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Hivatalos Lapja

C 228

Magyar nyelvű kiadás

Tájékoztatások és közlemények

57. évfolyam

2014. július 17.

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Európai Parlament

ÍRÁSBELI VÁLASZT IGÉNYLŐ KÉRDÉSEK A VÁLASZOKKAL

2014/C 228/01 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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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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Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011852/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(16 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Transpunerea Directivei 2011/36/UE de către statele membre

Traficul de ființe umane afectează cetățenii Uniunii și este interzis în mod explicit de articolul 5 din Carta drepturilor fundamentale a Uniunii Europene. Directiva 2011/36/UE privind prevenirea și combaterea traficului de persoane și protejarea victimelor acestuia a fost adoptată de către Parlamentul European și Consiliu la 5 aprilie 2011. Directiva se concentrează pe aplicarea legii, dar urmărește, de asemenea, prevenirea infracțiunii și faptul că victimele traficului de persoane au posibilitatea de a-și reveni și a se reintegra în societate. Statele membre au trebuit să transpună integral directiva până la 6 aprilie 2013.

1. Au transpus toate statele membre Directiva 2011/36/UE în termenul stabilit?

2. Dacă nu, care dintre statele membre nu au finalizat încă procesul de transpunere și ce justificări au oferit fiecare pentru că nu au acționat în termenul stabilit?

3. Intenționează Comisia să ofere acestor state membre o perioadă suplimentară pentru a încheia procesul de transpunere?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(10 ianuarie 2014)

Termenul de transpunere prevăzut la articolul 22 din Directiva 2011/36/UE ([1]) este 6 aprilie 2013. Directiva nu prevede posibilitatea prelungirii termenului pentru ca statele membre să încheie procesul de transpunere.

Până în prezent un număr de douăzeci de state membre ([2]) au notificat Comisiei transpunerea integrală a Directivei 2011/36/UE în dreptul intern, iar trei state membre ([3]) au notificat o transpunere parțială. Patru state membre ([4]) nu au comunicat încă Comisiei măsurile de transpunere. Comisia analizează în prezent informațiile primite și va lua toate măsurile pentru a asigura aplicarea corectă a legislației UE, inclusiv, dacă va fi cazul, prin intermediul procedurii de constatare a neîndeplinirii obligațiilor.

În ceea ce privește cele patru state membre care nu au comunicat încă măsurile de transpunere, pe baza informațiilor care au fost trimise până acum Comisiei, motivele întârzierii sunt diferite și nivelul de transpunere diferă între statele membre în cauză.

([1]) Directiva 2011/36/UE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 5 aprilie 2011 privind prevenirea și combaterea traficului de persoane și protejarea victimelor acestuia, precum și de înlocuire a Deciziei-cadru 2002/629/JAI a Consiliului. JO L 101 din 15.4.2011.

([2]) Austria, Bulgaria, Croația, Estonia, Finlanda, Franța, Grecia, Ungaria, Irlanda, Letonia, Lituania, Malta, Țările de Jos, Polonia, Portugalia, Republica Cehă, România, Regatul Unit, Slovacia, Suedia.

([3]) Belgia, Germania, Slovenia.

([4]) Cipru, Spania, Italia, Luxemburg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011852/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(16 October 2013)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2011/36/EU by Member States

Trafficking in human beings affects European citizens and is specifically prohibited by Article 5 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims was adopted by Parliament and the Council on 5 April 2011. The directive focuses on law enforcement but is aimed as well at preventing crime and ensuring that victims of trafficking are given an opportunity to recover and to reintegrate into society. The Member States had until 6 April 2013 to transpose the directive in full.

1. Have all Member States transposed Directive 2011/36/EU within the deadline set?

2. If not, which Member States have still to complete the transposition process, and what justifications have been given by each for failing to act within the deadline?

3. Does the Commission intend to offer these Member States an extended period to complete the transposition?

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

The deadline for transposition provided by the article 22 of the directive 2011/36/EU ([1]) is 6 April 2013. The directive does not allow any extended period to the Member States to complete the transposition.

To date, twenty Member States ([2]) have notified the Commission of the full transposition of the directive 2011/36/EU into national law and three ([3]) have notified partial transposition. Until now, four Member States ([4]) have still not communicated transposition measures to the Commission. The Commission is currently analysing the information received and will take all measures to ensure correct application of EC law, including by launching infringement procedures where necessary.

Concerning the four Member States which still have not communicated transposition measures, based on the information which has been provided so far to the Commission, there are different reasons for delays and the state of implementation differs between the Member States concerned.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA. OJ 15.04.2011, L 101.

([2]) Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom , Slovakia, Sweden.

([3]) Belgium, Germany, Slovenia.

([4]) Cyprus, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011909/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(17. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Risikobewertung des Überwachungssystems Eurosur

Im Juni 2013 gab die Europäische Kommission bekannt, dass sie das Überwachungssystem Eurosur einführen wird. Es soll eine bessere Ortung bei der Überwachung „problematischer Menschenströme" ermöglichen. Medienberichten zufolge habe vor der Installation des Systems keine technologische Risikobewertung stattgefunden.

1. Wird eine solche technologische Risikobewertung für das Eurosur-System noch durchgeführt?

2. Wenn ja, wann wird diese Risikobewertung stattfinden, und mit welchen Kosten rechnet die Kommission für die Bewertung? Wenn nicht, warum wird auf eine solche Bewertung verzichtet?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(13. Januar 2014)

Gemäß Artikel 22 der Verordnung ([1]) zur Errichtung eines Europäischen Grenzüberwachungssystems (Eurosur) stellen Frontex und die Mitgliedstaaten sicher, dass Verfahren für die Überwachung des technischen und operativen Funktionierens von Eurosur unter Berücksichtigung der Ziele eines angemessenen Lagebewusstseins und einer angemessenen Reaktionsfähigkeit an den Außengrenzen und der Einhaltung der Grundrechte einschließlich des Grundsatzes der Nichtzurückweisung vorhanden sind.

Auf der Grundlage der von den Mitgliedstaaten übermittelten Informationen erstellt die Agentur Frontex einen Bericht über das Funktionieren von Eurosur, den sie dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat zum 1. Dezember 2015 und danach alle zwei Jahre vorlegt.

Die Kommission wird dem EP und dem Rat zum 1. Dezember 2014 und danach alle vier Jahre eine Gesamtevaluierung von Eurosur vorlegen. Diese Evaluierung wird Folgendes umfassen: eine Bewertung der Ergebnisse anhand der Ziele, eine Bewertung der fortdauernden Gültigkeit der zugrunde liegenden Überlegungen, eine Bewertung der Anwendung dieser Verordnung in den Mitgliedstaaten und durch die Agentur sowie eine Bewertung der Beachtung der Grundrechte und der Auswirkungen auf die Grundrechte. Außerdem wird sie eine Kosten-Nutzen-Evaluierung enthalten. Gegebenenfalls werden der Evaluierung geeignete Vorschläge für eine Änderung der Eurosur-Verordnung beigefügt.

Die Kosten für die Erstellung des Berichts und der Evaluierung tragen Frontex und die Kommission.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1052/2013 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 22. Oktober 2013 zur Errichtung eines Europäischen Grenzüberwachungssystems (Eurosur); ABl. L 295 vom 6.11.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011909/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(17 October 2013)

Subject: Risk assessment for the Eurosur surveillance system

In June 2013, the Commission announced that it was going to introduce the Eurosur surveillance system. This system is intended to enable better tracking of 'problematic movements of people' that are being monitored. According to media reports, no technological risk assessment was carried out before the system was installed.

1. Will a technological risk assessment still be carried out for the Eurosur system?

2. If so, when will this risk assessment take place and how much does the Commission expect it to cost? If not, why is such an assessment being dispensed with?

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

Article 22 of the regulation ([1]) establishing the European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur) requires that Frontex and the Member States monitor the technical and operational functioning of Eurosur against the objectives of achieving an adequate situational awareness and reaction capability at the external borders and respect for fundamental rights, including the principle of non-refoulement.

On the basis of information provided by the Member States, Frontex will submit a report on the functioning of Eurosur to the EP and Council by 1 December 2015 and every two years thereafter.

The Commission will provide an overall evaluation of Eurosur to the EP and Council by 1 December 2014 and every four years thereafter. That evaluation will notably include an assessment of the results achieved against the objectives set, of the continuing validity of the underlying rationale, of the application of this regulation in the Member States and by the Agency and of the compliance with and impact on fundamental rights. It shall also include a cost-benefit evaluation. That evaluation may be accompanied, if necessary, by proposals to amend the Eurosur Regulation.

The costs for the required report and evaluation will be covered by Frontex and the Commission.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 establishing the European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur); OJ L 295, 6.11.2013

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011927/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(18 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Odmówienie wizy ukraińskim dziennikarzom

W dniach 15 i 16 października 2013 r. zorganizowałem w Parlamencie konferencję na temat integracji Ukrainy z UE. Jestem oburzony trudnościami, z którymi musieli zmierzyć się moi ukraińscy goście, starając się o wizę umożliwiającą udział w wydarzeniu. Byli oni dziennikarzami i przedstawicielami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego – przedstawicielami ukraińskiej elity intelektualnej podróżującymi do Brukseli w celu zacieśnienia stosunków między Ukrainą a UE. Odmówiono im udzielenia wizy gwarantującej elastyczność w planowaniu powrotu z konferencji w przypadku zaistnienia nieprzewidzianych okoliczności – takich jak opóźnienia – z którymi często mamy do czynienia w Brukseli. O sprawie tej informowały zarówno ukraińskie, jak i rosyjskie media, a także prestiżowy magazyn *The Economist*. Niestety incydent ten nie jest odosobniony. W zeszłym roku Jurij Lisowski z sieci społecznej OPORA doświadczył takich samych trudności, gdy ambasada Belgii uniemożliwiła mu udział w mojej konferencji.

Misja dzielenia się europejskimi wartościami wymaga poświęcenia specjalnej uwagi kreowaniu obrazu i postrzegania instytucji UE jako otwartych, wolnych od uprzedzeń i zaangażowanych w aktywny dialog z państwami spoza UE wyznającymi te same wartości. Wysiłki i zasoby budżetowe UE marnują się w przypadkach takich jak powyższy, kiedy to kontakt z przedstawicielami ambasady Belgii w Kijowie charakteryzuje się nieprzychylnym i biurokratycznym podejściem. W związku z tym polepszenie jakości obsługi w ambasadzie Belgii w Kijowie powinno stać się ważnym, choć małym, krokiem w procesie integracji Ukrainy z UE.

W przededniu szczytu w Wilnie Ukraińcy wyrazili swoje silne poparcie dla stowarzyszenia z UE, co, jak wszyscy wiemy, stanowi trudny proces. Kontakty między UE a dziennikarzami i przedstawicielami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego powinny zatem stać się fundamentalnym czynnikiem łączącym UE z krajami, które dzielą nasze wartości.

Czy Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych (ESDZ) jest świadoma występowania podobnych przypadków w krajach dążących do stowarzyszenia z UE, zwłaszcza na Ukrainie? Jakie konkretne środki zamierza podjąć ESDZ w celu zapobieżenia takim problemom w przyszłości?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(10 stycznia 2014 r.)

Promowanie kontaktów międzyludzkich ma szczególne znaczenie dla UE w jej relacjach z państwami objętymi polityką sąsiedztwa wschodniego. W związku z tym w umowach o ułatwieniach wizowych zawartych z tymi państwami zawarto postanowienia ułatwiające podróżowanie między innymi przedstawicielom organizacji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i dziennikarzom.

Komisja zna opisane przez Szanownego Pana Posła przypadki. Otrzymała również od władz ukraińskich dodatkowe informacje na temat ubiegających się o wizę osób, których ta sytuacja dotyczy. Komisja pozostaje w kontakcie z władzami belgijskimi w celu uzyskania pełnych informacji o tych przypadkach. Wszelkie otrzymane informacje zostaną przeanalizowane w świetle właściwych przepisów umowy o ułatwieniach wizowych i kodeksu wizowego. Komisja poinformuje Szanownego Pana Posła o wynikach przeprowadzonej analizy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011927/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Paweł Zalewski (PPE)
(18 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Denial of visas for Ukrainian journalists

On 15 and 16 October 2013, I organised a conference in Parliament on Ukraine's integration with the EU. I am outraged by the difficulties faced by my Ukrainian guests in obtaining a visa for the event. These guests were journalists and representatives of civil society — the Ukrainian intellectual elite travelling to Brussels with a view to strengthening Ukraine's relationship with the EU. They were denied the type of visa which would have allowed them flexibility in scheduling their return from the conference, in the event of unforeseen circumstances — such as delays — occurring, as is often the case in Brussels. The issue was reported by both the Ukrainian and Russian media, as well as by the prestigious newspaper *The Economist*. Unfortunately, this incident is not an isolated case. Last year, Mr Iurii Lisovskyi, from the civil network OPORA, experienced the same difficulties when the Belgian Embassy prevented him from participating in my conference.

The mission of sharing European values requires special attention to be paid to the image and perception of the EU institutions as open and free from prejudice, engaged in active dialogue with non-EU countries sharing the same values. EU budget efforts and resources are being put to waste in cases such as the above, where contact with representatives of the Belgian Embassy in Kiev is marked by an unfavourable and bureaucratic attitude. In this connection, the improvement of the quality of service provided by the Belgian Embassy in Kiev should be included as an important, albeit small, step in the process of Ukraine's integration with the EU.

Ahead of the upcoming summit in Vilnius, Ukrainians have expressed their strong support for association with the EU which, as we are all aware, is a difficult process. Contact between the EU and journalists and representatives of civil society should therefore be made a fundamental factor linking the EU with other nations that share our values.

Is the European External Action Service (EEAS) aware of similar cases in those countries with aspirations of EU association, especially Ukraine? What concrete steps does the EEAS intend to take in order to prevent such issues from reoccurring in the future?

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

In its relations with the countries in the Eastern Neighbourhood, the EU attaches particular importance to promoting people-to-people contacts. In this light, it has included in the Visa Facilitation Agreements that have been concluded with these countries provisions that facilitate travel *inter alia* for representatives of civil society organisations and journalists.

The Commission is aware of the cases mentioned by the Honourable Member and received from the Ukrainian authorities additional information regarding the visa applicants involved in the incident. The Commission is in contact with the Belgian authorities in order to obtain complete information about these cases. All information received will be analysed in light of the relevant provisions of the Visa Facilitation Agreement and the Visa Code. The Commission will inform the Honourable Member about the outcome of its analysis.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011966/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Übergangsfristen beim Berufswechsel von EU-Beamten

In verschiedenen Medienberichten wird immer wieder auf den Wechsel von Beamten der Kommission in die Privatwirtschaft hingewiesen. Für den Wechsel von der Kommission in die Privatwirtschaft gibt es Kriterien der Kommission, bei denen auch Übergangsfristen festgelegt sind.

1. In wie vielen Fällen wurden in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 die Übergangsfristen für den Wechsel von EU-Beamten nicht eingehalten, und in welchen Fällen war dies der Fall?

2. In wie vielen Fällen wurden in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 jeweils andere Kriterien für den Arbeitsplatzwechsel von EU-Beamten nicht eingehalten; um welche Kriterien handelte es sich, und in welchen Fällen war dies der Fall?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(9. Januar 2014)

1) Die Kommission geht davon aus, dass sich der Ausdruck „Übergangsfristen" auf den Zweijahreszeitraum unmittelbar nach dem Ausscheiden aus dem Dienst beim Organ bezieht, in dem ehemalige Bedienstete bestimmten Beschränkungen im Hinblick auf neue berufliche Tätigkeiten unterworfen sein können, die dem Schutz der legitimen Interessen des betreffenden Organs dienen. Dazu gehört gegebenenfalls eine „Sperrzeit", in der es keine beruflichen Kontakte mit bestimmten ehemaligen Kollegen geben darf.

2) Gemäß Artikel 16 des Statuts müssen ehemalige Bedienstete in den ersten zwei Jahren nach dem Ausscheiden aus dem Dienst eine Zustimmung zur Aufnahme einer neuen beruflichen Tätigkeit beantragen. Das betreffende Organ kann die Zustimmung verweigern oder an Auflagen binden, wenn die neue Tätigkeit angesichts der Aufgaben des Beamten in seinen letzten drei Dienstjahren zu einem Konflikt mit den legitimen Interessen des Organs führen könnte. Selbst nach Ablauf der Zweijahresfrist muss sich der ehemalige Beamte in Bezug auf neue berufliche Tätigkeiten ehrenhaft und zurückhaltend verhalten.

3) Ähnliche Bestimmungen gelten für Wechsel zwischen Unternehmen in der Privatwirtschaft oder zwischen nationalen Verwaltungen und dem Privatsektor. Sie müssen unter Berücksichtigung der Grundrechte der betreffenden Personen, insbesondere der Beschäftigungsfreiheit, ausgelegt werden. Jede Verweigerung einer Zustimmung bzw. jede Beschränkung muss sich auf ein tatsächliches und nachweisbares Risiko für ein berechtigtes Interesse des Organs stützen und zudem angemessen sein.

4) Zwar wurden in dem vom Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Zeitraum tatsächlich in einer Reihe von Fällen Zustimmungen verweigert und Beschränkungen auferlegt, doch sind der Kommission keine Fälle von Nichteinhaltung bekannt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011966/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21 October 2013)

Subject: Transitional periods for EU officials changing jobs

Moves by Commission officials into the private sector have been reported in the media on numerous occasions. The Commission has criteria that are to be applied in connection with a move from the Commission into the private sector, for which transitional periods are also laid down.

1. In how many cases in 2010, 2011 and 2012 were the transitional periods for moves by EU officials not complied with, and in which cases did this non-compliance occur?

2. In how many cases in each of the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 were other criteria for EU officials changing jobs not complied with, to which criteria did this relate, and in which cases did this non-compliance occur?

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

1. The Commission assumes that the expression 'transitional periods' refers to the period of two years immediately following departure from the institution during which former staff members may be subject to certain restrictions on new occupational activities, in order to protect the legitimate interests of that institution, including where appropriate a 'cooling off period' during which no professional contacts may be made with certain former colleagues.

2. Article 16 of the Staff Regulations lays down an obligation on former staff members during the first two years after leaving the service to request permission for any new occupational activity. The former institution may refuse permission or impose restrictions if the new activity could lead to a conflict with the legitimate interests of the institution when looking at the duties of the former official during the last three years of service. Even after the expiry of the two-year period, the former official is bound by the duty to behave with integrity and discretion concerning new occupational activities.

3. Similar provisions apply to changes between companies in the private sector or between national administrations and the private sector. All these provisions must be interpreted in the light of the fundamental rights of the individuals concerned, particularly the freedom of employment. Any refusal of permission, or any restriction, must be based upon the existence of a real and demonstrable risk to a legitimate interest of the institution, and must also be proportionate.

4. Although a refusal of permission and restrictions have indeed been imposed in a number of cases during the period mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission has no knowledge of any case of non-compliance.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012027/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(22 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Is-sistemi tal-parole fl-UE

Il-politiki tal-parole fil-kuntest tad-detenzjoni jagħmlu parti mill-kompetenzi tal-Istati Membri. Fl-istess ħin, il-politiki dwar l-asil ikunu involuti f'dak li għandu x'jaqsam mad-detenzjoni ta' persuni li mhumiex ċittadini tal-UE, ladarba jistgħu jinħargu ordnijiet ta' tneħħija f'każijiet li jinvolvu reati (serji). F'xi każijiet, l-ordnijiet ta' tneħħija wara t-terminazzjoni ta' sentenza jiskwalifikaw awtomatikament lill-persuni priġunieri li mhumiex ċittadini tal-UE milli jkunu eleġibbli għall-parole.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi analiżi tas-sitwazzjoni fl-Istati Membri f'dak li jirrigwarda l-ordnijiet ta' tneħħija bħala parti mis-sentenzi ta' persuni li mhumiex ċittadini tal-UE?

2. X'inhuma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni dwar il-prattiki f'ċerti Stati Membri li permezz tagħhom persuni li mhumiex ċittadini tal-UE jista' jinħarġilhom ordni ta' tneħħija anki fil-każ tal-iċken reat?

3. X'inhuma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni dwar l-eleġibilità għall-parole ta' persuni li mhumiex ċittadini tal-UE wara t-terminazzjoni tas-sentenza?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Jannar 2014)

Tneħħija bħala parti minn sanzjoni kriminali imposta skont il-liġi kriminali nazzjonali fuq persuni barranin hija kwistjoni li attwalment mhijiex armonizzata mil-liġi tal-Unjoni. Il-Kummissjoni jiddispjaċiha li ma għandhiex biżżejjed informazzjoni biex tkun tista' tipprovdi lill-Onorevoli Membru b'analiżi tas-sitwazzjoni fl-Istati Membri.

Id-Direttivi tal-KE u tal-UE kollha adottati fil-qasam tal-migrazzjoni fihom dispożizzjonijiet speċifiċi għas-settur dwar it-tmiem u l-irtirar ta' permessi f'każijiet speċifiċi, inklużi klawżoli dwar l-"ordni pubbliku" li jippermettu lill-Istati Membri li jirtiraw permessi ta' residenza u jkeċċu ċittadini ta' pajjiżi terzi li jikkostitwixxu theddida għall-politika pubblika jew għas-sigurtà pubblika. Meta dawn il-klawżoli ta' ordni pubblika jiġu applikati, il-prinċipju ta' proporzjonalità jrid jiġi rrispettat. Dan jimplika li għandha ssir valutazzjoni individwali, li tivvaluta kemm is-severità jew it-tip ta' reat kif ukoll il-perikli li qed joħorġu minn dik il-persuna kkonċernata.

L-eliġibbiltà ta' ċittadini ta' pajjiżi terzi għal libertà kondizzjonata wara tmiem is-sentenza hija kwistjoni ta' liġi proċedurali kriminali nazzjonali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012027/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(22 October 2013)

Subject: Parole systems in the EU

Parole policies in the context of detention are part of Member States' competences. At the same time, asylum policies come into play as regards the detention of non-EU citizens, since removal orders can be issued in cases involving (serious) crimes. In some cases, removal orders after termination of the sentence automatically disqualify imprisoned non-EU citizens from eligibility for parole.

1. Can the Commission provide an analysis of the situation in the Member States when it comes to removal orders as part of non-EU citizens' sentences?

2. What are the Commission's views on practices in certain Member States whereby non-EU citizens can be issued a removal order even in the case of the most minor offence?

3. What are the Commission's views on the eligibility of non-EU citizens for parole after termination of sentence?

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

Removal as part of a criminal sanction imposed under national criminal law on foreigners is an issue currently not harmonised by Union law. The Commission regrets that it does not have sufficient information to be able to provide the Honourable Member with an analysis of the situation in the Member States.

All EC and EU Directives adopted in the field of migration contain sector-specific provisions concerning the ending and the withdrawal of permits in specific cases, including 'public order' clauses which allow Member States to withdraw residence permits and to expel third-country nationals who constitute a threat to public policy or public security. When applying these public order clauses, the principle of proportionality must be respected. This implies that an individualised assessment must be carried out, assessing both the severity or type of offence and the dangers that are emanating from the person concerned.

The eligibility of third-country nationals for parole after termination of sentence is an issue of national criminal procedural law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012097/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Weiterbildungskosten der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 4 500 000 EUR für „Weiterbildung" vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 4 000 000 EUR, im Jahr 2011 wurden 5 078 694 EUR ausgegeben. Im Jahr 2011 hatte Frontex 141 Mitarbeiter und somit Weiterbildungskosten von 36 019 EUR pro Mitarbeiter. Für die Jahre 2012 und 2013 waren 143 und 153 Planstellen vorgesehen, und Frontex sah somit Mittel von 27 972 EUR und 29 411 EUR vor.

1. Wie erklärt Frontex die Höhe der Weiterbildungskosten?

2. In tabellarischer Form: Welche spezifischen Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen wurden in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils gefördert, wie hoch waren die Kosten für diese Maßnahmen jeweils, welcher Dienstleister führte diese Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen durch, und wie viele Mitarbeiter nahmen daran teil?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012098/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Kosten für Forschung, Entwicklung und Eurosur der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 3 444 000 EUR für „Research and Development & Eurosur" vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 2 340 000 EUR, im Jahr 2011 wurden 2 532 306 EUR ausgegeben.

1. Wie genau gliedern sich die Kosten für Forschung und Entwicklung sowie Eurosur für die Jahre 2011, 2012 und 2013 auf?

2. In tabellarischer Aufstellung: Welche Forschungsprogramme welcher Organisationen förderte Frontex in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils mit welcher Summe?

3. In tabellarischer Aufstellung: Welche Entwicklungsprogramme welcher Organisationen förderte Frontex in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils mit welcher Summe?

4. In tabellarischer Aufstellung: Welche Kosten fielen jeweils in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 für Eurosur an, und wie genau gliederten sich diese Kosten? Welche Unternehmen profitierten in welcher Höhe von im Rahmen von Eurosur getätigten Anschaffungen und abgeschlossenen Verträgen?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012099/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Immobilien der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 4 766 000 EUR für „Miete von Gebäuden und Nebenkosten" vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 3 805 000 EUR, 2011 fielen Ausgaben von 4 351 675 EUR an.

1. Über welche Immobilien verfügt Frontex, und über welche nutzbare Quadratmeterfläche verfügen diese jeweils?

2. Welche dieser Immobilien sind gemietet? Wie hoch sind die monatlichen Mietkosten und wie hoch ist der Mietpreis pro Quadratmeter?

3. Welche dieser Immobilien befinden sich ganz oder teilweise im Besitz von Frontex? Wann wurden sie erworben und wie hoch war der Kaufpreis?

4. Wie hoch waren die Nebenkosten für jede dieser Immobilien in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 beziehungsweise wie hoch werden sie sein? Wie gliedern sich die Nebenkosten auf Unterkostenpunkte (Reinigung, Heizung, Reparaturarbeiten, Umbaumaßnahmen etc.) auf?

5. Wie erklärt Frontex die hohe Fluktuation der Kosten von 2011 bis 2013?

6. Welche Maßnahmen unternimmt Frontex, um die Kosten niedrig zu halten sowie um sie zu verringern?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012100/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Einstellungskosten der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 167 000 EUR für das Kapitel 12 „Einstellung“ vor. Im Jahr 2012 waren 114 000 EUR vorgesehen, im Jahr 2011 wurden 161 941 EUR ausgegeben.

1. Wie viele Neueinstellungen tätigte Frontex in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013, beziehungsweise wie viele wird Frontex tätigen?

2. Wie genau gliederten sich die Einstellungskosten in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 auf?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012101/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Verwaltungsdienstreisen der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 485 000 EUR für Verwaltungsdienstreisen vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 500 000 EUR, im Jahr 2011 514 048 EUR.

1. Wie viele Verwaltungsdienstreisen wurden für Frontex in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 unternommen beziehungsweise werden noch unternommen?

2. Welchem Zweck dienten diese Dienstreisen?

3. Wie hoch waren die durchschnittlichen Kosten für Verwaltungsdienstreisen in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils?

4. Welches waren in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils die teuersten Dienstreisen?

5. Welche Kosten werden bei Dienstreisen von Frontex übernommen?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012102/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Datenverarbeitungs- und Telekommunikationskosten der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 2 400 000 EUR für „Datenverarbeitung und Telekommunikation" vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 4 117 000 EUR, im Jahr 2011 wurden 3 273 569 EUR ausgegeben.

1. Wie gliederten sich die Kosten für Datenverarbeitung und Telekommunikation in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils auf?

2. Wie erklärt Frontex die hohe Kostenfluktuation von 2011 bis 2013 und welche Anschaffungen erklären den starken Kostenanstieg im Jahr 2012?

3. Wie viele Computer und Laptops befinden sich im Besitz von Frontex?

4. Wie viele Geräte least Frontex?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012103/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Nicht-operative Sitzungen der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 600 000 EUR für „nicht-operative Sitzungen" vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 600 000 EUR, im Jahr 2011 wurden 616 847 EUR ausgegeben.

1. Wie definiert Frontex „nicht-operative Sitzungen"?

2. Wie viele nicht-operative Sitzungen hielt Frontex in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils ab?

3. Wie viele Teilnehmer hatten diese Sitzungen durchschnittlich in jedem dieser Jahre? War dies internes Personal, oder waren dies externe Experten oder Parteien?

4. Welche spezifischen Kosten fallen für nicht-operative Sitzungen an?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012104/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Information und Transparenz der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex)

Dem Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen (Frontex) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 zufolge sah die Agentur für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 1 000 000 EUR für „Information und Transparenz" vor. Im Vorjahr waren es 655 000 EUR, im Jahr 2011 wurden 256 908 EUR ausgegeben.

1. Welche Maßnahmen wurden in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 im Rahmen von „Information und Transparenz" von Frontex finanziert bzw. werden finanziert werden?

2. Wie genau gliedern sich die Kosten für die Jahre 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils auf?

3. Wie erklärt Frontex eine Vervierfachung der Kosten für „Information und Transparenz“ innerhalb von nur zwei Jahren?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission

(10. Januar 2014)

Die Kommission hat die Europäische Agentur für die operative Zusammenarbeit an den Außengrenzen der Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union (Frontex) um weitere Angaben zu den diversen Ausgaben von Frontex gebeten, an Hand deren die Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten beantwortet werden können. Die Kommission wird dem Herrn Abgeordneten die Antwort der Agentur umgehend übermitteln.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012097/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Training costs of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 4 500 000 for 'training'. The appropriation for last year was EUR 4 000 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 5 078 694. In 2011, Frontex had 141 members of staff and thus training costs of EUR 36 019 per staff member. For 2012 and 2013, 143 and 153 posts were envisaged, and Frontex therefore provided funds of EUR 27 972 and EUR 29 411 for these.

1. How does Frontex explain the level of the training costs?

2. In tabular form: what specific training initiatives were supported in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively, what were the costs for each of these initiatives, which service provider conducted this training, and how many members of staff took part?

Question for written answer E-012098/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Costs of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for research, development and Eurosur

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 3 444 000 for 'research and development and Eurosur'. The appropriation for last year was EUR 2 340 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 2 532 306.

1. What is the exact breakdown of the costs for research and development and Eurosur for 2011, 2012 and 2013?

2. In tabular form: which research programmes for which entities did Frontex support in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively, and how much did it provide in the way of funding in each case?

3. In tabular form: which development programmes for which entities did Frontex support in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively, and how much did it provide in the way of funding in each case?

4. In tabular form: what costs were incurred for Eurosur in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively, and what is the exact breakdown of these costs? Which undertakings benefited, and by what amount, from purchases made and contracts concluded in connection with Eurosur?

Question for written answer E-012099/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Properties of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 4 766 000 for 'rental of buildings and associated costs'. The appropriation for last year was EUR 3 805 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 4 351 675.

1. What properties does Frontex have at its disposal, and how many square metres of useful working area does each of these have?

2. Which of these properties are rented? What are the monthly rental costs, and how much is the rent per square metre?

3. Which of these properties are fully or partly owned by Frontex? When were they purchased and what was the purchase price?

4. How much were the associated costs for each of these properties in 2011, 2012 and 2013, or how much will they be? What is the exact breakdown of the associated costs by sub-item (cleaning, heating, repair work, renovation work, etc.)?

5. How does Frontex explain the considerable fluctuation in costs from 2011 to 2013?

6. What steps does Frontex take to keep the costs down and to reduce them?

Question for written answer E-012100/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Recruitment costs of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 167 000 for chapter 12 'recruitment'. The appropriation for last year was EUR 114 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 161 941.

1. How many new employees did Frontex hire in 2011, 2012 and 2013, or how many will it hire?

2. What is the exact breakdown of the recruitment costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013?

Question for written answer E-012101/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Administrative missions of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 485 000 for administrative missions. The appropriation for last year was EUR 500 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 514 048.

1. How many administrative missions were carried out for Frontex in 2011, 2012 and 2013, or are yet to be carried out?

2. What was the purpose of these missions?

3. What were the average costs for administrative missions in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

4. Which were the most expensive missions in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

5. What costs are borne by Frontex in connection with missions?

Question for written answer E-012102/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Data processing and telecommunication costs of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 2 400 000 for 'data processing and telecommunication'. Last year there was an appropriation of EUR 4 117 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 3 273 569.

1. What is the exact breakdown of the costs for data processing and telecommunication for 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

2. How does Frontex explain the considerable fluctuation in costs between 2011 and 2013, and what purchases explain the dramatic increase in costs in 2012?

3. How many computers and laptops does Frontex own?

4. How many items of equipment does Frontex lease?

Question for written answer E-012103/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Non-operational meetings of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 600 000 for 'non-operational meetings'. Last year there was an appropriation of EUR 600 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 616 847.

1. How does Frontex define 'non-operational meetings'?

2. How many non-operational meetings did Frontex hold in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

3. What were the average numbers of participants in these meetings in each of these years? Were they internal members of staff, or were they external experts or participants?

4. What specific costs are incurred for non-operational meetings?

Question for written answer E-012104/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Information and transparency of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex)

In the statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (Frontex) for the financial year 2013, the Agency provided for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 1 000 000 for 'information and transparency'. Last year there was an appropriation of EUR 655 000, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 256 908.

1. What measures were, or will be, funded in 2011, 2012 and 2013 by Frontex in connection with 'information and transparency'?

2. What is the exact breakdown of the costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

3. How does Frontex explain the fourfold increase in the costs for 'information and transparency' in just two years?

Joint answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 January 2014)

The Commission has asked the Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) to provide elements for a reply to the questions raised by the Honourable Member of Parliament as regards the several costs of Frontex. The reply of the Agency will be transmitted as soon as possible by the Commission to the Honourable Member.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012117/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Bewerbungsgespräche der Europäischen Agentur für Netz- und Informationssicherheit (ENISA)

Laut dem Jahresbudget der Europäischen Agentur für Netz- und Informationssicherheit (ENISA) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 ([1]) gab die Agentur im Jahr 2011 14 686,34 EUR für Reisekosten von Bewerbern aus. Für das Jahr 2012 sah die Agentur 22 306,57 EUR und für das Jahr 2013 sogar 32 000 EUR vor. Für 2013 sieht sie Gehaltskosten von 3 065 000 EUR vor, im Jahr 2012 waren es noch 2 798 112,39 EUR. Gleichzeitig verblieb die Zahl der Planstellen bei 47.

1. Wie viele Kandidaten lud die Agentur in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 zu Interviews ein?

2. Für welche Positionen wurden diese Interviews abgehalten?

3. Wie lang war der durchschnittliche Aufenthalt dieser Bewerber bei der Agentur in Kreta?

4. Welche Kosten wurden erstattet?

5. Welcher Nationalität waren diese Bewerber?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Agentur der Europäischen Union für Netz- und Informationssicherheit (ENISA) gebeten, die Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten zu beantworten. Die Kommission wird dem Herrn Abgeordneten so rasch wie möglich die Antwort der Agentur weiterleiten.

([1]) http://www.enisa.europa.eu/about-enisa/accounting-finance/files/enisa-2013-annual-budget

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012117/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Candidate interviews of the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)

According to the annual budget of the European network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) for the financial year 2013 ([1]), the Agency spent EUR 14 686.34 in 2011 on travel expenses in interviewing candidates. The Agency provided for an appropriation of EUR 22 306.57 for 2012 and as much as EUR 32 000 for 2013. For 2013, salary costs of EUR 3 065 000 were provided for, and in 2012 the amount was just EUR 2 798 112.39. At the same time, the number of posts remained at 47.

1. How many candidates did the Agency invite to interviews in 2011, 2012 and 2013?

2. For which positions were these interviews held?

3. How long, on average, did these candidates stay with the Agency in Crete?

4. What costs were reimbursed?

5. What were the nationalities of these candidates?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

The Commission has asked the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) 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.

([1]) http://www.enisa.europa.eu/about-enisa/accounting-finance/files/enisa-2013-annual-budget

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012118/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Datenverarbeitungskosten der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA)

Die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) plante für die Jahre 2011, 2012 und 2013 Kosten für die Datenverarbeitung in Höhe von 4 217 091,45 (2011), 3 251 696 (2012) und 2 611 000 (2013) EUR ein.

1. Wie genau gliederten sich diese Kosten in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils auf? Welcher Anteil dieser Kosten fiel insbesondere jeweils für Anschaffungen, Leasinggebühren und Dienstleistungen an?

2. Wie viele Computer und Laptops erwarb die Behörde jeweils in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013?

3. Welches waren jeweils die teuersten Datenverarbeitungsanschaffungen der Behörde in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013?

4. Welches sind die teuersten Leasingverträge der Behörde?

5. Welches sind die teuersten Dienstleistungsverträge der Behörde?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(19. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) gebeten, die Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten zu beantworten. Die Antwort der Behörde ist als Anhang beigefügt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012118/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Data processing costs of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

For 2011, 2012 and 2013, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) provided for costs of EUR 4 217 091.45 (2011), EUR 3 251 696 (2012) and EUR 2 611 000 (2013) for data processing.

1. What is the exact breakdown of these costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively? What proportion of these costs was incurred for purchases, leasing charges and services?

2. How many computers and laptops did the Authority purchase in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

3. What were the most expensive data processing purchases by the Authority in each of the years 2011, 2012 and 2013?

4. Which of the Agency's leasing contracts are the most expensive?

5. Which of the Agency's service contracts are the most expensive?

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

The Commission asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide a response to the questions raised by the Honourable Member. The Agency's reply is attached in annex.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012120/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Immobilien der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA)

Die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) plante für die Jahre 2011, 2012 und 2013 Kosten für Grundstücksinvestitionen, Miete von Gebäuden und Nebenkosten von 7 181 504,18 (2011), 6 108 261 (2012) und 4 785 000 (2013) EUR ein.

1. Wie genau gliederten sich die Kosten der Behörde in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils auf die Posten „Grundstücksinvestitionen", „Miete von Gebäuden" und „Nebenkosten" auf?

2. Welche Immobilien befinden sich ganz oder teilweise im Besitz der Behörde? Wie groß ist die nutzbare Quadratmeterzahl? Welche Kosten fielen für den Kauf dieser Immobilien in welchen Jahren an?

3. Welche Immobilien mietet die Behörde? Wie groß ist die nutzbare Quadratmeterzahl dieser Immobilien jeweils? Wie hoch sind die Mietkosten pro Quadratmeter jeder dieser Immobilien?

4. Wie genau gliederten sich die Nebenkosten in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 auf?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) gebeten, die Frage des Herrn Abgeordneten zu beantworten. Die Antwort der Behörde ist als Anhang beigefügt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012120/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Properties of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

For 2011, 2012 and 2013, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) provided for costs of EUR 7 181 504.18 (2011), EUR 6 108 261 (2012) and EUR 4 785 000 (2013) for investments in immovable property, rental of buildings and associated costs.

1. What is the exact breakdown of the Authority's costs in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively, in terms of the items 'investments in immovable property', 'rental of buildings' and 'associated costs'?

2. What properties does the Authority fully or partly own? What is the useful area in square metres? What costs were incurred for the purchase of these properties, and in which years?

3. What properties does the Authority rent? What is the useful area of each of these properties in square metres? What are the rental costs per square metre for each of these properties?

4. What is the exact breakdown of the associated costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013?

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

The Commission asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide a response to the question raised by the Honourable Member. The Agency's reply is attached in annex.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012121/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Immobilien der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (ETF)

Im Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (ETF) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 sind für „Grundstücksinvestitionen und Miete von Gebäuden und Nebenkosten" für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 529 296 EUR vorgesehen. Im Vorjahr waren es 510 783 EUR, im Jahr 2011 fielen tatsächlich Ausgaben von 465 075,67 EUR an.

1. Wie genau gliederten sich die Kosten in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 auf?

2. Warum stiegen die Kosten von 2011 bis 2013 um circa 64 000 EUR?

3. Über welche Immobilien verfügt die Stiftung?

4. Welche dieser Immobilien befinden sich ganz oder teilweise im Besitz der Stiftung? Welche nutzbare Quadratmeterfläche haben diese? Wann wurden diese zu welchem Preis gekauft?

5. Welche dieser Immobilien mietet die Stiftung an? Welche nutzbare Quadratmeterfläche haben diese Immobilien, und wie hoch sind der monatliche Quadratmeterpreis sowie der monatliche Gesamtmietpreis?

6. Welche Nebenkosten entfallen jeweils auf jede dieser Immobilien?

Antwort von Androulla Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(11. Dezember 2013)

Bei der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (ETF) handelt es sich um eine von der Kommission unabhängige Agentur ([1]). Daher liegt die alleinige Verantwortung für die vorgelegte, von der Kommission übermittelte Antwort bei der ETF.

Für die Jahre 2011 und 2012 entsprechen die in der vorliegenden Antwort angegebenen Zahlen den tatsächlichen Ausgaben und für 2013 den aktuellen Beträgen laut Haushaltsplan nach Änderungshaushalt von Juni 2013. Daher weichen sie von den in der Anfrage genannten Beträgen ab.

