive 77/388/EEC was no longer being applied?

If the 2004 Directive was being applied, can the Commission provide information on the state of transposition of that directive into Italian law?

If not, can the Commission confirm compliance with the procedure under the previous legislation?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

Council Directive 2004/7/EC amended, but did not replace, the Sixth EU VAT Directive 77/388/EEC as regards the application for and the adoption of special simplification and anti-fraud measures which derogate from the normal VAT rules. The EU provisions as regards the referred derogation were therefore applicable when the Italian law was introduced.

That procedure indeed stipulates that, upon a proposal of the Commission, the Council needs to approve unanimously the derogating measure. Of course, it has to be understood that the Member State that wishes to derogate from the normal rules, first has to file a request with the Commission. In this context, the Commission did not receive any request with regard to the Italian legislation the Honourable Member is referring to, and which seems to be related to an anti-fraud measure introducing self-billing obligations for taxable persons who purchase truffles from non-professional or occasional pickers.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013116/13
à Comissão
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(18 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Atraso na transposição da diretiva relativa aos cuidados de saúde transfronteiriços em Portugal

Tendo em conta que o prazo para a transposição da diretiva relativa aos cuidados de saúde transfronteiriços terminou a 25 de outubro de 2013;

Tendo em conta que, não obstante o prazo ter terminado, o Governo de Portugal colocou em consulta pública o anteprojeto de Lei que visa a transposição da referida diretiva apenas na data que a mesma deveria já ter sido transposta para a legislação portuguesa e que a discussão irá decorrer ainda até ao próximo dia 25 de novembro 2013;

Tendo em conta que este atraso verificado no processo de transposição, iniciado tardiamente pelo governo português, fará com que apenas a partir de 2014 os portugueses possam beneficiar das novas regras de mobilidade previstas na legislação comunitária;

Que medida irá tomar a Comissão para averiguar junto do Governo de Portugal quais os motivos que justificam o atraso e o incumprimento dos prazos de transposição da diretiva relativa aos cuidados de saúde transfronteiriços em Portugal?

Como avalia a Comissão a possibilidade de os doentes portugueses se verem privados de usufruir plenamente dos seus direitos no que respeita ao acesso a cuidados de saúde transfronteiriços e ao seu reembolso?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(10 de janeiro de 2014)

No que diz respeito aos Estados-Membros que ainda não comunicaram à Comissão as medidas nacionais de transposição da Diretiva 2011/24/UE ([1]) relativa ao exercício dos direitos dos doentes em matéria de cuidados de saúde transfronteiriços, a Comissão tenciona lançar os procedimentos previstos no Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia no que respeita à não transposição da legislação da UE no início de 2014.

([1]) JO L 88 de 4.4.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013116/13
to the Commission
Edite Estrela (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Delay in transposing the directive on cross-border healthcare in Portugal

The deadline for transposing the directive on cross-border healthcare expired on 25 October 2013.

Although the deadline has passed, the Portuguese Government only submitted the preliminary draft law to transpose the aforementioned directive for public consultation on the date that the directive should have been transposed into Portuguese legislation. The consultation will run until 25 November 2013.

This delay in the transposition process, which the Portuguese Government started late, means that Portuguese citizens will only be able to benefit from the new rules on mobility under EC law from 2014.

What action will the Commission take to find out from the Portuguese Government what grounds there are to justify the delay and the failure to comply with the deadlines for transposing the directive on cross-border healthcare in Portugal?

What does the Commission think of the possibility of Portuguese patients being unable to exercise their rights fully with regard to access to cross-border healthcare and being reimbursed for it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2014)

With regard to those Member States who have not yet notified the Commission of national measures transposing Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, the Commission intends to launch the procedures laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union with regard to failure to transpose EU legislation in early 2014.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-013117/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(19 de noviembre de 2013)

Asunto: El acceso de las PYME a las fuentes de financiación: una situación compleja

En la mayoría de las declaraciones oficiales de la UE se insiste sobre la importante función de las pequeñas y medianas empresas (PYME) en la promoción de la competitividad europea, la superación de la crisis económica y el fomento de la creación de más empleo. Desafortunadamente, la realidad aún dista de ser esta.

Algunas empresas europeas se encuentran con serias dificultades a la hora de solicitar ayudas y financiación de carácter estructural, en particular, debido a la complejidad y lentitud de los procedimientos administrativos. En estas condiciones, las PYME renuncian a menudo a solicitar tales ayudas a causa de las trabas administrativas en el ámbito nacional o a nivel de la UE.

Teniendo en cuenta que se aproxima el periodo de aplicación del nuevo Marco Financiero Plurianual 2014-2020 y que en breve se aprobarán los fondos de la política de cohesión y otros afines, ¿podría informar la Comisión al Parlamento Europeo sobre cómo piensa propiciar una mayor participación de las PYME en los Fondos Estructurales, reduciendo la burocracia y con una mayor adecuación a sus necesidades reales?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de enero de 2014)

Mejorar la competitividad de las PYME es la piedra angular de la estrategia Europa 2020 a la que contribuirán todos los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos (ESI). El Reglamento sobre Disposiciones Comunes (RDC) para los ESI [Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER), Fondo Social Europeo (FSE), Fondo de Cohesión, Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural y Fondo Europeo Marítimo y de Pesca] contiene un número de medidas de simplificación para facilitar el acceso a las ayudas de los Fondos ESI.

En primer lugar, el RDC promueve la armonización de las normas relativas a diferentes fondos, estableciendo disposiciones comunes aplicables a todos ellos. Por otra parte, el RDC incluye ahora un amplio abanico de métodos de simplificación de los costes comunes a todos los Fondos ESI. Prevé asimismo que los Estados miembros garanticen para el FEDER, el FSE y el Fondo de Cohesión que, a más tardar el 31 de diciembre de 2015, todos los intercambios de información entre los beneficiarios y los órganos y las autoridades responsables de los programas puedan realizarse a través de sistemas de intercambio electrónico de datos (e-cohesión). De este modo, los beneficiarios podrán facilitar toda la información a las autoridades nacionales y regionales por vía electrónica de una sola vez, lo que reducirá en consecuencia la carga administrativa.

El RDC contiene asimismo disposiciones adicionales a fin de facilitar el acceso de las PYME a los instrumentos financieros.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013117/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Access by SME's to finance: a critical situation

Most European public statements make specific reference to the fundamental role of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in building European competitiveness, fighting the economic crisis and fostering the creation of new jobs. Unfortunately, the reality is still far from this.

Some European companies face huge difficulties when applying for structural grants and funds, especially in terms of long and complex bureaucratic procedures. As a result, SMEs are often discouraged and decide not to apply for grants, due to either national or European administrative hurdles.

With the new multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 about to start and cohesion policy and related funds soon to be approved, could the Commission inform Parliament how it intends to facilitate SMEs' participation in the Structural Funds by alleviating bureaucracy and adapting to their real needs.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 January 2014)

Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs is at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy to which all the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) will contribute. The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) for the ESIF (European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), Cohesion Fund (CF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) contains a number of simplification measures to facilitate access to support from the ESIF.

First of all, the CPR promotes the harmonisation of rules across different funds by laying down common provisions applicable to all ESIF. Moreover, a broad range of simplified cost methods common to all ESIF are now included in the CPR. The CPR also foresees that Member States shall ensure for the ERDF, the ESF and the CF that by 31 December.2015 all exchanges of information between beneficiaries and the relevant programme authorities or bodies can be carried out by means of electronic data exchange systems (e-cohesion). This will ensure that beneficiaries can provide all information to national and regional authorities electronically and only once which will therefore reduce their administrative burden.

Additional provisions have also been included in the CPR to facilitate the access of SMEs to financial instruments.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013120/13
adresată Comisiei
Eduard-Raul Hellvig (ALDE)
(19 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Utilizarea de către anumite agenții de turism online a modulelor „cookie" în scopul manipulării prețurilor

Un număr din ce în ce mai mare de consumatori se plâng în legătură cu practicile anumitor agenții de turism și companii aeriene care manipulează prețurile serviciilor lor prin urmărirea activității utilizatorilor pe paginile lor de internet (adică a istoriei de căutări a acestora) prin folosirea modulelor „cookie". În foarte multe cazuri, consumatorilor care nu cumpără imediat și care compară în liniște prețurile cu cele de pe alte pagini de internet li se oferă prețuri mai ridicate când revin pe pagina inițială de internet câteva minute mai târziu. În cazul companiilor aeriene, noul preț, mai ridicat, poate fi chiar însoțit de un mesaj de avertizare a consumatorului asupra faptului că la prețul propus mai este disponibil numai un număr limitat de locuri. Cu toate acestea, dacă ștergem modulele „cookie" de pe computer sau dacă folosim, pur și simplu, un alt computer, ni se oferă din nou prețul mai scăzut, iar mesajul privind numărul limitat de locuri dispare. Prin urmare, această practică poate fi considerată abuzivă, deoarece pentru doi consumatori care cumpără simultan un serviciu se poate foarte bine oferi un preț diferit pentru exact același serviciu, ceea ce pare a fi o practică discriminatorie. În plus, mesajul privind numărul de locuri disponibile este unul care induce în eroare și poate avea ca unic scop presarea consumatorului astfel încât acesta să facă rezervarea respectivă.

1. A primit Comisia reclamații cu privire la astfel de practici și, dacă da, ce a întreprins în acest sens?

2. Consideră Comisia că astfel de practici sunt admisibile în temeiul dreptului UE?

3. Intenționează Comisia să ia vreo măsură pentru a proteja consumatorii împotriva unor astfel de practici?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(23 ianuarie 2014)

Comisia este la curent cu informațiile potrivit cărora anumite site-uri web urmăresc utilizatorii folosind mijloace cum ar fi *cookies*, cu scopul de a ajusta prețurile în funcție de comportamentul online anterior al clientului.