1. Die Aufschlüsselung der Kosten für die Jahre 2011, 2012 und 2013 ist der beigefügten Tabelle zu entnehmen.

2. Im Zeitraum 2011 bis 2013 sind die Kosten aus folgenden Gründen gestiegen: a) erheblicher Anstieg der Kosten, insbesondere für Versorgungsleistungen, infolge des neuen 5-Jahres-Vertrags mit der Region Piemont, b) höhere Mittelausstattung für Mobiliar im Jahr 2013, da die ETF Aufwendungen für Mobiliar und Ausstattung aufgrund der unsicheren Zukunft ihres Sitzes in der Villa Gualino aufgeschoben hatte, und c) Verdoppelung der an die Kommission für die von der ETF in Brüssel genutzten Büroräume zu zahlenden Miete im Jahr 2013.

3. Die ETF verfügt über eine Fläche von 6 000 m^2 im Gebäudekomplex der Villa Gualino in Turin und von 22,9 m^2 in den Kommissionsgebäuden in Brüssel (Vertretungsbüro) für rund 130 Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter.

4. Die ETF mietet die Immobilien von der Region Piemont bzw. der Europäischen Kommission an.

5. Für die von ihr genutzte Fläche in der Villa Gualino (6 000 m^2) zahlt die ETF eine symbolische Miete von 1 EUR pro Jahr. Der Europäischen Kommission zahlt die ETF 11 538,99 EUR für die Nutzung der Fläche in Brüssel (22,9 m^2), dies entspricht 961,58 EUR bzw. einem Quadratmeterpreis von 42 EUR pro Monat.

6. Die ETF übernimmt selbst die Reinigungs-, Sicherheits-, Instandhaltungs-, Versicherungs- und sonstigen Kosten für ihre Räume in der Villa Gualino; für die gemeinschaftlich genutzten Flächen und Systeme zahlt die ETF der Region Piemont den entsprechenden Kostenanteil. Der Kommission zahlt die ETF eine Nebenkostenpauschale in Höhe von 50 % der Miete für das Brüsseler Büro.

([1]) Siehe die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1339/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 zur Errichtung der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (Neufassung), ABl. L 354 vom 31.12.2008, S. 82.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012121/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Property of the European Training Foundation (ETF)

The statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Training Foundation (ETF) for the financial year 2013 provides for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 529 296 for 'investments in immovable property, rental of buildings and associated costs'. Last year there was an appropriation of EUR 510 783, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 465 075.67.

1. What is the exact breakdown of the costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013?

2. Why did the costs increase by approximately EUR 64 000 from 2011 to 2013?

3. What properties does the Foundation have at its disposal?

4. Which of these properties does the Foundation fully or partly own? What is the useful area of these properties in square metres? When were these properties purchased and at what price?

5. Which of these properties does the Foundation rent? What is the useful area of these properties in square metres, and how much is the monthly rent per square metre and the total monthly rent?

6. What associated costs are incurred for each of these properties?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

The European Training Foundation (ETF) is an agency which is independent of the Commission ([1]). Accordingly, sole liability for the attached answer, transmitted by the Commission, rests with the ETF.

The figures given in this answer are final outturn figures for 2011 and 2012 and current budget figures for 2013 following an amending budget of June 2013. They therefore differ from those cited in the question.

1. The breakdown of facility costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013 is shown in the table in the annex.

2. Costs increased from 2011 to 2013 because: (a) the new 5-year contract with the Piedmont Region entailed a significant increase, in particular for utilities; (b) the budget for furnishing in 2013 increased because ETF had deferred expenditure on furniture and fittings, due to uncertainty about the future of its premises in Villa Gualino; (c) in 2013, the Commission doubled the rate charged to ETF for use of its offices in Brussels.

3. The ETF has at its disposal 6 000 m^2 in the Villa Gualino Complex in Turin and 22.9 m^2 in Commission premises in Brussels (representation office) for c. 130 staff.

4. ETF rents the properties from the Piedmont Region and the European Commission respectively.

5. ETF pays a symbolic rent of EUR 1 per year for the 6 000 m^2 it occupies in Villa Gualino. The ETF pays the European Commission a rent of EUR 11 538.99 for the occupation of 22.9 m^2 in Brussels, i.e. EUR 961.58 per month or EUR 42.00 per square metre per month.

6. The ETF pays directly the cleaning, security, maintenance, insurance and other costs for its premises in Villa Gualino and reimburses the Piedmont Region in respect of its share of costs related to common areas and systems. The ETF pays the Commission a flat-rate service charge of 50% of the rent for its Brussels office.

([1]) See Regulation (EC) No 1339/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing a European Training Foundation (recast) OJ L 351/82, 31.12.2008.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012122/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: IKT-Kosten der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (ETF)

Im Einnahmen- und Ausgabenplan der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (ETF) für das Haushaltsjahr 2013 sind für „Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie" für das Jahr 2013 Mittel von 641 154 EUR vorgesehen. Im Vorjahr waren es 765 596 EUR, im Jahr 2011 fielen tatsächlich Ausgaben von 672 298,53 EUR an.

1. Wie genau gliederten sich die Kosten in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 auf?

2. Welche Anschaffungen tätigte die Stiftung in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 jeweils?

3. Warum stiegen die Kosten im Jahr 2012 außergewöhnlich an und sanken dann wieder?

Antwort von Androulla Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(11. Dezember 2013)

Bei der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (ETF) handelt es sich um eine von der Kommission unabhängige Agentur. ([1]) Daher liegt die alleinige Verantwortung für die vorgelegte, von der Kommission übermittelte Antwort bei der ETF.

Für die Jahre 2011 und 2012 entsprechen die nachstehend angegebenen Zahlen den tatsächlichen Ausgaben und für 2013 den aktuellen Beträgen laut Haushaltsplan nach Änderungshaushalt von Juni 2013. Daher weichen sie von den in der Anfrage genannten Beträgen ab.

1. Die Aufschlüsselung der IKT-Kosten für die Jahre 2011, 2012 und 2013 ist der beigefügten Tabelle zu entnehmen.

2. Die IKT-Mittel der ETF entfallen in erster Linie auf reguläre Ausgaben für die Wartung und den Betrieb ihrer IKT-Infrastruktur, darunter die regelmäßige Aufrüstung und der Austausch von Systemen und Einrichtungen, sowie auf die stufenweise Verbesserung von Software-Systemen, die die Agentur bei der Ausübung ihrer Tätigkeit nutzt. Rund 160 000 EUR pro Jahr (dies entspricht knapp 20 % der IKT-Mittel) zahlt die Stiftung an die Europäische Kommission für die Nutzung des Rechnungsführungssystems ABAC.

3. Im Jahr 2012 sind die Ausgaben der Agentur für IKT-Hardware und Telekommunikation gestiegen, weil sie ihr Telefonsystem erneuert hat (Umstellung auf VoIP), wodurch in den kommenden Jahren die Telefonkosten sinken werden, und weil sie im Zusammenhang mit der Einführung eines Content-Management-Systems mehr Mittel für Software aufgewendet hat. Das ursprüngliche Budget für 2013 entsprach dem Ausgabenstand von 2011; im Laufe des Jahres 2013 wurden die Mittel jedoch aufgestockt, um den verstärkten Ankauf von Software und die Kosten für die Entwicklung des neuen Intranets — zur Umsetzung der Ergebnisse des IAS-Audits im Bereich interne Kommunikation von 2011 — abzudecken und dem 25 %igen Anstieg der Kosten für die Nutzung von IKT-Systemen der Kommission (ABAC) von 125 000 auf 160 000 EUR Rechnung zu tragen.

([1]) Siehe die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1339/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 zur Errichtung der Europäischen Stiftung für Berufsbildung (Neufassung), ABl. L 354 vom 31.12.2008, S. 82.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012122/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: ICT costs of the European Training Foundation (ETF)

The statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Training Foundation (ETF) for the financial year 2013 provides for an appropriation for 2013 of EUR 641 154 for 'information and communication technologies'. Last year there was an appropriation of EUR 765 596, and in 2011 the outturn was EUR 672 298.53.

1. What is the exact breakdown of the costs for 2011, 2012 and 2013?

2. What purchases did the Foundation make in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively?

3. Why did the costs increase exceptionally in 2012 and then decrease again?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

The European Training Foundation (ETF) is an agency which is independent of the Commission, based. ([1]) Accordingly, sole liability for the attached answer, transmitted by the Commission, rests with the ETF.

The figures given below are final outturn figures for 2011 and 2012 and current budget figures for 2013, following an amending budget of June 2013. They differ from those cited in the question.

1. The breakdown of ICT costs per chapter for 2011, 2012 and 2013 is given in the table in the annex.

2. The ETF's ICT budget is mainly devoted to routine expenditure on the maintenance and operation of its ICT infrastructure, including the regular upgrade and replacement of systems and equipment, and the incremental improvement of software systems supporting the Agency's activities. Some EUR 160 000 per year, representing nearly 20% of the ICT budget, is paid to the European Commission for use of the ABAC accounting system.

3. The ETF's expenditure on ICT hardware and telecommunications increased in 2012 owing to the renewal of the Agency's telephone system (migration to VOIP), which will generate savings on telecommunications costs in future years, and increased software spending related to the implementation of a content management system. While the intial budget for 2013 was in line with 2011 expenditure levels, it was increased in the course of 2013 to meet increased software acquisition and development costs relating to the new intranet, implemented in response to the findings of a 2011 IAS audit of internal communications, and a 25% increase from EUR 125 000 to EUR 160 000 in the cost of Commission ICT systems (ABAC).

([1]) See Regulation (EC) No 1339/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing a European Training Foundation (recast)OJ 31/12/2008 L351/82.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012182/13
à la Commission
Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Création d'un statut européen des mutuelles

Ces dernières années, le Parlement a adopté plusieurs résolutions appelant à la mise en place d'un statut de la mutualité européenne, notamment à la suite du retrait de la proposition de règlement portant statut de la mutualité européenne en mars 2006.

En mars 2011, le Parlement a adopté une déclaration écrite demandant l'instauration de trois statuts européens pour les mutuelles, les associations et les fondations. En mars 2013, le Parlement Européen a adopté un rapport relatif au statut de la mutualité européenne qui demande à la Commission de soumettre rapidement une ou plusieurs propositions permettant aux mutualités d'opérer à l'échelle européenne et transfrontalière. En mars 2013, la Commission a lancé une consultation publique sur l'opportunité d'un statut européen pour les mutuelles, clôturée en juin 2013, dont les résultats devaient être disponibles en septembre 2013, puis une étude d'impact le 10 juillet 2013. Ainsi,

1. la Commission peut-elle indiquer quand ces résultats seront-ils disponibles?

2. la Commission peut-elle indiquer dans quel sens vont les résultats de la consultation écrite? Ces résultats vont-ils majoritairement dans le sens de la création d'un statut européen des mutuelles? Ces résultats confirment-ils (comme l'indiquait l'étude financée par la Commission et publiée en octobre 2012) qu'un statut de la mutualité européenne est nécessaire et serait bénéfique?

3. la Commission peut-elle indiquer si elle compte présenter une nouvelle proposition concernant la question des mutuelles en Europe? Cette proposition ira-t-elle dans le sens de la création d'un statut pour les mutualités européennes, à la suite des recommandations du Parlement? La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de faire une nouvelle proposition avant la fin de son mandat?

4. la Commission ne considère-t-elle pas que l'absence d'un tel statut européen des mutuelles (car les mutuelles en Europe sont actuellement confrontées à de nombreuses difficultés et obstacles, les empêchant de mener une activité à l'échelle européenne et transfrontalière) constitue une violation des principes de liberté d'établissement et de libre prestation de services et plus largement une atteinte à la liberté de circulation?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(10 janvier 2014)

Les résultats de la consultation publique sur «la situation actuelle et les perspectives des mutuelles en Europe» sont déjà consultables en ligne ([1]).

Il en ressort essentiellement que la grande majorité des répondants sont favorables à la création d'un statut européen des mutuelles (SEM) comme solution possible aux obstacles juridiques qui empêchent les mutuelles de s'engager dans des activités transfrontalières.

Toutefois, une minorité de répondants ne voit pas l'utilité ou l'intérêt d'un SEM ou s'oppose à cette idée et s'interroge sur l'ampleur des obstacles recensés dans l'étude de faisabilité; elle estime que les problèmes tiennent aux dispositions de la législation européenne en vigueur, essentiellement dans le domaine des directives sur l'assurance-vie et décès, des futures règles de solvabilité et du droit des sociétés (directives sur les fusions, constitution de groupes, transfert du siège, etc.). Selon cette minorité, la solution de substitution devrait donc consister à réviser, au besoin, ces instruments.

Dans le contexte de l'élaboration d'une proposition de SEM, et dans le but de garantir des conditions de concurrence équitables pour toutes les entreprises, la Commission prépare actuellement une évaluation des incidences éventuelles d'un tel statut.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/mutuals/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012182/13
to the Commission
Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Creation of a European statute for mutual societies

Over the last few years, Parliament has adopted several resolutions calling for the creation of a European statute for mutual societies. On one occasion, this was following the withdrawal of the March 2006 proposal for a regulation on a European statute for mutual societies.

In March 2011, Parliament adopted a written declaration calling for the introduction of three separate European statutes for mutual societies, associations and foundations respectively. In March 2013, Parliament adopted a report on a European statute for mutual societies, in which it called on the Commission to submit one or more proposals as quickly as possible, to allow mutual societies to operate throughout Europe and across borders. In March 2013, the Commission launched a public consultation on the benefits of a European statute for mutual societies, followed by an impact assessment on 10 July 2013. The consultation was closed in June 2013 and the results were supposed to have been available in September 2013.

1. Can the Commission state when these results will be available?

2. Can the Commission state which way the results of the written consultation are leaning? Do most of the responses lean towards the creation of a European statute for mutual societies? Do the results confirm that a European statute for mutual societies is necessary and would be beneficial (as suggested by the Commission-funded study published in October 2012)?

3. Does the Commission intend to present a new proposal on the subject of mutual societies in Europe? Will this proposal favour the creation of a statute for European mutual societies, in accordance with Parliament's recommendations? Does the Commission intend to make a new proposal before the end of its mandate?

4. Given that mutual societies in Europe currently face various difficulties and obstacles which prevent them from conducting their business throughout Europe and across borders, does the Commission not think that the absence of a European statute for mutual societies constitutes an infringement of the principles of freedom of establishment, freedom of service provision and freedom of movement in general?

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

The results of the public consultation on 'the current situation and prospects of mutual societies in Europe' are already published online ([1]).

The main conclusions stemming from the consultation are that there is strong support amongst the majority of the respondents to promote a European Mutual Society (EMS) statute as a possible solution to the legal barriers that affects mutual societies' possibilities to engage in cross-borders activities.

A minority of respondents, however, do not see the need or show no interest in, or are negative towards, the idea of an EMS statute, and raise questions about the relevance of the barriers identified in the feasibility study; they consider that the problems are related to the provisions of existing European legislation, mostly in the area of insurance life and non-life Directives and the future Solvency rules and company law (mergers directive, constitution of groups, transfer of the seat etc.); therefore according to them the alternative solution should be to review, if necessary, these instruments.

The Commission is currently preparing an impact assessment of a statute for a European mutual society as part of the preparation of a proposal for such a statute and to ensure a level playing field for all enterprises.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/mutuals/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012324/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιδείνωση της βίας με βάση το φύλο εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης

Η οικονομική κρίση έχει επιδεινώσει τη βία με βάση το φύλο (ενδοοικογενειακή βία, βιασμοί, εμπορία ανθρώπων και σεξουαλική παρενόχληση). Το ποσοστό ενδοοικογενειακής βίας στην Ελλάδα έχει αυξηθεί κατά 47% τους τελευταίους μήνες. Από το συνολικό αριθμό των ανδρών που παρουσίασαν βίαιη συμπεριφορά, το 44% ήταν άνεργοι· τα κύρια χαρακτηριστικά όλων των δραστών ήταν οι αυξημένες οικονομικές υποχρεώσεις, το επαγγελματικό άγχος και η χαμηλή σεξουαλική δραστηριότητα. Όταν οι γυναίκες χάνουν την κοινωνικοοικονομική τους αυτονομία, καθίστανται περισσότερο ευάλωτες σε καταχρηστικές συμπεριφορές ανδρών και δεν έχουν άλλη επιλογή από την επιστροφή στους βάναυσους συντρόφους.

1. Είναι η Επιτροπή ενήμερη για αυτό το βίαιο κύκλο λεκτικής κακοποίησης, οικονομικού εκβιασμού, σεξουαλικής ταπείνωσης, ξυλοδαρμών και βιασμών;

2. Ποια πρακτικά μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει για να καταπολεμήσει τις βαθύτερες αιτίες της βίας, στις οποίες περιλαμβάνονται η ανεργία, η απογοήτευση και φτώχεια;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η καταπολέμηση της βίας κατά των γυναικών αποτελεί προτεραιότητα για την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, όπως φαίνεται στο σχέδιο δράσης για την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος της Στοκχόλμης, στον Χάρτη για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών και στη στρατηγική για την ισότητα μεταξύ γυναικών και ανδρών για την περίοδο 2010-2015.

Δεν υπάρχουν επίσημα και συγκρίσιμα στοιχεία σε επίπεδο ΕΕ σχετικά με τη βία κατά των γυναικών. Αυτό οφείλεται κυρίως στους εξής λόγους: τα θύματα σπάνια αναφέρουν τα περιστατικά βίας στις αρχές· όταν τα αναφέρουν, οι καταγγελίες δεν καταγράφονται συστηματικά ούτε καταχωρούνται από όλες τις αρμόδιες εθνικές υπηρεσίες· η ταξινόμηση των εγκλημάτων και οι μέθοδοι συλλογής στοιχείων διαφέρουν σημαντικά μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ. Ως εκ τούτου, είναι δύσκολο να μετρηθεί η βία και να αναλυθούν οι διακυμάνσεις της διαχρονικά και η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει καμία έρευνα που να αποδεικνύει αύξηση της βίας κατά των γυναικών λόγω της κρίσης.

Για να βελτιωθούν οι γνώσεις σχετικά με τη συχνότητα εμφάνισης του φαινομένου αυτού και τις πιθανές επιπτώσεις της κρίσης, η Επιτροπή διερευνά επί του παρόντος τις δυνατότητες εκμετάλλευσης των τρεχουσών ερευνών της Eurostat και συμμετέχει ενεργά στις εργασίες του Ευρωπαϊκού Ινστιτούτου για την ισότητα των φύλων. Τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας του Οργανισμού Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων για τις εμπειρίες των γυναικών από κρούσματα βίας θα δημοσιευθούν το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2014 ([1]).

Καθώς η βία κατά των γυναικών αποτελεί συνέπεια των ανισοτήτων μεταξύ των φύλων, η Επιτροπή θα εξακολουθήσει να προωθεί την ισότητα των φύλων και τη χειραφέτηση των γυναικών, ιδίως με την αύξηση της ευαισθητοποίησης, την ανταλλαγή ορθών πρακτικών, τη χρηματοδότηση και την παρακολούθηση της αποτελεσματικής εφαρμογής της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο στηρίζει μέτρα που απευθύνονται σε ανέργους και ιδίως γυναίκες και θα ασχοληθεί με αυτά τα προβλήματα και βάσει του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου 2014-20.

([1]) Πληροφορίες σχετικά με την υπό εξέλιξη έρευνα του Οργανισμού Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων διατίθενται στη διεύθυνση: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012324/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(29 October 2013)

Subject: Aggravation of gender-based violence as a result of the economic crisis

The economic crisis has aggravated gender-based violence (domestic violence, rape, human trafficking and sexual harassment). The rate of domestic violence in Greece has increased by 47% in the past few months. Out of the total number of men who behaved violently, 44% were unemployed; the main characteristics shared by all the offenders were increased financial obligations, job stress and low sexual activity. When women lose socioeconomic autonomy they become more vulnerable to abusive behaviour from men and are left without any option but to return to abusive partners.

1. Is the Commission aware of this violent cycle of verbal abuse, financial blackmail, sexual humiliation, beating and rape?

2. What practical measures does it intend to take to combat the root causes of violence, which include unemployment, frustration and poverty?

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

Fighting violence against women is a priority of the European 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.

There are no official and comparable data available at EU-level on violence against women. The main reasons for this are: victims rarely report violence to the authorities; when reported, complaints are not systematically recorded and registered by all relevant national services; classification of crimes and collection methods differ greatly between the EU Member States. It is therefore difficult to measure violence and to analyse its fluctuations over time and the Commission is not aware of any research demonstrating an increase of violence against women due to the crisis.

In order to improve knowledge about the prevalence of this phenomenon and the possible impact of the crisis, the Commission is exploring possibilities to exploit current Eurostat surveys and is actively participating in the work of the European Institute for Gender Equality. In the first quarter of 2014, the results of the Fundamental Rights' Agency's survey on women's experiences of violence ([1]) will be published.

As violence against women is a consequence of gender inequalities, the Commission will continue promoting gender equality and empowering women in particular through awareness-raising, exchanges of good practices, funding and monitoring the effective implementation of the EU legislation. The European Social Fund is supporting measures targeting the unemployed and women in particular and will address these problems also under the 2014-20 multi-annual financial framework.

([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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012403/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(31 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υπηρεσίες φροντίδας παιδιών

Σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη οι διαθέσιμες υπηρεσίες φροντίδας παιδιών είναι περιορισμένες (Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία, Τσεχία, Κύπρος, Ιταλία), το κόστος για τις υπηρεσίες φροντίδας των παιδιών αυξάνεται (Κάτω Χώρες, Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο), οι υπηρεσίες για τους ηλικιωμένους και τα άτομα με αναπηρίες συρρικνώνονται (Κάτω Χώρες, Ιρλανδία), και τα νοσοκομεία κλείνουν (Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία, Ρουμανία). Ως αποτέλεσμα, η ευθύνη της φροντίδας μετατίθεται από την κοινωνία στις οικογένειες και ως επί το πλείστον στις γυναίκες. Ταυτόχρονα οι κυβερνήσεις μειώνουν τη χρηματοδότηση μέτρων που προάγουν τον ισομερή επιμερισμό της παροχής φροντίδας ανάμεσα σε γυναίκες και άνδρες, όπως η άδεια πατρότητας με αποδοχές (Εσθονία, Ισπανία, Γερμανία).

Θα μπορούσε ως εκ τούτου η Επιτροπή:

1. να παράσχει πληροφορίες για τις επιπτώσεις που έχουν οι περικοπές των παροχών και των υπηρεσιών στα θέματα που αφορούν το φύλο;

2. να προσκομίσει, εφόσον έχει στη διάθεσή της, δικά της ερευνητικά αποτελέσματα;

3. να παράσχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα μέτρα που προτίθεται να λάβει, προκειμένου να αναχαιτίσει την περαιτέρω επιδείνωση της κατάστασης;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1. Η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε έκθεση εμπειρογνωμόνων σχετικά με «τον αντίκτυπο της οικονομικής κρίσης στην κατάσταση των γυναικών και των ανδρών και σχετικά με τις πολιτικές για την ισότητα των φύλων» ([1]) η οποία δείχνει ότι ο αντίκτυπος της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης διαφέρει σημαντικά από χώρα σε χώρα. Συγκεκριμένα, οι υπηρεσίες και παροχές που σχετίζονται με την παιδική μέριμνα αυξήθηκαν σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη, ενώ μειώθηκαν σε άλλα.

2. Στην τελευταία έκθεσή της με θέμα την «Πρόοδο ως προς την ισότητα μεταξύ γυναικών και ανδρών το 2012» ([2]), η Επιτροπή περιγράφει εν συντομία την κατάσταση της «οικονομικής ανεξαρτησίας με ίσους όρους κατά τη διάρκεια της κρίσης».

3. Στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε ειδικές ανά χώρα συστάσεις για προσιτές υπηρεσίες μέριμνας, για τη βελτίωση της φορολογικής μεταχείρισης των ατόμων που συνεισφέρουν δεύτερο εισόδημα στο νοικοκυριό, καθώς και για την αντιμετώπιση των διαφορών στις αμοιβές μεταξύ των δύο φύλων. Στην ετήσια ανασκόπηση της ανάπτυξης 2014 τονίζεται ότι θα πρέπει να δοθεί προτεραιότητα στη «διευθέτηση του ζητήματος του αντικτύπου των διαφορών αμοιβών και δραστηριοτήτων μεταξύ ανδρών και γυναικών στα συνταξιοδοτικά δικαιώματα των γυναικών» και ότι «η πρόσβαση σε προσιτές υπηρεσίες μέριμνας θα βοηθήσει στη συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας». Επιπλέον, τονίζεται ότι πρέπει να αναπτυχθούν ενεργητικές στρατηγικές ένταξης, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της παροχής ευρείας πρόσβασης σε προσιτές και υψηλής ποιότητας κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες και υπηρεσίες υγείας και παιδικής μέριμνας.

Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται με τα κράτη μέλη ώστε να αξιοποιήσουν πλήρως τις επιλογές συγχρηματοδότησης που προσφέρονται από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και κατά τη διάρκεια της επόμενης περιόδου προγραμματισμού, για την ανάπτυξη υπηρεσιών μέριμνας παιδιών και άλλων εξαρτώμενων προσώπων ([3]), την κατάρτιση του προσωπικού και τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας των υπηρεσιών.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/130522_crisis_report_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130530_annual_report_en.pdf
([3]) Οι οποίες μπορούν να χρηματοδοτηθούν, για παράδειγμα, από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012403/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(31 October 2013)

Subject: Childcare

In certain Member States childcare availability is limited (GR, PT, CZ, CY, IT), childcare fees are on the increase (NL, UK), services for the elderly and the disabled are being reduced (NL, IE), and hospitals are closing (GR, PT, RO). This transfers the responsibility for care from society to households, and mostly to women. At the same time, governments are cutting back on measures that encourage the equal division of care between women and men, such as paid paternity leave (EE, ES, DE).

Could the Commission therefore:

1. provide information on the gender-related impact of cutbacks in services and benefits;

2. provide its own research findings, if available;

3. provide information on measures it intends to take to combat further deterioration.

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

1. The Commission has published an expert report on 'the impact of the economic crisis on the situation of women and men and on gender equality policies' ([1]) which shows that the impact of fiscal consolidation varies considerably among countries. Specifically, childcare related services and benefits were increased in some Member States, while reduced in others.

2. In its last report on 'Progress on equality between women and men in 2012' ([2]), the Commission gives a short state of play of the 'equal economic independence during the crisis'.

3. In the framework of the European Semester the Commission proposed country specific recommendations for affordable care services, for improving the fiscal treatment of second earners and for tackling the gender pay gap. The Annual Growth Survey 2014 highlights that priority should be given to 'addressing the impact of gender pay and activity gaps on women's pension entitlements' and that 'access to affordable care services will help the participation of women in the labour market.' It further stresses that active inclusion strategies should be developed, including broad access to affordable and high-quality social and health services and childcare.

The Commission works together with the Member States to make full use of the co-financing options offered by the Structural Funds including during the next programming period, for developing childcare services and services for other dependent people ([3]), staff training and improving service quality.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/130522_crisis_report_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130530_annual_report_en.pdf
([3]) Which can be financed for example by the European Regional Development Fund.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012433/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(4 November 2013)

Subject: Combating fuel laundering

This week in my constituency of Northern Ireland, an illegal fuel laundering plant in Crossmaglen, close to the border with the Republic of Ireland, was raided and dismantled by police, customs and officers from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. When active, the plant was capable of producing more than 16 million litres of fuel a year, evading millions of pounds in taxes and duties.

1. Can the Commission please provide details of any information it possesses on the cost of fuel laundering to the EU economy and, if relevant, break down these statistics by Member State?

2. What steps are being taken at EU level to combat fuel laundering in the Member States, particularly in border areas, which are more susceptible to the threats posed by this aspect of organised crime?

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

The Commission places a high priority on the fight against organised crime. Measures taken so far in the area of the fight against organised crime at the EU level (for more details see the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/index_en.htm) could also be applied by the Member States in the cases described by the Honourable Member.

In March 2012 the UK hosted a workshop organised in the framework of the Fiscalis 2013 programme which was dedicated to the issue of fighting tax fraud and evasion with regard to fuels. Further discussions with Member States took place in the Committee on Excise Duty in 2012 and 2013. Work on this issue will continue in the expert working group dealing with excise duty issues organised by the Commission and in the Committee.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012462/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 novembre 2013)

Objet: Présence de substances toxiques dans les lingettes pour bébés

Le phénoxyéthanol, éther aromatique, entrant dans la composition des lingettes nettoyantes destinées aux bébés est une substance qui a causé des allergies cutanées et des troubles neurologiques chez les adultes. En France, l'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé (ANSM) estime donc qu'elle ne devrait pas être utilisée pour les produits destinés aux enfants.

Actuellement, la réglementation européenne limite à 1 % la concentration maximale d'utilisation du phénoxyéthanol dans les produits de beauté et d'hygiène. Ce taux apparaît encore trop élevé aux yeux de l'agence française qui souhaite l'abaisser à 0,4 % dans les produits d'hygiène destinés aux enfants en bas âge. D'autant que ce produit est utilisé en moyenne six fois par jour et qu'il n'est pas forcément rincé.

Selon une enquête publiée en France cette semaine, la grande majorité des lingettes et laits de toilette utilisés lors de la toilette est, ainsi, potentiellement nocive pour les bébés. Une association de défense des consommateurs a fait tester 34 produits grand public en laboratoire. Les résultats, qualifiés d'«alarmants», révèlent que 26 lingettes et 6 laits de toilette contiendraient des produits dangereux pour la santé.

Aussi, la Commission compte-t-elle répondre aux demandes des associations françaises qui l'exhortent à renforcer la législation européenne pour ces produits destinés à des enfants en bas âge, particulièrement vulnérables, afin de mettre fin à leur exposition à des produits potentiellement dangereux?

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(10 janvier 2014)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à la réponse apportée à la question E-012173/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012462/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Toxic substances in baby wipes

Phenoxyethanol is an aromatic ether contained in baby wipes that has been shown to cause skin allergies and neurological disorders in adults. In France, the National Agency for the Safety of Medicines and Health Products (ANSM) has recommended that it should not be used in products designed for children.

EU regulations currently limit the maximum concentration of phenoxyethanol in beauty and hygiene products to 1%. This percentage still seems too high in the eyes of the French agency, which would like to reduce it to 0.4% in hygiene products designed for young children. This is of particular importance given that this type of product is used on average six times a day and is not necessarily rinsed.

According to a survey published in France this week, most wipes and cleansing milks are potentially harmful to babies. A consumer organisation had 34 consumer products tested in a laboratory. The results, which it described as 'alarming', revealed that 26 wipes and 6 cleansing milks contained products that were harmful to human health.

Does the Commission intend to respond to those French associations that are calling on it to strengthen EU legislation on these products designed for young children (who are particularly vulnerable) in order to ensure that they are no longer exposed to potentially harmful products?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its earlier answer to the Question E-012173/2013 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012468/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σταθεροποίηση της ελληνικής οικονομίας

Σε πρόσφατες δηλώσεις του, ο κ. Όλι Ρεν τόνισε πως «είναι ενθαρρυντικές οι ενδείξεις σταθεροποίησης της ελληνικής οικονομίας».

Ερωτάται ο αρμόδιος Επίτροπος:

1. Με το λαό της Ελλάδας να έχει βυθιστεί στην άκρα εξαθλίωση, πώς τεκμηριώνει τη δήλωσή του με πραγματικά στοιχεία και αριθμούς;

2. Στη βάση ποιας έρευνας μπορεί να την τεκμηριώσει;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Οι πρώτες ενδείξεις σταθεροποίησης της ελληνικής οικονομίας παρατηρήθηκαν το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2013, με συνολική επιβράδυνση της ύφεσης. Μια ισχυρή ανάκαμψη του τουρισμού παρατηρήθηκε κατά τη διάρκεια του καλοκαιριού. Η Ελλάδα έχει ωφεληθεί από την αυξημένη ανταγωνιστικότητά της έναντι άλλων προσφιλών προορισμών διακοπών. Μετά την απότομη βελτίωση του κλίματος εμπιστοσύνης και των χρηματοοικονομικών δεικτών (ESI, PMI, διαφορικό επιτόκιο των κρατικών ομολόγων) το πρώτο εξάμηνο του έτους, και παρά την προσωρινή αποδυνάμωσή τους την άνοιξη, λόγω της αβεβαιότητας για το πρόγραμμα της Κύπρου, ο τουρισμός πυροδότησε τη βελτίωση κατά το δεύτερο τρίμηνο του 2013 και υποστήριξε μια καλή επίδοση του ΑΕΠ το τρίτο τρίμηνο. Παρά την περαιτέρω συγκέντρωση της καταβολής των φόρων το τελευταίο τρίμηνο του 2013, η οποία αναμένεται να επηρεάσει αρνητικά την κατανάλωση, η αύξηση του πραγματικού ΑΕΠ αναθεωρήθηκε προς τα πάνω για το 2013 και αναμένεται πλέον στο -4,0%.

Καθοδηγούμενο από τις εξαγωγές και τις επενδύσεις, το πραγματικό ΑΕΠ αναμένεται να αυξηθεί το 2014 με ετήσιο ρυθμό αύξησης 0,6%. Αντιθέτως, η ιδιωτική κατανάλωση αναμένεται να συνεχίσει να υποχωρεί παράλληλα με το συνολικό διαθέσιμο εισόδημα. Το 2015, η ανάκαμψη αναμένεται να ενισχυθεί, καθώς οι επενδύσεις καθίστανται ο βασικός μοχλός της ανάκαμψης. Μία ανάκαμψη των εξαγωγών στο πλαίσιο της ζώνης ευρώ, θα πρέπει να υποστηρίξει την αύξηση των εξαγωγών εμπορευμάτων καθώς και μεγαλύτερα έσοδα από τη ναυτιλία και τον τουρισμό. Με την κατανάλωση να μην αποτελεί πλέον ανασχετικό παράγοντα, η αύξηση του πραγματικού ΑΕΠ προβλέπεται να είναι 2,9 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012468/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Stabilisation of the Greek economy

In his recent statements, Olli Rehn has stressed that 'there are encouraging signs of stabilisation in the Greek economy'.

1. With the people of Greece having been plunged into deep misery, can the Commissioner substantiate his statement with actual data and figures?

2. What research does he have to back it up?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

The first signs of stabilisation of the Greek Economy have been recorded during the first half of 2013, marked by an overall softening of the recession. A strong revival of tourism has occurred over the summer. Greece has benefited from increased competitiveness against other popular holiday destinations. Following the sharp improvement of confidence and financial indicators (ESI, PMI, government bond spreads) in the first half of the year, and despite their temporary weakening in spring due to uncertainties over the Cypriot programme, tourism triggered the improvement in the second quarter of 2013 and supported a good GDP reading in the third quarter. Despite a further concentration of tax payments in the last quarter of 2013, which is expected to weigh on consumption, real GDP growth has been revised upwards for 2013 and is now projected at -4.0%.

Led by exports and investment, real GDP is expected to expand in 2014 at an annual growth rate of 0.6%. In contrast, private consumption is expected to still decline, in line with aggregate disposable income. In 2015, the recovery is forecast to gain strength, as investment becomes the main engine of the recovery. A rebound in exports in the context of the euro area recovery should support a revival in goods export growth as well as stronger shipping and tourism revenues. With consumption no longer being a drag, real GDP growth is projected at 2.9%.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012470/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανάπτυξη στην κατεχόμενη Κύπρο

Με πρόσφατες δηλώσεις του, ο λεγόμενος πρεσβευτής της Τουρκίας στα κατεχόμενα, Χαλίλ Ιμπραχίμ Ακτσά, ανέφερε ότι η Άγκυρα παίζει σημαντικό ρόλο στην εφαρμογή των οικονομικών πολιτικών στο ψευδοκράτος.

Είπε συγκεκριμένα πως «Η Τουρκία ανέλαβε τη δική της ευθύνη σ' αυτό το θέμα, έχοντας την ανάπτυξη στα δικά της χέρια. Η υπό τουρκική κατοχή περιοχή έχει ένα περιορισμένο ρόλο στην ανάπτυξη και την κατανομή του εισοδήματος».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς σχολιάζει τη συγκεκριμένη δήλωση;

2. Γνωρίζει πόσος είναι ο ετήσιος «αναπτυξιακός προϋπολογισμός» που δαπανάται από μια κατοχική δύναμη, υποψήφια προς ένταξη στην ΕΕ και ποιος πληρώνει γι' αυτόν για να διατίθεται σε ένα παράνομο ψευδοκράτος;

3. Πώς διασφαλίζει ότι δεν χρησιμοποιούνται ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην παράγραφο 16 των συμπερασμάτων του Συμβουλίου του Δεκεμβρίου 2013 ([1]): «Όπως τονίζεται στο διαπραγματευτικό πλαίσιο, το Συμβούλιο αναμένει από την Τουρκία να υποστηρίξει ενεργά τις διαπραγματεύσεις με σκοπό μια δίκαιη, συνολική και βιώσιμη επίλυση του κυπριακού προβλήματος στο πλαίσιο του ΟΗΕ, σύμφωνα με τις σχετικές αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών και με τις αρχές στις οποίες θεμελιώνεται η Ένωση. Η δέσμευση της Τουρκίας και η συμβολή της με συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες στη συνολική αυτή διευθέτηση έχει ζωτική σημασία».

Τα έργα που χρηματοδοτούνται στο πλαίσιο του Μηχανισμού Προενταξιακής Βοήθειας (ΜΠΒ) αποσκοπούν στην στήριξη των προσπαθειών της Τουρκίας για εναρμόνισή της με τα πρότυπα της ΕΕ, ενώ η Επιτροπή επιβλέπει την ενδεδειγμένη χρήση των κονδυλίων στην Τουρκία.

Από το 2006, η Επιτροπή έχει θέσει σε εφαρμογή πρόγραμμα ενισχύσεων προς την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα δυνάμει του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 389/2006 του Συμβουλίου ([2]) που εγκρίθηκε από όλα τα κράτη μέλη [με τον γενικό στόχο να διευκολυνθεί η επανένωση της Κύπρου μέσω της προαγωγής της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας].

([1]) http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/140142.pdf
([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 389/2006 του Συμβουλίου, της 27ης Φεβρουαρίου 2006, για τη σύσταση μέσου χρηματοδοτικής στήριξης για την προαγωγή της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης της τουρκοκυπριακής κοινότητας και για τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 2667/2000 σχετικά με την Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Ανασυγκρότησης, ΕΕ L 65, της 7.3.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012470/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Development in occupied Cyprus

In his recent statements, the so-called Turkish ambassador to the occupied territories, Halil İbrahim Akça, has said that Ankara plays an important role in the implementation of economic policies in the self-styled State.

Specifically, he said that 'Turkey has assumed its responsibilities in this sphere, and is responsible for development. The area under Turkish occupation has a limited role in development and the distribution of revenue'.

1. What is the Commission's view on this statement?

2. Does it know what annual 'development budget' is being spent by an occupying power which is a candidate for accession to the EU, and who is paying for it so that it may be allocated to an illegal, self-styled State?

3. How does the Commission ensure that European funds are not being used?

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

The Commission refers to paragraph 16 of the December 2013 Council Conclusions ([1]): 'As emphasised by the Negotiating Framework, the Council also expects Turkey to actively support the ongoing negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded. Turkey's commitment and contribution in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial.'

Projects funded through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) are designed to support Turkey's efforts of alignment with EU standards, and the Commission monitors the correct use of the funds in Turkey.

Since 2006, the Commission is implementing an Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community under Council Regulation (EC) No 389/2006 ([2]) adopted by all Member States [with the overall objective to facilitate the reunification of Cyprus by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community].

([1]) http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/140142.pdf
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 389/2006 of 27 February 2006 establishing an instrument of financial support for encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2667/2000 on the European Agency for Reconstruction, OJ L 65, 7.3.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012474/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Budget of the European Commission

President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, revealed on 21 October 2013that the Commission would run out of funds to make payments in November unless Parliament approved a EUR 2.7 billion supplementary and amending budget (No 6) in plenary. MEPs subsequently approved the additional funding in a hastily convened meeting of the Budgets Committee on 22 October, with Parliament voting in favour on 24 October.

While the upcoming vote on the amending budget ought to have been consolidated with other outstanding budget issues the previous week, the incidents of the week of 21 October raise a number of questions:

1. Was the Commission only aware that it was on the brink of shutdown on the morning of Monday 21 October? If so, why did it not know sooner?

2. If the Commission was aware of the impending shutdown before 21 October, why was Parliament not informed at an earlier stage?

3. Does the Commission consider that Parliament, and in particular the Committee on Budgets, was given adequate time to scrutinise the supplementary and amending budget?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

The Commission has pointed out several times that it was anticipating liquidity problems at the end of the year. It tabled amending budgets 6/2013 and 8/2013 in July and September, the practical effect of which was to improve its liquidity in 2013, provided they were approved by Parliament before 15 November 2013, i.e. during the October II part-session.