Orice utilizare de *cookies* pentru realizarea de oferte personalizate trebuie să fie conformă cu legislația națională de transpunere a directivelor aplicabile ale UE, în special cu articolul 5 alineatul (3) din Directiva revizuită privind viața privată și comunicațiile electronice ([1]), care impune obligația ca un site web să obțină acordul în cunoștință de cauză al utilizatorilor înainte de a stoca informații pe echipamentul terminal al acestora. Directiva privind protecția datelor cu caracter personal ([2]) s-ar aplica la rândul său, în măsura în care se consideră că un *cookie* conține sau prelucrează date personale, astfel cum sunt acestea definite la articolul 2 litera (a) din directiva menționată.

În ceea ce privește compatibilitatea unor astfel de practici de ajustare a prețurilor cu legislația în materie de protecție a consumatorilor a UE, Comisia invită distinsul membru al Parlamentului European să consulte răspunsurile comune la întrebările E-000956/13, P-001257/13 și E-001574/13. Declarațiile înșelătoare referitoare la disponibilitatea locurilor, realizate cu intenția de a-l determina pe client să încheie o tranzacție pe baza unor date eronate, sunt interzise de Directiva privind practicile comerciale neloiale, 2005/29/CE ([3]). Comisia revizuiește în prezent orientările sale din 2009 privind aplicarea acestei directive [SEC(2009)1666], printre altele cu scopul includerii unor practici comerciale mai recent de pe internet.

Fără a se aduce atingere competențelor Comisiei de apărător al tratatului, autoritățile naționale sunt organele competente să monitorizeze aplicarea măsurilor naționale de transpunere a directivelor sus-menționate. Prin urmare, consumatorii care consideră că sunt lezați de astfel de practici ar trebui să se adreseze autorităților naționale competente în aceste probleme, care sunt în măsură să investigheze comportamentul unor întreprinderi.

Vă invităm să consultați, de asemenea, întrebarea E-006023/13, referitoare la urmărirea cu ajutorul adresei IP.

([1]) Directiva 2002/58/CE, modificată prin Directiva 2009/136/CE.
([2]) Directiva 95/46/CE.
([3]) Directiva 2005/29/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 11 mai 2005 privind practicile comerciale neloiale ale întreprinderilor de pe piața internă față de consumatori și de modificare a Directivei 84/450/CEE a Consiliului, a Directivelor 97/7/CE, 98/27/CE și 2002/65/CE ale Parlamentului European și ale Consiliului și a Regulamentului (CE) nr. 2006/2004 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului („Directiva privind practicile comerciale neloiale") JO L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22-39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013120/13
to the Commission
Eduard-Raul Hellvig (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Use of 'cookies' for purposes of manipulating prices by certain online travel agencies

An increasing number of consumers are complaining about the practices of certain travel agencies and airlines which manipulate the prices of their services by tracking users' activity on their websites (i.e. their search history) by using 'cookies'. Very often, consumers who do not buy instantly and take time to compare prices with those of other websites are offered higher prices when they come back to the initial website just a few minutes later. In the case of airlines, the new higher price may even be accompanied by a message warning the consumer that only a limited number of seats are left at the proposed fare. Nevertheless, if one deletes the cookies on one's computer or simply uses another computer, the lower price is offered again and the message concerning the limited number of seats disappears. Consequently, this practice may be considered to be abusive, as two consumers buying a service simultaneously may well be offered a different price for exactly the same service, which appears to be discriminatory. Moreover, the 'number of seats available' warning is misleading and may serve only to put pressure on the consumer to make the booking.

1. Has the Commission received any complaints regarding such practices and, if so, how has it followed them up?

2. Does the Commission consider such practices to be admissible under EC law?

3. Does the Commission envisage any steps to protect consumers against such practices?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(23 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of reports that websites track users, using devices such as cookies, to adjust prices in the light of their prior online behaviour.

Any use of cookies to track users to provide targeted offers must be in line with the national laws implementing the applicable EU Directives, in particular Article 5(3) of the revised e-Privacy Directive ([1]), which requires websites to obtain the user's informed consent before placing information on the user's terminal equipment. The Data Protection Directive ([2]) would also apply to the extent that a cookie is considered to contain or process personal data as defined in Article 2 a) of that directive.

Regarding the compatibility of such price adjustment practices with EU consumer protection law, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its joint answer to questions E-000956/13, P-001257/13 and E-001574/13. Misleading statements about seat availability to trick the consumer into entering the transaction are prohibited under the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]). The Commission is currently reviewing its 2009 Guidance on the application of this directive (SEC(2009)1666) with a view to address, amongst others, newer commercial practices on the Internet.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, national authorities are the competent bodies to monitor the application of the national measures implementing the above Directives. Therefore, consumers who feel affected by such practices should address their concerns to the national authorities competent for any of these matters, which are in a position to investigate the conduct of particular companies.

The Honourable Member is also referred to E-006023/13 concerning 'IP tracking'.