The initial plan was to vote on amending budget 8/2013 at the October II part-session. Following the decision to postpone the vote until the November part-session, the Commission asked that amending budget 6/2013 be approved urgently.

The Commission is very grateful to Parliament for having been able to take this decision despite the very tight deadlines.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012475/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Measures to tackle organised crime, corruption and money laundering

On Wednesday 23 October, Parliament approved an EU action plan for 2014-2019 which included seizing the financial assets of organised crime networks and tightening the legal definition of mafia-type criminal activity to include the crime of involvement in a mafia-type organisation. My own constituency of Northern Ireland has suffered, and continues to suffer, the devastating economic impact of organised crime, particularly in the border regions.

What assurances can the Commission give that it will listen to the recommendations drafted by the Special committee on organised crime, corruption and money laundering and approved by Parliament, in order to combat the scourge of organised crime?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 December 2013)

The European Commission considers the recommendations in the final report of the CRIM Committee an important point of reference for shaping policies for the fight against organised crime, corruption and money laundering.

Many of the initiatives mentioned by the report have recently been undertaken by the Commission, e.g. a legislative proposal on Europol (adopted on 27 March 2013), a legislative proposal on Eurojust and a legislative proposal on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (both adopted on 17 July 2013).

Other initiatives are currently under preparation, e.g. the EU Anti-Corruption Report and a proposal for a directive on criminal law aspects of money laundering. All initiatives undertaken by the Commission as well as their exact scope are carefully assessed in preparation, with full respect of principles of necessity, proportionality and subsidiarity.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012476/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Eggs from non-compliant countries illegally on the market

Given the cost to egg producers across the EU of complying with the Council Directive 1999/74/EC and the prohibition of non-enriched cage systems since January 2012, is the Commission aware of the number of eggs from non-compliant countries that are illegally in the marketplace? Furthermore, what strategies does the Commission have in place to reduce these figures?

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

It is the Member States' responsibility to ensure that no eggs from non-compliant holdings are placed on the market. There are no statistics pertaining to eggs from un-enriched cages produced in the EU, as they are now illegal. With regard to measures in place to reduce the number of eggs stemming from un-enriched cages, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to previous written questions E-009822/2013 and E-004763/2013 ([1]).

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

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-012479/13
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5. november 2013)

Om: Mellemafgrøder i reformen af den fælles landbrugspolitik

I arbejdsdokument DS/EGDP/2013/10 angiver Kommissionen, at et område med mellemafgrøder kun vil blive betragtet som et miljømæssigt indsatsområde (EFA), hvis området med afgrøder er større end det areal, som landmænd er påkrævet ifølge nitratdirektivet (91/676/EOEF).

Alle danske landmænd skal så mellemafgrøder på 10 eller 14 % af deres jord afhængigt af deres produktion. Nogle landmænd kan imidlertid erstatte mellemafgrøder med en anden foranstaltning. Det betyder, at danske landmænd sidste år tilsåede 210 000 hektarer med mellemafgrøder, der alle var baseret på nitratdirektivet.

Hvis Kommissionens arbejdsdokument fastholdes, vil danske landmænd således ikke kunne bruge et areal med mellemafgrøder som et miljømæssigt indsatsområde, selvom Danmark er den eneste medlemsstat, hvor der er krav om, at alle landmænd skal dyrke mellemafgrøder eller træffe tilsvarende foranstaltninger. Mener Kommissionen på baggrund af dette, at dens arbejdsdokument efterlever aftalen mellem Parlamentet og Ministerrådet om reformen af den fælles landbrugspolitik, der tydeligvis giver medlemsstaterne beføjelse til at lade områder med mellemafgrøder indgå som miljømæssige indsatsområder?

Arbejdsdokumentet udelukker desuden mellemafgrøder, der sås i henhold til nitratdirektivet, men tillader samtidig specifikt, at erosionshæmmende bælter anerkendes som miljømæssige indsatsområder, selvom de er påkrævet af EU-lovgivning (habitatdirektivet og nitratdirektivet). Således inkluderer det samme direktiv nogle miljømæssige indsatsområder, men ikke andre. Kan Kommissionen forklare logikken bag denne forskelsbehandling?

Desuden skelner Kommissionens forslag mellem mellemafgrøder, der er baseret på nitratdirektivet, og mellemafgrøder, der anvendes som en »landbrugs-/miljø-/klimaforanstaltning« under politikken for udvikling af landdistrikterne. Sidstnævnte anerkendes som en »tilsvarende foranstaltning«. Men hvordan kan en obligatorisk ordning, der har en veldokumenteret miljømæssig effekt, men som indebærer betydelige omkostninger for landmændene, ikke blive inkluderet, mens en frivillig ordning med tilskud kan?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Dacian Cioloş
(28. november 2013)

Kommissionen er i gang med at udarbejde de delegerede retsakter, der er nødvendige for gennemførelsen af reformen af den fælles landbrugspolitik, i overensstemmelse med Kommissionens beføjelser jf. basisretsakterne. Forberedelsen af delegerede retsakter omfatter drøftelser i ekspertgrupper med eksperter fra medlemsstaterne og Europa-Parlamentet. Denne proces er endnu ikke afsluttet, og arbejdsdokument DS/EGDP/2013/10 skal ses i den kontekst. Kommissionen vil tage stilling til alle relevante spørgsmål, som stilles i forbindelse med forslaget for Danmark, og om nødvendigt revidere det.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012479/13
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Catch crops in the CAP reform

In its working document DS/EGDP/2013/10 the Commission states that an area with catch crops will only be considered to be an ecological focus area (EFA) if the establishment of the crops goes beyond what is required from farmers pursuant to the nitrate directive (91/676/EEC).

All Danish farmers are required to establish catch crops on 10 or 14% of their land, depending on their production. However, some farmers can substitute catch crops with another measure. This means that last year Danish farmers established around 210 000 hectares of catch crops which were all based on the nitrate directive.

Thus, if the working document of the Commission is upheld, Danish farmers will not be able to use catch crops as an EFA even though Denmark is the only Member State where all farmers are required to establish catch crops or equivalent measures. Bearing this in mind, does the Commission consider that its working document complies with the agreement between Parliament and the Council of Ministers on the CAP reform, which clearly gives authority to Member States to include areas with catch crops as EFAs?

Furthermore, the working document rules out catch crops which are established pursuant to the nitrate directive, but at the same time specifically allows buffer strips to be recognised as EFAs even though they are required by EU regulations (the habitat and the nitrate directives). In this way, the very same directive includes some EFAs but not others. Can the Commission explain the reasoning behind this discrimination?

In addition, the Commission's proposal distinguishes between catch crops based on the nitrate directive and catch crops established as an 'agri-environment-climate measure' under the rural development policy. The latter is recognised as an 'equivalent measure'. However, why can a mandatory scheme, which has well-documented environmental effects but imposes significant costs to farmers, not be included, whereas a voluntary scheme based on a subsidy can?

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

The Commission is in the process of developing the delegated acts necessary to implement the CAP reform and in accordance with the empowerments for the Commission foreseen in the basic acts. The preparation of delegated acts involves discussions in the context of expert groups with experts from the Member States and European Parliament. This process is still ongoing and working document DS/EGDP/2013/10 is to be seen in that context. The Commission will assess all the relevant questions raised in relation to the proposal for DA and will revise it as necessary.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-012480/13
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(5. november 2013)

Om: Spredning af bynkeambrosie

Af EU-Kommissionens svar til mig af 25. oktober 2013 angående bynkeambrosie fremgår det, at direktiv 2002/32/EF har strenge foranstaltninger vedrørende forekomsten af frø af bynkeambrosie i fodermidler og foderblandinger. Ifølge svaret skal spredningen af bynkeambiose i EU undgås gennem en effektiv håndhævelse af foranstaltningerne fra medlemsstaternes side.

Jeg har dog ikke fået svar på, hvad Kommissionen agter at gøre ved det aktuelle problem med spredning af bynkeambrosie.

Når Kommissionen svarer, at det er medlemslandenes ansvar, hvad har Kommissionen så tænkt sig at gøre for at sikre, at landene overholder de gældende regler?

Det er vel op til Kommissionen at sikre, at reglerne bliver implementeret og overholdt i overensstemmelse med EU-retten?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(4. december 2013)

Kommissionen har offentliggjort et forslag til forordning om forebyggelse og håndtering af introduktion og spredning af invasive ikkehjemmehørende arter ([1]), herunder et system for tidlig varsling og reaktion sammenkoblet med et system til udveksling af oplysninger medlemsstaterne imellem for at sikre en hurtig og koordineret indsats, ud fra en risikobaseret tilgang, der koncentrerer indsatsen om de mest skadevoldende invasive ikkehjemmehørende arter.

Som nævnt i svaret på forespørgsel P-011137/2013 ([2]) fra det ærede medlem fremhævede Kommissionen over for de kompetente myndigheder fra medlemsstaterne på mødet i Den Stående Komité for Fødevarekæden og Dyresundhed, afdelingen for foder, den 17.-18. oktober 2013 ([3]) betydningen af en effektiv håndhævelse af bestemmelserne vedrørende forekomsten af frø af bynkeambrosie i fodermidler for at beskytte folkesundheden.

Ansvaret for at håndhæve foderstof- og fødevaresikkerhedsbestemmelserne påhviler medlemsstaterne, som skal etablere et omfattende system af offentlig kontrol for at kontrollere overholdelsen af fødevarelovgivningen. Kommissionens Generaldirektorat for Sundhed og Forbrugeres Levnedsmiddel- og Veterinærkontor (FVO) gennemfører jævnligt audit for at sikre, at medlemsstaterne overholder EU-lovgivningen om fødevaresikkerhed, dyresundhed og -velfærd samt plantesundhed. På disse audit vurderes de kontrolsystemer, der er indført i medlemsstaterne, og deres effektivitet med henblik på at håndhæve EU-fødevare- og fodersikkerhedslovgivningen. Rapporterne fra disse audit er tilgængelige på webstedet ([4]).

([1]) KOM(2013)0620 endelig.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Rapport fra mødet tilgængelig på http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/animalnutrition/sum_1718102013_en.pdf Spørgsmålet blev drøftet under punkt A.7 på dagsordenen.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012480/13
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Spread of common ragweed

In its answer to me, dated 25 October 2013, in connection with common ragweed, the Commission states that directive 2002/32/EC contains strict provisions on the presence of common ragweed seeds in feed and compound feedingstuffs. According to the answer, the spread of common ragweed in the EU should be averted through effective enforcement of those provisions by Member States.

However, no answer was given as to what measures the Commission itself proposes to take to address the problem of the spread of common ragweed.

The Commission's response is that this is the responsibility of Member States. What, however, does the Commission intend to do in order to ensure that they comply with the rules?

Would the Commission agree that it is its responsibility to ensure that the rules are applied and observed in accordance with EC law?

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

The Commission has published a proposal for a regulation for the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species ([1]), including an early warning and rapid response system, coupled with a system for the exchange of information between Member States to ensure swift and coordinated action, on the basis of a risk-based approach that would focus action on the most damaging invasive alien species.

As mentioned in reply to Question P-011137/2013 ([2]) of the Honourable Member, the Commission has highlighted to the competent authorities from the Member States in the meeting of Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health, section Animal Nutrition on 17-18 October 2013 ([3]), the importance of an effective enforcement of the provisions as regards the presence of common ragweed seeds in feed for the protection of public health.

Responsibility for enforcing feed and food safety rules lies with the Member States, which are required to establish a comprehensive system of official controls to verify compliance with food law. The Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General (FVO) undertakes regular audits to ensure that Member States are respecting EU legislation on food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health. In these audits, the control systems in place in the Member States and their effectiveness for the enforcement of European feed and food safety legislation are assessed. The reports of these audits are available on the website ([4]).

([1]) COM(2013) 620 final.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Report of the meeting available on http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/animalnutrition/sum_1718102013_en.pdf The issue was discussed under agenda item A.7.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012481/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Στόχοι του σχεδίου δράσης της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά 2009-2012

Δύο από τους διακηρυγμένους στόχους του σχεδίου δράσης της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά 2009-2012 (ΕΕ C 326 της 20.12.2008) ήταν η έγκαιρη ανίχνευση και τα προγράμματα παρέμβασης για χρήστες που κινδυνεύουν να αναπτύξουν τοξικομανία και η εστιασμένη πρόληψη της ιδιαίτερα επικίνδυνης συμπεριφοράς των χρηστών ναρκωτικών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Καθώς το συγκεκριμένο σχέδιο δράσης ολοκληρώθηκε, είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει στοιχεία αναφορικά με την επίτευξη ή μη των παραπάνω στόχων;

2. Είναι ικανοποιημένη η Επιτροπή από την εκτέλεση του σχεδίου δράσης της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά και ποιοι οι νέοι στόχοι από εδώ και πέρα;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Τα επιτεύγματα της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά 2005-2012 και των σχεδίων δράσης για την εφαρμογή της υποβλήθηκαν σε εξωτερική αξιολόγηση που δρομολογήθηκε από την Επιτροπή. Η έκθεση αξιολόγησης ([1]), η οποία ολοκληρώθηκε τον Μάρτιο του 2012, προσδιόρισε τη μείωση της ζήτησης ναρκωτικών ως έναν τομέα κύριας προστιθέμενης αξίας της στρατηγικής και των σχεδίων δράσης της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά, και σημείωσε μια μέτρια τάση για πιο στοχοθετημένες προσεγγίσεις και πρότυπα όσον αφορά τα προγράμματα πρόληψης της χρήσης των ναρκωτικών.

Οι δραστηριότητες που αποσκοπούν στη μείωση της ζήτησης ναρκωτικών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της πρόληψης, εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ, τα οποία λαμβάνουν τα μέτρα που είναι τα πλέον κατάλληλα για τις κοινωνικο-οικονομικές και πολιτιστικές συνθήκες που επικρατούν στην εκάστοτε χώρα.

Τα χρηματοδοτικά προγράμματα της ΕΕ, όπως το πρόγραμμα Πρόληψη των ναρκωτικών και σχετική ενημέρωση ([2]), συμπληρώνουν τις δράσεις των κρατών μελών, υποστηρίζοντας έργα που αποσκοπούν, για παράδειγμα, στην ανάπτυξη καινοτόμων προσεγγίσεων για την πρόληψη της χρήσης των ναρκωτικών ή στην ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών.

Η πρόληψη της χρήσης των ναρκωτικών αποτελεί επίσης προτεραιότητα της τρέχουσας στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά ([3]), η οποία καλύπτει την περίοδο 2013-2020. Η τρέχουσα στρατηγική για τα ναρκωτικά υπογραμμίζει την ανάγκη όχι μόνο να βελτιωθεί η διαθεσιμότητα, η προσβασιμότητα και η κάλυψη αποτελεσματικών και διαφοροποιημένων μέτρων για τη μείωση της ζήτησης, και να προαχθεί η χρήση και ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών, αλλά και να επιτευχθεί η ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή ποιοτικών προτύπων. Το σχέδιο δράσης της ΕΕ για τα ναρκωτικά 2013-2016 ([4]) ορίζει συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες για την υλοποίηση των προτεραιοτήτων αυτών.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/rand_final_report_eu_drug_strategy_2005-2012_en.pdf
([2]) Για λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με το πρόγραμμα, επισκεφτείτε την παρακάτω διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/programme/drug-prevention-information/index_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:402:0001:0010:el:PDF
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/drugs-ap-2013-2016_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012481/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Objectives of the EU Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012

Two of the declared objectives of the EU Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012 (OJ C 326, 20.12.2008) were early detection and intervention programmes for users at risk of addiction and the targeted prevention of high-risk behaviour by drug users.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. As the specific action plan has now been completed, can it provide information on whether or not the above objectives have been achieved?

2. Is it satisfied with the implementation of the EU Drugs Action Plan and what are the new objectives for the future?

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

The achievements of the EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012 and of its implementing action plans were subject to an external evaluation, launched by the Commission. The evaluation report ([1]), which was completed in March 2012, identified drug-demand reduction as an area of key added value of the EU Drugs Strategy and action plans, and noted a moderate shift towards more targeted approaches and models in drug prevention programmes.

Activities aimed at reducing the demand for drugs, including prevention, are the responsibility of the EU Member States, which take the measures that are most suited to their socioeconomic and cultural context.

EU financial programmes, such as the Drug Prevention and Information Programme ([2]), complement Member States' actions by supporting projects seeking to develop innovative drug prevention approaches, for instance, or the sharing of best practice.

Drug prevention is also a priority under the current EU Drugs Strategy ([3]), covering the period 2013-2020. The current Drugs Strategy stresses the need to improve the availability, accessibility and coverage of effective and diversified drug-demand reduction measures, to promote the use and exchange of best practices, and to develop and implement quality standards. The EU Drugs Action Plan 2013-2016 ([4]) sets out concrete actions to implement these priorities.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/rand_final_report_eu_drug_strategy_2005-2012_en.pdf
([2]) For details of the Programme, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/programme/drug-prevention-information/index_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:402:0001:0010:el:PDF
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/drugs-ap-2013-2016_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012483/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αξιολόγηση της πρωτοβουλίας πολιτών

Η εφαρμογή της Ευρωπαϊκής Πρωτοβουλίας Πολιτών που προβλέφθηκε από τη Συνθήκη της Λισαβόνας και τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή από την 1η Απριλίου 2012 παρέχει σε ένα εκατομμύριο πολίτες της ΕΕ τη δυνατότητα να συμμετέχουν άμεσα στη διαμόρφωση των πολιτικών της ΕΕ, ζητώντας από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να υποβάλει νομοθετική πρόταση. Καθώς αποτελεί ένα από τα σημαντικότερα πολιτικά εργαλεία εμπλοκής των πολιτών στη λήψη αποφάσεων και επομένως στην αντιμετώπιση του δημοκρατικού ελλείμματος και του ζητήματος αλληλεγγύης στην ΕΕ, είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει:

1. Ενάμιση περίπου χρόνο μετά την έναρξη εφαρμογής της πρωτοβουλίας πολιτών, κρίνεται ικανοποιητικός ο βαθμός των μέχρι σήμερα πρωτοβουλιών που τελικά υποβλήθηκαν;

2. Για πόσες από αυτές η Επιτροπή έκρινε σκόπιμο να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλία;

3. Στη μέχρι σήμερα εφαρμογή του ανταποκρίνεται το πολύτιμο αυτό εργαλείο δημοκρατίας στους προβλεπόμενους στόχους που είχε θέσει η Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση του κ. Šefčovič εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Από την 1η Απριλίου 2012, η Επιτροπή παρέλαβε 21 προτάσεις πρωτοβουλιών πολιτών. Εννέα από αυτές έχουν ολοκληρώσει την περίοδο συγκέντρωσης των δηλώσεων υποστήριξης και 10 βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη ([1]) ενώ δύο αποσύρθηκαν από τους διοργανωτές τους. Καλύπτουν ποικιλία θεμάτων, όπως το περιβάλλον, η εκπαίδευση, τα μέσα ενημέρωσης και τα δικαιώματα των πολιτών. Άλλες 15 πρωτοβουλίες που υποβλήθηκαν στην Επιτροπή για καταχώριση δεν καταχωρίστηκαν επειδή δεν πληρούσαν ένα από τα νομικά κριτήρια που ορίζονται στον κανονισμό σχετικά με την πρωτοβουλία πολιτών ([2]), δηλαδή το ότι η πρόταση πρωτοβουλίας δεν πρέπει να είναι καταφανώς εκτός του πεδίου αρμοδιοτήτων της Επιτροπής.

Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι τα στοιχεία αυτά είναι ενθαρρυντικά και αποδεικνύουν τον ενθουσιασμό και τη στράτευση των πολιτών για το νέο αυτό δικαίωμά τους. Εκφράζει επίσης την ικανοποίησή της για το γεγονός ότι, αν και μια σειρά πρωτοβουλιών τυγχάνουν της ενεργού υποστήριξης διαφόρων οργανώσεων, η πλειονότητά τους προωθείται από πολίτες.

Επιπλέον, για τρεις από τις εννέα πρωτοβουλίες που ολοκληρώνονται («Η ύδρευση και η αποχέτευση είναι ανθρώπινο δικαίωμα!», «Ένας από εμάς» και «Σταματήστε τη ζωοτομία»), ανακοινώθηκε ότι έχουν συγκεντρώσει τον απαιτούμενο αριθμό υπογραφών. Παρά το γεγονός ότι οι δηλώσεις υποστήριξης δεν έχουν ακόμη ελεγχθεί από τις αρμόδιες εθνικές αρχές, πρόκειται για ένα θετικό και ελπιδοφόρο αποτέλεσμα του εν λόγω μέσου.

Ωστόσο, μέχρι σήμερα, καμία από αυτές τις πρωτοβουλίες δεν έχει υποβληθεί επισήμως στην Επιτροπή, η οποία, ως εκ τούτου, δεν είχε ποτέ την ευκαιρία να αποφανθεί για τις ενδεχόμενες ενέργειες στη συνέχεια πρωτοβουλίας πολιτών.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/ongoing?lg=el

([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 211/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Φεβρουαρίου 2011, σχετικά με την πρωτοβουλία πολιτών, ΕΕ L 65 της 11.3.2011, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:065:0001:0022:EL:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012483/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Assessment of European Citizens' Initiative

Under the European Citizens' Initiative provided for by the Lisbon Treaty and entering into force from 1 April 2012, one million EU citizens may together invite the Commission to submit a legislative proposal on matters directly relating to EU policy making. This is one of the most significant political instruments for public involvement in the decision-making process and is hence a means of addressing the democratic deficit and the issue of EU solidarity.

In view of this:

1. Around 18 months from the entry into force of the European Citizens' Initiative, is the Commission satisfied with the extent to which it has been put to use?

2. In how many cases has the Commission decided to take action?

3. Has this valuable democratic instrument up until now shown itself equal to the Commission's expectations?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(6 janvier 2014)

Depuis le 1er avril 2012, la Commission a enregistré 21 propositions d'initiative citoyenne. Neuf d'entre elles ont achevé leur période de collecte des déclarations de soutien et 10 sont toujours en cours ([1]) tandis que deux ont été retirées par leurs organisateurs. Elles portent sur des sujets très variés tels que l'environnement, l'éducation, les médias ou encore les droits des citoyens. 15 autres propositions d'initiative soumises à la Commission pour enregistrement n'ont pas pu être enregistrées car elles ne remplissaient pas l'un des critères juridiques fixés dans le règlement relatif à l'initiative citoyenne ([2]), à savoir le fait que la proposition d'initiative ne doive pas être manifestement en dehors du cadre des attributions de la Commission.

La Commission considère que ces chiffres sont encourageants et démontrent l'enthousiasme et l'engagement des citoyens pour leur nouveau droit. Elle se réjouit également du fait que, bien qu'un certain nombre d'initiatives bénéficient d'un soutien actif de diverses organisations, la majorité d'entre elles soient véritablement menées par des citoyens.

Par ailleurs, trois des neuf initiatives étant arrivées à leur terme («L'eau et l'assainissement sont un droit humain!», «Un de nous» et «Stop Vivisection») ont annoncé avoir atteint le nombre de signataires requis. Bien que les déclarations de soutien doivent encore être vérifiées par les autorités nationales compétentes, il s'agit d'un résultat positif et prometteur pour l'avenir de l'outil.

En revanche, à ce jour, aucune de ces initiatives n'a été formellement présentée à la Commission, qui ne s'est donc encore jamais prononcée sur les éventuelles suites à donner à une initiative citoyenne.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/ongoing.
([2]) Règlement (UE) No 211/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 16 février 2011 relatif à l'initiative citoyenne, OJ L 65, 11.3.2011, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:065:0001:0022:FR:PDF.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012484/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαφάνεια στην ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια που παρέχει η Ευρώπη

Με έκθεσή του στις 24.10.2013 (ECA/13/34) το Ευρωπαϊκό Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο εξέφρασε την ανησυχία του αναφορικά με τη διαφάνεια αξιοποίησης σημαντικών πόρων που προορίζονται για ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια. Συγκεκριμένα, εστίασε στα 14 δισ. δολάρια που διοχετεύθηκαν στην περιοχή της νοτιοανατολικής Ασίας που επλήγη από το φονικό τσουνάμι το 2004 δηλώνοντας ουσιαστικά αδυναμία ελέγχου για το αν και πώς αξιοποιήθηκαν τα συγκεκριμένα κεφάλαια. Καθώς είναι εντυπωσιακό το γεγονός ότι 9 χρόνια μετά τη συγκεκριμένη τραγωδία, η Ευρώπη δεν μπορεί ακόμη να εγγυηθεί τη διαφάνεια αξιοποίησης των πόρων που στάλθηκαν από ευρωπαίους πολίτες, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με ποιο τρόπο επικουρεί τις προσπάθειες των ελεγκτών για τη διαπίστωση της αξιοποίησης ή όχι των πόρων που εστάλησαν στην περιοχή;

2. Πώς θα διασφαλιστεί στο μέλλον ότι δεν θα επαναληφθεί παρόμοιο φαινόμενο;

3. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τα μέτρα που προτίθεται να λάβει η Επιτροπή για ευρωπαϊκές οργανώσεις που τους ανατέθηκε το έργο διαχείρισης και αξιοποίησης των σχετικών κεφαλαίων, σε περίπτωση που τυχόν αποδειχθούν αδιαφανείς χειρισμοί;

Απάντηση της κ. Georgieva εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η μνημονευθείσα έκθεση είναι στην πραγματικότητα δελτίο τύπου (ECA/13/34) που αναφέρεται σε μια πρόταση που έκανε ο Διεθνής Οργανισμός των Ανωτάτων Οργάνων Ελέγχου (Intosai) με στόχο τη βελτίωση της διαφάνειας και της λογοδοσίας όσον αφορά τα κεφάλαια ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο. Η πρόταση έγινε λόγω του ότι οι ελεγκτές διαπίστωσαν ότι ήταν δύσκολο — όχι αδύνατο, όπως επισημαίνεται στην ερώτηση —, εξηγηθούν οι λόγοι για τους οποίους χρησιμοποιήθηκαν πολλά από τα κεφάλαια ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας παγκοσμίως.

Η Επιτροπή διαθέτει ισχυρό νομικό πλαίσιο όσον αφορά τη λογοδοσία και τη διαφάνεια, το οποίο έχει αναγνωρισθεί από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο. Η Επιτροπή συμμετέχει επίσης στην ανάπτυξη και στη δοκιμή του συνόλου των προταθέντων μορφοτύπων αναφοράς Intosai. Επιπλέον η Επιτροπή διαχειρίζεται και συμμετέχει σε διάφορα συστήματα που παρέχουν διαφανείς και ενοποιημένες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα κεφάλαια ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας (EDRIS, FTS, TR-AID) ([1]).

Η χρησιμοποίηση των κεφαλαίων ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας που χορηγεί η Επιτροπή από τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ αποτελεί αντικείμενο πολλών ελέγχων στα διάφορα στάδια του προγράμματος ανθρωπιστικής βοήθειας. Τα διάφορα στάδια της στρατηγικής ελέγχου είναι τα ακόλουθα:

— Στάδιο καθορισμού αυστηρών κριτηρίων επιλογής και ποιοτικού ελέγχου των εταίρων μέσω τακτικών και ειδικών αξιολογήσεων;

— Στάδιο εκ των προτέρων ελέγχων όσον αφορά την επιλογή των προγραμμάτων πριν από την υπογραφή της σύμβασης;

— Στάδιο τακτικής παρακολούθησης των προγραμμάτων καθώς και πραγματοποίησης επιτόπιων ελέγχων;

— Στάδιο ελέγχου της επιλεξιμότητας των αιτούμενων δαπανών;

— Στάδιο λογιστικών ελέγχων και επαληθεύσεων κατά τη διάρκεια και μετά την υλοποίηση των δράσεων;

— Στάδιο αξιολόγησης και επαναληπτικών ελέγχων.

Μετά από όλους αυτούς τους ελέγχους η Επιτροπή είναι σε θέση να παρέχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με τον τελικό προορισμό της χορηγούμενης βοήθειας μέσα από ένα ευρύ φάσμα τακτικών εκθέσεων.

([1]) Ευρωπαϊκό σύστημα ενημέρωσης σχετικά με την αντιμετώπιση των καταστροφών (EDRIS), υπηρεσία χρηματοδοτικής παρακολούθησης (FTS).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012484/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Transparency regarding humanitarian aid provided by Europe

In its report of 24 October 2013 (ECA/13/34), the European Court of Auditors expressed concern regarding transparency in connection with the allocation of substantial humanitarian aid funds, referring in particular to the impossibility of establishing how or indeed whether an amount of USD 14 billion earmarked for assistance to South-East Asia in response to the lethal tsunami of 2004 was actually deployed. The fact that, nine years on, Europe is still unable to guarantee transparency regarding the use of European taxpayers' money remains a cause of great concern.

In view of this:

1. In what way is the Commission helping the auditors establish the extent to which funding in question has or has not been properly used?

2. How will it prevent any recurrence of such a situation in future?

3. What action will it take in response to any lack of transparency on the part of bodies entrusted by it with the management and deployment of humanitarian aid funds?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

The report mentioned is in reality a press release (ECA/13/34) which refers to a proposal made by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) which aims at improving transparency and accountability of humanitarian aid funds at a worldwide level. The proposal is triggered by the fact that auditors found it difficult — not impossible, as stated in the question — to account for many of humanitarian aid funds worldwide.

The Commission has a strong framework in respect of accountability and transparency in place recognised by the European Court of Auditors. The Commission equally participates in the development and testing of the INTOSAI set of proposed reporting formats. Additionally, the Commission manages and participates in several systems providing transparent and consolidated info on humanitarian aid funds EDRIS, FTS and TR-AID). ([1])

The use of humanitarian aid funds provided by the Commission from the EU budget is controlled through several layers of checks, at the various stages of the project cycle of operations. The main axes of the control strategy are the following:

— Strict selection and quality control mechanisms for partners through regular and *ad-hoc* assessment;

— *Ex-ante* controls on the selection of projects and before the contract's signature;

— Regular monitoring of all projects including field visits of the projects;

— Control of eligibility of claimed expenditure before final payment;

— Audits and verifications done during and after implementation of the actions;

— Evaluation and review programme.

Through the cumulative effects of these controls, the Commission is in a position to provide detailed information on the final destination of aid, as made available, in a comprehensive set of regular reports.

([1]) European Disaster Response Information System (EDRIS), the Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012487/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ραγδαία αύξηση των κρουσμάτων βίας κατά των γυναικών στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τα πρόσφατα δημοσιοποιημένα στατιστικά στοιχεία πανελλαδικής έρευνας που διενεργήθηκε για λογαριασμό της Γενικής Γραμματείας Ισότητας των Φύλων του Υπουργείου Εσωτερικών, τα κρούσματα βίας κατά των γυναικών στην Ελλάδα εμφανίζονται αυξημένα κατά περίπου 47% τον τελευταίο χρόνο, με μία στις τρεις γυναίκες να έχει πέσει θύμα ξυλοδαρμού. Με δεδομένο ότι η καταπολέμηση του φαινομένου της βίας σε βάρος των γυναικών αποτελεί διακηρυγμένο στόχο της ΕΕ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για τη διακύμανση του φαινομένου της βίας κατά των γυναικών στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Υπάρχουν έρευνες με τις οποίες να αποδεικνύεται η συσχέτιση της όξυνσης των εν λόγω φαινομένων βίας με τις επιπτώσεις της κοινωνικοοικονομικής κρίσης;

3. Όπως γνωρίζουμε, έχουν ήδη υλοποιηθεί ή βρίσκονται σε φάση υλοποίησης πληθώρα δράσεων, χρηματοδοτούμενων από τα Ευρωπαϊκά Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία, με στόχο, αφενός, τον περιορισμό και την αντιμετώπιση της βίας κατά των γυναικών και, αφετέρου, τη στήριξή των κακοποιημένων γυναικών. Πώς αξιολογεί τα μέχρι τώρα παραγόμενα αποτελέσματα;

4. Ποια είναι τα ποσοστά απορροφητικότητας των εν λόγω προγραμμάτων στα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η καταπολέμηση της βίας κατά των γυναικών αποτελεί προτεραιότητα για την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, όπως φαίνεται στο σχέδιο δράσης για την εφαρμογή του προγράμματος της Στοκχόλμης, στον Χάρτη για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών και στη στρατηγική για την ισότητα μεταξύ γυναικών και ανδρών για την περίοδο 2010-2015.

Δεν υπάρχουν επίσημα και συγκρίσιμα στοιχεία σε επίπεδο ΕΕ σχετικά με τη βία κατά των γυναικών, κυρίως επειδή: τα θύματα σπανίως καταγγέλλουν περιστατικά βίας· όταν υποβάλλονται, οι καταγγελίες δεν καταγράφονται συστηματικά από όλες τις αρμόδιες εθνικές υπηρεσίες· υφίστανται σημαντικές διαφορές στην κατηγοριοποίηση των εγκλημάτων και τις μεθόδους συλλογής δεδομένων μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ. Ως εκ τούτου, η καταμέτρηση των περιστατικών βίας και η ανάλυση των διακυμάνσεων τους σε βάθος χρόνου καθίσταται δύσκολη.

Για τη βελτίωση των γνώσεων σχετικά με τη συχνότητα εμφάνισης του φαινομένου αυτού, η Επιτροπή διερευνά τις δυνατότητες αξιοποίησης τρεχουσών ερευνών της Eurostat και συμμετέχει ενεργά στις εργασίες του Ευρωπαϊκού Ινστιτούτου Ισότητας των Φύλων. Επιπλέον, τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας του Οργανισμού Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων σχετικά με τις εμπειρίες γυναικών σε θέματα βίας ([1]) θα δημοσιευθούν στις αρχές του 2014.

Στην Ελλάδα, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ΕΚΤ) συγχρηματοδοτεί έργα για την παροχή βοήθειας στις πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των γυναικών που έχουν υποστεί κακοποίηση. Πρόκειται για συνεχιζόμενα έργα για τα οποία δεν έχει διενεργηθεί μέχρι στιγμής αξιολόγηση.

Τα έργα που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία δεν παρακολουθούνται σε επίπεδο υποομάδας και, ως εκ τούτου, δεν διατίθενται συγκεκριμένα ποσοστά αξιοποίησης.

([1]) Πληροφορίες σχετικά με την τρέχουσα έρευνα του ΟΘΔ διατίθενται στη διεύθυνση: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012487/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Sharp rise in the number of cases of violence against women in Greece

According to the recently published statistics of a survey covering the whole of Greece commissioned by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality of the Ministry of the Interior, incidents of violence against women in Greece increased by about 47% over the last year, affecting one woman in three. Given that the fight against violence against women is a declared objective of the EU, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any information on the fluctuation of the phenomenon of violence against women in the Member States?

2. Does any research exist demonstrating a correlation between an escalation of this phenomenon of violence and the impact of the socioeconomic crisis?

3. As we know, a plethora of actions financed by the European Structural Funds has already been implemented or is currently being implemented with the twofold aim of reducing and addressing violence against women and supporting women who have been abused. How does it evaluate the results obtained to date?

4. What are the take-up rates for these programmes in Member States?

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

Fighting violence against women is a priority of the European 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.

There are no official and comparable data available at EU-level on violence against women, mainly because: victims rarely report violence; when reported, complaints are not systematically recorded and registered by all relevant national services; classification of crimes and collection methods differ greatly between EU Member States. It is therefore difficult to measure violence and to analyse its fluctuations over time.

To improve knowledge of the prevalence of this phenomenon the Commission is exploring possibilities to exploit current Eurostat surveys and is actively participating in the work of the European Institute for Gender Equality. Moreover, the results of the Fundamental Rights' Agency's survey on women's experiences of violence ([1]) will be published early in 2014.

In Greece, the European Social Fund (ESF) co-finances projects providing assistance to the most vulnerable groups, including women who have been abused. These projects are ongoing and no evaluation has been conducted yet.

Projects co-financed by Structural Funds are not monitored on a sub-group basis, so no specific take-up rates are available.

([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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012488/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επικείμενη φορολόγηση στην Ελλάδα των αγροτεμαχίων — «χωραφιών» που δεν αποφέρουν εισόδημα

Στο πλαίσιο της κατάρτισης του νέου Ενιαίου Φόρου Ακινήτων στην Ελλάδα, προωθείται η διαβαθμισμένη φορολόγηση του συνόλου των αγροτεμαχίων, ακόμη δηλαδή και των μικρών εκτάσεων γης εκτός σχεδίου πόλης ή οικισμού που δεν καλλιεργούνται ή είναι χέρσα και δεν αποφέρουν κανενός είδους εισόδημα ή πλεονέκτημα στους ιδιοκτήτες τους. Επί του θέματος αυτού ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει το γεγονός της καθολικής μετατροπής της γης σε φορολογητέα ύλη;

2. Διαθέτει στοιχεία για την ύπαρξη αντίστοιχων ή παρόμοιων ολιστικής έμπνευσης καθεστώτων φορολόγησης της γης; Αν ναι, ποιες ήταν οι επιπτώσεις αυτών των φορολογικών επιβαρύνσεων στην διατήρηση της εν λόγω ιδιοκτησίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1. Η Επιτροπή δεν θα σχολιάσει το θέμα αυτό κατά το παρόν στάδιο, δεδομένου ότι οι ελληνικές αρχές εξακολουθούν να εργάζονται για τον ακριβή σχεδιασμό του νέου φόρου, ο οποίος θα αντικατοπτρίζεται στο σχέδιο νόμου που θα κατατεθεί για έγκριση στο Ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο.

2. Ο φόρος γης εφαρμόζεται το 2013 σε ορισμένες χώρες της ΕΕ, όπως η Δανία, η Εσθονία, η Ρουμανία, η Λιθουανία, η Γαλλία, η Ισπανία, η Γερμανία, η Ιταλία και η Βουλγαρία, και σε χώρες του ΟΟΣΑ (Αυστραλία, Νέα Ζηλανδία). Υπάρχει μεγάλη ποικιλία στον τρόπο με τον οποίο οι χώρες φορολογούν την ακίνητη περιουσία δυνάμει του περιοδικού φόρου επί των ακινήτων· ορισμένες φορολογούν μόνο τη γη, άλλες φορολογούν χωριστά τη γη και τα κτίρια, ενώ κάποιες άλλες φορολογούν τη συνολική αξία των ακινήτων (γηπέδων-οικοπέδων και κτιρίων). Στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, ο φόρος εφαρμόζεται συχνά ως ποσοστό της εκτιμηθείσας συνολικής αξίας της γης. Σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη (π.χ. Ρουμανία) υπάρχει ειδικός κατ' αποκοπή συντελεστής ανά τετραγωνικό μέτρο, ανάλογα με τη γεωγραφική θέση και τη χρήση της γης.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012488/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Plans to tax small plots of land in Greece yielding no returns

With the introduction of a new single property tax in Greece, plans exist to introduce a sliding scale tariff for all farmland, including small areas of uncultivated or fallow land not included in any urban or residential development plans and from which owners derive no financial or other rewards.

In view of this:

1. What view does the Commission take of the classification of all land as a taxable asset?

2. Does it have information regarding similar or corresponding all-encompassing land tax arrangements? If so, what are the implications thereof in terms of upkeep?

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

1. The Commission will not comment on this matter at this stage, as the Greek authorities are still working on the precise design of the new tax, which will be reflected in draft legislation to be approved by the Greek Parliament.

2. Tax on land is applied in a number of EU countries in 2013, such as Denmark, Estonia, Romania, Lithuania, France, Spain, Germany, Italy and Bulgaria and OECD countries (Australia, New Zealand). There is a wide variety in the way countries tax property under the recurrent property tax, some taxing only land, others taxing land and buildings separately, and still others taxing the total value of properties (land plus buildings). In EU Member States the tax is often applied as a percentage of the assessed total value of the land. In some Member States (e.g. Romania) there is an explicit lump sum per square meter tax rate depending on location and use of land.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012490/13
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Plastic pollution contamination

Plastic waste in our planet's oceans is estimated to be responsible for the deaths of millions of seabirds and fish and over 100 000 marine mammals annually. ([1]) In addition, chemical contaminants from plastic waste enter the food chain at the lowest level and gradually accumulate, appearing in higher concentrations in the food we eat and posing a serious risk to human health.

Once plastic waste enters the oceans it can stay there for years and is carried all over the world, meaning that plastic waste from Europe can cause severe environmental damage thousands of miles away in places where we are not even aware of it. Over 13 000 pieces of plastic float on every square kilometre of ocean. ([2])

Can the Commission state when the results of the consultation on the Green Paper on Plastic Waste will be published?

Does the Commission plan to come forward with legislation which will address both the quantity of plastic waste produced and the ecological, environmental and health problems caused by plastic waste across the globe?

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

The analysis of the consultation on the Green Paper on plastic waste was published on 28th November and is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/pdf/green_paper_plastic.pdf

One of the principal sources of plastic waste in oceans comes from lightweight plastic bags, 8 billion of which escape proper treatment each year. In view of this the Commission adopted recently a proposal for a directive to reduce use of such bags by 80% in the EU, and this proposal ([3]) is now with the co-legislators.

The Commission is preparing a review of waste legislation for spring 2014. In this process, the Commission intends to review the recycling targets in the Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC ([4]) as well as the targets on plastic recycling, presently in the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive 94/62/EC ([5]) and the landfill targets of the Landfill Directive 1999/31/EEC ([6]).

Building on legislative elements of this review, and in line with the arguments of the Rio+ 20 Summit and the 7th Environment Action Programme, the Commission is also considering how best to achieve a significant reduction in marine litter.

([1]) http://plastic-pollution.org/#the-victims-and
([2]) http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/sowb/casestudy/159
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/packaging/pdf/proposal_plastic_bag.pdf
([4]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([5]) OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.
([6]) OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012491/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Commission tendering process for SMEs

Would the Commission agree that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are a vital part of the European economy?

If so, can the Commission confirm if any targets exist for SMEs bidding for Commission work and what any such targets are?

Do any opportunities exist for SMEs with specialist knowledge to access Commission contracts and how are such opportunities made available to SMEs?

What mechanisms exist for a register of suppliers of specialist services (such as the UK G-Cloud framework), whereby suppliers can list their services so as to enable the Commission to issue direct invitations to tender?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

The Commission's public procurement follows the Financial Regulation and its Rules of Application. It aims to create conditions of fair and open competition for all economic operators. Public procurement is based on transparency and equal treatment, so no specific targets are set for SME bidding. Yet, the rules strive to ensure fair conditions of access for SMEs.

Recognising the key role that SME play in the EU economy, the Commission has put forward a series of measures, notably in the revision of the Financial Regulation and its Rules of Application adopted in 2012 and applicable from 2013, that are designed to improve their access to Commission contracts: the simplification of low value procedures, the possibility to divide contracts into lots, the use of electronic means of information and communication ([1]), the limitation of administrative burden ([2]), the recommendation to make interim payments.

SMEs can participate individually or as part of a consortium or as a subcontractor, based on their specialised skills and knowledge.

The Financial Regulation sets down 'the call for expression of interest (CEI)'. A CEI can be used either to pre-select candidates to be invited to submit tenders in response to future restricted procedures, or to collect a list of vendors to be invited to submit requests to participate or tenders in response to future procurement procedures. Any interested person may submit an application at any time during the period of validity of the list ([3]). A CEI shall be published in the Official Journal or wherever it is necessary to provide publicity among potential candidates, i.e. on the Internet site of the institution concerned.

([1]) e.g. e-procurement.
([2]) e.g. verification of exclusion criteria is based on a simple declaration on honour for candidates and tenderers.
([3]) With the exception of the last three months of that period.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012493/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: EU withdrawal procedure

Could the Commission confirm the procedure for a Member State to withdraw from the EU, and the timeline envisaged for the necessary legislation?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-004991/2012 ([1]).

Article 50 TEU specifies that the Treaties shall cease to apply to the State in question from the date of entry into force of the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after the notification of the intention to withdraw, unless the European Council, in agreement with the Member State concerned, unanimously decides to extend this period.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012496/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 novembre 2013)

Objet: Alerte inquiétante aux bactéries multirésistantes en région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

On se souvient qu'en 2011, une entérobactérie appelée *Escherichia Coli* avait semé le trouble en Allemagne en provoquant la mort de 14 patients. La même année, à Paris, trois autres décès avaient été imputés à une souche particulièrement virulente de *Klebsiella pneumoniae*.

Fin août 2013, cette même bactérie a provoqué la mise en alerte des hôpitaux azuréens, 22 patients décédés ayant été diagnostiqués comme porteurs de ce germe. Impossible néanmoins d'imputer directement leur décès à cette bactérie car la plupart des malades étaient vulnérables et souffraient de pathologies multiples.

En parallèle, du côté des Bouches-du-Rhône, une épidémie de *Clostridium difficile* sévit depuis mars 2013 dans plusieurs hôpitaux et maisons de retraite de la région de Marseille. Quarante personnes ont été atteintes et trois patients, touchés par ce germe, sont décédés. Là encore, le lien de causalité n'est pas strictement établi par la communauté médicale.

1. La Commission européenne suit-elle de près l'évolution de ces épidémies en région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur et dispose-t-elle de plus d'informations sur le lien de causalité entre la contamination à ces bactéries et les décès constatés?

Dans sa résolution intitulée «Le défi microbien — menaces croissantes de la résistance aux antimicrobiens» du 11 décembre 2012 (P7_TA(2012)0483), le Parlement européen a demandé la mise en place d'une feuille de route intégrée qui décrive les réactions stratégiques adéquates et envisage éventuellement des mesures législatives pour lutter contre la résistance de certaines bactéries aux antibiotiques.

2. Quelle suite concrète la Commission européenne compte-elle donner aux recommandations du Parlement européen afin de lutter contre la multi-résistance bactérienne dans l'Union européenne?

3. Que préconise la Commission européenne pour éviter que ces bactéries sortent des hôpitaux et apparaissent dans les villes?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(8 janvier 2014)

La Commission a connaissance des épidémies mentionnées par le parlementaire et ne dispose pas d'informations lui permettant d'établir un lien de causalité entre les infections et les cas mortels. Pour démontrer l'existence d'un tel lien, il est nécessaire que les autorités sanitaires françaises procèdent localement à des enquêtes supplémentaires.

La feuille de route du plan d'action de la Commission ([1]) pour combattre la menace croissante de la résistance aux antimicrobiens comprend des actions spécifiques faisant suite à la résolution du Parlement européen du 11 décembre 2012. Il s'agit, entre autres, d'élaborer des orientations en matière de prévention des infections et de lutte contre celles-ci, y compris l'importance du lavage des mains et des procédures d'hygiène dans les départements à hauts risques, le renforcement de la surveillance des infections associées aux soins de santé, y compris le contrôle de la propagation des bactéries les plus dangereuses et la formation du personnel de santé, afin de réduire au minimum le risque de propagation des bactéries au moyen de procédures médicales et paramédicales. Il s'agit également de fournir aux patients des informations appropriées, par exemple sur la manière d'éviter les comportements qui augmentent le risque d'apparition et de propagation des infections.

Sur le plan législatif, l'UE a adopté, en 2012, les définitions des cas d'infections associées aux soins de santé et de résistance antimicrobienne, ce qui a permis la mise en place d'une approche européenne permettant de détecter et de surveiller les bactéries multirésistantes dans les établissements de soins de santé et d'y réagir.

Pour ce qui est de la prévention en dehors des hôpitaux, les mêmes approches s'appliquent aux autres collectivités, telles que les maisons de soins. Le premier rapport de la Commission sur la mise en œuvre de la recommandation du Conseil relative à la sécurité des patients, publié en novembre 2012, met en évidence l'importance pour les maisons de soins de disposer de mécanismes de gouvernance appropriés pour l'élaboration et le suivi de programmes de prévention des infections et de lutte contre celles-ci.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/road-map-amr_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012496/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Alarm over multiresistant bacteria in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region

In 2011, an enterobacterium known as *Escherichia coli* wreaked havoc in Germany, resulting in 14 deaths. That same year, three more deaths in Paris were attributed to a particularly virulent strain of *Klebsiella pneumoniae*.

In late August 2013, the same bacterium put hospitals on the Côte d'Azur on the alert and 22 patients died after being diagnosed as being infected with the bacterium. However, it is impossible to establish a direct link between their deaths and this bacterium, as most of the patients were vulnerable and had several concomitant diseases.

At the same time, in Bouches-du-Rhône, an outbreak of *Clostridium difficile* has been affecting a number of hospitals and retirement homes in the Marseilles area since March 2013. Forty people have been infected and three infected patients have died. Here too, no direct causal link has been established by the medical community.

1. Is the Commission monitoring developments in these epidemics in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region and does it have any information on the causal link between infection with these bacteria and the deaths that have occurred?

In its resolution entitled 'Microbial challenge — rising threats from antimicrobial resistance' of 11 December 2012 (P7-TA(2012)0483), Parliament called for an integrated roadmap outlining relevant policy responses, including possible legislative action, to combat the resistance of certain bacteria to antibiotics.

2. What specific action does the Commission plan to take in response to Parliament's recommendations in order to combat multiresistant bacteria in the EU?

3. What does the Commission recommend to prevent such bacteria from spreading beyond hospitals and into the community?

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

The Commission is aware of the outbreaks mentioned by the Honourable Member and does not have information to establish a causal link between the infections and the fatal cases. Additional investigations carried out locally by the French health authority are necessary to demonstrate such a link.

The roadmap of the Commission Action Plan ([1]) on the rising threat from Antimicrobial Resistance includes specific activities addressing Parliament Resolution of 11 December 2012. These include developing guidance on infection prevention and control including the importance of hand washing and of hygienic procedures in high risks departments; strengthening surveillance of healthcare associated infections, including monitoring the spread of the most dangerous bacteria and training healthcare workers to minimise the risk of spreading the bacteria through medical and paramedical procedures. It also includes giving appropriate information to patients for example on how to avoid behaviour that increases the risk to acquire and spread infections.

Concerning EU legislation case definitions for healthcare associated infections and antimicrobial resistance have been adopted in 2012, providing for an EU approach to identify, monitor and respond to multiresistant bacteria in healthcare facilities.

Concerning prevention beyond hospitals, the same approaches apply to other community institutions, such as nursing homes. The first Report of the Commission on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on patient safety, published in November 2012, underlines the importance that nursing homes have in appropriate governance arrangements for the preparation and monitoring of infection prevention and control programmes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/road-map-amr_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012499/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Romania ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002909/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Romania in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]), che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei ROM e dei SINTI?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012500/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Ungheria ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002912/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte dell'Ungheria in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]), che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei ROM e dei SINTI?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012501/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Bulgaria ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002904/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Bulgaria in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]), che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei ROM e dei SINTI?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012502/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Polonia ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002907/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Polonia in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]), che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei ROM e dei SINTI?

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:371:0001:0001:IT:PDF

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012503/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Repubblica Ceca ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002901/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Repubblica Ceca in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([2]), che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei ROM e dei SINTI?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012505/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale a favore di Rom e Sinti

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002939/2010, è in grado la Commissione di fornire dati aggiornati circa l'entità della spesa che l'Unione europea ha sostenuto nell'ambito del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR), dal 2010 a oggi, per sovvenzionare programmi comunitari, nazionali e locali a sostegno dell'inclusione sociale e del miglioramento delle condizioni delle comunità dei Rom e dei Sinti in Europa?

In quale misura i finanziamenti del FESR sono stati impiegati in Italia allo scopo di promuovere misure orientate all'inclusione sociale di Rom e Sinti dal 2010 a oggi? Qual è la previsione di spesa per l'anno in corso e per il 2014 nell'ambito del FESR, per l'inclusione sociale di Rom e Sinti in Europa?

Risposta congiunta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

Non sono disponibili dati disaggregati per componenti etniche sugli stanziamenti del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR). I finanziamenti del FESR sono pienamente in linea con i principi di base comuni sull'inclusione dei Rom adottati dal Consiglio nel 2009 ([3]). Tali principi consentono una tracciatura esplicita, ma ciò non dovrebbe avvenire in modo esclusivo (vale a dire che la tracciatura dovrebbe coprire altri gruppi emarginati o svantaggiati).

Per quanto concerne la spesa del FESR per la crescita inclusiva nel suo complesso, gli Stati membri hanno stanziato per il periodo 2007-2013 un totale di 17,8 miliardi di euro in investimenti per l'istruzione, la salute, l'alloggiamento, i servizi all'infanzia e l'infrastruttura sociale. Sulla base delle relazioni annuali di attuazione presentate dagli Stati membri per il 2012 il tasso di avanzamento dei progetti selezionati corrisponde a 17,4 miliardi di euro ovvero al 98 % degli importi stanziati. Per definizione è tuttavia impossibile quantificare la proporzione di questi importi che va, direttamente o indirettamente, a vantaggio dei Rom poiché si tratta essenzialmente di una spesa a carattere generale e non di una spesa mirata.

In base alle regole di gestione comune della politica di coesione, la sua attuazione è effettuata dagli Stati membri. La Commissione suggerisce pertanto all'Onorevole deputata di rivolgersi direttamente all'autorità di gestione competente negli Stati membri in relazione all'attuazione di progetti specifici finanziati dal FESR.

In seguito alla modifica dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento del FESR ([4]) la Commissione incoraggia gli Stati membri ad avviare azioni pilota in materia di alloggi a favore delle comunità Rom emarginate. 8 paesi ([5]) hanno pianificato progetti pilota di alloggi per i Rom con finanziamenti per un totale di 80 milioni di euro.

Si allega una sintesi delle azioni previste nei progetti pilota di alloggi per i Rom.

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:371:0001:0001:IT:PDF
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/108377.pdf
([4]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1083/2006 del Consiglio, del'11 luglio 2006, recante disposizioni generali sul Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, sul Fondo sociale europeo e sul Fondo di coesione e che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 1260/1999, GU L 210 del 31.7.2006, modificato dal regolamento (CE) n. 397/2009 del 6 maggio 2009 (GU L 126 del 21 maggio 2009).
([5]) Bulgaria, Repubblica ceca, Francia, Grecia, Ungheria, Italia, Romania, Slovacchia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012499/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Romania, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-2909/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Romania under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]), whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Question for written answer E-012500/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Hungary, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-2912/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Hungary under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]), whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Question for written answer E-012501/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Bulgaria, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-2904/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Bulgaria under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]), whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Question for written answer E-012502/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Poland, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-2907/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Poland under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]), whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:371:0001:0001:EN:PDF

Question for written answer E-012503/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in the Czech Republic, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-2901/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by the Czech Republic under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([2]), whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Question for written answer E-012505/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Updated figures on the use of the European Regional Development Fund for Sinti and Roma

Further to my Written Question E-002939/2010, could the Commission provide updated figures for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) spending since 2010 on Union, national and local programmes to promote the social inclusion of and secure better conditions for Sinti and Roma communities in Europe?

To what extent has ERDF funding been used in Italy for measures to promote the social inclusion of Sinti and Roma people since 2010? What are the estimates for ERDF spending on such measures in 2013 and 2014?

Joint answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

Segregated ethnic data on the allocation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is not available. ERDF funding is fully in line with the Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion adopted by the Council in 2009 ([3]). These principles do allow for explicit targeting, but this should not be exclusive in nature (i.e. targeting should cover other marginalised or poor groups).

As regards ERDF inclusive growth expenditure as a whole, Member States have allocated a total of EUR 17.8 billion for education, health, housing, childcare and social infrastructure investments for the 2007-2013 period. Based on the Member States' annual implementation reports for 2012, the rate of the selected projects corresponds to EUR 17.4 billion or 98% of the allocated amounts. It is however by definition impossible to quantify the proportion of these amounts from which Roma benefit, either directly or indirectly, given that this is largely general mainstream, rather than targeted, expenditure.

Under the rules of shared management of cohesion policy, implementation is carried out by the Member States. The Commission would therefore suggest that the Honourable Member contact directly the competent managing authorities in Member States concerning the implementation of specific projects funded by ERDF.

Following the modification of Article 7(2) of the ERDF regulation ([4]) the Commission encouraged Member States to launch housing pilot actions in favour of marginalised Roma communities. 8 countries ([5]) have planned Roma housing pilots with a total amount of EUR 80 million ERDF funding.

A summary of the Roma housing pilot actions is attached.

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:371:0001:0001:EN:PDF
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/108377.pdf
([4]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006 modified by Council Regulation 397/2009 of 6 May 2009 (OJ L 126 21 May 2009).
([5]) Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovakia.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012504/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento su violenze, persecuzioni e discriminazioni anticristiane in Vietnam

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-003988/2010 concernente «violenze, persecuzioni e discriminazioni anticristiane in Vietnam», la Commissione:

1. può riferire a che punto si trova l'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione, che l'UE sta al momento negoziando con il Vietnam?

2. come giudica, oggi, la situazione dei cristiani in Vietnam?

3. in che modo intende garantire il rispetto dei loro diritti?

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

1. L'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione (APC) è stato firmato il 27 giugno 2012 ed è attualmente in fase di ratifica.

2. Sebbene il principio della libertà di religione sia sancito sia dalla Costituzione che dalle leggi e dalle politiche pertinenti, nelle politiche e nelle prassi permangono restrizioni, soprattutto a livello delle province e dei villaggi, di cui sono vittime anche i cristiani. Il decreto 92 (Disposizioni e misure specifiche per l'attuazione dell'ordinanza su credo e religione), in vigore dal gennaio 2013, contiene elementi che possono essere utilizzati per limitare le pratiche religiose. Si osserva tuttavia un graduale miglioramento nell'attuazione di questo quadro normativo, specie per quanto riguarda la registrazione delle chiese. La situazione della chiesa cattolica dovrebbe migliorare ulteriormente grazie alle recenti iniziative prese dal Vietnam per instaurare relazioni diplomatiche con la Santa Sede.

3. L'UE promuove il rispetto della libertà di religione o di credo, segnatamente attraverso il dialogo potenziato sui diritti umani istituito a gennaio 2012 nell'ambito dell'APC. La libertà di religione o di credo figurava tra le questioni discusse con le autorità nelle tre sessioni tenutesi finora. Durante l'ultima sessione del dialogo, svoltasi l'11 settembre 2013, il Vietnam ha risposto positivamente all'invito dell'UE a riprendere i contatti con il relatore speciale dell'ONU per la libertà di religione o di credo e ha espresso l'intenzione di invitarlo a recarsi nel paese nel 2014. L'UE continuerà a seguire da vicino gli sviluppi e esorterà le autorità a garantire il pieno rispetto della libertà di religione o di credo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012504/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on violence, persecution and discrimination against Christians in Vietnam

With reference to my Question E-003988/2010 on 'Anti-Christian violence, persecution and discrimination in Vietnam', could the Commission answer the following:

1. What is the state of play on the partnership and cooperation agreement which the EU is negotiating at present with Vietnam?

2. How does it assess the situation of Christians in Vietnam now?

3. How will it ensure that their rights are respected?

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

1. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed on 27 June 2012 and is now in the ratification process.

2. While the Constitution and relevant laws and policies provide in principle for religious freedom, restrictions persist in policy and practice notably on provincial and village level, also affecting Christians. The Decree 92 'Specific provisions and measures for the implementation of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion' in force since January 2013 contains elements that may be used to restrict religious practice. However, a gradual improvement can be noted in the implementation of this normative framework, concerning in particular the registration of churches. As regards the Catholic Church, the recent steps taken by Vietnam towards establishing diplomatic relations with the Holy See can be expected to lead to further improvements.

3. The EU promotes respect of Freedom of Religion or Belief namely through the enhanced human rights dialogue established in January 2012 under the PCA. Freedom of Religion or Belief was among the issues discussed with the authorities in all the three sessions held since. In the last session held on 11 September 2013, Vietnam responded positively to the EU's call to re-engage with the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief and announced its intention to extend an invitation for the Special Rapporteur to visit the country in 2014. The EU will continue to monitor developments closely and encourage authorities to ensure full respect of Freedom of Religion or Belief.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012506/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'assegnazione delle frequenze sul digitale terrestre in Veneto/Nordest dell'Italia e contestazione da parte delle emittenti locali

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione P-005589/2010 in tema di «Assegnazione delle frequenze sul digitale terrestre in Veneto/Nordest dell'Italia e contestazione da parte delle emittenti locali», può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Come giudica le scelte compiute dalle autorità italiane in tema di assegnazione delle radiofrequenze?

2. Ritiene che le decisioni delle autorità italiane di non assegnare frequenze di accertata qualità e fruibilità alle emittenti locali siano compatibili con il diritto comunitario vigente?

3. Ritiene che i criteri scelti per l'assegnazione delle frequenze sul digitale rispondano pienamente ai requisiti contenuti nei disposti delle Direttive 2002/20/CE(2), 2002/21/CE(3) e 2002/77/CE(4), del 2002?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

L'Italia, come tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE, ha sottoscritto l'accordo Ginevra 06 dell'UIT, un trattato intergovernativo vincolante che mira a un'equa distribuzione dei canali di trasmissione digitale tra gli Stati membri dell'UIT confinanti. La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che in passato le emittenti italiane hanno utilizzato canali televisivi che erano stati assegnati dal suddetto trattato a paesi confinanti, creando interferenze con le emittenti operanti in tali paesi.

Il gruppo «Politica dello spettro radio», composto dai rappresentanti ad alto livello degli Stati membri dell'UE, si dedica in parte a fornire assistenza per risolvere situazioni di questo tipo. La Commissione sostiene tali sforzi e apprezza la volontà di tutte le parti coinvolte di raggiungere un risultato positivo. Sembrerebbe tuttavia inevitabile che il numero complessivo di canali di trasmissione disponibili da utilizzare in Italia sia destinato a diminuire rispetto a pochi anni fa o quantomeno a operare a livelli di potenza che non creino interferenze transfrontaliere. L'introduzione da parte dell'Italia delle reti a frequenza singola dovrebbe almeno in parte compensare questo effetto.

In questa situazione complessa e ancora in evoluzione, eventuali presunte infrazioni relative alla compatibilità delle decisioni dell'AGCOM con la legislazione nazionale, che assegna una quota predefinita delle frequenze disponibili alle emittenti locali, dovrebbero essere segnalate alle competenti autorità nazionali, compresi gli organi giurisdizionali. Al contempo la Commissione continua a sorvegliare la conformità della ripartizione e dell'assegnazione delle radiofrequenze alla normativa dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012506/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Allocation of digital terrestrial frequencies in Veneto/north-east Italy and objections by local broadcasting stations

Further to my written question on the 'allocation of digital terrestrial frequencies in Veneto/north-east Italy and objections by local broadcasting stations' (P-5589/2010), can the Commission say:

1. What view it takes of the decisions made by the Italian authorities when allocating radio frequencies?

2. Does it think that decisions by those authorities not to allocate frequencies of proven quality and serviceability to local broadcasters are consistent with EC law?

3. Does it think that the criteria used to allocate the digital frequencies are fully consistent with the requirements laid down in Directives 2002/20/EC, 2002/21/EC and 2002/77/EC?

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

Italy, as all EU Member States, is a signatory to the ITU Geneva-06 agreement, a binding inter-governmental treaty which aims at a fair distribution of digital transmitter channels between neighbouring ITU Member States. The Commission understands that Italian transmitters have earlier used TV channels that were allotted by that treaty to neighbouring countries, creating interference with the transmitters operating in those countries.

The Radio Spectrum Policy Group, composed of EU High-Level Member States representatives has as a work strand to provide good offices to resolve situations as described above. The Commission supports these efforts and appreciates the willingness of all involved parties to acheive a fruitful outcome. It would, however, seem inevitable that the total number of transmitting channels available for use in Italy would decrease in comparison with the situation a few years ago as a consequence, or at least have to operate at power levels that do not create cross-border interference. The introduction, by Italy, of Single Frequency Networks should at least partly alleviate this effect.

In this complex and still evolving situation, any alleged infringement regarding the compatibility of the AGCOMDecisions with national law that allocates a predefined share of the available frequencies to local broadcasters would have to be referred to the competent national authorities, including the national courts. The Commission in parallel continues to monitor the compliance of national radio spectrum allocations and assignment with EU rules.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012507/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo sociale europeo a favore di rom e sinti

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002940/2010, è la Commissione in grado di fornire dati aggiornati sui progetti — quantità, contenuto e ammontare complessivo — che l'Unione europea ha sostenuto nell'ambito del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE), dal 2010 a oggi, per sovvenzionare l'inclusione sociale delle comunità rom e sinti in Europa?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

Nessuna categoria specifica del sostegno del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) è destinata ai Rom. Per tale motivo gli Stati membri non presentano relazioni sui finanziamenti dell'FSE a favore dei Rom ed alcuni vietano addirittura la registrazione dell'origine etnica delle persone. Una cifra approssimativa potrebbe essere estrapolata dalle relazioni degli Stati membri relative alla più ampia priorità *Percorsi d'integrazione e reinserimento nel mondo del lavoro per le persone con difficoltà; lotta alla discriminazione e nell'accesso al mercato del lavoro e nell'avanzamento nello stesso e promozione dell'accettazione della diversità sul posto di lavoro*, che comprende la maggior parte dei programmi di inclusione dei Rom, ma non ad esclusione di altri gruppi. A tutto il 2012 erano stati impegnati per tale priorità 7,8 miliardi di euro. Inoltre, il finanziamento di misure destinate alle persone svantaggiate in generale, di cui i Rom fanno parte, andrebbe a sua volta preso in conto anche se i beneficiari comprendono anche i non Rom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012507/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Social Fund for the Roma and Sinti

With reference to my Written Question E-2940/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the projects (quantity, content and total amount of expenditure) that the European Union has supported under the European Social Fund (ESF) from 2010 to the present day, to subsidise the social inclusion of the Roma and Sinti communities in Europe?

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

No specific category of European Social Fund (ESF) support is earmarked for Roma people. Therefore Member States do not report on ESF funding for Roma and some Member States even prohibit the registration of people's ethnic origin. An approximate figure could be deduced from Member State reports on the broader priority 'Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people; combating discrimination in accessing and progressing in the labour market and promoting acceptance of diversity at the workplace', which includes most Roma inclusion programmes, but not to the exclusion of others. Up to the end of 2012, EUR 7.8 billion was committed to that priority. In addition, the funding of measures benefiting disadvantaged people in general, of whom Roma are one target group, should be taken into account, though the beneficiaries include non-Roma, too.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012509/13
an die Kommission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(5. November 2013)

Betrifft: Exportkreditgarantien für in der EU verbotene Tierhaltungssysteme

Die deutsche Bundesregierung ([1]) (BR) gab an, dass 2009-2012 staatlich gedeckte Exportkreditgarantien in Höhe von 40,86 Mio. EUR für den Anlagenbau zur Käfighaltung von Hühnern (Legehennen und Masthühner) vergeben wurden. Diese Anlagen wurden in der Türkei, der Ukraine, Russland, Kasachstan und Usbekistan errichtet

Zwei dieser Projekte dienten der Kapazitätserweiterung von Avangardco, des nach Eigenangaben größten Eierproduzenten Europas, durch den Bau von zwei Legehennenfabriken für 3 bzw. 5 Mio. Tiere in der Ukraine. Die Frage, ob die Haltungen EU-Recht entsprechen, verneinte die Bundesregierung ([2]). Avangardco erwartete, ab 2013 Eier und Eiprodukte in die EU zu exportieren.

Die Bundesregierung argumentiert u. a. mit der „Wettbewerbsgleichheit unter den Exporteuren", da „der Projektdurchführer anderenfalls auf Lieferungen aus einem anderen Land zurückgreifen" könne.

1. Können Eier oder Eiprodukte aus Anlagen in der Ukraine, der Türkei oder anderen Drittstaaten auf den EU-Markt gelangen, auch wenn die Haltung der betreffenden Hühner nicht den EU-Normen ([3]) entspricht?

2. Wird die Kommission eine gemeinsame Position der Mitgliedstaaten der EU initiieren und vorantreiben mit dem Ziel, dass die Exportkreditagenturen der Mitgliedstaaten die Errichtung von Anlagen zur Tierhaltung nur noch dann mit Exportkreditgarantien unterstützen, wenn die Anlagen mindestens die in der EU geltenden Bestimmungen für die Tierhaltung erfüllen? Wird die Kommission dasselbe Ziel auch innerhalb der einschlägigen OECD-Gremien aktiv verfolgen? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

3. Die „Gemeinsamen Ansätze" (Common Approaches) der OECD beziehen sich u. a. auf die EHS-Leitlinien der Weltbankgruppe. Wird sich die Kommission im Zuge der für 2014 vorgesehenen Überarbeitung dieser Leitlinien aktiv für die Aufnahme von verbindlichen Mindeststandards für die landwirtschaftliche Tierhaltung einsetzen, die den EU-Standards gleichwertig sind?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(7. Januar 2014)

Die Einhaltung der EU-rechtlichen Tierschutzstandards kann von Drittländern nicht direkt verlangt werden. Bisher gibt es nur wenige Ausnahmen, wie die Standards zum Schutz der Tiere bei der Schlachtung, die auf internationalen Leitlinien der Weltorganisation für Tiergesundheit beruhen. Seit Januar dieses Jahres darf nur Fleisch in die EU importiert werden, das von gemäß den Anforderungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1099/2009 ([4]) geschlachteten Tieren stammt. Wenn die Importbedingungen für ein bestimmtes Erzeugnis tierischen Ursprungs eingehalten werden, darf dieses Erzeugnis in die EU eingeführt werden. Die Kommission setzt sich bei Handelspartnern und multilateralen Organisationen fortlaufend für die Einhaltung von Tierschutzstandards ein.

Für nationale Finanzierungsvorhaben sind allein die Mitgliedstaaten verantwortlich.

Die Weltbankgruppe wird von ihren Mitgliedern geleitet, deren Finanzminister im Gouverneursrat vertreten sind. Die Kommission kann keine verbindlichen Mindestnormen vorschlagen. Die Lage ist ähnlich wie bei der OECD, d. h. die EU hat keine Möglichkeit, diese Organisationen zur Einhaltung von EU-Recht zu zwingen.

Zum Thema Finanzierung von Nutztierhaltungsbetrieben in Drittländern verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten ferner auf ihre Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-7102/2013, E-7559/2013 und E-7200/2013 ([5]).

([1]) http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/112/1711266.pdf
([2]) http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/106/1710626.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31999L0074:DE:HTML
([4]) ABl. L303 vom 18.11.2009, S. 1.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012509/13
to the Commission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Export credit guarantees for animal housing systems prohibited in the EU

The German Government ([1]) has stated that, between 2009 and 2012, export credit guarantees underwritten by the state amounting to EUR 40.86 million were issued for the construction of cage systems to house chickens (laying hens and broilers). These systems were erected in Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Two of these projects served to expand the capacity of Avangardco, which claims to be the largest egg producer in Europe, through the construction of two egg production factories for three and five million animals, respectively, in Ukraine. In response to the question of whether the housing complied with EC law, the German Government stated that it did not ([2]). Avangardco expected to export eggs and egg products to the EU from 2013 onwards.

The German Government's reasoning related, among other things, to fair competition among exporters, as the party implementing the project could otherwise resort to obtaining supplies from another country.

1. Is it possible for eggs or egg products from systems in Ukraine, Turkey or other third countries to end up on the EU market even if the chickens in question have not been housed in accordance with EU standards ([3])?

2. Will the Commission initiate and promote a common position for the EU Member States, seeking to ensure that the export credit agencies of the Member States only support the construction of animal housing systems with export credit guarantees if the systems, as a minimum, comply with the animal housing provisions in force in the EU? Will it actively pursue this same aim within the relevant OECD bodies, too? If not, why not?

3. One of the things to which the OECD common approaches relate is the ETS guidelines of the World Bank Group. During the review of these guidelines scheduled for 2014, will the Commission actively support the inclusion of binding minimum standards for farm animal husbandry that are equivalent to EU standards?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The standards for animal welfare provided in the EU legislation cannot be directly demanded of third countries. A few exceptions exist at present such as welfare standards at slaughter that are based on the international guidelines adopted by the World Organisation for Animal Health. Since January this year, the meat imported into the EU must derive from animals killed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) 1009/2009 ([4]). As long as the import conditions for a specific product of animal origin are certified, such products may be imported to the EU. The Commission constantly promotes the acceptance of animal welfare standards with its trading partners and in multilateral organisations.

National funding remains the competence of the Member States.

The World Bank Group is governed by its Member Countries and it is their Ministers of Finance who are representatives of the Board of Governors. It is not within the competence of the Commission to propose binding minimum standards. The situation is similar with regard to the OECD, i.e. the EU is not in a position to impose Union law on these organisations.

On other issues related to funding of farm animal holdings in third countries the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-7102/2013, E-7559/2013 and E-7200/2013 ([5]).

([1]) http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/112/1711266.pdf
([2]) http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/106/1710626.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31999L0074:EN:HTML
([4]) OJ L 280/3, 27.10.2009.
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012514/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Raggiri fiscali delle multinazionali USA

Da fonti di stampa, si apprende che dal gennaio 2015 in Irlanda entreranno in vigore norme fiscali restrittive che non eviteranno ad importanti multinazionali americane di non dichiarare alcun paese come domicilio fiscale e far rientrare così l'Irlanda nella lista dei cosiddetti paradisi fiscali.

Sembra inoltre che diverse multinazionali statunitensi con sede in Irlanda, sfruttando una triangolazione con una propria sussidiaria nei Paesi Bassi, versino le tasse in un paradiso fiscale dove l'aliquota per le aziende è pari a zero.

È la Commissione europea a conoscenza di questi raggiri fiscali da parte di multinazionali americane sul territorio europeo e come intende reagire?

È la Commissione europea a conoscenza di altri paesi coinvolti in queste «triangolazioni» per poter evadere il fisco?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(3 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del problema dell'elusione fiscale da parte delle multinazionali, che assume una molteplicità di forme. La questione è una priorità dell'UE e negli ultimi dodici mesi la Commissione ha avviato una serie di iniziative per porvi rimedio. Nel dicembre 2012 ha adottato il piano d'azione per rafforzare la lotta alla frode fiscale e all'evasione fiscale e le due raccomandazioni di accompagnamento sulla pianificazione fiscale aggressiva e sui paradisi fiscali ([1]). Nell'aprile 2013 ha istituito la piattaforma sulla buona governance fiscale (C(2013)2236) per assicurare il seguito attuativo di queste raccomandazioni. Il mese scorso ha istituito il gruppo di esperti sulla tassazione dell'economia digitale ([2]) che si occuperà, tra l'altro, di questioni specifiche riguardanti la pianificazione fiscale aggressiva nell'economia digitale. Il 25 novembre 2013, infine, la Commissione ha presentato una proposta di rafforzamento della direttiva sulle società madri e figlie per evitare che le sue norme siano aggirate al fine di eludere le imposte sulle società ([3]). L'elusione fiscale da parte delle società occupa un posto prominente anche nell'agenda politica mondiale, come dimostra il progetto del G20/OCSE sull'erosione della base imponibile e sul trasferimento degli utili varato nel settembre 2013 al Vertice del G20 di San Pietroburgo. L'UE sostiene con forza il progetto e tanto la Commissione quanto gli Stati membri partecipano attivamente al suo sviluppo e alle sue realizzazioni.

La soluzione non può essere puntare il dito verso alcuni paesi e risolvere il problema al loro interno, perché le imprese non incontrerebbero difficoltà a reperire alternative. La sfida si pone a livello sia mondiale sia di UE; per vincerla occorrono norme fiscali internazionali più vincolanti combinate con un approccio coordinato nell'UE che sfoci in una rigorosa normativa europea comune.

([1]) COM(2012)722 def., C(2012)8805 def. e C(2012)8805 def.
([2]) C(2013)7082 def.
([3]) COM(2013)814 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012514/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Tax dodging by US multinationals

According to press reports, in January 2015 the Republic of Ireland will roll out new, more restrictive tax rules preventing large American firms from declaring themselves 'stateless' for tax purposes — an arrangement that had led to Ireland being labelled a 'tax haven'.

What is more, it appears that a number of US multinationals based in the Republic of Ireland with subsidiaries in the Netherlands have been taking advantage of triangulation arrangements to 'pay taxes' in tax havens with zero corporate rates.

Is the Commission aware that US multinationals have been engaging in tax dodging in Europe? How does it intend to respond?

Does it know which other countries are involved in triangulation arrangements used to avoid tax?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the issue of international corporate tax avoidance, which takes a multitude of forms. It is a high priority in the EU and the Commission in the past year has launched a series of initiatives to address it. In December 2012, the Commission agreed an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion and two accompanying Recommendations on aggressive tax planning and tax havens ([1]). In April 2013 the Commission established a Platform for Tax Good Governance, C(2013)2236, to follow-up on the implementation of these recommendations. Last month, the Expert Group on Taxation of the Digital Economy was established ([2]) which will, amongst other matters, address specific issues relating to aggressive tax planning in the digital economy. On 25 November 2013 the Commission came forward with its proposal to strengthen the Parent-Subsidiary Directive to prevent the directive being misused for corporate tax avoidance ([3]). Corporate tax avoidance is also high on the political agenda globally as indicated by the G20/OECD project on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting established at the G20 Summit in St-Petersburg in September 2013. The EU strongly supports the project and both the Commission and Member States are actively involved in its development and delivery.

The problem cannot be solved by singling out and addressing individual countries. Businesses will easily find alternatives. It is both a global and an EU challenge, which requires stronger international tax standards combined with a coordinated approach in the EU aimed at strict common domestic rules.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final, C(2012)8805 final and C(2012)8805 final.
([2]) C(2013)7082 final.
([3]) COM(2013) 814 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012515/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(5 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Costi di fabbricazione dell'euro

Negli ultimi giorni, in Italia, diversi organi di stampa hanno riportato notizie circa il costo del conio delle monete.

Dai dati risulterebbe che per la fabbricazione di una moneta da un centesimo se ne spendono oltre quattro, mentre il costo unitario per la moneta di due centesimi ammonterebbe a oltre cinque, ovvero più del doppio rispetto al valore della stessa.

Può la Commissione europea verificare e comunicare il reale costo di fabbricazione delle monete da 1, 2 e 5 centesimi in Italia e negli altri paesi dell'area dell'euro?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(13 dicembre 2013)

Nella comunicazione «Questioni relative al proseguimento dell'emissione delle monete in euro da 1 e 2 cent» (COM(2013) 281 final), del 14 maggio 2013, la Commissione ha constatato che i costi di produzione e di emissione di tali monete sono in generale elevati. La maggior parte degli Stati membri sostiene costi di acquisizione superiori fino a quattro volte al valore facciale delle monete stesse. Sulla base delle indicazioni fornite da cinque Stati membri, il prezzo di acquisizione medio non ponderato di queste monete per il rispettivo Tesoro rappresenta circa il 150 % del valore facciale. La Commissione non dispone di indicazioni circa il prezzo di acquisizione delle monete da 5 cent. Sui prezzi di acquisizione in Italia s'invita l'Onorevole deputato a rivolgersi alle autorità italiane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012515/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Euro coin minting costs

Various Italian media outlets have recently carried reports on the cost of minting euro coins.

Those reports indicate that it costs more than four cents to mint a one-cent coin and more than five cents to mint a two-cent coin — i.e. well over twice the coins' nominal value.

Would the Commission find out how much it costs to mint one-, two- and five-cent coins in Italy and the other eurozone Member States, and then pass on that information?

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

In its communication of 14 May 2013 (COM(2013) 281 final) on issues related to the continued issuance of the 1 and 2 euro cent coins, the Commission came to the conclusion that the costs of production and issuance of 1 and 2 euro cent coins are generally high. Most Member States are confronted with acquisition costs exceeding up to four times the face value of these denominations. Based on the indications provided by 5 Member States, the non-weighted average acquisition price of these coins for the respective Treasuries represents around 150% of their face value. The Commission has no indications on the acquistion price of 5 euro cent coins. For the acquisition prices in Italy, the Honourable Member may ask the Italian authorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012517/13
to the Commission
Derek Vaughan (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: UK slate tax exemption

The slate industry in Wales employs 200 people in its four operations, with approximately a further 100 personnel employed in sectors which rely directly on the slate industry.

Starting on 1 April 2002, the UK authorities introduced a levy on aggregates which applied to rock, sand and gravel on its first extraction, when used for the manufacture of products containing a proportion of aggregate. Slate was excluded from this levy.

However, on 1 August 2013 the UK Government received a notification from the Commission stating that it had decided to open a formal investigation in relation to certain exemptions, exclusions and tax reliefs from the aggregates levy.

1. Could the Commission please give an expected timeline of when the UK slate industry will be informed of a decision regarding its exemption status, and a start date of when this decision will be implemented?

2. Should the exemption of slate be lifted, could the Commission please clarify whether the levy would be paid retrospectively, with a starting point of tax to be paid from 1 April 2002?

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

Further to the judgment of the General Court of 7 March 2012 (T-210/02 RENV), the Commission had to reassess the levy on aggregates and the exemptions. Since the Commission could not exclude that some of the exemptions, including that for slate, constituted aid on the basis of the information available, and as their compatibility with state aid rules had not yet been demonstrated, the Commission had to open a formal investigation procedure to examine them more in detail. This decision was published in OJ C 348/162 of 28/11/13 and is also available at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/249594/249594_1474636_30_2.pdf

The formal investigation procedure gives the slate industry the possibility to comment on the opening decision and to provide any information it deems liable to demonstrate that the exemption for slate does not constitute aid or is compatible aid. Opening the formal investigation procedure does not prejudge the outcome of the investigation. At the end of the investigation, the Commission can conclude that the exemption does not constitute aid, is compatible aid or is not compatible with state aid rules. A date for the outcome of the formal investigation is not yet known, but in general the Commission strives to conclude formal investigations within 18 months after opening.