([1]) Directive 2002/58/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC.
([2]) Directive 95/46/EC.
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC, 98/27/EC and 2002/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('Unfair Commercial Practices Directive') , OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22-39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013121/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Autumn economic forecasts: slow growth and unemployment

On 5 November 2013, the Commission released its economic forecast for 2013 and projections for 2014-15. The findings indicated that the economies of the EU are recovering, albeit at a very slow pace with growth in the second half of 2013 at 0.5% on last year, and forecast at 1.4% and 1.9% in 2014 and 2015 respectively. While my own constituency posted a decrease in unemployment levels this month, the EU's unemployment rate is forecast to remain in double figures (10.7%) by 2015.

Given these troubling growth and unemployment figures, what plan does the Commission have in place to improve these statistics? Further, how will the Commission ensure that the EU remains competitive in attracting investment against comparatively better performing countries outside the EU, such as the US and Japan?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 January 2014)

In recent months, the economies of the EU have started to recover from the economic and financial crisis. Yet, it is too early to declare the crisis over and many challenges remain. Deleveraging and rebalancing needs, financial fragmentation and sector relocation are likely to put constrains to growth in the coming years. Further policy effort and policy delivery is needed on various fronts.

The Commission has set the priorities for the next year on how to sustain the recovery which is under way in its Annual Growth Survey 2014 ([1]). The Commission would refer the Honorable Member to the EU2020 strategy for a long-term approach to make Europe a more competitive economy

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/ags2014_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013122/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Commission's economic priorities for 2014

On 13 November 2013 the Commission published its annual growth survey setting out its economic priorities for 2014. The survey calls on the Member States to do more to ensure that private companies are able to access alternative sources of financing, particularly through venture capital and bonds.

Given that the Economic Forecast for 2014 and 2015, published on 5 November 2013, predicts a sluggish recovery, what plans does the Commission have in place to ensure sufficient confidence in its growth strategy, thereby creating an environment in which the Member States may be more willing to ease access to alternative sources of funding?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

The Union has reached a turning point of the crisis, with growth slowly returning. The recovery is expected to continue and become more robust in 2014. However, the incipient recovery is still fragile and uneven among Member States. The first signs of an economic improvement should be seen as an encouragement to continue the path of reforms leading to growth and jobs. This is why the European Commission has confirmed the five priorities in its Annual Growth Survey ([1]) to lay the fundamentals for sustainable growth and jobs: Pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; restoring lending to the economy: promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow; tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis and modernising public administration. These five priorities, but in particular the growth friendliness of public finances, structural reforms and the banking union, are crucial macroeconomic conditions to counter the fragmentation of the financial markets and restore the lending to the real economy. The European Commission further supports these by targeted initiatives to improve access to finance such as the SME initiative, jointly with the European Investment Bank ([2]), and Project Bonds. The new Multiannual financial framework and, in particular, the COSME programme will also be instrumental in this regard. Finally, the European Commission has consulted more broadly which regulatory or other initiatives can be taken with the Green Paper on long-term financing ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/ags2014_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/eib_en.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0150:FIN:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013123/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: CAP reform and delegated acts

A coalition of 23 Member States has accused the Commission of not accurately transposing the agreed reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP) when drafting the delegated acts that seek to clarify technical rules related to EU farm policy. The 23 Member States identify a number of inconsistencies in interpretation between the basic acts agreed in September and the provisions of the delegated acts. For instance, they identify discrepancies in the eligibility criteria for the different types of Ecological Focus Area, with more stringent conditions applying under the delegated acts than the basic acts.

Given that clarity for the agricultural sector is essential as reform of the CAP moves forward, how does the Commission plan to reconcile the apparent inconsistencies between the basic acts and delegated acts? Furthermore, does the Commission agree that if delegated acts deviate significantly from the basic acts, a troubling precedent will have been set, not only in the agricultural sector but for legislation in general?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The purpose of the Delegated Acts is not to replace provisions of the basic act, but to supplement or amend non-essential elements of the basic act in accordance with the delegated power granted by the Parliament and Council.

When preparing the delegated acts, the Commission has carried out appropriate consultation in particular of the experts of the Member States and of the Parliament. The relevant documents have been transmitted to the Parliament and Council. The Commission will consider the input provided by this consultation when finalising the Delegated Acts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013126/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Youth charter and youth unemployment

From 6 to 8 November 2013, the Citizens' Agora on Youth Unemployment assembled to discuss youth unemployment. One of its key recommendations was to establish a 'youth charter' setting out common principles on internships and volunteering, including a call for minimum pay for internships and recognition of formal and informal skills acquired through volunteering.

Given these recommendations, what strategies does the Commission have in place to ensure that unemployed young people gain valuable and transferable experiences through volunteering activities and unpaid internships? Further, does the Commission have any plans to incorporate the findings of the Citizens' Agora in future recommendations on corporate social responsibility?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships on 4 December 2013 ([1]). This initiative aims to ensure that traineeships can effectively contribute to successful education-to-work transitions by providing trainees with useful, transferable work experience. To that end, the proposal sets out guidelines for ensuring that traineeships have sound learning content and offer suitable working conditions.