If at the end of the investigation the Commission has to conclude that the exemption for slate constitutes aid and is incompatible with the internal market, the aid has to be re-paid as from the date it was granted, provided this recovery is not contrary to a common principle of European law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-012519/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório do Eurostat no âmbito do procedimento por défice excessivo

Considerando que:

— A edição do dia 4 de novembro do Diário Económico noticia que «o Eurostat quer receber uma lista das sanções potenciais para a Região Autónoma da Madeira, por suspeita de ter escondido dívida de forma deliberada», para além de solicitar ser informado de quaisquer desenvolvimentos no âmbito de uma investigação a cargo do Ministério Público;

— A citada notícia reproduz alegados trechos do relatório final, datado de 10 de outubro, sobre as reuniões ocorridas em Lisboa em novembro passado, nomeadamente que «o Eurostat espera que o INE o informe sobre os progressos feitos na investigação ao caso, em particular, sobre as descobertas da investigação e as sanções que tenham sido aplicadas, ou que possam estar a ser consideradas»;

— O relatório menciona ainda que «as autoridades portuguesas vão reenviar uma cópia do documento sobre as sanções possíveis para a Madeira, preparadas pelo Conselho Nacional de Estatística», mas que, contudo, «ainda não foram, até à data, recebidas quaisquer informações», estando assim por cumprir a exigência do envio da lista sobre as potenciais sanções a aplicar à Madeira;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da existência do citado relatório final, datado de 10 de outubro, a que se reporta a notícia em causa?

2. Existindo tal relatório, encontra-se o mesmo disponível ao público em geral? Em caso afirmativo, onde, quando e de que forma foi o mesmo divulgado?

3. Não sendo público o relatório em causa, como se justifica que um órgão de comunicação social tenha tido acesso ao seu conteúdo?

4. Partindo do pressuposto que o teor do relatório citado pela notícia é correto e fidedigno, como é que ele se coaduna com o princípio da separação de poderes e com a independência do Ministério Público em Portugal, nomeadamente na parte em que o Eurostat solicita informação sobre as sanções que possam estar a ser consideradas no âmbito de um inquérito que se encontra em curso, e como tal, sujeito a segredo de justiça?

5. A que tipo de sanções se refere o Eurostat? Às sanções que possam eventualmente decorrer do citado inquérito, ou a outras?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(2 de dezembro de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento do relatório a que o Senhor Deputado se refere.

2.-3. Esse relatório, com data de 10 de outubro de 2013 e disponível ao público desde 24 de outubro de 2013 ([1]), apresenta as conclusões finais da visita de diálogo normal no âmbito do procedimento relativo aos défices excessivos (PDE) realizada pelo Eurostat em Portugal, em 22 e 23 de novembro de 2012.

4. Convém recordar que a existência de indicações sérias da existência de factos suscetíveis de constituir uma comunicação incorreta de dados relativos à dívida e ao défice, quer intencionalmente, quer por negligência grave, pode dar azo ao início de uma investigação pela Comissão, nos termos do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1173/2011 e da Decisão Delegada 2012/678/UE da Comissão. Se for detetada a existência de tais declarações incorretas, a Comissão pode recomendar ao Conselho que imponha uma sanção pecuniária ao Estado-Membro em causa. Essas sanções, contudo, só podem ser aplicadas às declarações incorretas ocorridas após a entrada em vigor do regulamento, em 13 de dezembro de 2011.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

Durante a referida visita, as autoridades estatísticas portuguesas informaram o Eurostat do seguimento dado ao anterior caso de comunicação incorreta de estatísticas da Região Autónoma da Madeira (discutido numa visita do Eurostat a Portugal, em 2011), incluindo a investigação iniciada a nível do Ministério Público, as conversações mantidas no Conselho Estatístico e a legislação nacional no domínio estatístico, em que se preveem sanções.

5. As sanções referidas no relatório são as previstas pela legislação nacional no domínio estatístico e não pela legislação da União.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012519/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Eurostat report relating to the excessive deficit procedure

On 4 November 2013, the news site *Diário Económico* reported that 'Eurostat wants a list of penalties which could be imposed on the Autonomous Region of Madeira, which is suspected of having deliberately hidden its debt', and has also asked to be kept informed of any developments linked to an investigation being carried out by the Ministry of Justice.

The article reproduces what it claims are parts of the final report, dated 10 October 2013, on the meetings held in Lisbon in November 2012, and reports that 'Eurostat is awaiting information from the National Statistics Institute (INE) on progress made in investigating the case, particularly the results of the inquiry and penalties which have been applied or may be under consideration'.

The report is also quoted as stating that the Portuguese authorities are to forward to Eurostat a copy of the document detailing possible penalties against Madeira drawn up by the National Statistics Council, but that no such information has as yet been received and that this requirement has therefore not yet been complied with.

1. Is the Commission aware of the existence of the abovementioned final report, dated 10 October 2013, on which this news item is based?

2. If such a report exists, is it available to the general public? If so, when and how was it published?

3. If this report is not publicly available, how is it possible that a media organisation has been able to access it?

4. Assuming that the content of the report, as quoted by the news site, is correct and reliable, how does this tally with the principle of separation of powers and the independence of the Portuguese Ministry of Justice, particularly with respect to Eurostat's request for information about penalties under consideration as part of an inquiry which is still underway and therefore *sub judice*?

5. What type of penalties is Eurostat referring to? Are these penalties which may arise from the abovementioned investigation, or of some other type?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the report referred to by the Honourable Member.

2-3. This report, dated 10 October 2013 and available to the general public since 24 October 2013 ([1]), presents the final findings of the excessive deficit procedure (EDP) standard dialogue visit carried out by Eurostat to Portugal on 22-23 November 2012.

4. It is worth recalling that serious indications of the existence of facts liable to constitute a misreporting of deficit and debt data, either by intent or by serious negligence, may lead to an investigation launched by the Commission in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 and Commission Delegated Decision 2012/678/EU. If the existence of such misrepresentation is established, the Commission may recommend to the Council imposing a fine upon the Member State concerned. Such sanctions can however only be applied to misrepresentations which have taken place after the entry into force of the regulation on 13 December 2011.

5. During the abovementioned visit, the Portuguese statistical authorities informed Eurostat on the follow-up of the previous statistical misreporting case in the Autonomous Region of Madeira (discussed in a visit by Eurostat to Portugal in 2011), including the investigation launched at national level by the Public Prosecutor, the discussions held in the Statistical Council and the national statistical law, where sanctions are foreseen. he sanctions referred to in the report are those foreseen by the national statistical law and not sanctions under Union legislation.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012520/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Relatório do Eurostat no âmbito do procedimento por défice excessivo

Considerando que:

— A edição do dia 4 de novembro do Diário Económico noticia que «o Eurostat quer receber uma lista das sanções potenciais para a Região Autónoma da Madeira, por suspeita de ter escondido dívida de forma deliberada», para além de solicitar ser informado de quaisquer desenvolvimentos no âmbito de uma investigação a cargo do Ministério Público;

— A citada notícia reproduz um alegado relatório concluído no verão do ano passado sobre a visita de setembro de 2011, onde, de acordo com o respetivo teor, o Eurostat teria frisado que queria sanções «severas» para a Madeira;

— A notícia cita um alegado trecho do relatório onde se afirma que «o Eurostat tem em conta que este é um caso de má transmissão deliberada de uma entidade das administrações públicas (portuguesas)» e que, no relatório elaborado pela equipa de peritos que visitou Lisboa, constava que este erro «é sério e deve ser severamente sancionado».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da existência do citado relatório, concluído no verão do ano passado, a que se reporta a notícia em causa?

2. Existindo tal relatório, encontra-se o mesmo disponível ao público em geral? Em caso afirmativo, onde, quando e de que forma foi o mesmo divulgado?

3. Não sendo público o relatório em causa, como se justifica que um órgão de comunicação social tenha tido acesso ao seu conteúdo?

4. Qual a composição da equipa de peritos que se deslocou a Portugal para o efeito?

5. Quais são os objetivos que foram fixados às equipas de peritos que se deslocaram a Portugal no âmbito do procedimento de défices excessivos e como se delimitam as respetivas competências?

6. Quantas visitas de peritos a Portugal já foram efetuadas neste âmbito e quantos relatórios foram produzidos?

7. Foram tais relatórios notificados às autoridades estatísticas de Portugal? Em caso afirmativo, como e quando?

8. Não tendo tais relatórios sido publicamente divulgados, estão os mesmos sujeitos a algum tipo de classificação? Pode a Comissão disponibilizar cópias integrais dos mesmos?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(16 de dezembro de 2013)

1.-2.-3. O relatório mencionado pelo Senhor Deputado apresenta as conclusões finais da visita de diálogo normal no âmbito do procedimento relativo aos défices excessivos (PDE) a Portugal, realizada em 22-23 de novembro de 2012, publicadas no sítio web do Eurostat em 24 de outubro de 2013 ([1]).

4.-5. A composição da equipa de peritos consta do relatório publicado. A visita faz parte das visitas regulares do Eurostat aos Estados-Membros, em conformidade com o Regulamento (CE) n.° 479/2009 do Conselho.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

6. No sítio web do Eurostat encontram-se disponíveis todas as datas e os relatórios das visitas a Portugal.

7.-8. Todos os relatórios foram enviados às autoridades estatísticas portuguesas para observações antes da publicação no sítio web do Eurostat.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012520/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Eurostat report as part of the excessive deficit procedure

According to a report in the newspaper *Diário Económico* on 4 November 2013, Eurostat wants to receive a list of potential sanctions for the Autonomous Region of Madeira, which is suspected of deliberately concealing debt, and has asked to be kept abreast of any developments in the investigation by the Public Prosecutor.

The aforementioned news report reproduces a report allegedly drawn up last summer concerning the visit of September 2011, in which Eurostat stressed that it would seek 'severe' sanctions for Madeira.

The news report quotes wording allegedly taken from the report, according to which Eurostat felt that this was a case of deliberate misreporting on the part of a (Portuguese) government body and, in the report drawn up by the team of experts that visited Lisbon, it noted that this oversight was serious and warranted severe sanctions.

1. Does the Commission know whether the abovementioned report, drawn up last summer and quoted in the newspaper report in question, exists?

2. If this report does exist, is it available to the public? If so, where, when and how was it published?

3. If the report in question is not publicly available, how can a media outlet justifiably have had access to it?

4. Who was on the team of experts that travelled to Portugal in that connection?

5. What objectives were set for the team of experts that travelled to Portugal as part of the excessive deficit procedure and what were the limits of their powers?

6. How many visits to Portugal by experts have there been in this regard and how many reports have been produced?

7. Have these reports been notified to the Portuguese statistical authorities? If so, how and when?

8. If these reports have not been made public, are they classified in any way? Can the Commission provide full copies of the reports?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

1-3. The report mentioned by the Honorable Member represents the final findings of the EDP standard dialogue visit to Portugal on 22-23 November 2012, published on Eurostat's website on 24 October 2013 ([1]).

4-5. The team of experts are included in the published report. The visit is part of Eurostat's regular visits to Member States, in accordance with Council Regulation 479/2009.

6. All the dates and reports from the visits to Portugal are available on Eurostat's website.

7-8. All the reports were sent to the Portuguese statistical authorities for comments before publication on Eurostat's website.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012522/13
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE) et Kinga Göncz (S&D)
(5 novembre 2013)

Objet: Financement de la formation policière européenne

L'Université de Strasbourg a annoncé, jeudi 17 octobre, le lancement d'un collège européen pour la formation des fonctionnaires de police et de justice de l'Union européenne aux investigations financières afin de lutter contre la criminalité organisée (Ceifac). Doté d'un budget de 940 000 euros sur deux ans, le CEIFAC est financé à 90 % par la Commission européenne.

La Commission peut-elle expliquer pourquoi elle finance une nouvelle structure de formation des policiers européens alors qu'elle propose la fusion du Collège européen de police avec Europol pour des motifs de restrictions budgétaires?

Réponse donnée par Mme Malmström au nom de la Commission
(23 décembre 2013)

La Commission a octroyé une subvention à un projet d'une durée de deux ans sélectionné à la suite de l'appel à propositions ouvert lancé en 2012 dans le cadre du programme «Prévenir et combattre la criminalité». Ce projet a été proposé, en association avec des partenaires, par l'Université de Strasbourg, l'Office anti-fraude de la Catalogne (Espagne) et la Commission d'enquête sur les biens acquis dans le cadre d'activités criminelles (Bulgarie).

Le financement couvre l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre d'un vaste programme de formation doté d'une composante recherche, conforme aux nouvelles normes du Groupe d'action financière (GAFI) et au rapport final du Conseil sur la cinquième série d'évaluations mutuelles relatives à la criminalité financière et aux enquêtes financières ([1]).

Le financement ne porte pas sur une nouvelle infrastructure de formation, comme on peut le lire dans la question, mais sur une action spécifique, à savoir une formation dotée d'une composante recherche et de durée limitée.

La formation en question concorde avec les objectifs du programme européen de formation des services répressifs proposé par la Commission ([2]), qui vise à combler les lacunes que présente la formation des services répressifs sur les questions transfrontières par l'apport d'un soutien financier en faveur des formations dispensées par les centres d'excellence européens et nationaux, et par leur coordination.

La proposition de la Commission relative au règlement Europol ([3]), qui comprend la fusion du Collège européen de police avec Europol, vise à améliorer l'efficacité de la coopération policière et de la formation des agents des services répressifs. Elle vise à réaliser non seulement des économies financières, mais, surtout, des synergies fonctionnelles, conformément à l'approche commune sur les agences décentralisées.

([1]) 12657/2/12, REV 2, GENVAL 51, 3.10.2012.
([2]) COM(2013) 173 final du 27.3.2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 172 final du 27.3.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012522/13
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE) and Kinga Göncz (S&D)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Funding of European police training

On Thursday 17 October 2013, the University of Strasbourg announced the launch of a European college for training police officers and judicial officials in order to combat organised crime (CEIFAC). With a budget of EUR 940 000 over two years, CEIFAC is 90% funded by the Commission.

Can the Commission explain why it is funding a new training facility for European police officers while it is proposing to merge the European Police College and Europol because of budget cuts?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 December 2013)

The Commission awarded a grant for a two-year project, arising from the 2012 open call for proposals under the Prevention of and Fight Against crime (ISEC) programme, and based on a proposal submitted by the University of Strasbourg with the anti-fraud office of Catalonia (Spain) and the Commission for establishing of property acquired from criminality (Bulgaria) together with associated partners.

The funding provides for the development and delivery of an extensive training programme, including a research component, in line with the new Financial Action Task-Force standards and with the Council's Final report of the Vth round of mutual evaluations on financial crime and financial investigation ([1]).

The funding is not for a new training facility, as suggested in the question, but for a specific action — a training course with a research component — of limited duration.

The training in question is consistent with the objectives of the European Law Enforcement Training Scheme proposed by the Commission ([2]), which aims to address gaps in existing law enforcement training on cross-border matters by supporting and coordinating the delivery of training by European and national centres of excellence.

As to the Europol Regulation ([3]), including the proposed merger of CEPOL and Europol, the Commission's proposal aims at improving the effectiveness of police cooperation and training. It is designed to achieve not only cost savings, but also and more importantly, functional synergies in accordance with the Common Approach on decentralised agencies.

([1]) 12657/2/12, REV 2, GENVAL 51, 3.10.2012.
([2]) COM(2013) 173 final, 27.3.2013.
([3]) COM(2013) 172 final, 27.3.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012523/13
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(5 novembre 2013)

Objet: Consultations publiques de la Commission

La Commission peut-elle indiquer dans quelle mesure elle tient compte des résultats des consultations publiques qu'elle lance?

Pourrait-elle indiquer en particulier la prise en compte des résultats de la consultation publique «Une approche commune en vue de réduire les dommages dus à l'usage criminel d'armes à feu dans l'UE», pour laquelle elle a reçu 85 673 réponses?

Dans ce nombre, 80 % des répondants expriment leur opposition à une modification des règles européennes concernant l'utilisation légale des armes à feu. La communication de la Commission du 21 octobre 2013 (COM(2013) 0716) reflète au contraire une volonté de modifier substantiellement les règles existantes.

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(6 janvier 2014)

La consultation en ligne réalisée au début de l'année 2013 a permis de recueillir les réponses d'un très grand nombre de citoyens européens. Un pourcentage important des personnes qui ont répondu à cette consultation ont déclaré être affiliées à des associations liées à l'utilisation d'armes à feu. Lors de cette consultation, plus de 73 % des personnes interrogées ont indiqué que la criminalité liée aux armes à feu n'était pas «grave» tandis que 50 % ont déclaré que les États membres ne devraient «jamais» faire état de leurs progrès dans la lutte contre le trafic des armes à feu. 72 % ont estimé que l'UE ne devrait pas prendre de mesures concernant l'utilisation des armes à feu à des fins terroristes, 53 % ont déclaré que l'UE ne devrait pas inclure la lutte contre le trafic d'armes à feu dans ses accords avec des pays voisins et, enfin, 56 % ont indiqué que l'UE ne devrait pas instaurer de mécanisme commun pour la collecte de statistiques sur le trafic des armes à feu.

En revanche, dans l'enquête Eurobaromètre de septembre 2013, 49 % des personnes interrogées ont estimé que la criminalité liée aux armes à feu était élevée et 58 % s'attendaient à ce qu'elle progresse au cours des cinq prochaines années, tandis que 64 % pensaient que la coopération entre l'UE et les autorités nationales était la meilleure façon de traiter le problème. Cette enquête Eurobaromètre a utilisé un échantillon aléatoire de citoyens de l'Union et est, par conséquent, globalement représentative des vues dans l'ensemble de l'UE.

La Commission a tenu compte des résultats de la consultation publique et d'autres informations pertinentes. La diversité des avis mise en évidence par la consultation publique et l'enquête Eurobaromètre, ainsi que l'évolution inquiétante de la criminalité liée aux armes à feu dans l'UE, se reflètent dans la communication ([1]) de la Commission du 21 octobre 2013.

([1]) COM(2013) 716 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012523/13
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Public consultations by the Commission

Can the Commission say to what extent it takes account of the results of its public consultations?

In particular, could it say how much attention it paid to the results of the public consultation 'A common approach to reducing the harm caused by criminal use of firearms in the EU', which received 85 673 responses?

Of that number, 80% of respondents said they were opposed to a change in European rules on the legal use of firearms. The Commission's Communication of 21 October 2013 (COM(2013)0716), on the other hand, shows that there is a desire to see the existing rules changed substantially.

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

The online consultation carried out in early 2013 elicited answers from a very large number of European citizens. A large proportion of respondents to this consultation declared their membership of associations related to firearms use. In this consultation, over 73% of respondents said that firearms crime was 'not serious' while 50% said Member States should 'never' report their progress in tackling firearms trafficking. 72% said EU should not take action on terrorist use of firearms, 53% said EU, in its agreements with third countries in its neighbourhood, should not include action to tackle trafficking in firearms and, finally, 56% EU should not establish a common mechanism for collecting statistics on firearms trafficking.

However, in the Eurobarometer survey of September 2013, 49% considered firearms-related crime to be high and 58% expected it to increase over the next five years, and where 64% considered that the problem was best tackled by the EU working in cooperation with national authorities. This Eurobarometer survey used a random sample of EU citizens, and is therefore broadly representative of views across the EU.

The Commission took the results of the public consultation into account, along with other relevant information. The diversity of opinion, evidenced by the public consultation and the Eurobarometer survey along with worrying trends on firearms crime across the EU, is reflected in the Commission communication ([1]) of 21 October 2013.

([1]) COM(2013) 716 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012525/13
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(5 novembre 2013)

Objet: Origine du matériel de communication de la Commission européenne

La Commission européenne peut-elle préciser la proportion de son équipement de télécommunication qui est fabriquée aux États-Unis?

Aurait-elle la possibilité de sélectionner des entreprises européennes qui lui fourniraient son équipement de télécommunication?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(7 janvier 2014)

L'infrastructure des télécommunications de la Commission est composée d'équipements provenant d'un grand nombre de fabricants.

Dans le cadre de TESTA ([1]), et pour ce qui est plus particulièrement des services de cryptage des informations classifiées de l'UE, les systèmes cryptographiques utilisés ont été approuvés au préalable par le Conseil ([2]).

Il y a lieu toutefois de noter que:

— dans la plupart des cas, les entreprises ne sont pas les contractants de la Commission puisque, dans le cadre des procédures de passation des marchés, tout soumissionnaire ou candidat est parfaitement en droit de proposer des produits fabriqués par une autre société, qui peut à son tour être établie dans un pays différent;

— en ce qui concerne la question de la proportion d'équipements «fabriqués aux États-Unis» posée par l'Honorable Parlementaire, le siège du fabricant ne correspond pas nécessairement au lieu de fabrication du produit.

Pour la réponse à la seconde question de l'Honorable Parlementaire, il convient de se référer à la réponse de la Commission à la question écrite E-006780/2013 ([3]), qui s'applique aussi aux équipements de télécommunications.

([1]) Le réseau TESTA (services transeuropéens pour la télématique entre administrations) est un réseau hautement sécurisé d'échange d'informations entre les États membres et les institutions de l'Union, les agences et d'autres organismes.

([2]) La liste des produits actuellement autorisés par le Conseil se trouve à l'adresse suivante: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/policies/information-assurance/list-of-approved-cryptographic-devices?lang=fr

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012525/13
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Origin of the Commission's communications equipment

Can the Commission specify what proportion of its telecommunications equipment is manufactured in the United States?

Could it choose European companies to supply its telecommunications equipment?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission's corporate telecommunications infrastructure consists of equipment from a large number of manufacturers.

In the context of TESTA ([1]), and specifically for encryption services related to EU Classified information, any cryptographic devices used have to be previously approved by the Council ([2]).

It must be noted that:

— In almost all cases, undertakings are not the Commission's contractors. This is because, in the context of procurement procedures, a tenderer or candidate is perfectly entitled to offer products manufactured by another company, which may itself be based in a different country.

— While the Honourable Member's question refers to equipment manufactured 'in the United States', the place of establishment of the manufacturer does not necessarily coincide with the place where the product is actually manufactured.

Concerning the Honourable Member's second question, reference is made to the Commission's answer to Written Question E-006780/2013 ([3]), which is also valid for telecommunications equipment.

([1]) TESTA = Trans-European Services for Telematics between Administrations, a highly secure network for exchange of information between Member States and EU institutions, Agencies and other Bodies.

([2]) The list of currently approved products is available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/policies/information-assurance/list-of-approved-cryptographic-devices?lang=en

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012526/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(5 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Riscuri ale pilulelor contraceptive

O tânără de 27 de ani din orașul Arad a decedat luna trecută în urma unei embolii pulmonare, cauzată de pastilele anticoncepționale pe care le lua. La scurt timp după ce a fost întocmit raportul medico-legal, Agenția Națională a Medicamentului a raportat acest caz la Comitetul European de Farmacovigilență. Din nefericire, acesta nu este un eveniment singular, agențiile de știri din întreaga lume publicând periodic astfel de informații tragice. De asemenea, diverse studii clinice au demonstrat că incidența infarctelor cardiace și accidentelor cerebro-vasculare este cu 40% mai mare la femeile care iau sau au luat anticoncepționale, iar incidența cancerelor este de șase ori mai mare la femeile care au luat anticoncepționale față de cele care nu au folosit niciodată astfel de pilule.

Având în vedere cele scrise mai sus:

1. Intenționează Comisia să revizuiască reglementările privind contraceptivele orale?

2. Ce fel de acțiuni prevede Comisia privind informarea populației în legătură cu posibilele reacții adverse ale pilulelor contraceptive?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(20 decembrie 2013)

În noiembrie 2013, Agenția Europeană pentru Medicamente a finalizat o evaluare la nivelul UE a contraceptivelor hormonale combinate (CHC). Evaluarea ([1]) a trecut în revistă avantajele și riscurile utilizării acestor medicamente, în special riscul apariției trombozelor. Concluzia Comitetului pentru medicamente de uz uman subordonat Agenției este că beneficiile utilizării contraceptivelor hormonale combinate în prevenirea sarcinilor nedorite continuă să prevaleze asupra riscurilor. Bine-cunoscutul risc de tromboembolii venoase (poate cauza embolie pulmonară) este redus și depinde de tipul de progestogen conținut de produs. Riscul de tromboembolie arterială (poate cauza un accident vascular cerebral sau un infarct) este redus și nu există dovezi ale existenței unei diferențe în ceea ce privește gradul de risc în funcție de tipul de progestogen conținut de produs.

Evaluarea a subliniat importanța garanției ca femeile care utilizează contraceptive hormonale combinate și cadrele medicale care oferă sfaturi și îngrijire medicală să dispună de informații clare și actualizate. Informațiile referitoare la aceste medicamente trebuie să fie actualizate, cu scopul de a le oferi femeilor posibilitatea de a lua decizii în cunoștință de cauză împreună cu cadrul medical atunci când aleg tipul de contraceptiv. Pe site-ul internet al Agenției ([2]) sunt disponibile informații suplimentare cu privire la procedură, inclusiv informații pentru pacienți și cadrele medicale.

Avizul Comitetului pentru medicamente de uz uman urmează să fie trimis Comisiei în scopul adoptării unei decizii cu caracter obligatoriu, prin care se urmărește actualizarea informațiilor referitoare la produs în ceea ce privește toate contraceptivele hormonale combinate din UE.

([1]) conform articolului 31 din Directiva 2001/83/CE.
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2013/11/news_detail_001969.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012526/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: Risks of contraceptive pills

A 27-year-old woman from Arad in Romania died last month from a pulmonary embolism caused by the contraceptive pills she was taking. Shortly after the post mortem report was compiled, the National Agency for the Safety of Medicine and Health Products reported this case to the European Pharmacovigilance Committee. Unfortunately, this is not a one-off incident, as news agencies around the world regularly publish such tragic stories. In addition, various clinical studies have highlighted that there is a 40% higher incidence of heart attacks and strokes among woman who take or have taken the pill. There is also a six times higher incidence of cancers among women who have taken the pill compared to those who have never taken the pill.

Taking into consideration the above,

1. Does the Commission intend to review the regulations on oral contraceptives?

2. What kind of measures does the Commission envisage taking in terms of informing the public about the possible adverse reactions to contraceptive pills?

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

The European Medicines Agency has completed an EU-wide review of combined hormonal contraceptives (CHCs) in November 2013. The review ([1]) looked at the benefits and risks of these medicines, particularly the risk of blood clots. The Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) has concluded, that the benefits of CHCs in preventing unwanted pregnancies continue to outweigh their risks. The well-known risk of venous thromboembolism (can potentially cause a pulmonary embolism) is small and varies depending on the type of progestogen the product contains. The risk of arterial thromboembolism (can potentially cause a stroke or heart attack) is very low and there is no evidence for a difference in the level of risk depending on the type of progestogen.

The review has reinforced the importance of ensuring that clear and up-to-date information is provided to women who use CHCs and to the healthcare professionals giving advice and clinical care. The product information of these medicines will be updated to help women make informed decisions about their choice of contraception together with their healthcare professional. More information about the procedure is available on the website of the Agency ([2]) and includes information to patients and healthcare professionals.

The CHMP opinion will now be sent to the Commission for the adoption of a legally binding decision to update the product information of all combined hormonal contraceptives throughout the EU.

([1]) Under Article 31 of the directive 2001/83/EC.
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2013/11/news_detail_001969.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012531/13
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(5 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Współfinansowanie ze środków UE projektów związanych z wykonywaniem aborcji

Według raportu organizacji European Dignity Watch „Finansowanie aborcji w ramach pomocy dla rozwoju" z 2012 r., środki z budżetu Unii Europejskiej przeznaczane zostały na dofinansowywanie dwóch organizacji charytatywnych, których działalność łączy się między innymi z promowaniem aborcji w krajach rozwijających się. International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) oraz Marie Stopes Intenational (MSI) otrzymały w ramach funduszy unijnych ponad 18 mln euro. Wśród priorytetów afiszowanych na oficjalnych stronach internetowych obu organizacji wymienia się „zwiększenie dostępu do chirurgii medycznej i aborcji tam, gdzie jest ona dozwolona" (MSI) oraz „dostęp do bezpiecznej, legalnej aborcji", jako imperatyw zdrowia publicznego i praw ludzkich (IPPF).

Zarówno Komisja Europejska, jak i Rada wielokrotnie deklarowały, że kwestie dotyczące zdrowia reprodukcyjnego pozostają poza kompetencjami Unii Europejskiej (zobacz np. odpowiedź Komisji Europejskiej, H-0239/07 ([1]) z 24 kwietnia 2007). Ponadto, zgodnie z Rozporządzeniem (WE) nr 1567/2003 Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 15 lipca 2003r. w sprawie pomocy w odniesieniu do polityk oraz działań i praw dotyczących zdrowia reprodukcyjnego i seksualnego w krajach rozwijających się, „nie przewiduje się popierania jakichkolwiek zachęt do przeprowadzania sterylizacji lub aborcji (…) w krajach rozwijających się".

Mając na uwadze powyższe, powstają następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja dysponuje informacjami dotyczącymi celowego wykorzystania unijnych funduszy przez IPPF oraz MSI?

2. Jaka część przyznanych środków została przez ww. organizacje przeznaczona na działania związane z promowaniem lub wykonywaniem aborcji?

3. Czy przewiduje się dalsze finansowanie ze środków unijnych organizacji promujących aborcję, takich IPPF czy MSI?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

W przypadku każdego projektu finansowanego w ramach Instrumentu Finansowania Współpracy na rzecz Rozwoju częścią warunków umowy pomiędzy Komisją a beneficjentem jest zawsze dokładny opis projektu. Ściśle monitorowana jest również realizacja programu pod kątem przestrzegania warunków umowy.

Finansowane przez UE projekty wspomnianych organizacji nie promują aborcji ani związanych z nią usług.

Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu wypełniać swoje zobowiązania dotyczące zdrowia reprodukcyjnego i seksualnego zgodnie z polityką rozwoju UE i programem działań Międzynarodowej Konferencji na temat Ludności i Rozwoju, przyznając na te cele środki finansowe zgodnie z ustawodawstwem państw, w których są one realizowane. Komisja dysponuje szeregiem instrumentów, w tym właściwych instrumentów zapewniających wsparcie organizacjom społeczeństwa obywatelskiego.

Komisja pragnie odesłać Szanownych Panów Posłów do odpowiedzi udzielonych na pytania wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-005234/2012, E-005275/2012 i E-005269/2012 ([2]).

([1]) Odpowiedź na pytanie ustne z 24.4.2007.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012531/13
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(5 November 2013)

Subject: EU co-financing for abortion-related projects

According to 'The Funding of Abortion through EU Development Aid', a report published in 2012 by European Dignity Watch, EU funding has been allocated to two charities whose activities include the promotion of abortion in developing countries. The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and Marie Stopes International (MSI) have been awarded over EUR 18 million in EU grants. According to the official websites of these two organisations, their priorities include 'increasing access to surgical and medical abortion where the law allows' (MSI) and 'access to safe and legal abortion' as a public health and human rights imperative (IPPF).

Both the Commission and the Council have stated on many occasions that reproductive health issues lie outside the EU's remit (for example in the Commission's response of 26 April 2007 to question H-0239/07 ([1])). Furthermore, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1567/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2003 on aid for policies and actions on reproductive and sexual health and rights in developing countries, 'No support is to be given under this regulation to incentives to encourage sterilisation or abortion (…) in developing countries'.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Does the Commission have any information on the use to which EU funds are put by the IPPF or MSI?

2. What percentage of the allocated funding was spent by these organisations on the promotion of abortion or the provision of abortion services?

3. Are there plans to provide continued EU funding for organisations such as the IPFF and MSI which promote abortion?

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

A detailed project description is always part of the contractual terms between the Commission and beneficiary organisation for each project funded under the Development Cooperation Instrument. Programme implementation is also closely monitored in respect for the agreed contractual terms.

EU funded projects with these organisations neither include promotion of abortion nor abortion services.

The Commission will continue implementing the EU's sexual and reproductive health related commitments, in line with the EU development policy and the programme of Action of the International Conference of Population and Development, allocating funding to these purposes in accordance to the legislation of the countries where they take place. The Commission has a variety of instruments available including those relevant for providing support to the civil society organisations.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Members to its answers to Written Questions E-005234/2012, E-005275/2012 and E-005269/2012 ([2]).

([1]) Written response of 24.4.2007.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-012536/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(6 november 2013)

Betreft: Uitleg naar aanleiding van het onderhoud tussen Kris Peeters en Michel Barnier

Op 4 november 2013 hadden Kris Peeters, minister-president van de Vlaamse Regering, en Europees Commissaris voor Interne Markt Michel Barnier een onderhoud over het Oosterweelproject. Commissaris Barnier gaat akkoord met de toewijzing van de concessie van het Oosterweelproject aan de nv Tunnel Liefkenshoek (TLH). De plannen van de Vlaamse overheid om de concessie rechtstreeks, zonder aanbesteding, door te schuiven van de BAM (Beheersmaatschappij Antwerpen Mobiel), die verantwoordelijk is voor de financiering en implementatie van het Masterplan 2020-project, naar TLH (een dochter van BAM), is volgens de Commissie niet in strijd met de Europese regels rond overheidsopdrachten. Die verschuiving werd in 2010 opgezet om het Oosterweeldossier uit de Vlaamse begroting te houden.

TLH wordt daarbij beschouwd als een autonoom overheidsbedrijf en wordt niet gekoppeld aan het Vlaams Gewest, waardoor de begroting van TLH niet opgenomen wordt in de Vlaamse begroting.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Heeft Europees Commissaris Barnier voorafgaandelijk aan het antwoord van Kris Peeters overleg gepleegd met Eurostat? Zoja, wat is het resultaat en is dit beschikbaar?

2. Op welke rechtsgrondslag wordt de TLH niet opgenomen in de Vlaamse begroting? Gaat de Commissie daarmee akkoord?

3. Welke motivatie en omkadering heeft de Vlaamse regering gegeven om die overdracht te motiveren?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(11 december 2013)

1. Het gesprek van Commissaris Barnier en de minister-president van de Vlaamse regering, Kris Peeters, betrof uitsluitend de Europeesrechtelijke vragen met betrekking tot de openbare aanbesteding die waren gerezen in de context van het Oosterweelproject. De verklaring van Commissaris Barnier ter gelegenheid van dat onderhoud over de toewijzing van de concessie aan de nv Tunnel Liefkenshoek met het oog op de uitvoering en de exploitatie van de werkzaamheden van het Oosterweelproject past in dat kader. Aspecten van de nationale begroting zijn niet ter sprake gekomen, en er was dan ook geen aanleiding om Eurostat te raadplegen.

2. TLH wordt beschouwd als een marktproducent en valt daarom statistisch, overeenkomstig de ESR95-normen, buiten de overheidssector. Met deze classificatie heeft Eurostat in 2010 ingestemd op basis van meest recente informatie op dat moment.

Het feit dat de concessiehouder buiten de overheidssector wordt geclassificeerd, brengt echter niet automatisch met zich mee dat de financiering van het project volledig buiten de overheidsbegroting wordt geboekt. Zo bepaalt het ESR95-handboek overheidstekort en overheidsschuld dat indien de overheid de meeste risico's in verband met het project draagt, de gebouwde infrastructuur moet worden opgenomen in de overheidsbegroting.

3. Zoals in het antwoord op vraag 2 wordt vermeld, wordt TLH door de Belgische autoriteiten beschouwd als een marktproducent die conform de ESR95-normen statistisch buiten de overheidssector wordt geclassificeerd.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012536/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Explanation necessitated by the discussion between Kris Peeters and Michel Barnier

On 4 November 2013, Kris Peeters, Prime Minister of the Flemish Government, and the European Commissioner for the internal market, Michel Barnier, discussed the Oosterweel project. Commissioner Barnier approves of the award of the concession for the project to nv Tunnel Liefkenshoek (TLH). According to the Commission, the plans of the Flemish authorities to pass the concession on directly, without a procurement procedure, from BAM (Beheersmaatschappij Antwerpen Mobiel), which is responsible for the financing and implementation of the Masterplan 2020 project, to TLH (a subsidiary of BAM) do not breach European public procurement law. This arrangement was decided in 2010 in order to keep the funding of the Oosterweel project off the Flemish Government's budget.

TLH is regarded as an autonomous public-sector undertaking, and is not linked to the Flemish Region, so that TLH's budget does not form part of that region's budget.

1. Before Kris Peeters' answer, did Commissioner Barnier consult Eurostat? If so, with what result, and are its findings available?

2. On what legal basis is TLH excluded from the Flemish Government budget? Does the Commission agree with this?

3. How did the Flemish Government justify this transfer, and what framework did it adduce?

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

1. The sole purpose of the meeting between Commissioner Barnier and Mr Kris Peeters, Prime Minister of the Flemish Government, was to discuss issues related to EU public procurement law which were raised in the context of the Oosterweel project. Mr Barnier's statements on this occasion, concerning the award of a public works contract to the company Tunnel Liefkenshoek to carry out the work involved in the Oosterweel project, are in line with this. As national accounting issues were not addressed, there was no need to consult Eurostat.

2. TLH is considered a market producer and it is statistically classified outside the general government sector, following ESA95 standards. The classification was agreed by Eurostat in 2010, based on the latest available information at that time.

However, the fact that the concessionaire is classified outside the general government sector does not automatically entail that the funding of the project is fully recorded off the government budget. For example, following the ESA95 Manual on Government Deficit and Debt, if the government is bearing most of the risks associated with the project, the infrastructure built should be recorded in the government budget.

3. As mentioned under 2, TLH is considered by the Belgian authorities as a market producer statistically classified outside the general government sector, following ESA95 standards.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-012542/13
a Bizottság számára
Gyürk András (PPE)
(2013. november 6.)

Tárgy: A „behálózott kontinens” csomagra vonatkozó bizottsági javaslat hatásai

A „behálózott kontinens” csomag nagy jelentőséggel bír Európa számára. E jogszabálynak köszönhetően a társadalom még nagyobb része tudja élvezni az internet és a mobilkommunikáció nyújtotta előnyöket.

A javaslat olyan összetett intézkedéseket javasol, amelyek a teljes piaci struktúrára hatással vannak. Ilyen jelentős változtatásokat csak egy mélyreható elemzésen és széles körű konszenzuson alapuló csomag révén lehet végrehajtani. Mivel ez a téma a Parlament 2014. tavaszi ülésrendjén szerepel, kétséges, hogy meg lehet-e szervezni egy valamennyi részletre kiterjedő megbeszélést.

A fentiekre tekintettel tudna-e a Bizottság az alábbi kérdésekre válaszolni:

1. Mennyire befolyásolja a javaslat a tagállamok hatáskörét?

2. Végeztek-e hatásvizsgálatokat e csomag kisebb tagállamokra, különösen piacaikra, kkv-ágazataikra és költségvetésükre kifejtett lehetséges hatásairól?

3. A csomag éppen a barangolásról szóló III. rendelet elfogadását követően fogja bevezetni a barangolás (roaming) egy új koncepcióját. Okozhat-e a barangolásra vonatkozó szabályok folyamatos megváltoztatása zavarokat a piacon, tekintve, hogy az üzemeltetők nem biztosak abban, hogy melyik rendeletet kell követniük?

Neelie Kroes válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. december 11.)

A javaslat a szubszidiaritás elve alapján kíván megfelelő egyensúlyt teremteni az egységes szabályozás iránti igény és a nemzeti hatáskörök tiszteletben tartása között. Ahelyett, hogy egyszerűen csak máshová telepítené a hatásköröket, olyan mechanizmusok bevezetését irányozza elő, amelyek könnyebbé teszik a szabályozási célú intézkedések napi szintű koordinálását. A jelenlegi keretszabályozással összhangban a nemzeti szabályozó hatóságok továbbra is kulcsszerepet fognak játszani a területükön lévő piacok ellenőrzésében és szabályozásában. Ugyanígy a Bizottság a spektrumgazdálkodás területén sem a felelősségek nemzeti szintről európai szintre való áthelyezésére törekszik, hanem arra, hogy a rádióspektrum használata koordinált módon történjék, és egy következetes feltételrendszer mellett egész Európában összehangolt rendszer működjön.

A javaslat széles körű hatásvizsgálaton alapszik, amely kiterjedt a kisebb tagállamok érdekeinek elemzésére és a kis- és középvállalkozásokra gyakorolt hatások vizsgálatára is. A hatásvizsgálat egyik közvetkeztetése éppen az volt, hogy az összeköttetések javítása – az elektronikus kereskedelemnek, a számítási felhőnek, a szervezeti innovációnak és más hasonló alkalmazásoknak köszönhetően – valamennyi gazdasági ágazatban növekedési lehetőségeket generál, ami különösen a kis- és középvállalkozások esetében nyit tág teret a termelékenység növelésének.