The legal basis for the Council Recommendation does not apply to pay, which therefore rules out any provisions on minimum pay for traineeships. However, it recommends that traineeship agreements should state whether or not the traineeship is remunerated, and thus does not stand in the way of transparency in terms of pay.

The Council Recommendation on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning of 20 December 2012 ([2]) provides for the validation of non-formal and informal learning through Member State arrangements. To foster participation in this process employers, youth organisations and civil society organisations should promote and facilitate the identification and documentation of learning outcomes acquired at work and in voluntary activities, using relevant Union transparency tools such as those developed under the Europass framework and Youthpass.

The Commission's policy on Corporate Social Responsibility (COM(2011)681) is complementary to pertinent social, environmental, human rights and consumer regulation and follows the assumption that the development of CSR should be led by enterprises themselves. The role of public authorities, including the Commission, is therefore non-prescriptive.

([1]) COM(2013) 857 final of 4 December 2013.
([2]) COM(2012) C 398/01 of 20 December 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013127/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Encouraging cooperation and exchange of good practice for prevention, screening and control of diabetes

Parliament hosted several events to mark World Diabetes Day on 14 November 2013, one of which featured the publication of a report commissioned for the European Parliamentary Diabetes Working Group that assessed the progress of diabetes prevention, screening and control processes across both EU Member States and non-member countries in Europe.

A key finding of the report was the call to encourage cooperation between countries in the exchange of good practice information and research, an example being a recent programme between Finland and Germany. The report follows a motion adopted by Parliament in March 2012 which urged the Commission to improve the coordination of diabetes research.

Given the findings of the report, does the Commission have any plans to establish a European diabetes forum to facilitate information exchange? Furthermore, in what ways has the Commission been encouraging Member State governments to improve their national diabetes policies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

The Commission has been actively involved in a number of events to mark World Diabetes Day on 14 November 2013.

With regard to encouraging Member State governments to improve their national diabetes policies, the Commission welcomes the publication of the 'Policy Puzzle: Is Europe making progress', by European societies active in this field, which helps to create transparency about the situation regarding diabetes prevention and management in Europe, and will feed into policies related to diabetes and other chronic diseases.

In addition, the Commission is co-financing through the health programme a joint action with Member States on chronic diseases, which includes a work package dedicated to diabetes aimed at identifying barriers to effective prevention, screening and treatment of diabetes.

Finally, the Commission is convening a major conference on chronic diseases in April 2014 to review progress made so far with action to address chronic diseases and to identify possible future interventions to tackle the burden of chronic diseases.

The Commission does not however intend to establish a specific European diabetes forum.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013128/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απίθανες τουρκικές προκλήσεις

Ο αντιπρόεδρος της τουρκικής κυβέρνησης, Μπουλέντ Αρίντς, σε δημόσια ομιλία του την περασμένη εβδομάδα που μεταδόθηκε απ' όλα τα πρακτορεία ειδήσεων απείλησε να μετατραπεί σε τζαμί ο χριστιανικός βυζαντινός ναός της Αγίας Σοφίας.

Ο βυζαντινός αυτός ναός της Κωνσταντινούπολης, ο οποίος αποτελεί πολιτιστικό και εκκλησιαστικό μνημείο επί 14 περίπου αιώνες, αποτελεί συνάμα θρησκευτικό σύμβολο για τους απανταχού της γης ορθόδοξους χριστιανούς.

Οι δηλώσεις αυτές του Τούρκου αντιπροέδρου προστίθενται σε σειρά προκλητικών δηλώσεων και ενεργειών Τούρκων αξιωματούχων, οι οποίοι, σε κορύφωση θρησκευτικού ρατσισμού, προσβάλλουν το θρησκευτικό συναίσθημα εκατομμυρίων χριστιανών.

Πολύ περισσότερο καταδεικνύουν ότι η τουρκική κυβέρνηση δεν έχει αντιληφθεί αλλά ούτε και σέβεται την κουλτούρα των ευρωπαϊκών λαών που μετέχουν στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, με την οποία η Τουρκία βρίσκεται σε ενταξιακές διαπραγματεύσεις.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Προτίθεται να θέσει αυτό το θέμα στην Τουρκία και να επιμείνει για την προστασία του περίφημου αυτού χριστιανικού μνημείου, του ναού της Αγίας Σοφίας, που αποτελεί παγκόσμια πολιτιστική κληρονομιά;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013158/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(19 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μετατροπή της Αγίας Σοφίας σε μουσουλμανικό τέμενος

Τον τελευταίο καιρό, αξιωματούχοι της τουρκικής κυβέρνησης, με επαναλαμβανόμενες δηλώσεις τους, τάσσονται υπέρ της μετατροπής της ιστορικής βυζαντινής εκκλησίας της Αγίας Σοφίας, που λειτουργεί ως μουσείο, σε μουσουλμανικό τέμενος. Η συγκεκριμένη εκκλησία αποτελεί μνημείο της παγκόσμιας πολιτιστικής κληρονομίας και προστατεύεται από την Unesco. Αποτελεί δε ισχυρότατο θρησκευτικό σύμβολο για εκατομμύρια χριστιανούς σε όλο τον κόσμο.