Ami a barangolással kapcsolatos kérdését illeti, a javaslat a 2012-ben elfogadott barangolási rendeletre épít, és az előirányzott megoldás a versenypiaci feltételek megerősítésével vet véget a magas barangolási díjaknak. A Bizottság megítélése szerint fontos ösztönözni a szolgáltatókat arra, hogy egymással megállapodva csökkentsék a barangolási szolgáltatások nagykereskedelmi költségeit, és ezáltal lehetővé tegyék, hogy a barangolási szolgáltatások ára 2014-re a belföldi árak szintjére csökkenjen. A 2012. évi barangolási rendelet alapján a javaslat egy olyan útitervet kínál a kérdés iránt érdeklődő mobilszolgáltatóknak, amellyel már a rendelet 2016-ban esedékes felülvizsgálata előtt megoldást lehet találni a túlzó barangolási díjak problémakörére.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012542/13
to the Commission
András Gyürk (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Impacts of the Commission's proposal 'connected continent'

The connected continent package bears great significance for Europe. Through this legislation a greater part of society can enjoy the advantages of Internet and mobile communication.

The proposal contains complex measures which would affect the entire market structure. Such important changes can only be implemented via a package based on thorough analysis and wide consensus. Considering that this topic is on Parliament's agenda for spring 2014, the possibility of a discussion covering all details seems doubtful.

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

1. To what extent does the proposal interfere with Member States' scope of authority?

2. Have impact assessments been carried out on the potential effects of this package on smaller Member States, specifically on their markets, SME sectors and budgets?

3. The package will introduce a new roaming concept just after the adoption of the Roaming III regulation. Could the continuous modification of roaming rules cause market obscurity, given that operators are unsure of the regulation to which they must adhere?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

The proposal aims to achieve the right balance between the need to ensure regulatory consistency and the respect of national competences in accordance with the subsidiarity principle. It envisages mechanisms that facilitate day to day coordination of regulatory measures, rather than shifting decision-making competences. In line with the current regulatory framework, national regulators will continue to have a key role in monitoring and regulating markets in their territory. Equally, in the area of spectrum the Commission is not seeking a transfer of responsibilities from the national to the European level, but the coordination of use of radio spectrum ensuring a synchronised approach and the application of consistent conditions across Europe.

The proposal is based on an extensive impact assessment that considered the interests of smaller Member States and also the impact on SMEs. In particular, the impact assessment concludes that improved connectivity would enable growth possibilities across all economic sectors enabling the use of applications such as e-Commerce, cloud computing and organisational innovation, driving productivity gains especially for SMEs.

As regards roaming, the proposal builds on the 2012 Roaming Regulation and proposes a solution to end high roaming charges by reinforcing competitive market conditions. The Commission considers that it is important to incentivise operators to find agreements which allow them to reduce wholesale roaming costs and thus enable them to provide roaming services at the level of domestic prices (roam-like-at-home) starting in 2014. Building on the 2012 Roaming Regulation the proposal gives interested mobile operators a roadmap to fix roaming surcharges before the 2016 review.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-012543/13
a Bizottság számára
Gyürk András (PPE)
(2013. november 6.)

Tárgy: Az európai acélpiacokon a héakijátszás elleni küzdelem tekintetében követett bevált gyakorlatok

Az európai acélipar világviszonylatban a második helyen áll acélgyártásban, és stratégiai jelentőséggel bír számos egyéb fontos európai iparág számára.

Az európai acélipar globális versenyképessége azonban veszélybe került az alacsony kereslet, a magas működési költségek és a méltánytalan nemzetközi kereskedelmi korlátozások miatt. Ezért az EU számára elsődleges az egyenlő versenyfeltételek megteremtése és a jogellenes tevékenységek elleni küzdelem az acélpiacokon.

A fentiek fényében válaszolna-e a Bizottság az alábbiakra:

1. Milyen módon szándékozik a Bizottság fellépni a jogellenes tevékenységek ellen, beleértve a héakijátszást?

2. A Bizottság tudomása szerint előfordult-e héakijátszás a tagállamokban?

3. Milyen bevált gyakorlatok vannak érvényben az acélpiacon a héakijátszás elleni küzdelem tekintetében?

Algirdas Šemeta válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. december 13.)

1. A Bizottság fel szeretné hívni a figyelmet arra, hogy a hozzáadottérték-adóval (héa) kapcsolatos feladatok a szubszidiaritás elve alapján megoszlanak a Bizottság és a tagállamok között.

Az adórendszerek szervezése és irányítása elsősorban a tagállamok felelőssége. Ez azt jelenti, hogy a héa megállapítása, beszedése, ellenőrzése és visszatérítése a tagállamok felelősségi körébe tartozik.

Annak érdekében, hogy támogassa a tagállamok erőfeszítéseit a csalás elleni küzdelem hatékonyabbá tételében, a Bizottság biztosítja a jogi keretet, amely lehetővé teszi a tagállamok számára, hogy együttműködjenek ezen a területen, valamint eszközöket biztosít a határokon átnyúló csalások elleni küzdelemhez. Ezek az eszközök az alábbiakat foglalják magukba: információcsere, többoldalú ellenőrzés lefolytatása és adóügyi tisztviselők jelenléte más tagállamokban folytatott vizsgálatok során.

Szeretném felhívni a tisztelt képviselő úr figyelmét az EU héa-jogszabályainak közelmúltbeli változásaira is, nevezetesen a bizonyos fémtípusok értékesítésére vonatkozó fordított adózás csalásellenes intézkedésként történő alkalmazhatóságára ([1]).

2. A Bizottság 2013. december 4-én magas szintű kerekasztal-beszélgetés keretében találkozott az acélipar képviselőivel, hogy megvitassák többek között a betonacélok szektorában előforduló, határon átnyúló csalások eseteit.

3. A héacsalás elleni küzdelem terén folytatott többoldalú együttműködés elősegítése és megkönnyítése érdekében a 904/2010/EU tanácsi rendelet létrehozott (a 33–37. cikkben) egy hálózatot Eurofisc néven, amely a célzott információk tagállamok közötti gyors cseréjére szolgál és 2010. november 1-jén lépett hatályba. E hálózaton keresztül a tagállamok információkat cserélhetnek a (potenciális) csalási ügyekkel kapcsolatban, és megoszthatják egymással például az acélszektorban előforduló héacsalás határon átnyúló eseteit.

([1]) A Tanács 2013. július 22-i 2013/43/EU irányelve a közös hozzáadottértékadó-rendszerről szóló 2006/112/EK irányelvnek a fordított adózás bizonyos csalásra alkalmas termékek és szolgáltatások értékesítésére vonatkozó fakultatív és ideiglenes alkalmazása tekintetében történő módosításáról (HL L 201., 2013.7.26., 4. o.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012543/13
to the Commission
András Gyürk (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Best practices to fight VAT evasion in European steel markets

The European steel industry is the second largest steel producer in the world and is of strategic importance for several other major European industries.

However, the global competitiveness of the European steel industry is at risk due to low demand, high operational costs and unfair international trade restrictions. Creating a level playing field and fighting against illegal activities within the steel markets are therefore key priorities for the EU.

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

1. How does the Commission intend to fight illegal activities, including VAT evasion?

2. Is the Commission aware of any precedents for VAT evasion in Member States?

3. What best practices are in place to fight VAT evasion in the steel production market?

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

1. The Commission would point out that in the area of VAT responsibilities are divided between the Commission and Member States based on the principles of subsidiarity.

The organisation and the management of tax systems is primarily the responsibility of Member States. This means that the assessment, collection, auditing and the recovery of VAT fall under the responsibility of Member States.

In order to assist the Member States in their efforts to fight fraud more efficiently, the Commission provides the legal framework that allows Member States to cooperate in this field as well as offering them tools to fight cases of cross-border fraud. These tools comprise exchanges of information, carrying out multilateral controls and the presence of tax officials in enquiries in other Member States.

The attention of the Honourable Member is also drawn to recent changes in EU VAT legislation as regards the possible application, as an anti-fraud measure, of the reverse charge mechanism to supplies of certain types of metals ([1]).

2. The Commission met representatives of the steel industry at the High-Level Roundtable on the Future of the European Steel Industry on 4th December 2013 to discuss among other things cross border fraud in the steel reinforcing bars sector.

3. In order to further promote and facilitate multilateral cooperation in the fight against VAT fraud Council Regulation (EU) No 904/2010 created (in Articles 33-37) a network for the swift exchange of targeted information between Member States called 'Eurofisc', which entered into force on 1 November 2010. Through this network, Member States can exchange information relating to (potential) fraud cases and exchange best practice to tackle VAT fraud in cross border situations such as in the steel sector.

([1]) See Council Directive 2013/43/EU of 22 July 2013 amending Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax, as regards an optional and temporary application of the reverse charge mechanism in relation to supplies of certain goods and services susceptible to fraud (OJ L 201, 26.7.2013, p. 4).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012544/13
alla Commissione
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(6 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: «Premio Hitler» 2013 per la tutela degli animali

L'Associazione Italiana FederFauna ([1]) sta diramando un comunicato ([2]) nel quale si annuncia la consegna del «Premio Hitler 2013» alla persona che sarà segnalata da presunte «vittime di violenze di matrice animalista» per essersi «particolarmente distinta nell'animalismo» nel corso dell'anno. Tale «premio» verrebbe consegnato a Bologna il 25 novembre e sarebbe costituito da una targa che riproduce, come indica il comunicato, il Führer che accarezza amorevolmente due caprioli sullo sfondo del campo di concentramento di Auschwitz, sovrastato dalla scritta «*Animal Rights*» corretta in «*Animal Reich*». Dietro al preteso sarcasmo di cui è intriso tale comunicato, si evince inequivocabilmente un evidente giudizio sull'animalismo — con cui in realtà si dovrebbe definire la posizione di chi ritiene che vada accresciuta la tutela giuridica ed etica nei confronti delle specie animali differenti dall'uomo —, che si vorrebbe dipingere quale pratica vicina alla «violenza» nei confronti dell'uomo e in contrasto con i diritti fondamentali stessi dell'uomo, tant'è che le segnalazioni dei «vincitori» del premio sarebbero affidate alle presunte vittime di «violenze di matrice animalista» e il Führer stesso, i cui crimini contro l'umanità sono ben rappresentati dal campo di concentramento di Auschwitz, assurgerebbe a simbolo di riconoscimento di merito.

Codesta Associazione risulta iscritta nel registro dei portatori di interessi della Commissione europea e del Parlamento sotto il numero 99979016898-26 ([3]).

L'articolo 3, lettera h) dello statuto di Federfauna recita: «[i principi ispiratori sono] l'europeismo, quale forma primaria, nell'attuale fase storica, per costruire ambiti crescenti di convivenza costruttiva e di collaborazione pacifica fra le nazioni».

È la Commissione a conoscenza delle attività dell'associazione che sono in evidente contrasto con tale principio? Ritiene la Commissione che l'iniziativa di questa associazione sia compatibile con la sua iscrizione nel registro dei portatori di interessi?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(13 dicembre 2013)

1) I dipartimenti della Commissione incaricati del benessere degli animali e della politica agricola non hanno avuto contatti o rapporti di collaborazione con FederFauna e non sono a conoscenza di tali attività.

2) La Commissione ringrazia l'on. parlamentare per aver segnalato le attività di FederFauna e per il riferimento al Registro per la trasparenza. Sulla base della segnalazione, la Commissione effettuerà un controllo di qualità della registrazione di questa organizzazione nel Registro per la trasparenza, comprendente le attività svolte in rapporto all'attività legislativa dell'UE (che pertanto ricadono nell'ambito di applicazione del registro).

Lo scopo dei controlli di qualità è di limitare, per quanto possibile, il persistere di errori flagranti, incoerenze o altri abusi individuati nel contenuto del Registro per la trasparenza.

Si ricorda che le informazioni fornite rientrano e dovrebbero permanere nell'ambito di responsabilità del registrante, che rimane responsabile per eventuali violazioni del codice di condotta. I controlli di qualità non hanno quindi l'effetto di avvallare formalmente la dichiarazione né costituiscono un procedimento di validazione.

([1]) sito internet: www.federfauna.org
([2]) http://www.federfauna.org/newss.php?id=8559
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/consultation/displaylobbyist.do?id=99979016898-26

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012544/13
to the Commission
Tiziano Motti (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: 2013 'Hitler Award' for the protection of animals

FederFauna ([1]), the Italian confederation of animal breeders', traders' and owners' associations, has released a statement ([2]) announcing that the winner of its 2013 Hitler Award for outstanding contribution to the animal rights movement will be chosen by 'victims of violence by animal rights activists'. The 'award' will be presented on 25 November 2013 in Bologna. According to the statement, the prize consists of a plaque displaying a picture of the Führer lovingly caressing two deer in front of Auschwitz concentration camp, under the heading 'Animal Rights' which has been corrected to read 'Animal Reich'. However tongue in cheek it may be, the statement is clearly intended to show animal rights activism in a particular light. While, in reality, animal rights activists seek to secure greater legal protection for and humane treatment of animals, FederFauna's statement equates such activism with 'violence' against human beings, depicting it as a breach of basic human rights, with nominations for the award being made by 'victims of violence by animal rights activists'. Hitler, whose crimes against humanity are symbolised by the image of Auschwitz concentration camp, is the ultimate expression of this twisted logic.

FederFauna is listed in the Transparency Register as a group lobbying Parliament and the Commission (identification number 99979016898-26 ([3])).

Article 3(h) of FederFauna's statute states: '[our guiding principles are] Europeanism, as a key means in today's world of fostering harmonious coexistence and peaceful cooperation among nations'.

Is the Commission aware of FederFauna's activities, which are quite clearly in conflict with its own guiding principles? Is the above award compatible with FederFauna's inclusion in the Transparency Register?

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

1. The departments of the Commission in charge of animal welfare issues and agricultural policy have not had any contact or collaboration with FederFauna and are not aware of any of its activities.

2. The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for alerting it to the activities of FederFauna, and for the reference to the Transparency Register (TR). Following this alert, the Commission will perform a quality check of the TR registration of this organisation, covering its activities with relation to EU legislative activity (i.e. falling under the scope of the register).

The aim of quality checks is to limit, as far as possible, the existence of flagrant errors, mistakes, inconsistencies or other abuses found in the Transparency Register content.

It is recalled that the information provided is, and should remain, the responsibility of the registrant, who remains liable for any violation of the code of conduct. Therefore the quality checks do not have the effect of formally clearing the declaration or constituting a validation process.

([1]) website: www.federfauna.org
([2]) http://www.federfauna.org/newss.php?id=8559
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/consultation/displaylobbyist.do?id=99979016898-26

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012545/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(6 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Publicitatea privind țigaretele electronice

Potrivit ziarului francez *Le Figaro*, la 28 octombrie, proprietarul unei tutungerii din Toulouse a dat în judecată un vânzător de țigarete electronice pentru concurență ilegală. Proprietarul tutungeriei a scos în evidență o lacună în legislație referitoare la publicitatea privind țigaretele electronice. Acestea sunt considerate a fi produse din tutun, fapt confirmat și prin votul din 8 octombrie 2013 al Parlamentului cu privire la Directiva privind fabricarea, prezentarea și vânzarea tutunului și a produselor aferente.

Directiva privind publicitatea pentru produsele din tutun interzice publicitatea pentru acestea. Directiva privind fabricarea, prezentarea și vânzarea tutunului și a produselor aferente interzice publicitatea și vânzarea țigaretelor electronice minorilor, însă nu specifică modul în care ar trebui abordată publicitatea destinată adulților.

Ținând cont de faptul că țigaretele electronice conțin nicotină, va fi actualizată Directiva privind publicitatea pentru produsele din tutun pentru a include în aceasta dispoziții specifice referitoare la țigaretele electronice?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(20 decembrie 2013)

Cu privire la propunerea privind reglementarea utilizării țigărilor electronice, Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul la întrebarea scrisă E-6410/2013 ([1]). Propunerea Comisiei ca țigările electronice care depășesc un anumit prag în ceea ce privește conținutul de nicotină să facă obiectul legislației privind medicamentele a fost confirmată în abordarea generală adoptată de miniștrii sănătății în cadrul Consiliului EPSCO din 21 iunie ([2]).

Pe de altă parte, amendamentul PE la propunerea Comisiei consideră că țigările electronice sunt produse din tutun și supune aceste produse restricțiilor în materie de publicitate impuse de Directiva privind publicitatea pentru produsele din tutun ([3]) și de Directiva serviciilor mass-media audiovizuale. ([4]) În prezent, au loc discuții între Parlamentul European, Consiliu și Comisie și este prematur să ne antepronunțăm în privința rezultatelor negocierilor.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/ro/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st11/st11483.en13.pdf
([3]) Directiva 2003/33/CE, JO L 152/16 din 20.6.2003.
([4]) Directiva 2010/13/UE, JO L 95, 15.4.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012545/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Advertising of electronic cigarettes

According to the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, on 28 October a tobacconist in Toulouse sued a vendor of electronic cigarettes for unlawful competition. The tobacconist pointed out a loophole in the legislation concerning the advertising of electronic cigarettes. They are regarded as tobacco products, a fact that was also confirmed by Parliament's vote on 8 October 2013 on the directive on the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products.

The Tobacco Advertising Directive (2003/33/EC) bans advertising of tobacco products. The directive on the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products bans the advertising and sale of electronic cigarettes to minors, but does not make reference to how advertising directed at adults should be handled.

Given that electronic cigarettes contain nicotine, will the Tobacco Advertising Directive be updated to include specifications on electronic cigarettes?

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

On the proposed regulation of electronic cigarettes, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-6410/2013 ([1]). The Commission proposal to subject electronic cigarettes exceeding a certain threshold of nicotine to the medicinal products legislation was upheld in the general approach adopted by Health Ministers at the EPSCO Council on 21 June ([2]).

In contrast, the EP amendment to the Commission proposal regards e-cigarettes as tobacco-related products and subjects these products to the advertising restrictions of the Tobacco Advertising Directive ([3]) and Audiovisual Media Services Directive. ([4]) Discussions are ongoing between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission and it is premature to prejudge the outcome of negotiations.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st11/st11483.en13.pdf
([3]) Directive 2003/33/EC, OJ L 152/16, 20.6.2003.
([4]) Directive 2010/13/EU ,OJ L 95, 15.4.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012546/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Turismo del welfare in Gran Bretagna

Il 1º gennaio 2013 scadrà la moratoria applicata da alcuni paesi, tra cui la Gran Bretagna, alla libera circolazione di circa 30 milioni di cittadini provenienti da Romania e Bulgaria che potranno così beneficiare a pieno titolo delle agevolazioni sociosanitarie previste per i cittadini inglesi. I centri per l'impiego britannici fanno sapere che sono già sommersi dalla richieste di cittadini bulgari e rumeni che vogliono sapere come poter accedere ai benefici oggi previsti per i residenti. Sono nate, inoltre, alcune agenzie e sono stati attivati numeri telefonici a pagamento che, proponendo le consulenze degli «specialisti dell'immigrazione», pubblicizzano e offrono aiuto ai cittadini che vogliono trasferirsi in Gran Bretagna in cambio dell'impegno a ricevere una parte dei contributi ottenuti.

Può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. è a conoscenza di questo fenomeno?

2. intende attivare una seria indagine sul turismo del *welfare* in Europa?

3. intende verificare le attività degli «specialisti dell'immigrazione»?

4. ritiene che il diritto comunitario sia adeguato e sufficiente per contrastare questo fenomeno?

5. ha considerato la possibilità di inserire, tra i disposti che attualmente regolano questa materia, il principio di reciprocità per cui i cittadini di uno Stato membro che si spostano devono ricevere lo stesso trattamento che troverebbero in quello di origine?

6. ha considerato la possibilità che i singoli Stati membri possano riservarsi il diritto di adottare misure restrittive per l'accesso ai servizi socio assistenziali verso i cittadini che non hanno mai lavorato sul loro territorio?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La normativa dell'UE stabilisce che i cittadini dell'UE devono godere di parità di trattamento allorché si spostano in un altro Stato membro ([1]), cosa che è garantita su base di reciprocità da tutti gli Stati membri. Applicare alle persone che si spostano in un altro Stato membro le disposizioni del loro paese d'origine sarebbe contrario all'*acquis* dell'UE e sarebbe impraticabile sul piano amministrativo. Inoltre, la libertà di circolazione dei cittadini dell'UE è una delle quattro libertà fondamentali che sono le pietre angolari del mercato unico. Il principio della parità di trattamento è però sottoposto a limitazioni e a condizioni definite nel trattato e nel diritto derivato.

La Commissione non ha ricevuto nessuna informazione dalle autorità del Regno Unito sulla situazione specifica descritta dall'Onorevole deputata e non è quindi in condizione di indagarla. La Commissione è a conoscenza del dibattito in corso sul «turismo del welfare». Una recente comunica zione della Commissione ([2]) sulla libera circolazione dei cittadini dell'UE ribadisce tuttavia che le preoccupazioni espresse nel merito non sono basate su elementi probatori. La maggior parte dei cittadini dell'UE che si spostano in un altro Stato membro lo fanno per lavoro. Inoltre, conformemente ai dati forniti dagli Stati membri e da studi recenti, i cittadini dell'UE che si avvalgono dell'opzione della mobilità fanno ricorso alle prestazioni previdenziali con un'intensità non superiore a quella dei cittadini dei paesi ospitanti.

Il corpus della legislazione dell'UE contiene inoltre rigorose disposizioni di salvaguardia contro la frode oltre ad assicurare che gli obblighi in forza della normativa unionale siano rispettati e che sui sistemi di assistenza sociale degli Stati membri ospitanti non ricada un onere irragionevole. Ulteriori particolari su tali salvaguardie sono contenute nella comunicazione di cui sopra.

([1]) Articoli 18 e 21 del Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.
([2]) Libera circolazione dei cittadini dell'Unione e dei loro familiari: cinque azioni fanno la differenza (COM(2013) 837 def. del 25 novembre 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012546/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Welfare tourism in the United Kingdom

The moratorium placed by certain countries, including the United Kingdom, on the free movement of around 30 million Romanian and Bulgarian citizens will expire on 1 January 2014, after which people from those countries will have full entitlement to the health and welfare benefits which UK citizens enjoy. UK job centres have reported that they have already been flooded with inquiries from Bulgarian and Romanian nationals wanting to know how to access the benefits to which residents are entitled. Several agencies have also been set up and several paying telephone numbers activated, claiming to offer advice from 'immigration specialists' and offering help to citizens who wish to move to the UK, in exchange for a commitment to pay them a portion of the benefits they obtain.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Does it intend to launch a serious investigation into 'welfare tourism' in Europe?

3. Does the Commission have plans to investigate the activities of these so-called 'immigration specialists'?

4. Does the Commission believe that there is adequate EU legislation in place to combat this problem?

5. Has the Commission considered the possibility of incorporating into the existing provisions on this subject a principle of reciprocity, whereby EU citizens who move to a different Member State should be treated in the same way as they are treated in their country of origin?

6. Has it considered the possibility that individual Member States might be able to reserve the right to adopt restrictive measures on access to social services and welfare benefits for people who have never worked in that country?

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

EC law provides that EU citizens are to enjoy equal treatment when moving to another Member State ([1]), which is guaranteed on a reciprocal basis by all Member States. To apply the provisions of their country of origin to persons who move to another Member State would be contrary to the EU *acquis* and administratively unworkable. Furthermore, freedom of movement for EU citizens is one of the four fundamental freedoms that constitute the cornerstones of the Single Market. Nevertheless, the principle of equal treatment is subject to limitations and conditions set out in the Treaty and in secondary legislation.

The Commission has not received any information from the UK authorities on the specific situation described by the Honourable Member, and it is not therefore in a position to investigate it. The Commission is aware of the current debate on 'benefit tourism'. A recent Commission communication ([2]) on free movement of EU citizens points out, however, that the concerns expressed are not based on evidence. Most EU citizens moving to another Member State do so to work. Furthermore, according to figures provided by the Member States and recent studies, mobile EU citizens use welfare benefits no more intensively than the host countries' nationals.

The body of EU legislation also lays down strong provisions to safeguard against fraud and to ensure that obligations under EC law are respected and that an unreasonable burden is not placed on the social assistance schemes of the host Member States. Further details of such safeguards are set out in the communication referred to above.

([1]) Articles 18 and 21 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
([2]) 'Free movement of EU citizens and their families: Five actions to make a difference' (COM(2013) 837 final of 25 November 2013).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012547/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Mutilazioni genitali femminili e immigrazione

Nonostante l'approvazione della risoluzione votata dall'Assemblea generali della Nazioni Unite circa un anno fa che ha messo al bando universalmente le mutilazioni genitali femminili (Mgf), per milioni di ragazze in tutto il mondo ancora incombe la minaccia delle mutilazioni dei loro genitali.

Più di 125 milioni di ragazze e donne vengono ancora sottoposte a queste pratiche in 29 Paesi in Africa, in Asia e in Medio Oriente e si stima che circa 86 milioni di ragazze in tutto il mondo rischiano di essere sottoposte a una qualche forma di mutilazione entro il 2030 se continua il trend attuale.

Quali azioni intende intraprendere la Commissione per l'intensificazione e il coordinamento degli impegni politici, legali e finanziari per far cessare concretamente le mutilazioni genitali femminili a livello globale?

Le Mgf sono diffuse anche all'interno di alcune comunità di immigrati presenti in Europa.

Può la Commissione fornire informazioni recenti e dati attuali e indicare quali Stati membri sono coinvolti nella pratica delle Mgf?

Quali azioni intende intraprendere, a livello europeo, la Commissione a tale riguardo?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(19 dicembre 2013)

Come osserva l'onorevole deputato, ogni anno milioni di donne e ragazze in tutto il mondo, anche nell'UE, sono sottoposte a mutilazioni genitali, in violazione dei loro diritti umani.

Le cifre riportate nell'ultima risoluzione del Parlamento europeo sulle mutilazioni genitali femminili (Mgf) ([1]) parlano di 500 000 vittime nell'UE. In base al rapporto Female genital mutilation in the European Union and Croatia, pubblicato dall'Istituto europeo per l'uguaglianza di genere ([2]), sono disponibili stime sulla diffusione di queste pratiche in Belgio, Francia, Germania, Ungheria, Irlanda, Italia, Paesi Bassi e Regno Unito, sebbene non sempre questi dati nazionali possano essere messi a confronto.

Il 25 novembre 2013 la Commissione ha adottato la comunicazione Verso l'eliminazione delle mutilazioni genitali femminili, un testo fortemente incentrato sulla prevenzione, che contempla sia l'azione interna che quella esterna. Oltre a reiterare la necessità di una migliore comprensione del problema a livello dell'UE, la comunicazione evidenzia il fatto che le Mgf rispondono a norme sociali profondamente radicate che vanno affrontate attraverso cambiamenti sociali duraturi. Sottolinea la necessità di una cooperazione multidisciplinare per proteggere le bambine a rischio e sostenere le vittime e sollecita misure di tutela di donne e ragazze, ricordando, innanzitutto, che le Mgf vanno riconosciute come ragioni valide per la richiesta di asilo, che le procedure d'asilo devono integrare la dimensione di genere e, infine, che queste pratiche sono perseguibili in tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE, malgrado le azioni penali siano rare. La comunicazione stila poi una lista di misure che la Commissione adotterà per favorire l'eliminazione delle mutilazioni genitali femminili.

([1]) Risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 14 giugno 2012 sull'abolizione delle mutilazioni genitali femminili (2012/2684(RSP)). Si noti che non tutti i paesi dispongono di stime e che i dati disponibili non sono necessariamente comparabili.
([2]) http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/female-genital-mutilation-in-the-european-union-and-croatia-report.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012547/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Female genital mutilation and immigration

Despite the UN General Assembly resolution banning female genital mutilation (FGM), passed a year ago, millions of girls around the world still live with the threat of having their genitals mutilated.

Over 125 million women and girls are still subjected to these practices in 29 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and it is estimated that if the current trend continues, around 86 million girls worldwide could be subjected to mutilation in one form or another between now and 2030.

What action does the Commission intend to take to step up and coordinate political, legal and financial commitments to help put a real stop to female genital mutilation around the world?

FGM is also widespread in some immigrant communities in Europe.

Can the Commission provide any recent information and up-to-date statistics and can it say which Member States are affected by the practice of FGM?

What action does the Commission intend to take on this matter at EU level?

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

As the Honourable Member mentioned, every year millions of women and girls around the world, including in the EU, are subject to female genital mutilation (FGM), a violation of their human rights.

The European Parliament, in its last Resolution on FGM ([1]), cited the figures of 500 000 victims in the EU. According to the report 'Female genital mutilation in the European Union and Croatia' published by the European Institute for Gender Equality ([2]), prevalence estimates are available for Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK. However, these national figures are not necessarily comparable.

On 25 November 2013, the Commission adopted the communication 'Towards the elimination of female genital mutilation'. The communication has a strong focus on prevention and includes both internal and external actions. It reiterates the need to improve understanding of the issue in the EU; it emphasises that FGM is a deep-rooted social norm and that sustainable social change is needed; it highlights the need for multidisciplinary cooperation to protect children at risk and support victims; it calls for protection of women and girls, recalling that FGM needs to be recognised as grounds for asylum, and asylum procedures must be gender-sensitive; it recalls that FGM is prosecutable in all EU Member States, even though prosecutions are rare. This communication defines a list of measures that the Commission will take to push forward the elimination of FGM.

([1]) European Parliament: Resolution on ending female genital mutilation from 16/06/2012 (2012/2684(RSP)). Note that not all countries have estimates, and such estimates are not necessarily comparable.

([2]) http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/female-genital-mutilation-in-the-european-union-and-croatia-report

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012549/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuovamente violate in Turchia le libertà di espressione e di stampa

Dalla rivolta di Gezi Park, i giornalisti stranieri non sono visti di buon occhio in Turchia.

In quei giorni, il primo ministro turco Recep Tayyip Erdogan aveva più volte accusato i media internazionali di essere complici di un complotto contro il paese, arrivando persino a minacciare di querela autorevoli quotidiani come il britannico *Times* e l'americano *New York Times*.

È accaduto però anche che un corrispondente sia stato minacciato di essere espulso dalla Turchia. Nei giorni scorsi, infatti, il quotidiano turco *Today's Zaman* ha riportato l'incredibile odissea di un giornalista olandese, corrispondente in Turchia per il giornale liberale *NRC Handelsblad*, che dal 1° gennaio 2014 non avrà più permesso di residenza e tesserino stampa: il giornalista diventerà una persona non grata, non potrà rimanere nel paese né tornarci in futuro.

Il motivo, tuttavia, non è chiaro, poiché le autorità turche non vogliono rivelare né al suo datore di lavoro, né al ministero degli Esteri olandese le ragioni di un trattamento così duro.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questo fatto?

Non ritiene la Commissione che in Turchia, ancora una volta, siano state violate la libertà di espressione e di stampa e che, di conseguenza, questo atteggiamento è in netto contrasto con i valori dell'UE alla quale la Turchia sta tentando da anni, e invano, di aderire?

Non ritiene la Commissione opportuno congelare qualsiasi apertura di negoziato di adesione con questo paese che, come citano autorevoli fonti stampa, non smania di entrare nell'UE e che non è ben visto da una gran parte dei cittadini europei?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del caso a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato. Le autorità turche le hanno fatto sapere che la questione è stata risolta e che ora il giornalista è libero di recarsi e lavorare in Turchia.

In linea generale, la Commissione ricorda che il diritto alla libertà di espressione, che comprende anche il diritto di ricevere e comunicare informazioni e idee, è un elemento fondamentale dei criteri politici a cui devono conformarsi tutti i paesi desiderosi di aderire all'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012549/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Freedom of expression and freedom of the press violated yet again in Turkey

Since the Gezi Park revolt, foreign journalists have been viewed with suspicion in Turkey.

At the time, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan repeatedly accused the international media of being party to a plot against his country and even threatened legal action against highly regarded newspapers such as *The Times* and *The New York Times*.

Now, a journalist has been threatened with expulsion from Turkey. Over the last few days, the Turkish daily newspaper *Today's Zaman* has reported on the unbelievable experiences of a Dutch journalist who is the Turkey correspondent for the liberal newspaper *NRC Handelsbad*. From 1 January 2014, the journalist will no longer be allowed a residence permit or press pass. He will not be welcome in the country and will not be allowed to stay there or to return in future.

The reasons are unclear, however, as the Turkish authorities refuse to explain either to his employer or to the Dutch Foreign Ministry what grounds they have for such harsh treatment.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Does the Commission agree that freedom of speech and freedom of the press have been violated yet again in Turkey and that this attitude is plainly at odds with the values of the European Union, which Turkey has been trying to join in vain for many years?

Does the Commission not feel that all talks with Turkey on EU membership should be put on hold, especially since authoritative press sources claim that Turkey is lukewarm about joining the EU, and many EU citizens do not look kindly on the country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the case referred to by the Honourable Member. It has been informed by the Turkish authorities that the issue has been resolved and that the journalist is now free to travel to, and work in, Turkey.

On a general note, the Commission recalls that the right to freedom of expression, which also includes the right to receive and impart information and ideas, is a key element of the political criteria each country wishing to join the EU needs to respect.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012550/13
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 november 2013)

Angående: Global kemikaliepanel

Människor exponeras dagligen för en lång rad kemikalier i sin vardag. För många av dessa kemikalier saknas det idag kunskap för att kunna bedöma ämnets farlighet, till exempel hur människors hälsa påverkas på lång sikt.

Arbetet med kemikalielagstiftning måste fördjupas och breddas i Europa. Revisionen av REACH, liksom de kommande kriterierna för hormonstörande ämnen, är mycket viktiga steg i detta, men långt ifrån tillräckliga.

Detta gäller naturligtvis inte bara på vår kontinent, utan globalt.

FN:s klimatpanel (IPCC) har spelat en stor roll för att sammanfatta och ta fram vetenskapligt underlag till politiska beslut på alla nivåer, inte minst globalt. Med tanke på att kemikaliefrågan är lika komplex, global och kanske också lika avgörande för vår framtid vore det därför önskvärt att FN inrättade en liknande panel för kemikalier.

1. Ställer sig kommissionen bakom iden om en global kemikaliepanel?

2. Hur kommer kommissionen att verka för att FN ska utveckla en dylik global kemikaliepanel?

Svar från Janez Potočnik på kommissionens vägnar
(6 januari 2014)

Kommissionen stöder internationellt samarbete om hantering av kemikalier för att förbättra skyddet av människors hälsa och miljön. Det finns redan ett antal rättsligt bindande internationella avtal samt icke-bindande instrument som aktivt stöds av kommissionen och som fastställer vetenskapligt material som görs tillgängligt för alla länder i syfte att stödja den nationella förvaltningen av vissa kemikalier.

Kommissionen och medlemsstaterna samt andra länder överväger för närvarande olika alternativ för en framtida kemikaliepolitik inom ramen för ett samrådsförfarande om hantering av kemikalier som inleddes genom FN:s miljöprogram (Unep). Mot bakgrund av ovanstående anser kommissionen att en bättre användning av befintliga instrument är viktigare än att skapa nya.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012550/13
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Global chemicals panel

In their daily lives, people are exposed to a whole range of chemicals. In many cases, there is currently insufficient knowledge to assess the hazard presented by a given substance, for example how human health is affected in the long term.

Work on chemicals legislation needs to be deepened and broadened in Europe. The revision of REACH, and the future criteria for hormone disrupters, are very important steps in this context, but by no means sufficient.

This naturally applies not only in Europe but worldwide.

The UN panel on climate change (IPCC) has played a big role in collating and presenting scientific material on which to base political decisions at all levels, including in particular global level. As the issue of chemicals is equally complex and global and will perhaps have a comparable impact on our future, it would be desirable for the UN to set up a similar panel for chemicals.

1. Does the Commission support the idea of a global chemicals panel?

2. How will the Commission encourage the UN to develop such a global chemicals panel?

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

The Commission supports international cooperation on chemicals management to improve the protection of human health and the environment. There are already a number of legally binding international agreements, as well as non-binding instruments in place, which are actively supported by the Commission and which establish scientific material that is made available to all countries in order to support national management of certain chemicals.

The Commission together with the Member States and other countries is currently considering options for a future chemicals policy in the context of a consultative process on chemicals management launched by UNEP. In view of the above, the Commission considers better use of existing instruments to be more important than the creation of new ones.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012551/13
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 november 2013)

Angående: Patientrörlighetsdirektivet

EU:s patientrörlighetsdirektiv, som trädde i kraft den 25 oktober 2013, innebär bland annat att människor har rätt till ersättning när de söker vård i ett annat EU- eller EES-land.

En viktig fråga i behandlingen av det nya patientrörlighetsdirektivet var möjligheten för patienter att själva slippa ligga ute med pengar vid planerad vård i ett annat medlemsland. Detta är viktigt eftersom vård ska ges på lika villkor, och många patienter inte har möjlighet att ta lån eller på annat sätt finansiera vården utomlands, ens i avvaktan på att senare få ersättning från den egna medlemsstaten.

Hur många av EU:s medlemsländer har infört system där patienten har möjlighet att slippa att själv ligga ute med pengar vid vård i ett annat medlemsland? I behandlingen av patientrörlighetsdirektivet diskuterades till exempel system där patienten på förhand kunde ansöka om och beviljas ett ”bevis” (voucher) att visa upp för vårdgivaren. Vårdgivaren skulle sedan utifrån detta ”bevis” fakturera medlemslandet direkt (alltså inte patienten).

1. Kan kommissionen redogöra för hur många länder som hittills har genomfört EU:s patientrörlighetsdirektiv?

2. Hur många länder ger patienter rätt att slippa att själva ligga ute med pengar vid planerad vård utomlands?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(20 december 2013)

I skrivande stund har tretton medlemsländer anmält införlivandeåtgärder till kommissionen. Åtgärderna håller på att översättas och bedömas. Under tiden går det inte att säga hur många medlemsländer som har infört särskilda åtgärder enligt artikel 9.5 i direktivet.

Men oavsett om medlemsländerna har infört de här frivilliga bestämmelserna enligt direktivet eller inte, är det viktigt att påpeka att de kan använda sig av förordning nr 883/2004 om samordning av de sociala trygghetssystemen. Där införs en mekanism så att en patient kan få vård utomlands och få kostnaderna täckta direkt av hemlandet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012551/13
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Patient Mobility Directive

The EU Patient Mobility Directive, which entered into force on 25 October 2013, provides among other things that patients are entitled to reimbursement when they seek healthcare in another EU or EEA country.

One important issue in preparing the new Patient Mobility Directive has been to ensure that patients are exempted from having to pay in advance themselves for planned healthcare in another Member State. This is important because healthcare should be provided to all on an equal footing, and many patients are not able to take out loans or otherwise finance their healthcare abroad, even if they can expect to receive reimbursement later from their own Member State.

How many EU Member States have introduced systems exempting patients from having to pay in advance themselves for healthcare in another Member State? In drawing up the Patient Mobility Directive, systems were discussed whereby, for example, patients could apply in advance for a voucher which they would show the healthcare provider. The provider would then invoice the Member State directly (and not the patient) on the basis of this voucher.

1. Can the Commission state how many countries have so far implemented the EU's Patient Mobility Directive?

2. How many countries exempt patients from having to advance money themselves for planned healthcare abroad?

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

At the time of writing the Commission has received notification of transposition measures from thirteen Member States. These measures are currently being translated and assessed. Whilst this process is taking place it is not possible to provide a specific answer to the question of how many Member States have introduced specific measures using the options available to them under Article 9(5) of the directive.

It is also important to point out that, whether or not Member States have transposed these optional provisions of the directive, Regulation 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems offers all Member States a mechanism whereby a patient may go abroad for treatment and have the cost of the treatment covered directly by his or her Member State.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012554/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: European Arrest Warrant — implications

Could the Commission explain the implications of the European Arrest Warrant: specifically, what requirement is there to place a warrant before the national police and/or the judiciary prior to the implementation of an arrest warrant?

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

The practical procedures that apply when a Member State receives a European arrest warrant (EAW) and the authority that carries out the arrest pursuant to the EAW, will be determined by national law. Such procedures must however respect the over-arching obligations in the EAW Framework Decision [1] to recognise and execute via a judicial procedure and to do so within the ordained time limits. Depending on the circumstances of each case and as set out in Articles 9 and 10 of the EAW Framework decision, the manner of transmission of the European arrest warrant (directly or via the Schengen Information system or Interpol) may determine the national authority that first deals with it in the executing Member State. Once a person is arrested on the basis of an EAW, the decision on execution must be taken by a judicial authority as set out in Articles 12, 13, 14, and 15 of the framework Decision.

[1] Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA — OJ L190/1 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012555/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: EU/UK trade deficit

Could the Commission tell me the annual trade deficit between the UK and the other Member States as a whole for each of the past 5 years?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2013)

On the basis of Eurostat Balance of Payments statistics, the United Kingdom trade (goods and services) balance with other EU-27 members can be estimated as follows:

Reporter:	GB United Kingdom					
Partner:	V1 EU-27					
Flow:	**2 Credit transactions/Exports**					
Posts	2007A	2008A	2009A	2010A	2011A	2012A
100 Goods	187	178	140	166	183	186
200 Services	84	79	67	76	81	85
991 Goods and services	271	257	206	241	264	271

Reporter:	GB United Kingdom					
Partner:	V1 EU-27					
Flow:	**3 Debit transactions/Imports**					
Posts	2007A	2008A	2009A	2010A	2011A	2012A
100 Goods	248	228	182	217	233	257
200 Services	77	70	59	65	65	72
991 Goods and services	325	298	241	282	299	328

Reporter:	GB United Kingdom					
Partner:	V1 EU-27					
Flow:	**4 Net transactions/Balance**					
Posts	2007A	2008A	2009A	2010A	2011A	2012A
100 Goods	-61	-50	-42	-51	-50	-71
200 Services	7	9	8	11	15	13
991 Goods and services	-54	-41	-35	-41	-35	-58

Data from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database table bop_q_c, in billion euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012557/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Jobs dependent on EU membership

Could the Commission tell me how many jobs in the UK are absolutely dependent on EU membership?

In which sectors are those jobs predominantly found?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

The Commission does not have information of the nature requested by the Honourable Member. Indeed, the Commission is not aware that such precise information is available even at Member State level although there may well be academic research which does look at this question.

As a guideline however, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to a briefing note from the UK House of Commons ([1]) on UK-EU economic relations in which, under Section 2.1, reference is made to 3.5 million jobs being associated with UK trade with the EU. As the note points out, this is not the same as saying jobs dependent on the UK's membership of the EU. There is also the recent 180-page report, by the CBI in which it estimates — based on past academic studies — that EU membership adds GBP 62 to 78 billion a year to UK gross domestic product, equal to the combined economies of northeast England and Northern Ireland. That works out at GBP 3,000 per household and GBP 1,225 per individual.

([1]) www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN06091.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012558/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Permanent seat on the UNSC

In the opinion of the High Representative, would the UK's continued membership of the EU threaten its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council?

Answer given by High representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2013)

The UK's continued membership of the EU does not affect its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012559/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Restrictions on global trade

Could the Commission identify any current restrictions on the UK's trade with global partners resulting from EU membership?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2013)

The United Kingdom (UK) is part of the European Union, which is a custom union and has a common commercial policy. As a result of this, all Member States of the European Union benefit from the same trade regime on third markets. Therefore, trade restrictions faced by the UK in overseas markets are usually the same as those faced by other Member States. One of the main objectives of the EU's common commercial policy is to remove trade barriers and trade restrictions in third country markets, to the benefit of all Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012560/13
alla Commissione
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Franco Bonanini (NI), Lara Comi (PPE), Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), Susy De Martini (ECR), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Fiorello Provera (EFD), Oreste Rossi (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Franco Frigo (S&D), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE) e Vito Bonsignore (PPE)
(6 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Inquinamento in Abruzzo

Considerando che:

— nel marzo 2007 fu scoperta una mega discarica abusiva a Bussi sul Tirino, contenente migliaia di metri cubi di sostanze tossiche interrate, situata nei pressi del polo chimico e a meno di 20 metri di distanza dalla sponda destra del fiume Pescara;

— nella stessa zona furono successivamente scoperte altre tre discariche, ugualmente estese e pericolose;

— l'intera area, per complessivi sette ettari e mezzo, è attualmente sotto sequestro;

— secondo gli studi condotti dall'Ispra, si stima un danno ambientale di 8,5 miliardi;

— secondo le associazioni ambientaliste i valori di cloroformio, tricloroetilene, diclorometano e tetracloruro di carbonio presenti nella falda acquifera superano di migliaia di volte i limiti stabiliti per legge; inoltre, sarebbe stata accertata la presenza di diossina;

— per decenni, e fino al 2007, circa 500 mila cittadini della Val Pescara avrebbero utilizzato e bevuto acqua inidonea al consumo umano;

— per la bonifica occorrono circa 600 milioni di euro, mentre ve ne sono 50 milioni, messi a disposizione dal governo;

— l'area interessata si trova nel mezzo di numerosi siti rientranti nella rete Natura 2000.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se sia a conoscenza della situazione sopra descritta e, se sì, quali iniziative abbia intrapreso finora per garantire la tutela dell'ambiente e una vita salubre ai cittadini nell'area di Bussi sul Tirino;

2. se ritenga che l'Italia abbia rispettato la normativa comunitaria ambientale;

3. se non ritenga importante negoziare con le autorità competenti una programmazione dei fondi strutturali per il periodo 2014-2020 che garantisca il finanziamento per la bonifica dell'area.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza della situazione descritta dagli onorevoli deputati relativa alla discarica di Bussi sul Tirino.

Spetta agli Stati membri garantire la corretta applicazione del diritto dell'UE nei loro territori, e dalle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato, sembra che le autorità italiane abbiano adottato provvedimenti per porre rimedio alla situazione nel caso in questione. Inoltre, nel quadro della procedura di infrazione 2003/2077 riguardante le discariche abusive su tutto il territorio italiano, la Commissione ha recentemente deciso di ricorrere per la seconda volta alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea, giacché le autorità italiane non hanno ancora bonificato tutte le discariche abusive oggetto della causa, compresi numerosi siti in Abruzzo.

L'articolo 5 del regolamento recentemente approvato recante disposizioni specifiche sul Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale per il periodo 2014-2020 prevede, all'obiettivo tematico 6, la possibilità di sostenere progetti volti alla protezione dell'ambiente, compresa la conservazione del patrimonio naturale, la protezione del suolo e la decontaminazione delle aree dismesse. A tali azioni si applica tuttavia il principio «chi inquina paga», con la conseguenza che il Fondo non interverrà ogniqualvolta dalla contaminazione si può risalire a un inquinatore. Le disposizioni dettagliate relative alla possibilità di sostegno dei Fondi a tali progetti costituiranno oggetto di negoziati tra la Commissione, l'Italia e le singole regioni sull'accordo di partenariato e sui programmi operativi e saranno fissate nei documenti di programmazione del periodo 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012560/13
to the Commission
Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Franco Bonanini (NI), Lara Comi (PPE), Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), Susy De Martini (ECR), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Fiorello Provera (EFD), Oreste Rossi (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Franco Frigo (S&D), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE) and Vito Bonsignore (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Pollution in Abruzzo

In March 2007, a vast illegal landfill site was discovered in Bussi sul Tirino in the Abruzzo region, containing thousands of cubic metres of buried toxic substances. The site is located near the chemical industrial zone and is less than 20 metres away from the east bank of the Pescara River.

Three further illegal sites were subsequently found in the same area, all equally large and equally dangerous.

The entire area, comprising 7.5 hectares, is currently under the authorities' control.

According to studies conducted by Italy's environmental agency ISPRA, the environmental damage is estimated at EUR 8.5 billion.

According to environmental organisations, levels of chloroform, trichloroethylene, dichloromethane and carbon tetrachloride in the water table are thousands of times higher than the legally permissible levels. Apparently the presence of dioxin has also been confirmed.

It seems that in the decades leading up to 2007, around 500 000 residents of the Val Pescara area had been using and drinking water unfit for human consumption.

It will cost in the region of EUR 600 million to decontaminate the site; however the Italian Government has only promised EUR 50 million.

The area in question is home to several sites that are part of the Natura 2000 network.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation outlined above? If so, what steps has it taken thus far to protect the environment and the health of residents in the Bussi sul Tirino area?

2. Does the Commission believe that Italy has abided by EU environmental legislation?

3. Does the Commission think it should negotiate with the competent authorities funding for decontamination of the area as part of the 2014-2020 Structural Fund programming period?

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

The Commission is not aware about the situation presented by the Honourable Members concerning Bussi sul Tirino.

It is for the Member States to ensure the correct application of EC law in their territories and, from the information provided by the Honourable Members, it appears that Italian Authorities have taken action to redress the situation in the case in question. Furthermore, in the framework of infringement procedure 2003/2077 concerning illegal landfills in the whole Italian territory, the Commission has recently decided to apply to the EU Court of Justice for the second time, because the Italian authorities have not yet cleaned up all the illegal landfills covered by the case, including many sites in Abruzzo.

Article 5 of the recently approved regulation laying down specific provisions on the European Regional Development Fund for the 2014-2020 period, provides, under thematic objective 6, for the possibility to support projects aiming at the protection of the environment including the conservation of the natural heritage, soil protection and the decontamination of brownfield sites. To such actions, however, the polluter-pays principle applies which implies that the funds will not intervene whenever the contamination can be traced to a polluter. Detailed provisions on the possibility for support by the funds to such projects will be the subject of negotiations between the Commission, Italy and individual regions on the partnership agreement and operational programmes and will be laid down in these 2014-2020 programming documents.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012561/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(6 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Regiunea Carpatică

Strategia pentru regiunea Carpatică, la fel ca și strategiile regionale adoptate deja de Uniunea Europeană, trebuie să aibă în vedere provocările comune, să îmbunătățească funcționalitatea structurilor existente, să vizeze mărirea coeziunii teritoriale, să permită o exploatare substanțială a potențialului existent, să țină cont de specificitățile regiunii, de tradițiile locale și regionale ale populației. Toate acestea vor asigura implementarea sustenabilă a legislației europene și a Strategiei 2020. Cooperarea privind turismul (incluzând agro și ecoturismul) conservarea biodiversității, amenajarea teritoriului, agricultura, silvicultura, transportul, industria, energia pot conduce la îmbunătățirea calității vieții în aceasta zonă, dar și la împiedicarea depopulării localităților din regiune.

Toate obiectivele menționate nu pot fi îndeplinite decât printr-o strategie specifică pentru Carpați, deoarece aceste lucruri nu pot fi realizate prin intermediul Strategiei Dunării.

Va analiza Comisia posibilitatea unei strategii eficiente în regiunea Carpați, care sa aibă propria sa linie de finanțare din bugetul UE și care să îi permită elaborarea și derularea proiectelor în baza unor direcții strategice care să țină cont de specificitățile regiunii?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(6 ianuarie 2014)

Având în vedere existența unor suprapuneri geografice extinse cu Strategia pentru regiunea Dunării, flexibilitatea geografică a strategiei și abordarea provocărilor din regiunea Carpaților, Comisia nu vede motivele unei strategii pentru regiunea Carpaților.

Strategia UE pentru regiunea Dunării a dat deja rezultate bune după doi ani de punere în aplicare ([1]). Strategia include aproape în întregime țările străbătute de lanțul munților Carpați și a adaptat o abordare geografică funcțională care este deschisă, de la caz la caz, și altor parteneri precum Polonia. Planul său de acțiune stabilește proiecte concrete care răspund provocărilor regiunii Carpaților, de exemplu în domeniile prioritare „energie", „cultură și turism", „calitatea apelor", „riscuri de mediu" și „biodiversitate". Convenția privind Carpații este un partener important pentru punerea în aplicare a planului de acțiune.

De asemenea, Comisia încurajează cooperarea dintre țările din regiunea Carpaților prin programele de cooperare teritorială europeană și face apel la țările din regiunea Carpaților să utilizeze strategia existentă a UE pentru regiunea Dunării, care oferă deja un cadru de cooperare. Raportul Comisiei privind valoarea adăugată a strategiilor macroregionale ([2]) prevede că strategiile macroregionale pot fi utilizate numai în anumite circumstanțe speciale, când implicarea UE este de dorit. În țările străbătute de lanțul munților Carpați, implicarea UE este deja garantată de numeroase activități din cadrul Strategiei pentru regiunea Dunării. Trebuie remarcat faptul că macroregiunile nu primesc nicio finanțare suplimentară prin fondurile structurale ale UE.

([1]) Raportul Comisiei publicat la 9 aprilie 2013: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/documents_en.cfm#1
([2]) Raportul Comisiei publicat la 27 iunie 2013: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/upload/documents/Commissioner/COMM_NATIVE_COM_2013_468_REPORT_FROM_COMMISSION_EN_V2_P1_728758.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012561/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Carpathian region

The strategy for the Carpathian region, in a similar manner to the regional strategies already adopted by the European Union, must focus on the common challenges, improve how existing structures operate, aim at increasing territorial cohesion, allow existing potential to be tapped to a considerable extent, as well as take into account the region's specific features and the population's local and regional traditions. All these measures will ensure the sustainable implementation of European legislation and the 2020 strategy. Establishing cooperation on tourism (both agri- and ecotourism), biodiversity conservation, land planning, agriculture, forestry, transport, industry and energy can help not only improve the quality of life in this area, but also prevent depopulation of the towns and villages in the region.

All the objectives mentioned can only be met by applying a specific strategy for the Carpathian region, as they cannot be achieved through the Danube Strategy.

Will the Commission look into the possibility of an effective strategy in the Carpathian region which will have its own funding in the EU budget and enable projects to be devised and implemented, based on strategic lines taking into account the region's specific features?

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

Given the very large geographic overlaps that would exist with the Danube Strategy, that Strategy's geographic flexibility and its coverage of Carpathian challenges, the Commission does not see the rationale for a Carpathian Strategy.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region is already showing good results after two years of implementation ([1]). The strategy includes almost entirely the countries covered by the Carpathian mountain chain, and has adapted a functional geographic approach, staying open on a case by case basis for other partners, such as Poland. Its action plan sets out concrete projects responding to the challenges of the Carpathians, such as in the priority areas of 'Energy', 'Culture and Tourism', 'Quality of Waters', 'Environmental risks' and 'Biodiversity'. The Carpathian Convention is an important partner in implementing the action plan.

The Commission also encourages cooperation among Carpathian countries using European Territorial Cooperation programmes and urges the Carpathian countries to make use of the existing EU Strategy for the Danube Region, which already provides a framework for cooperation. The Commission's report ([2]) on the added value of macro-regional strategies states that macro-regional strategies shall only be used for particular circumstances, where EU involvement is appropriate. In the countries covered by the Carpathian mountain chain, EU involvement is already guaranteed by the numerous activities in the Danube Strategy. It should be noted that macro-regions receive no additional funding under the EU structural funds.

([1]) Report of the Commission published on 9 April 2013: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/danube/documents_en.cfm#1
([2]) Report of the Commission published on 27 June 2013: ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/upload/documents/Commissioner/COMM_NATIVE_COM_2013_468_REPORT_FROM_COMMISSION_EN_V2_P1_728758.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012567/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επίπεδα πληρωμών στις 31 Οκτωβρίου 2013

Μετά από την έγκριση του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 6/2012, η Επιτροπή, κατόπιν αιτήσεως της αρμόδιας για τον προϋπολογισμό αρχής, υπέβαλε το σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 2/2013, ύψους 11,2 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο θα καταστεί δυνατή η κάλυψη όλων των νόμιμων υποχρεώσεων πληρωμών οι οποίες εκκρεμούσαν στα τέλη του 2012, καθώς και εκείνων που θα προκύψουν πριν από το τέλος του 2013, από τον προϋπολογισμό του τρέχοντος έτους.

Στη συνεδρίαση της 14ης Μαΐου 2013 του Συμβουλίου Οικονομικών και Δημοσιονομικών Υποθέσεων (Ecofin), επιτεύχθηκε πολιτική συμφωνία για την παροχή της επιπλέον χρηματοδότησης για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 σε δύο δόσεις, εκ των οποίων η πρώτη ύψους 7,3 δισ. ευρώ. Οι υπουργοί συμφώνησαν να επανέλθουν στο θέμα αυτό αργότερα εντός του έτους. Ωστόσο, δεν έχει υπάρξει επίσημη δέσμευση όσον αφορά το υπόλοιπο ποσό 3,9 δισ. ευρώ του σχεδίου διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού 2/2013.

Μετά από την πολιτική συμφωνία που επιτεύχθηκε από τα θεσμικά όργανα στις 27 Ιουνίου 2013 σχετικά με το Πολυετές Δημοσιονομικό Πλαίσιο 2014-2020, το Συμβούλιο Ecofin ενέκρινε στις 9 Ιουλίου 2013 τη συμπληρωματική χρηματοδότηση ύψους 7,3 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ για τον προϋπολογισμό του 2013 και δεσμεύτηκε να λάβει κάθε απαραίτητο πρόσθετο μέτρο για να διασφαλιστεί η πλήρης τήρηση των υποχρεώσεων της Ένωσης για το 2013. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, βάσει πρότασης που πρόκειται να υποβάλει η Επιτροπή στις αρχές του φθινοπώρου στηριζόμενη στις πιο πρόσφατες επικαιροποιημένες εκτιμήσεις όσον αφορά τις πιστώσεις πληρωμών, το Συμβούλιο δεσμεύεται να αποφασίσει χωρίς καθυστέρηση σχετικά με πρόσθετο σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού, προκειμένου να αποφευχθούν οποιεσδήποτε ελλείψεις όσον αφορά αιτιολογημένες πιστώσεις πληρωμών. Στις 26 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013 η Επιτροπή κατέθεσε το σχέδιο διορθωτικού προϋπολογισμού αριθ. 8/2013 για τα υπόλοιπα 3,9 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω και δεδομένου ότι το επίπεδο πληρωμών για τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ όσον αφορά το 2013 είναι κατά 5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ χαμηλότερο από τις εκτιμήσεις της Επιτροπής για τις ανάγκες πληρωμών στο σχέδιο προϋπολογισμού της για το 2013, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει λεπτομερείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το ύψος των πληρωμών που έχουν καταβληθεί μέχρι τις 31 Οκτωβρίου 2013; Ειδικότερα, θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να γνωστοποιήσει τις πληρωμές που έχουν καταβληθεί κατά τους μήνες Ιανουάριο έως Οκτώβριο 2013, κατανεμημένες ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Θα μπορούσε επίσης η Επιτροπή να παράσχει μία σύγκριση μεταξύ των εκτιμήσεων πληρωμών των κρατών μελών και των πραγματικών πληρωμών που έχουν καταβληθεί μέχρι τώρα φέτος στο πλαίσιο του προϋπολογισμού του 2013, αναλυτικά ανά κράτος μέλος και ανά τομέα/πρόγραμμα πολιτικής;

Απάντηση του κ. Lewandowski εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η αναλυτική κατανομή των έγκυρων αιτήσεων πληρωμών ([1]) που υποβλήθηκαν τον Οκτώβριο για τα χρηματοδοτούμενα από το ΕΚΤ, το ΕΤΠΑ και το ΤΣ επιχειρησιακά προγράμματα της περιόδου 2007-2013 παρατίθεται στο παράρτημα Ι της παρούσας απάντησης, ενώ τα στοιχεία σχετικά με το ΕΤΑ και το ΕΓΤΑΑ παρατίθενται στο παράρτημα ΙΙ. Τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία του πίνακα προκύπτουν από τη σύγκριση των αιτημάτων πληρωμής που υποβλήθηκαν έως το τέλος Οκτωβρίου 2013 με τα στοιχεία που υποβλήθηκαν μέχρι το τέλος Σεπτεμβρίου 2013. Η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αποφασίσει την αλλαγή χαρακτηρισμού ενός αιτήματος πληρωμής από «Αποδεκτή» σε «Πλήρως απορριφθείσα» ή «Επιστραφείσα προς διόρθωση» και, συνεπώς, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των παραρτημάτων της παρούσας απάντησης ενδέχεται να αποτελέσουν αντικείμενο περαιτέρω προσαρμογών. Τα αρνητικά υπόλοιπα του ΕΤΑ για τη Σουηδία, για παράδειγμα, είναι αποτέλεσμα τέτοιας αλλαγής χαρακτηρισμού.

Ανάλογα στοιχεία για τους μήνες Ιανουάριο, Φεβρουάριο, Μάρτιο, Απρίλιο, Μάιο, Ιούνιο, Ιούλιο, Αύγουστο και Σεπτέμβριο δόθηκαν από την Επιτροπή στις ερωτήσεις E-1090/2013, E-3237/2013, E-3928/2013, E-4903/2013, E-6405/2013, E-8097/2013, E-9846/2013 και E-11168/2013 ([2]), αντίστοιχα.

([1]) Με εξαίρεση τα ποσά που έχουν απορριφθεί πλήρως.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html

Οι προβλέψεις πληρωμών των κρατών μελών δεν μπορούν να συγκριθούν άμεσα με τις πραγματικές πληρωμές που πραγματοποιήθηκαν μέχρι τώρα κατά το τρέχον έτος, λόγω του ότι οι εν λόγω πληρωμές περιλαμβάνουν το σημαντικό ποσό που αφορά τις αιτήσεις πληρωμών που ελήφθησαν πριν από το τέλος του προηγούμενου έτους και έπρεπε να καταλογιστούν στις διαθέσιμες πιστώσεις στον προϋπολογισμό του 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012567/13
to the Commission
Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Payment levels as of 31 October 2013

After the approval of Draft Amending Budget No 6/2012, the Commission, at the request of the Budgetary Authority, put forward Draft Amending Budget No 2/2013 amounting to EUR 11.2 billion. This will allow all legal payment obligations left pending at the end of 2012, as well as those arising before the end of 2013, to be covered in this year's budget.

At the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Ecofin) meeting of 14 May 2013, a political agreement was reached to provide the extra funding for the 2013 Budget in two tranches, the first one amounting to EUR 7.3 billion. The ministers agreed to come back to the issue later in the year. However, there has been no formal commitment regarding the remaining EUR 3.9 billion of Draft Amending Budget 2/2013.

After the political agreement reached by the institutions on 27 June 2013 regarding the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, Ecofin approved the EUR 7.3 billion top-up for the 2013 EU Budget on 9 July 2013 and committed to take all necessary additional steps to ensure that the Union's obligations for 2013 are fully honoured. In this respect, on the basis of a proposal to be made by the Commission in early autumn based on the most up-to-date estimates of payment appropriations, the Council commits to make a decision, without delay, on a further draft amending budget to avoid any shortfall in justified payment appropriations. On 26 September, the Commission issued Draft Amending Budget No 8/2013 for the remaining EUR 3.9 billion.

Taking all of the above into consideration and given the fact that the payment levels for the 2013 EU Budget are EUR 5 billion lower than the Commission's estimates for payment needs in its 2013 Draft Budget, could the Commission provide detailed information on the level of payments received by 31 October 2013? Specifically, could the Commission provide information on the payments received in the months of January to October 2013 inclusive, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Moreover, could the Commission provide a comparison of Member States' payment forecasts and the actual payments that have taken place so far this year in the framework of the 2013 EU Budget, broken down by Member State and policy area/programme?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

A detailed breakdown of the valid payment claims ([1]) received in October for the 2007-2013 ESF, ERDF and CF-funded operational programmes is provided in Annex I to this reply while for EFF and EAFRD the data is included in Annex II. The figures in the table result from comparing valid payment claims submitted until the end of October 2013 with those submitted until the end of September 2013. The Commission may decide to change the status of a payment claim from 'Accepted' to 'Fully rejected' or 'Returned for corrections' and therefore the figures presented in the annexes to this reply could still undergo further adjustments. A negative EFF balance for Sweden, for instance, is the result of such changes in status.

Similar data for the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August and September were provided by the Commission in response to Questions E-1090/2013, E-3237/2013, E-3928/2013, E-4903/2013, E-6405/2013, E-8097/2013, E-9846/2013 and E-11168/2013 ([2]), respectively.

Member States' payment forecasts cannot directly be compared to the actual payments that have taken place thus far in the year because the latter includes the significant amount of payment claims received before the end of last year and had to be charged on the appropriations available in the 2013 budget.

([1]) Excluding fully rejected amounts.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012568/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Ação da Comissão Europeia em 2014, tendo em conta o seu Programa de Trabalho para o próximo ano

A Comissão adotou, a 22 de outubro de 2013, o seu Programa de Trabalho para 2014, o qual coloca o seu enfoque nos resultados. O Presidente da Comissão considerou que o ano de 2014 deverá ser um ano destinado à execução e à implementação e de ação decisiva.

No seu Programa de Trabalho para 2014, a Comissão identifica como prioridade a concretização das propostas promotoras de crescimento, a finalização da União Bancária, do Mercado único da Agenda Digital, bem como a utilização dos recursos financeiros ao abrigo do futuro Quadro Financeiro Plurianual de 2014 a 2020 para combater o desemprego juvenil.

A 1 de janeiro de 2014, inicia-se um novo período plurianual, com novas linhas orçamentais e programáticas, pelo que será um ano de mudança, num contexto de crise económica e financeira e de elevada taxa de desemprego em vários dos Estados-Membros da União Europeia.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Planeia apresentar alguma nova proposta legislativa e programática sobre as prioridades e os desafios chave para 2014 no decorrer do próximo ano? E, em caso afirmativo, qual o calendário indicativo para o fazer?

2. Como vai ter em consideração a mudança e a diferença de prioridades programáticas resultantes do novo Quadro Financeiro Plurianual e dos novos programas e políticas para 2014 a 2020 nas suas atividades do próximo ano, e nomeadamente na desejada execução e realização das propostas cujo procedimento está em curso, num contexto de crise económica e financeira que tarda a mudar?

Resposta dada por José Manuel Durão Barroso em nome da Comissão
(18 de dezembro de 2013)

1. A Comissão prevê um número limitado de iniciativas legislativas em 2014, a maioria das quais prevista para a primeira parte do ano, bem como iniciativas relativas a domínios estratégicos mais amplos. Tais iniciativas são definidas no Anexo II do Programa de Trabalho. Incluem a prossecução do trabalho relativo a alguns dos principais temas do presente Colégio, nomeadamente a contribuição para promover a recuperação económica, o emprego juvenil, as políticas no domínio do clima e da energia para além de 2020, e a prossecução da reflexão sobre o Estado de direito.

2. O Programa de Trabalho coloca uma ênfase particular no apoio ao Parlamento Europeu e ao Conselho na conclusão de importantes dossiers legislativos, bem como na sua implementação, de um modo mais geral. Os novos programas do QFP assumem uma importância particular: a implementação rápida e eficaz dos programas assegurará que os benefícios cheguem aos cidadão, tão rapidamente quanto possível. Muitos dos programas são orientados especificamente para a recuperação económica e a Comissão está a trabalhar com os Estados-Membros e outros organismos responsáveis para garantir que os objetivos da Estratégia Europa 2020 e as questões específicas identificadas através de recomendações por país sejam hierarquizadas, ao canalizar as despesas ao longo do próximo período de programação.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012568/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Commission action in 2014, in view of its Work Programme for the coming year

On 22 October 2013, the Commission adopted its Work Programme for 2014, which focuses on results. According to the President of the Commission, 2014 should be a year for getting things done and for decisive action.

In its Work Programme for 2014, the Commission identifies the implementation of proposals to boost growth, the completion of banking union and the single market of the Digital Agenda, as well as the use of funds under the future Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 to combat youth unemployment, as priorities.

A new multiannual period begins on 1 January 2014, with new budget and programming lines, making 2014 a year of change, against a backdrop of economic and financial crisis and high levels of unemployment in a number of EU Member States.

1. Does the Commission plan to present any new legislative and programme proposals over the coming year on the key priorities and challenges for 2014? If so, what is the indicative schedule for doing so?

2. How will it account for the change and the difference in programming priorities as a result of the new Multiannual Financial Framework and of the new programmes and policies for 2014-2020 in its activities over the coming year, and particularly in the desired implementation of proposals in progress, against a backdrop of economic and financial crisis which is slow to change?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2013)

1. The Commission foresees a limited number of legislative initiatives in 2014, most planned for the first part of the year, as well as initiatives looking ahead in broader policy fields. These are set out in Annex II to the Work Programme. They include further work on a number of the key themes of this College, including helping to promote economic recovery, youth unemployment, climate and energy policies beyond 2020, and taking forward the reflection on the rule of law.

2. The Work Programme places a particular emphasis on helping the European Parliament and the Council to conclude on key legislative dossiers, as well as on implementation more generally. The new MFF programmes are of particular importance here: swift and effective implementation of the programmes will ensure that the benefits flow to citizens as quickly as possible. Many of the programmes are directly specifically towards economic recovery, and the Commission is working with Member States and other responsible bodies to ensure that the goals of Europe 2020 and the specific issues identified through country-specific recommendations are prioritised when directing spending over the next planning period.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012569/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Colaboração interinstitucional e dos Estados-Membros no contexto do Programa de Trabalho da Comissão Europeia para 2014

A Comissão adotou, a 22 de outubro de 2013, o seu Programa de Trabalho para 2014, o qual coloca o seu enfoque nos resultados. O Presidente da Comissão considerou que o ano de 2014 é um ano destinado à execução e à implementação e de ação decisiva.

No seu Programa de Trabalho para 2014, a Comissão Europeia identifica os principais desafios para a União no próximo ano e as principais prioridades, que passam por uma solução que associe a promoção dos objetivos da UE2020 ao Semestre Europeu e a consolidação da governação económica, ao mesmo tempo que se pretende um progresso na coesão económica, social e territorial.

A partir de 1 de janeiro de 2014, abre-se um novo ciclo financeiro e programático na União Europeia; pela primeira vez, a Comissão estabelece uma lista das propostas legislativas cujo procedimento legislativo está em curso e que merecem uma atenção particular.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Em que medida podem as instituições contribuir para que, ao nível interinstitucional, o ano de 2014 se torne um ano de execução e de implementação, nomeadamente no que respeita aos dossiês que constam da sua lista enumerativa e, sobretudo, aqueles que estão mais diretamente relacionados com o objetivo da retoma e do crescimento económicos e com a criação de emprego?

2. Há alguma recomendação que faça aos Estados-Membros no que respeita à sua colaboração para tornar o ano de 2014 efetivamente um ano de execução e de ação?

3. No que respeita aos itens prioritários, há algum calendário e/ou prazo indicativo que considere relevante ter em conta? E há alguma ordem de urgência que seja necessário ter em conta, nomeadamente atendendo ao novo ciclo programático que se inicia em 2014?

Resposta dada por José Manuel Durão Barroso em nome da Comissão
(14 de janeiro de 2014)

1. O Programa de Trabalho da Comissão para 2014 (PTC 2014) visa consolidar os trabalhos em curso no sentido de gerar crescimento e emprego. As propostas atualmente perante o legislador são de primordial interesse para este objetivo, razão pela qual o anexo 1 do PTC 2014 identifica uma lista de 26 propostas cuja adoção no atual mandato a Comissão considera simultaneamente importante e viável, incluindo iniciativas em domínios como a união bancária, os dois atos para o mercado único, a mobilidade dos trabalhadores e a agenda digital. As instituições podem contribuir para garantir este objetivo, colaborando estreitamente entre si para concluir as negociações sobre propostas legislativas fundamentais, antes das eleições para o Parlamento Europeu em maio próximo.

2. Para os Estados-Membros, será essencial assegurar um arranque sem sobressaltos nem atrasos para os novos programas no âmbito do quadro financeiro plurianual 2014-2020 e para aprofundar a coesão económica e social graças às reformas em curso tendentes a concretizar a estratégia Europa 2020 no contexto do Semestre Europeu.

3. Em 2014, a Comissão vai concentrar os seus esforços no cumprimento e na execução, com uma lista limitada de novas iniciativas, planeadas, na maioria dos casos, no início do ano e incluídas no anexo 2 do PTC 2014. As eleições europeias proporcionam uma oportunidade para demonstrar o trabalho da União pelos seus cidadãos, pelo que é particularmente importante que o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho deem o seu máximo contributo no sentido de, antes do final do atual mandato parlamentar, serem concluídas as negociações sobre uma série de propostas existentes com potencial para estimular o crescimento e a criação de emprego, conforme consta do anexo 1 do PTC 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012569/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Collaboration between institutions and between Member States in the context of the Commission's Work Programme for 2014

On 22 October 2013, the Commission adopted its Work Programme for 2014, which focuses on results. According to the President of the Commission, 2014 should be a year for getting things done and for decisive action.

In its Work Programme for 2014, the Commission identifies the EU's key challenges for the coming year and the main priorities, which include a solution that combines promotion of the EU 2020 targets with the European Semester and the consolidation of economic governance, while seeking to make progress in terms of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

A new financial and programming cycle begins in the European Union on 1 January 2014; for the first time, the Commission has drawn up a list of legislative proposals for which the legislative procedure is under way and which deserve special attention.

1. To what extent can the institutions help, in interinstitutional terms, to make 2014 a year for getting things done, particularly with regard to issues that appear on the Commission's list and, above all, those that are more directly related to the aim of restoring economic growth and job creation?

2. Does the Commission have any recommendations to make to the Member States in terms of collaboration to make 2014 a year of action and getting things done?

3. As regards the priorities, is there any indicative schedule and/or time limit that it thinks should be taken into account? Is there any order of urgency that should be taken into account, particularly in view of the new programming cycle beginning in 2014?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(14 January 2014)

1. The Commission Work Programme for 2014 (CWP 2014) aims at consolidating work under way to deliver on growth and jobs. Proposals now before the legislator are of primary interest to this goal: this is why Annex I of the CWP 2014 identifies a list of 26 proposals, whose adoption in the current term the Commission considers both important and feasible, including initiatives in areas like banking union, the two Single Market Acts, the mobility of workers and the digital agenda. The institutions can help to secure this goal by working closely together to finalise negotiations on key legislative proposals before the European Parliament elections next May.

2. For the Member States, it will be essential to ensure a smooth and timely start for the new programmes under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 and to deepen economic and social cohesion through the ongoing reforms to deliver the Europe 2020 strategy in the context of the European Semester.

3. The Commission will concentrate its work in 2014 on delivery and implementation, with a limited list of new initiatives mostly planned during the early part of the year, which are included in Annex 2 of CWP 2014. The European elections provide an opportunity to show how the Union is delivering for its citizens, so realising the maximum by the European Parliament and the Council to finalise negotiations on a series of existing proposals that have the potential to boost growth and job creation, as included in Annex I of CWP 2014, before the end of the current parliamentary mandate is of particular importance.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-012570/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6. november 2013)

Om: Tvangstilslutning til antenneforeninger

Kommissionen har flere gange på baggrund af direktiv 2002/77/EF behandlet spørgsmålet om, at der i Danmark eksisterer tvunget medlemskab af og betaling til lokale antenneforeninger.

I et svar af 31. januar 2011 (E-010292/2010 ([1])) opfordrede Kommissionen til, at Danmark hurtigt vedtager den nødvendige lovgivning med henblik på at fjerne obligatorisk medlemskab af lokale antenneforeninger, så adgangen til markedet eller indførelsen af bredbåndsnet (fiberbredbånd eller anden teknologi) ikke hindres.

Den danske regering har nu vedtaget et lovforslag, som pr. 1. januar 2014 ophæver det tvungne medlemskab af antenneforeninger.

Andre dele af dansk lovgivning har imidlertid samme negative effekt og begrænser forbrugeres adgang til markedet for bredbånd og tv.

En rapport fra konsulentfirmaet Deloitte viser, at 650 000 danske husstande er omfattet af tvungne, kollektive aftaler. Der er tale om husstande, der bor til leje, og hvor udlejer via lejekontrakten påtvinger lejer at aftage et bestemt tv-produkt fra en bestemt tv-udbyder. Af disse udtrykker 240 000 husstande et ønske om frit at kunne vælge et andet produkt og en anden udbyder.

Lejelovens bestemmelser, der giver udlejer adgang til at påtvinge lejer bestemte tv-produkter, har således samme begrænsende effekt på konkurrencen på tv-markedet som den nu snart ophævede tvangstilslutning til antenneforeninger.

Den danske regering vil inden længe træffe beslutning om, hvorvidt lejeloven skal ophæves for at stoppe tvungne, kollektive aftaler.

1. Er Kommissionen enig i Deloitte-rapportens konklusioner om, at ophævelse af tvungne, kollektive aftaler vil fordyre tv-produktet for den enkelte, eller er det Kommissionens vurdering, at fri konkurrence generelt vil medføre lavere priser for forbrugerne?

2. Vil Kommissionen give en vurdering af, om lejelovens bestemmelser om tvangstilslutning til en bestemt tv-løsning via lejekontrakten er forenelige med EU-lovgivningen?

3. Agter Kommissionen, hvis den vurderer, at den danske lovgivning ikke er forenelig med EU-lovgivningen, at indlede en procedure over for den danske regering for at sikre, at loven bringes i fuld overensstemmelse med EU-lovgivningen?

4. Såfremt Kommissionen vurderer, at den danske lovgivning ikke er forenelig med EU-lovgivningen, agter Kommissionen da at tilsikre, at en nødvendig lovændring sker snarest muligt for hurtigt at fjerne de konkurrencebegrænsende effekter?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Joaquín Almunia
(6. januar 2014)

Det ærede medlem har i forbindelse med tidligere forespørgsler rejst spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt den danske planlov er forenelig med EU-retten, idet den sætter de lokale myndigheder i stand til at gøre boligbyggetilladelser betinget af, at ejere af ejendom er medlem af en lokal antenneforening. Da Kommissionen imidlertid greb ind, har Danmark ændret loven. Det tvungne medlemskab af antenneforeninger vil blive ophæver pr. 1. januar 2014.

Disse spørgsmål vedrører et andet problem, nemlig den danske lejelovs forenelighed med EU-retten.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2010-010292&language=DA.

Til forskel fra situationen med hensyn til planloven synes de fremlagte oplysninger ikke at tyde på, at den danske lejelovs bestemmelser om forholdet mellem lejere og udlejere medfører, at der indrømmes eller opretholdes særlige eller eksklusive rettigheder som beskrevet i artikel 106 i traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde og direktiv 2002/77/EF om konkurrence på markederne for elektroniske kommunikationsnet og -tjenester, som finder anvendelse på statslige foranstaltninger. I medfør af den danske lejelov er der imidlertid ikke tale om statslige foranstaltninger, når en udlejer udlejer ejendom mod betaling af en leje.

Selv når virksomheder er involveret i en lejekontrakt, synes situationen ikke umiddelbart at indebære en overtrædelse af EU's konkurrenceregler og dermed en påvirkning af handlen mellem medlemsstaterne, navnlig når den anvendte praksis står i et rimeligt forhold til formålet og er begrundet i en legitim interesse såsom udlejerens ret til at beskytte sin ejendom og sikre, at lejernes installering af en antenne sker på en acceptabel måde.

På grundlag af de oplysninger, Kommissionen råder over, synes det på nuværende tidspunkt derfor ikke nødvendigt med yderligere indgriben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012570/13
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Compulsory affiliation to cable distribution networks

The Commission has, on several occasions, dealt with the question of the existence of mandatory membership of and payment to local cable distribution networks in Denmark on the basis of Directive 2002/77/EC.

In its reply dated 31 January 2011 (E-010292/2010 ([1])), the Commission encouraged Denmark to adopt the necessary legislation to remove compulsory membership of local cable distribution networks quickly so that market entry or the deployment of broadband networks (fibre and other technologies) may not be hindered.

The Danish Government has now adopted a draft law which, as of 1 January 2014, will abolish the compulsory membership of cable distribution networks.

However, other elements of Danish legislation have the same negative effect and restrict consumers' access to the broadband and TV markets.

A report by the consultancy firm Deloitte indicates that 650 000 Danish households are subject to mandatory collective agreements. These are households where the property is rented and where landlords force the tenants, via the rental contract, to buy a particular TV product from a particular TV service provider. Of these households, 240 000 express the desire to be free to choose a different product and a different service provider.

Thus, the provisions of the Danish Rent Restriction Act, which allow landlords to impose particular TV products on tenants, have the same effect of restricting competition on the TV market as the soon to be abolished compulsory affiliation to cable distribution networks.

The Danish Government will shortly take a decision as to whether the Rent Restriction Act is to be repealed in order to put an end to mandatory collective agreements.

1. Does the Commission agree with the conclusions of the Deloitte report that the abolition of mandatory collective agreements will make TV products more expensive for individuals, or does it believe that free competition in general will result in lower prices for consumers?

2. Can the Commission give its assessment of whether the provisions of the Rent Restriction Act concerning compulsory affiliation to a particular TV option via the rental contract are compatible with EC law?

3. If it considers the Danish legislation to be incompatible with EC law, does it intend to initiate a procedure against the Danish Government in order to ensure that the Act is brought fully into line with EC law?

4. If the Commission considers the Danish legislation to be incompatible with EC law, does it intend to ensure that the necessary amendment to the Act is made as soon as possible in order to quickly eliminate the restriction of competition?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

In previous questions, the Honourable Member has raised the matter of compliance with EC law of the Danish 'Planning law' that enabled local authorities to make the authorisation of housing developments conditional on the property owners' membership of a local cable TV association. However, since the Commission intervened, Denmark has amended the law. The compulsory affiliation to cable distribution networks will be lifted on 1 January 2014.

The current questions relate to another issue, namely the compliance of the Danish Rental Act with EC law.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2010-010292&language=DA

Unlike in the situation regarding the Planning law, the information provided does not appear to indicate that the provisions of the Danish Rental Act on the relationship between tenants and landlords involve the granting or maintaining of special, or exclusive rights as described in Article 106 of the TFEU and Directive 2002/77/EC on competition in the markets for electronic communications networks and services, which apply to State measures. However, under the Danish Rental Act, where the landlord is letting property in return for the payment of a rent, there are no State measures involved.

Further, even where undertakings are involved in the rental contract, the situation does not prima facie appear to involve a breach of EU competition law with an effect on trade between Member States, in particular where the practises would be proportionate and justified by legitimate interest objectives, such as the landlord's right to protect its property and ensure that any antenna installation by the tenants is carried out in an acceptable manner.