Κατά την ίδια περίοδο, ο πρωθυπουργός Ερντογάν κατήγγειλε τους μικτούς κοιτώνες στα πανεπιστήμια ως «ανήθικους», τονίζοντας ότι προσβάλλουν το δημόσιο αίσθημα.

Τα δυο γεγονότα, όπως και σειρά άλλων αποδεικνύουν τη σταθερή τάση ισλαμοποίησης που το κόμμα του κ. Ερντογάν και ο ίδιος προσωπικά επιχειρεί να επιβάλει.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

Μια τέτοια ενέργεια ταιριάζει σε μια υποψήφια χώρα που πρέπει να σέβεται τις ευαισθησίες όλων των τμημάτων του πληθυσμού της; καταδικάζει τις δηλώσεις των τούρκων αξιωματούχων για την μετατροπή της Αγίας Σοφίας σε μουσουλμανικό τέμενος; Δεδομένου ότι ο ναός είναι μουσείο, συμφωνεί ότι μια παρόμοια ενέργεια θα καλλιεργήσει το θρησκευτικό μίσος και τη μισαλλοδοξία;

Με βάση και τις δηλώσεις Ερντογάν θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η τουρκική κυβέρνηση επιχειρεί να επιβάλει μια ισλαμική ατζέντα για το κράτος, έστω και αν ο ίδιος προσπαθεί να πείσει τους ευρωπαίους συνομιλητές του για το αντίθετο;

Τελικά μήπως η πολιτική Ερντογάν απέναντι στο Ισλάμ, δυναμιτίζει την προσπάθεια συμφιλίωσης και υπέρβασης των συγκρούσεων του παρελθόντος;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013540/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σε τζαμί μετατρέπεται ένας ακόμη βυζαντινός ναός στην Τουρκία

Σε τζαμί σκοπεύει να μετατρέψει η τουρκική κυβέρνηση τη Μονή Στουδίου, ένα από τα σημαντικότερα βυζαντινά μνημεία της Κωνσταντινούπολης.

Η αναπαλαίωση της μονής, της οποίας όρθια στέκονται σήμερα μόνο τα ερείπια από τους τοίχους της, θα περατωθεί το 2014 για να μετατραπεί στη συνέχεια σε τζαμί. Η τουρκική κυβέρνηση έχει ήδη αποχαρακτηρίσει το μνημείο από μουσείο, ανοίγοντας το δρόμο στη μετατροπή του σε τζαμί.

Η επιχείρηση μετατροπής βυζαντινών ναών σε τεμένη — κυρίως εκείνων που έχουν συμβολική αξία στο συλλογικό θυμικό της Τουρκίας — βρίσκεται σε πλήρη εξέλιξη τα τελευταία χρόνια, προς ικανοποίηση της ισλαμιστικής βάσης του κόμματος του πρωθυπουργού Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν. Η τουρκική κυβέρνηση έχει ήδη μετατρέψει σε τεμένη ακόμη δύο ιστορικές βυζαντινές εκκλησίες, την Αγία Σοφία της Νίκαιας και τον ομώνυμο βυζαντινό ναό της Τραπεζούντας, ενώ το τελευταίο διάστημα εντάθηκαν και πάλι οι πιέσεις για τη λειτουργία της Αγίας Σοφίας της Κωνσταντινούπολης ως τζαμί.

Η Μονή του Αγίου Ιωάννη Στουδίου ή απλά Μονή Στουδίου, το μοναστήρι των «άγρυπνων μοναχών», ήταν από τα σπουδαιότερα της Ανατολικής Ρωμαϊκής Αυτοκρατορίας χτισμένο στον έβδομο λόφο της Κωνσταντινούπολης.

Ερωτάται λοιπόν ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος:

— Τί προτίθεται να πράξει ή έπραξε στη διάρκεια των διεξαγόμενων διαπραγματεύσεων για την ενταξιακή πορεία της Τουρκίας, ώστε να ζητήσει ρητά και ξεκάθαρα την προστασία όλων των χριστιανικών μνημείων στην Τουρκία;

— Γιατί δεν ζητεί ρητή δέσμευση από την Τουρκική Κυβέρνηση, ώστε να τερματιστεί η μετατροπή Χριστιανικών μνημείων σε ισλαμικά τεμένη;

— Γιατί στη φετεινή έκθεση προόδου που ετοίμασε η Επιτροπή για την Τουρκία, παραβλέπονται τέτοιου είδους προκλητικές τακτικές και δεν ασκείται περισσότερη πίεση με το ενδεχόμενο υποβολής κυρώσεων σε μια υπό ένταξη χώρα, ώστε να τερματίσει πάραυτα τέτοιου είδους προκλητικές ενέργειες;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η έκθεση προόδου για την Τουρκία του 2012 ([1]) έθεσε το ζήτημα της μετατροπής του μουσείου της Αγίας Σοφίας στο Iznik σε τζαμί (σελίδα 25). Η έκθεση προόδου για την Τουρκία του 2013 ([2]) έθεσε με τη σειρά της το ζήτημα της μετατροπής του μουσείου της Αγίας Σοφίας στην Τραπεζούντα σε τζαμί (σελίδα 55). Τα θέματα που θίγονται σε εκθέσεις προόδου τίθενται επίσης υπόψη των τουρκικών αρχών και παρακολουθούνται στενά από την Επιτροπή.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013421/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(26 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: L'UE intervenga a favore di Santa Sofia

Recentemente il vice primo ministro turco Arinc ha espresso la speranza di vedere l'attuale museo di Santa Sofia tornare ad essere utilizzato come moschea. Da tempo gruppi islamici conservatori fanno di continuo campagne affinché Santa Sofia ridiventi una moschea, un progetto al quale si oppongono strenuamente il Patriarca ortodosso di Costantinopoli Bartolomeo I, la comunità greco-ortodossa turca e il governo ellenico.

Da parte sua, il ministro degli esteri greco ha rilevato che «le ripetute dichiarazioni da parte di funzionari turchi circa la conversione di chiese bizantine cristiane in moschee costituiscono un insulto alla sensibilità religiosa di milioni di cristiani e sono gesti anacronistici e incomprensibili da parte di un Paese che dichiara di voler partecipare come membro a pieno titolo dell'Unione europea, uno dei cui principi fondamentali è proprio il rispetto della libertà religiosa».

Come intende la Commissione europea intervenire sulla questione anche in conformità a quanto scritto nella sua comunicazione del 16.10.2013 COM(2013)0700 «Strategia di allargamento e sfide principali per il periodo 2013-2014» ossia «*(…) La Turchia dovrà infine garantire il pieno rispetto dei diritti di proprietà, in particolare per quanto riguarda i beni delle comunità religiose non musulmane.*»?

Risposta congiunta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2014)

La relazione del 2012 sui progressi della Turchia ([1]) ha sollevato la questione della conversione del museo di Hagia Sofia di Iznik in una moschea (pag. 25). La relazione del 2013 sui progressi della Turchia ([2]) ha sollevato a sua volta la questione della conversione del museo di Hagia Sofia di Trabzon in una moschea (pag. 55). Le questioni sollevate nelle relazioni sui progressi compiuti vengono sottoposte anche alle autorità turche e seguite attentamente dalla Commissione.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013639/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(2 december 2013)

Betreft: Grootste Byzantijns klooster in Istanbul wordt omgevormd tot moskee

Het klooster van Stoudios, dat werd opgericht in de vijfde eeuw, was het grootste en belangrijkste klooster in Byzantium. Er werd nu beslist dat het zal worden omgevormd tot een moskee ([1]).

Deze beslissing getuigt van weinig of geen respect tegenover christenen in Turkije. Opnieuw wordt een stuk christelijk erfgoed in Turkije teniet gedaan.

Heeft de Commissie hierover contact opgenomen met de Turkse autoriteiten? Zo ja, wat waren de conclusies?

Acht de Commissie deze zoveelste provocatie tegenover niet-moslims in Turkije in overeenstemming met het acquis communautaire?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2014)

Het voortgangsverslag 2012 betreffende Turkije ([2]) bracht de kwestie ter sprake van de herinrichting van het Hagia Sophia-museum in Iznik tot een moskee (blz. 25). Het voortgangsverslag 2013 betreffende Turkije ([3]) bracht op zijn beurt de kwestie ter sprake van de herinrichting van het Hagia Sophia-museum in Trabzon tot een moskee (blz. 55). De kwesties die in de voortgangsverslagen ter sprake worden gebracht, worden eveneens bij de Turkse autoriteiten aangekaart en nauwlettend opgevolgd door de Commissie.

([1]) http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/istanbul-monastery-to-become-mosque.aspx?pageID=238&nID=58526&NewsCatID=341.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013128/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Unbelievable Turkish provocations

Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc, in a speech transmitted by all of the news agencies last week, threatened the conversion of Christian Byzantine church of Saint Sophia into a mosque.

This Byzantine church of Constantinople, which has been a cultural and ecclesiastical monument for almost 14 centuries, is at the same time a religious symbol for Christian orthodox believers throughout the world.

These statements by the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister are the latest in a series of provocative statements and actions by Turkish officials offending the religious feelings of millions of Christians with mounting religious racism.

Moreover they show that the Turkish Government neither understands nor respects the culture of the European peoples who are part of the European Union, with which Turkey is conducting accession negotiations:

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to raise this matter with Turkey and insist on the protection of the church of Saint Sofia, which is a renowned Christian monument forming part of the world cultural heritage?

Question for written answer E-013158/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Conversion of Agia Sophia to a Muslim temple

According to recent repeated statements, Turkish government officials are in favour of converting the historic Byzantine church of Agia Sophia, which is currently a museum, to a Muslim temple. This particular church forms part of the global cultural heritage protected by Unesco and is a potent religious symbol for millions of Christians throughout the world.

At the same time, Prime Minister Erdogan has denounced mixed dormitories in universities as 'immoral' and as an insult to public feelings.

These two — and a series of other — incidents illustrate the consistent move towards stricter Islamic lines which Mr Erdogan's party and Mr Erdogan personally are trying to impose.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Does such action befit a candidate country, which must respect the sensitivities of all sections of its population? Does it denounce the statements made by Turkish officials concerning the conversion of Agia Sophia into a Muslim temple? As the church is a museum, does it agree that any such action would foster religious hatred and fanaticism?

Based on the statements made by Mr Erdogan, does the Commission believe that the Turkish government is trying to impose an Islamic agenda on the state, even though he personally is at pains to persuade his European counterparts that the opposite is true?

Finally, is Erdogan's policy towards Islam perhaps undermining efforts to reconcile and overcome past conflicts?

Question for written answer E-013421/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: The EU should take action in favour of the Hagia Sofia

Recently, the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister, Bulent Arinc, has expressed a hope of seeing the Hagia Sofia, currently a museum, revert to its former role as a mosque. For some time now, conservative Islamic groups have conducted an ongoing campaign to convert the Hagia Sofia back into a mosque, a project strongly opposed by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, the Greek Orthodox community and the Greek Government.

The Greek Foreign Minister has stated that: 'the repeated statements from Turkish officials regarding the conversion of Byzantine Christian churches into mosques are an insult to the religious sensibilities of millions of Christians and are actions that are anachronistic and incomprehensible from a state that declares it wants to participate as a full member in the European Union, a fundamental principle of which is respect for religious freedom'.

How does the European Commission intend to act on the issue, in accordance with what was written in its communication of 16 October 2013, COM(2013)0700 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014', i.e. '(…) Turkey needs to ensure full respect for all property rights, including those of non-Muslim religious communities.'?

Question for written answer E-013540/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(28 November 2013)

Subject: Another mosque converted from a Byzantine church in Turkey

The Turkish Government plans to transform the Stoudiou Monastery, one of the most important Byzantine monuments of Constantinople, into a mosque.

The restoration of the monastery, only the ruined walls of which remain standing today, will be completed by 2014, following which it will be converted into a mosque. The Turkish Government has already reclassified the monument as a museum, paving the way for conversion into a mosque.

The operation to convert Byzantine churches into mosques — particularly those that have symbolic value in Turkey's collective memory — has been in full swing in recent years, to the satisfaction of the support base of the Islamist party of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The Turkish Government has already converted two historical Byzantine churches into mosques, Hagia Sophia of Nicea and a Byzantine church of the same name in Trebizond, and has recently again intensified pressure for Hagia Sophia in Constantinople to become a mosque.

The Monastery of Saint John of Stoudiou, or simply the Monastery of Stoudiou, the monastery of the 'sleepless monks', was one of the greatest of the Eastern Roman Empire, built on the seventh hill of Constantinople.

— What is the Commission going to do, and what has it done, during the ongoing negotiations on Turkey's accession process, in terms of making an explicit and clear request for the protection of all Christian monuments in Turkey?

— Why does it not seek a firm commitment from the Turkish Government to end the conversion of Christian monuments into Islamic mosques?

— Why has the annual progress report drawn up by the Commission on Turkey ignored such provocative tactics and failed to exert greater pressure, with the possibility of sanctions for any refusal of this accession country to immediately terminate such provocations?

Question for written answer E-013639/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(2 December 2013)

Subject: Largest Byzantine monastery in Istanbul to be turned into a mosque

The Monastery of Stoudios, founded in the fifth century, was the biggest and most important monastery in Byzantium. It has now been decided that it is to be converted into a mosque ([1]).

This decision shows little or no respect towards Christians in Turkey. Once again, a piece of Christian heritage in Turkey is to be destroyed.

Has the Commission been in contact with the Turkish authorities on this matter? If so, what were the conclusions?

Does the Commission consider this umpteenth provocation against non-Muslims in Turkey to be in accordance with the *acquis communautaire*?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

The 2012 Turkey Progress Report ([2]) raised the issue of the conversion of the Hagia Sophia Museum in Iznik into a mosque (page 25). The 2013 Turkey Progress Report ([3]) has in its turn raised the issue of the conversion of the Hagia Sophia Museum in Trabzon into a mosque (page 55). Issues raised in Progress Reports are also raised with the Turkish Authorities and followed-up closely by the Commission.

([1]) http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/istanbul-monastery-to-become-mosque.aspx?pageID=238&nID=58526&NewsCatID=341
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/tr_rapport_2012_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

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