Therefore, based on the information available to the Commission, further action does not seem necessary at this moment in time.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012578/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κυκλοφορία οχημάτων ιδιωτικής χρήσεως στην Ελλάδα

Σε πολλές χώρες της ΕΕ δίνεται η δυνατότητα τμηματικής κυκλοφορίας των ιδιωτικής χρήσεως οχημάτων κατά την διάρκεια του έτους (π.χ. 3,6 μήνες) με παράλληλη πληρωμή των αναλογούντων τελών κυκλοφορίας. Στην Ελλάδα κάτι τέτοιο δεν γίνεται, παρά το γεγονός ότι πάνω από 1 εκ. οχήματα έχουν ακινητοποιηθεί λόγω κατάθεσης των πινακίδων από τους ιδιοκτήτες τους, καθώς αδυνατούν να πληρώσουν τα τέλη κυκλοφορίας για ολόκληρο το έτος.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Θα αναλάβει πρωτοβουλία ώστε να κατανοήσει το ελληνικό Υπουργείο Οικονομικών την πολλαπλή χρησιμότητα μιας τέτοιας ρύθμισης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής για οδηγία του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με τη φορολογία των επιβατικών αυτοκινήτων (COM(2005)261 τελικό της 5ης Ιουλίου 2005), δεν έχει εγκριθεί από το Συμβούλιο. Ελλείψει εναρμόνισης στον τομέα της φορολογίας των αυτοκινήτων, η φορολογία των ιδιωτικών οχημάτων επαφίεται αποκλειστικά στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών, υπό τον όρο ότι τηρούνται οι γενικές αρχές του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Ειδικότερα, η Επιτροπή δεν πρέπει να προκαλεί διατυπώσεις στις συναλλαγές οι οποίες συνεπάγονται διέλευση συνόρων μεταξύ κρατών μελών και να τηρεί την αρχή της μη διακριτικής μεταχείρισης.

Η ενδεχόμενη απόφαση εφαρμογής πιο ευέλικτων ρυθμίσεων από τα κράτη μέλη για τα οδικά τέλη ή τέλη κυκλοφορίας των ιδιωτικής χρήσεως αυτοκινήτων πρέπει να εντάσσεται στο πλαίσιο των συνολικών δημοσιονομικών περιορισμών και στόχων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012578/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Private vehicles in Greece

Many EU countries allow private vehicles to use the roads for certain periods during the year (for example 3.6 months), in return for payment of *pro-rata* road tax. This is not allowed in Greece, despite the fact that over 1 million vehicles have been declared off road by their owners, who have handed in their licence plates because they are unable to pay the full road tax for the year.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Will it take the initiative to try and make the Greek Ministry of Finance see the many benefits of such an arrangement?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

The Commission proposal for a Council Directive on passenger car related taxes (COM(2005) 261 final of 5 July 2005), has not been adopted by the Council. In the absence of harmonisation in the field of car taxation, private vehicles' taxation is left exclusively to the responsibility of the Member States, provided that it complies with the general principles of EC law. In particular, it must not give rise to border-crossing formalities in trade between Member States and must respect the non-discrimination principle.

The eventual decision to introduce more flexible arrangements by the Member States for road charges or circulation taxes for private cars has to be accommodated within the overall budgetary constraints and targets.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012579/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ερωτηματολόγιο προς την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για τον φόρο στα ακίνητα

Απίστευτη είναι η επιβάρυνση που υφίστανται τα τελευταία χρόνια τα ακίνητα στην Ελλάδα. Ο Επίτροπος κ. Oettinger είχε αποστείλει στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση, το 2012, ερωτηματολόγιο για τον φόρο ακινήτων που εισπράττεται μέσω των λογαριασμών ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιες ερωτήσεις (αναλυτικά) περιελάμβανε το ερωτηματολόγιο;

2. Ποιες οι απαντήσεις (αναλυτικά) των ελληνικών αρχών; Ποιο υπουργείο έδωσε τις απαντήσεις; Κρίθηκαν απόλυτα ικανοποιητικές από την Επιτροπή;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1. Το ερωτηματολόγιο αποσκοπεί στη διευκρίνιση ορισμένων πτυχών του ειδικού καθεστώτος φορολογίας ακίνητης περιουσίας και ιδίως της ενδεχόμενης διακοπής της παροχής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας εφόσον δεν καταβληθεί το τέλος. Επίσης, θίγει τις ιδιαιτερότητες του εθνικού νόμου 4021/2011, οποίος εισήγαγε το εν λόγω καθεστώς, καθώς και τη συμβατότητά τους με την οδηγία για την ηλεκτρική ενέργεια ([1]). Οι ερωτήσεις επικεντρώθηκαν στο εύρος και το χρονοδιάγραμμα εφαρμογής του καθεστώτος, στην αλλαγή προμηθευτή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας βάσει του εν λόγω καθεστώτος, καθώς και στη συμβατότητα των κατηγοριών πελατών για τις οποίες προβλέφθηκαν ειδικές ρυθμίσεις όσον αφορά την καταβολή του τέλους με τον ελληνικό ορισμό των ευάλωτων καταναλωτών στον τομέα της ενέργειας ([2]).

2. Το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών έδωσε τις απαντήσεις μέσω του Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών, διευκρινίζοντας ότι οι διατάξεις σχετικά με το ειδικό τέλος όπως ορίζονται στον νόμο 4021/2011 ίσχυαν για όλους τους προμηθευτές ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας, ήδη υπάρχοντες και μελλοντικούς, και αρχικά αναφέρονταν στα οικονομικά έτη 2011-2012 με την είσπραξη του τέλους προγραμματισμένη να πραγματοποιηθεί μέσω των προμηθευτών. Η επιβολή του εν λόγω ειδικού τέλους επρόκειτο να παύσει μετά την εισαγωγή νέου ενιαίου φόρου ακίνητης περιουσίας σε προσεχή πράξη εθνικής νομοθεσίας. Οι απαντήσεις αφορούσαν επίσης τον τρόπο με τον οποίο εξασφαλίζεται ικανοποιητική προστασία από τη διακοπή της παροχής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας σε ευάλωτους καταναλωτές. Επιπλέον, έπειτα από την απόφαση αριθ. 1972/2012 του ελληνικού Συμβουλίου της Επικρατείας και τη συνακόλουθη τροποποίηση του νομοθετικού πλαισίου ([3]) που θα επιτρέψει στους καταναλωτές να διαχωρίσουν την καταβολή του τέλους από τον λογαριασμό ηλεκτρικού ρεύματος ή να αλλάξουν προμηθευτή, από τις απαντήσεις προέκυψε ότι πλέον δεν υφίσταται ζήτημα διακοπής της παροχής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας ή διαταραχής όσον αφορά την αλλαγή προμηθευτή σε περίπτωση οφειλόμενης πληρωμής του τέλους. Με βάση τα διαθέσιμα στοιχεία και τις παρεχόμενες πληροφορίες, οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής κατέληξαν στο συμπέρασμα ότι δεν ήταν αναγκαία περαιτέρω δράση της Επιτροπής.

([1]) Οδηγία 2009/72/ΕΚ, ιδίως οι διατάξεις σχετικά με την καθολική υπηρεσία (άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 3), την αλλαγή προμηθευτή (άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 5 και άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 7) και την γενική προστασία των καταναλωτών (άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 7).
([2]) Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 7 της οδηγίας.
([3]) (βάσει του νόμου 4110/2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012579/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Property tax questionnaire sent to the Greek government

Absurdly high taxes have been imposed on property in Greece over recent years. In 2012, Commissioner Oettinger sent the Greek Government a questionnaire about the property tax paid with electricity bills.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What questions (in detail) were included in the questionnaire?

2. What answers (in detail) were received from the Greek authorities? Which ministry replied to the questionnaire? Did the Commission find that the answers were absolutely satisfactory?

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

1. The questionnaire aimed to clarify certain aspects of the special property tax regime and in particular potential disconnection of electricity supply if the levy is not paid. It addressed specificities of the national Law 4021/2011 that introduced the regime, and their compatibility with the Electricity Directive ([1]). The questions focused on the extent and timing of the regime application, electricity supplier switching under this scheme and, on the compatibility of customer categories for which special arrangements for paying the levy were foreseen, with the Greek definition of vulnerable consumers in the energy field ([2]).

2. The answers were supplied by the Ministry of Finance via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They clarified that the special levy provisions as set out in Law 4021/2011 were applicable to all, existing and future electricity providers and originally referred to fiscal years 2011-2012 with collection scheduled through the suppliers. This temporary special levy was to cease after the introduction of a new single property tax in a forthcoming piece of national legislation. The answers also addressed how satisfactory protection from disconnection was ensured for vulnerable customers. Furthermore, following judgment No 1972/2012 of the Greek Council of State and the subsequent amendment of the legislative framework ([3]) enabling consumers to disassociate the levy payment from the electricity bill or to switch suppliers, the replies showed that the case of electricity supply interruption or disruption of switching in the event of due levy payments did no longer exist. Based on the data available and the information provided, the Commission services concluded that further Commission action was not necessary.

([1]) 2009/72/EC, specifically provisions on universal service (Article 3(3)), change of supplier (Articles 3(5), 3(7)) and general customer protection (Article 3(7)).
([2]) In line with Article 3(7) of the directive.
([3]) (Under Law 4110/2013).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012581/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(6. November 2013)

Betrifft: Regeln für Radfahrer an Grenzübergängen zwischen Schengen-Ländern und Nicht-Schengen-Ländern

Am 26. Oktober war ich mit dem Fahrrad auf dem Europa-Radweg Eiserner Vorhang (EuroVelo 13) von Szeged nach Kikinda unterwegs. Ich war in Begleitung mehrerer Radfahrer aus Serbien sowie des belgischen Botschafters in Serbien, Alain Kundycki, und des früheren Botschafters der Vereinten Nationen in Serbien, William S. Infante. Sie waren alle an dem Morgen mit dem Auto am Grenzübergang Horgoš problemlos von Serbien nach Ungarn eingereist.

Wir fuhren dann mit dem Rad von Szeged auf dem wunderschönen Radweg auf dem Damm entlang der Theiß, vorbei am tiefsten Punkt Ungarn, und kamen kurz vor dem Dorf Đala an der Grenze an.

An dem Grenzübergang zwischen Szeged und Đala gab es dann Probleme, da der US-Staatsbürger William S. Infante die Grenze nicht passieren durfte. Als Grund gaben die ungarischen und serbischen Grenzposten an, dass ihre Computer nur EU-Reisepässe und keine US-Reisepässe lesen könnten.

Die Grenzposten empfahlen einen 35 km langen Umweg, um die Grenze in Horgoš in korrekter Weise zu passieren, obwohl keine amtlichen Informationen diesbezüglich vorlagen.

Erst nach einer Reihe von Telefonaten erlaubten die Grenzposten dem US-Bürger die Ausreise aus Ungarn und die Einreise nach Serbien.

1. Darf Ungarn als Staat des Schengener Abkommens zwischen EU-Bürgern und US-Bürgern differenzieren, wenn es um das Verlassen des Landes an unterschiedlichen Grenzübergängen geht? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

2. Haben die serbischen Behörden in dem Abkommen über Grenzkontrollen zwischen Serbien und der EU der anderen Seite das Recht eingeräumt, an unterschiedlichen Grenzübergängen zwischen EU-Bürgern und US-Bürgern zu differenzieren? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

3. Stellt eine etwaige Unterscheidung und Diskriminierung einen Verstoß gegen EU-Rechtsvorschriften dar? Wenn nicht, warum nicht? Wenn ja, was gedenkt die Kommission gegen die Diskriminierung von Drittstaatsangehörigen zu unternehmen?

4. Ab wann werden Drittstaatsangehörige die Grenze zwischen Szeged und Đala problemlos passieren können, wie es in Horgoš möglich ist?

5. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis von anderen Grenzübergängen mit einer ähnlichen diskriminierenden Praxis? Falls ja, wo?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(13. Januar 2014)

Der Schengener Grenzkodex ([1]) sieht vor, dass Außengrenzen nur an den Grenzübergangsstellen

und nur während der festgesetzten Verkehrsstunden überschritten werden dürfen. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind verpflichtet, der Kommission die Liste ihrer Grenzübergangsstellen zu übermitteln, die daraufhin im Amtsblatt veröffentlicht wird. Auch der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannte Drittstaat muss eine Grenzübergangsstelle und den Umfang ihrer Nutzung festlegen. Die von Ungarn mitgeteilte Grenzübergangsstelle ist Tiszasziget — Đala; die Verkehrsstunden sind festgesetzt auf 7.00 bis 19.00 Uhr. Diese Informationen wurden veröffentlicht und müssen auch an der Grenzübergangsstelle deutlich angegeben sein.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 562/2006, ABl. L 105 vom 13.4.2006
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006R0562:DE:NOT

Generell können Mitgliedstaaten das Überschreiten von Außengrenzen an den Grenzübergangsstellen auf eine bestimmte Kategorie von Personen (z. B. Grenzbewohner oder Staatsangehörige der zwei Nachbarländer oder andere Staatsbürger von EU-Ländern) oder auf eine bestimmte Kategorie von Fahrzeugen (z. B. keine Lastkraftfahrzeuge) beschränken. Diese Beschränkungen sind meistens geografisch oder ökologisch begründet. Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen diese Beschränkungen in den Mitteilungen an die Kommission angeben, damit sie veröffentlicht werden können.

Abgesehen von den zeitlich begrenzten Verkehrsstunden hat Ungarn keine weiteren Beschränkungen hinsichtlich des Überschreitens der Außengrenzen an der Grenzübergangsstelle, auf die sich der Herr Abgeordnete bezieht, mitgeteilt. Die Kommission wird die ungarischen Behörden daher um Stellungnahme zu der genannten Beschränkung an dieser Grenzübergangsstelle bitten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012581/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Rules for cyclists at border crossings between Schengen and non-Schengen countries

On 26 October I was cycling along the Iron Curtain Trail (EuroVelo 13) from Szeged to Kikinda. I was accompanied by several Serbian cyclists, the Belgian ambassador to Serbia, Alain Kundycki, and former United Nations ambassador to Serbia William S. Infante. That morning they had all entered Hungary from Serbia by car via the border crossing at Horgoš without any problems.

We cycled from Szeged along the wonderful cycle path on the Tisza dam, passed the deepest point of Hungary and reached the border shortly before Đala.

Problems occurred at the border crossing point between Szeged and Đala when the US citizen William S. Infante was not allowed to cross the border because, according to the Hungarian and Serbian border guards, the computers were only able to read European passports and not US ones.

Although there was no official information, the border guards recommended a 35-km-long detour via Horgoš in order to cross the border in the correct way.

Only after a number of phone calls were the border guards able to allow the US citizen to leave Hungary and enter Serbia.

I am therefore asking the Commission:

1. As a member of the Schengen area, is Hungary allowed to differentiate between EU and US citizens when it comes to leaving the country at different border crossings? If so, why? If not, why not?

2. In the agreement regarding border controls between Serbia and the EU, did the Serbian authorities grant the right to differentiate between EU and US citizens at different border crossings? If so, why? If not, why not?

3. Does any possible differentiation and discrimination break EC law? If not, why not? If so, what is the Commission doing to stop discrimination against non-EU citizens?

4. When will non-EU citizens be allowed to cross the border between Szeged and Đala without any problem, as they can in Horgoš?

5. Is the Commission aware of any other border crossings where similar discrimination takes place? If so, where?

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

According to the Schengen Borders Code ([1]), external borders may be crossed only at border crossing points and during the fixed opening hours. Member States have the obligation to notify the list of their border crossing points to the Commission, and this is then published in the Official Journal. The third-country concerned also needs to agree on the establishment and the extent of use of a border crossing point. Hungary notified the border crossing point of *Tiszasziget — Đjala* with restricted opening hours from 07.00 to 19.00. This information has been published and must also be clearly indicated at the border crossing point.

In general, Member States may restrict the use of border crossing points to a certain category of persons such as local border residents, or citizens of the two neighbouring countries concerned and other EU citizens, or to a certain category of transport, for example excluding heavy vehicles. These limitations are mostly based on the geographical or environmental situation. Member States must include the information about these restrictions in their notifications so the information can be made public.

However, apart from the limited opening hours, no other limitations of the use of the crossing point to which the Honourable Member refers were notified by Hungary. The Commission will therefore address the Hungarian authorities to request clarifications concerning the reported restriction at this crossing point.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 as amended, OJ L 105, 13.4.2006 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006R0562:EN:NOT

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-012582/13
til Kommissionen
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(6. november 2013)

Om: Status for Kommissionens undersøgelse om forbrugeroplysning om slagtning uden bedøvelse

Det kan og bør have højeste prioritet for Den Europæiske Union i almindelighed og for Kommissionen i særdeleshed at sikre, at de dyr, vi opdrætter til forbrug, lever sundt uden unødvendig smerte, psykisk belastning og lidelse.

Således glæder jeg mig over beslutningen om, at der skal udarbejdes en undersøgelse om, hvordan vi bedst oplyser de europæiske forbrugere om de slagtningsmetoder, der anvendes til at producere forskellige kødvarer, f.eks. som fastlagt i artikel 50 i Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EU) nr. 1169/2011 af 25. oktober 2011 om fødevareinformation til forbrugerne, om ændring af Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1924/2006 og (EF) nr. 1925/2006 og om ophævelse af Kommissionens direktiv 87/250/EØF, Rådets direktiv 90/496/EØF, Kommissionens direktiv 1999/10/EF, Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2000/13/EF, Kommissionens direktiv 2002/67/EF og 2008/5/EF og Kommissionens forordning (EF) nr. 608/2004.

Kommissionen anmodes derfor om at besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Hvornår offentliggøres den nævnte undersøgelse?

2. Vil Kommissionen sikre, at undersøgelsen medtager relevante og aktuelle tal for, hvor stor en procentdel af europæiske dyr der slagtes uden bedøvelse?

3. Vil Kommissionen sikre, at undersøgelsen dækker relevante fødevaresikkerhedsmæssige betænkeligheder i forbindelse med visse former for slagtning uden bedøvelse?

4. Vil Kommissionen sikre, at undersøgelsen inkluderer forslag om praktiske og konkrete ordninger til mærkning af kød fra dyr, der er slagtet uden bedøvelse?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(12. december 2013)

Indholdet af den i spørgsmålet nævnte undersøgelse beskrives således i betragtning 50 i forordning (EU) nr. 1169/2011 om fødevareinformation til forbrugerne ([1]): »Forbrugerne i Unionen viser voksende interesse for gennemførelsen af Unionens dyrevelfærdsregler i forbindelse med slagtning, herunder spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt dyret blev bedøvet før slagtning. Det bør derfor i forbindelse med en fremtidig EU-strategi for dyrebeskyttelse og -velfærd overvejes at undersøge mulighederne for, at forbrugerne gives information om bedøvelse af dyr.«

Resultaterne af undersøgelsen forventes i april 2014.

([1]) EUT L 304 af 22.11.2011, s. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012582/13
to the Commission
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Progress of the Commissions study on informing consumers about non-stun slaughtering

Ensuring that the animals we raise for consumption live healthy lives free of unnecessary pain, stress and suffering can and must be a top priority for the European Union at large and the Commission in particular.

This being the case, I have welcomed the decision that a study be carried out into how we can best inform European consumers about the method of slaughter used to produce various meat products as, for example, stated in Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004.

I therefore ask the Commission the following questions:

1. When will the said study be published?

2. Will the Commission ensure that the study includes relevant and up-to-date figures on what percentage of European animals are slaughtered without stunning?

3. Will the Commission ensure that relevant food safety concerns associated with some forms of non-stun slaughter are covered by the study?

4. Will the Commission ensure that the study will include suggestions for practical and concrete systems for the labelling of non-stun-slaughtered meats?

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

The content of the study referred to in the question is described in Recital 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([1]) as follows: 'Union consumers show an increasing interest in the implementation of the Union animal welfare rules at the time of slaughter, including whether the animal was stunned before slaughter. In this respect, a study on the opportunity to provide consumers with the relevant information on the stunning of animals should be considered in the context of a future Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals.'

The results of the study are expected by April 2014.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18-63.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012586/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per le attività di allevatore di cavalli da corsa in Italia

In Italia vi sono circa 2.000 allevatori del galoppo e del trotto, i quali su terreni di proprietà o in affitto svolgono quest'attività che si concretizza nel mantenimento delle fattrici, nella fecondazione delle stesse e nello svezzamento e nel mantenimento dei prodotti nati (puledri) fino all'età media di 18/20 mesi. Dopo tale periodo, i cavalli, attraverso le aste o semplici trattative private, vengono venduti a proprietari che li affidano a centri di allenamento dove vengono svolte le attività di doma e di preparazione allo svolgimento di attività agonistiche (corse al trotto e al galoppo). Pertanto, l'introito principale per un allevatore deriva dalla vendita dei puledri e secondariamente dalla royalty del 20 % dei premi che il cavallo percepisce al traguardo.

Per queste ragioni il lavoro di ogni allevatore è quello di studiare gli incroci ed investire in genealogie importanti per poter far nascere cavalli competitivi e poter così partecipare a corse e Gran Premi internazionali. Il comparto dell'allevamento di cavalli da corsa italiano conta circa 12.000 occupati diretti e più di 50.000 praticanti, oltre a interessare 42 ippodromi, e rappresenta un'eccellenza italiana a livello mondiale, come dimostrano i risultati. Tuttavia, tale attività è oggi gravata da onerosi costi (strutture con scuderie e paddocks, mantenimento di vastissimi pascoli, mantenimento qualitativo di fattrici e puledri, mascalcia, spese veterinarie per la fecondazione e per i dovuti controlli durante la gravidanza, onerosi costi dei tassi di monta, trasporti, costi inerenti alle spese di registrazione dei puledri negli appositi registri genealogici) che stanno mettendo seriamente in crisi tutto il comparto, con gravi ripercussioni anche su tutto l'indotto.

Tali costi hanno infatti ridotto drasticamente il numero dei prodotti nati, perché molti allevatori o hanno ridotto il loro parco fattrici o addirittura hanno cessato l'attività a causa dell'elevato rischio d'impresa, derivante dal mancato ingravidamento della fattrice oppure da eventuali infortuni in cui possono incorrere i puledri e che possono renderli non in grado di svolgere attività agonistica.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali programmi o finanziamenti sono previsti per il settore degli allevatori di cavalli da corsa al trotto ed al galoppo nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020;

2. a quali finanziamenti previsti nell'ambito della PAC può accedere il settore dell'allevamento ippico italiano;

3. se vi sono finanziamenti per la promozione e la valorizzazione delle aziende dell'allevamento ippico italiano;

4. quali sono i finanziamenti previsti per il piano zootecnico italiano al fine di favorire gli allevatori nello studio degli incroci e delle genealogie migliori e, inoltre,

5. fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012592/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per le attività di allevatore di cavalli da corsa in Toscana

In Toscana vi sono circa 200 allevatori che su terreni di proprietà o in affitto svolgono questa attività che si concretizza nel mantenimento delle fattrici, fecondazione delle stesse, svezzamento e mantenimento dei prodotti nati (puledri) fino all'età media di 18/20 mesi. Dopo tale periodo, i cavalli, attraverso le aste o semplici trattative private, vengono venduti a proprietari che li affidano a centri di allenamento dove vengono svolte le attività di doma e di preparazione allo svolgimento di attività agonistiche (corse al trotto ed al galoppo). Pertanto, l'introito principale per un allevatore è derivante dalla vendita dei puledri e secondariamente dalla royalty del 20 % dei premi che il cavallo percepisce al traguardo.

Per queste ragioni il lavoro di ogni allevatore è quello di studiare gli incroci ed investire in genealogie importanti per poter far nascere cavalli competitivi e poter così partecipare a corse e Gran Premi internazionali. Il comparto ippico toscano, infatti, rappresenta la prima regione italiana per numero di attività: vi sono circa 2 000 diretti e più di 70 000 praticanti oltre ad esservi 195 centri FISE (Federazione Italiana Sport Equestri) e 9 ippodromi.

Tuttavia, tale attività è oggi gravata da onerosi costi (strutture con scuderie e paddocks, mantenimento di vastissimi pascoli, mantenimento qualitativo di fattrici e puledri, mascalcia, spese veterinarie per la fecondazione e per i dovuti controlli durante la gravidanza, onerosi costi dei tassi di monta, trasporti, costi inerenti le spese di registrazione dei puledri negli appositi registri genealogici) che stanno mettendo seriamente in crisi tutto il comparto, con gravi ripercussioni anche su tutto l'indotto.

Tali costi hanno infatti ridotto drasticamente il numero dei prodotti nati perché molti allevatori o hanno ridotto il loro parco fattrici o addirittura hanno cessato l'attività a causa dell'elevato rischio d'impresa derivante dal mancato ingravidamento della fattrice oppure da eventuali infortuni che possono incorrere ai puledri e che possono renderlo non in grado di svolgere attività agonistica.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali programmi o finanziamenti sono previsti per il settore degli allevatori di cavalli da corsa al trotto ed al galoppo nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020, ed in particolare con riferimento alla Toscana?

2. Vi sono finanziamenti per la promozione e la valorizzazione degli ippodromi in Toscana?

3. Quali sono i finanziamenti previsti per il piano zootecnico regionale toscano al fine di favorire gli allevatori nello studio degli incroci e delle genealogie migliori?

4. Può fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta congiunta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

Il quadro giuridico UE relativo alla programmazione 2014-2020 non esplicita i settori non agricoli che possono beneficiare del sostegno in ambito rurale. Spetta infatti agli Stati membri definire la portata dell'intervento dei rispettivi programmi di sviluppo rurale. Di conseguenza, allo stato attuale non si può escludere che l'allevamento di cavalli da corsa e/o i servizi connessi possano eventualmente essere sovvenzionati dal Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR).

Per quanto riguarda il periodo di programmazione 2007-2013, in virtù della base giuridica vigente e del contenuto dei programmi di sviluppo rurale italiani appare altamente improbabile che il FEASR possa erogare sostegno per la promozione e la valorizzazione degli ippodromi. Tuttavia, poiché l'attuazione delle misure contemplate dal programma di sviluppo rurale e la selezione dei singoli progetti sono di competenza delle autorità di gestione regionali, è a loro che dovrebbero essere chieste ulteriori informazioni al riguardo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012586/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Possible funding to breed racehorses in Italy

In Italy around 2 000 people breed racehorses and trotting horses on land that they either own or lease; their job consists in keeping broodmares, ensuring that they reproduce and weaning and raising their offspring (foals) until they reach an average age of 18-20 months. Thereafter the horses are sold, in auctions or simply by private agreement, to owners who entrust them to equestrian centres where dressage activities and competition training (trotting and gallop racing) are carried out. Breeders therefore earn most of their money from selling foals, with the 20% royalty they receive from their horses' prize money being their second most important source of income.

For these reasons, it is the job of every breeder to study cross-breeds and invest in superior bloodlines so that they can breed competitive horses that can take part in races and major competitions throughout the world. The racehorse breeding sector in Italy has around 12 000 direct employees and more than 50 000 practitioners, while 42 racecourses operate on the strength of it. Racehorse breeding is an activity at which Italy excels internationally, as the results show. However, this activity today incurs high costs (stabling and paddock costs, costs of maintaining huge pastures, costs of maintaining high-quality broodmares and foals, farrier costs, veterinary costs for insemination and for checks required during pregnancy, high stud fee costs, transport costs and the costs of registering foals in the appropriate stud books) which are seriously jeopardising the entire sector and having a major impact on all related sectors, too.

These costs have led to a drastic reduction in the number of foal births, because many breeders have either reduced their stock of broodmares or stopped breeding horses altogether on account of the high risk to their business if broodmares fail to reproduce or if their foals have an accident and are unable to take part in competitions.

In view of the above, can the Commission:

1. say what programmes or funding are planned for the trotting horse and racehorse breeding sector in the new programming period 2014-2020;

2. say what funding the Italian horse breeding sector can access under the CAP;

3. say whether any funds are available to promote and enhance horse breeding farms in Italy;

4. say what funding is planned for animal breeding in Italy in order to assist breeders in researching the best cross-breeds and bloodlines; and

5. provide an overview of the situation?

Question for written answer E-012592/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Possible funding to breed racehorses in Tuscany

In Tuscany around 200 people breed racehorses on land that they either own or lease; their job consists in keeping broodmares, ensuring that they reproduce and weaning and raising their offspring (foals) until they reach an average age of 18-20 months. Thereafter the horses are sold, in auctions or simply by private agreement, to owners who entrust them to equestrian centres where dressage activities and competition training (trotting and gallop racing) are carried out. Breeders therefore earn most of their money from selling foals, with the 20% royalty they receive from their horses' prize money being their second most important source of income.

For these reasons, it is the job of every breeder to study cross-breeds and invest in superior bloodlines so that they can breed competitive horses that can take part in races and major competitions throughout the world. Tuscany is the Italian region with the highest number of equestrian activities: around 2 000 people are employed directly in the sector and more than 70 000 people participate in equestrianism; there are also 195 FISE (Italian Equestrian Federation) centres and 9 racecourses in the region.

However, this activity today incurs high costs (stabling and paddock costs, costs of maintaining huge pastures, costs of maintaining high-quality broodmares and foals, farrier costs, veterinary costs for insemination and for checks required during pregnancy, high stud fee costs, transport costs and the costs of registering foals in the appropriate stud books) which are seriously jeopardising the entire sector and having a major impact on all related sectors, too.

These costs have led to a drastic reduction in the number of foal births, because many breeders have either reduced their stock of broodmares or stopped breeding horses altogether on account of the high risk to their business if broodmares fail to reproduce or if their foals have an accident and are unable to take part in competitions.

In view of the above, can the Commission reply to the following questions:

1. What programmes or funding are planned for the trotting horse and racehorse breeding sector in the new programming period 2014-2020, with particular reference to Tuscany?

2. Are any funds available for the promotion and enhancement of racecourses in Tuscany?

3. What funding is planned for Tuscany's regional animal breeding plan in order to assist breeders in researching the best cross-breeds and bloodlines?

4. Can it provide an overview of the situation?

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

The EU legal framework for programming period 2014-2020 does not explicitly list the non-agricultural sectors for which support in rural area can be given. It is up to the Member States to define the scope of intervention of their Rural Development Programmes. Therefore, at present, it cannot be excluded that racehorse breeding and/or services linked to it could potentially be funded by the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

With regard to the 2007-2013 programming period and in accordance with the current legal basis, as well as on the basis of the content of the Italian Rural Development Programmes (RDPs), support for 'promotion and enhancement of racecourses' from the EAFRD is highly unlikely. Nevertheless, since the implementation of RDP measures and the selection of individual projects are the responsibility of the Regional Managing Authorities, it is at that level that further information on this issue should be sought.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-012587/13
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(6 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rozporządzenie Komisji Europejskiej ws. wyłączeń blokowych

W związku z przedłużeniem terminu obowiązywania rozporządzenia Komisji Europejskiej (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r. uznającego niektóre rodzaje pomocy za zgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem w zastosowaniu art. 87 i art. 88 TWE, zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Czy znany jest już projekt (lub założenia do zmienionego projektu) rozporządzenia Komisji Europejskiej uznającego niektóre rodzaje pomocy za zgodne z rynkiem wewnętrznym w zastosowaniu art. 107 i art. 108 Traktatu (nowe wyłączenie w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych), który zastąpi obecnie obowiązujące rozporządzenie Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r.?

2. Czy unijne ustawodawstwo zakazuje (lub będzie zakazywać) w Polsce:

a. prowadzenia zakładów pracy chronionej, tj. zakładów pracy gdzie pracuje zwiększona liczba osób niepełnosprawnych (np. powyżej 50 %) i udzielania im pomocy publicznej w formie subsydiów płacowych dla zatrudnionych osób niepełnosprawnych?

b. udzielania dodatkowej pomocy publicznej dla zakładów pracy (otwartego rynku pracy) zatrudniających osoby niepełnosprawne z tytułu podwyższonego wskaźnika zatrudnienia osób niepełnosprawnych u tego pracodawcy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(9 grudnia 2013 r.)

Zmienione ogólne rozporządzenie w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych (GBER) ma zostać przyjęte przed latem 2014 r. Zaktualizowany projekt tego rozporządzenia będzie przedmiotem konsultacji publicznych na początku przyszłego roku.

Warunki obecnego GBER mające na celu grupowe wyłączenie pomocy dla pracowników niepełnosprawnych nie będą bardziej surowe w zmienionym GBER. Projekt GBER, tak samo jak obowiązujący GBER, wyłącza pomoc na zatrudnianie pracowników niepełnosprawnych w formie subsydiów płacowych i pomoc na rekompensatę dodatkowych kosztów związanych z zatrudnianiem pracowników niepełnosprawnych. Oznacza to, że państwa członkowskie będą nadal mogły przydzielać te środki pomocy, bez konieczności zgłaszania tego faktu Komisji, pod warunkiem spełnienia wymogów określonych w GBER. Obie kategorie pomocy mogą być oczywiście przyznawane przedsiębiorstwom wykonującym zatrudnienie chronione.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012587/13
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(6 November 2013)

Subject: Commission Regulation on block exemptions

In connection with the extension of Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty, I would like to ask the Commission the following:

1. Has a draft Commission regulation (or the assumptions for the amended draft) declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (new block exemptions), which will replace existing Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008, already been produced?

2. Does (or will) EU legislation prohibit in Poland:

a. the running of sheltered employment establishments, i.e. establishments which employ a large number of people with disabilities (e.g. over 50%) and the granting to them of state aid in the form of wage subsidies for employing people with disabilities?

b. the provision of additional state aid to establishments (operating in the open labour market) employing persons with disabilities, on the basis of the increased rate of employment of people with disabilities by that employer?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

The revised General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) is expected to be adopted before summer 2014. The revised draft of this regulation will be subject to public consultation at the beginning of next year.

The conditions of the current GBER to block exempt aid for workers with disabilities will not be made stricter in the revised GBER. The draft GBER, the same as the GBER currently in force, block exempts aid for the employment of workers with disabilities in the form of wage subsidies, and aid for compensating the additional costs of employing workers with disabilities. This means that Member States will continue to be able to grant these categories of aid without having to notify it to the Commission, provided the conditions of the GBER are respected. Both categories of aid can be, obviously, granted to undertakings providing sheltered employment.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012589/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ψηφιακή τηλεόραση στην Ελλάδα και δημόσιοι διαγωνισμοί

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση προωθεί ρύθμιση με την οποία όσοι τηλεοπτικοί σταθμοί βρίσκονται σε λειτουργία την 31/8/13, μπορούν να συνάψουν συμβάσεις με τον Πάροχο Δικτύου Ψηφιακής Τηλεόρασης (ΠΔΨΤ) που θα προκύψει από τον επικείμενο, σχετικό, διαγωνισμό. Στην Ελλάδα, επί 23 έτη, οι ιδιωτικοί τηλεοπτικοί σταθμοί λειτουργούν με προσωρινές άδειες, παρά τις αντίθετες προβλέψεις της νομοθεσίας, χωρίς να ελεγχθεί η τεχνική και η οικονομική τους επάρκεια καθώς και η βιωσιμότητά τους. Από το 2009, οι επτά μεγαλύτεροι ιδιωτικοί τηλεοπτικοί σταθμοί της Ελλάδας συνέπτυξαν κοινοπραξία (Digea), η οποία έλαβε προσωρινή άδεια ΠΔΨΤ, για την πρώτη φάση της ψηφιακής τηλεόρασης και σήμερα κατέχει δεσπόζουσα θέση στην ελληνική αγορά ΠΔΨΤ, αποτελώντας ουσιαστικά τον αποκλειστικό προμηθευτή της σχετικής υπηρεσίας. Με τον επικείμενο διαγωνισμό για την ανάδειξη του ΠΔΨΤ και τις σχετικές διατάξεις των προδιαγραφών του, εμποδίζεται, επί της ουσίας, η συμμετοχή οποιασδήποτε άλλης επιχείρησης ήθελε να λάβει μέρος, κατά παράβαση της Οδηγίας 2002/21/ΕΚ. Και αυτό συμβαίνει γιατί: α) το χρονοδιάγραμμα του διαγωνισμού προβλέπει την εγκατάσταση 600 πομπών σε 156 σημεία της Ελλάδας εντός 315 ημερών, με ημερομηνία έναρξης την πρώτη ημέρα ανάθεσης, κάτι που μπορεί να εκτελεστεί μόνον από μια εταιρεία που ήδη δραστηριοποιείται. Αρκεί, ενδεικτικά, να αναφερθεί ότι ο μέσος χρόνος αδειοδότησης ενός κεραιοσυστήματος ξεπερνά τους 10 μήνες. Επομένως, καταστρατηγείται ευθέως η Οδηγία 2002/21/ΕΚ, και, β) μια επιχείρηση που θα ήθελε να συμμετάσχει στο διαγωνισμό, θα είχε ως βασικό ανταγωνιστή την κοινοπραξία των κυριότερων δυνητικών πελατών της. Οι πελάτες αυτοί θα είχαν κάθε λόγο να εμποδίσουν τη συμμετοχή της για να ευνοήσουν την δική τους κοινοπραξία.

Κατόπιν των ανωτέρω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει το φάκελο του διαγωνισμού για έλεγχο από την Εθνική Επιτροπή Τηλεπικοινωνιών και Ταχυδρομείων ή από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση; Θα ερευνήσει τα ανωτέρω;

2. Με ποιο τρόπο έχει γίνει η παροχή αδειών στους παρόχους προγράμματος και δικτύου τηλεόρασης στις άλλες χώρες της ΕΕ;

3. Είναι σύμφωνη με την κοινοτική νομοθεσία η παροχή αδειών λειτουργίας τηλεοπτικών σταθμών και, κατ' επέκταση, χρήσης των δημοσίων συχνοτήτων δωρεάν και μάλιστα χωρίς προηγούμενη διαγωνιστική διαδικασία; Θα επισημάνει στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση την αναγκαιότητα αδειοδότησης των τηλεοπτικών σταθμών πριν την προκήρυξη του διαγωνισμού για τον ΠΔΨΤ, ώστε να γνωρίζουν οι ενδιαφερόμενοι τους νόμιμους πελάτες τους;

Απάντηση της κ. Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τα έγγραφα διαβούλευσης της ΕΕΤΤ που δημοσιεύθηκαν στις 28 Μαΐου 2013 όσον αφορά τον περιορισμό των δικαιωμάτων χρήσης ραδιοσυχνοτήτων για υπηρεσίες ψηφιακής τηλεόρασης.

Σύμφωνα με το ενωσιακό δίκαιο, τα κράτη μέλη δεν υποχρεούνται να ζητούν την έγκριση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής πριν από την εκχώρηση δικαιωμάτων χρήσης ραδιοσυχνοτήτων, μεταξύ άλλων και για λόγους τηλεοπτικής αναμετάδοσης· οι οικείες αποφάσεις ανάθεσης πρέπει, ωστόσο, να συμμορφώνονται με την ισχύουσα ενωσιακή νομοθεσία. Βάσει αυτής, κάθε περιορισμός των δικαιωμάτων χρήσης ραδιοσυχνοτήτων πρέπει να βασίζεται σε αντικειμενικά, διαφανή, αμερόληπτα και αναλογικά κριτήρια. Τα κράτη μέλη έχουν χρησιμοποιήσει διάφορες διαδικασίες που ανταποκρίνονται στα ανωτέρω κριτήρια για την αδειοδότηση παρόχων δικτύου, συμπεριλαμβανομένων συγκριτικών και ανταγωνιστικών διαδικασιών (δημοπρασιών), όπως προτάθηκε και από την ΕΕΤΤ τον Μάιο.

Σύμφωνα με την ενωσιακή νομοθεσία, η αδειοδότηση παρόχων περιεχομένου δεν αποτελεί προϋπόθεση για την εκχώρηση συχνοτήτων σε φορείς εκμετάλλευσης δικτύου. Επιπλέον, οι διαδικασίες για τη χορήγηση αδειών για τηλεοπτικά κανάλια δεν έχουν αποτελέσει αντικείμενο εναρμόνισης σε ενωσιακό επίπεδο. Τα κράτη μέλη είναι, συνεπώς, ελεύθερα να εφαρμόζουν καθεστώτα αδειοδότησης σύμφωνα με τις εσωτερικές τους απαιτήσεις, εφόσον αυτές ανταποκρίνονται στις ελευθερίες παροχής υπηρεσιών και εγκατάστασης που προβλέπονται στη ΣΛΕΕ. Η αδειοδότηση χωρίς ειδική διαγωνιστική διαδικασία δεν είναι, ως εκ τούτου, αφεαυτής ασύμβατη. Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη όσον αφορά ανταγωνιστικές προσφορές, «καλλιστεία», καθώς και δεσμοποιημένες διαδικασίες εκχώρησης που έχουν χρησιμοποιηθεί ή είναι σε χρήση σε κράτη μέλη, με σκοπό την αδειοδότηση παρόχων περιεχομένου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012589/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Digital television in Greece and tendering procedures

The Greek Government is pushing forward an arrangement whereby all television stations which are up and running on 31 August 2013 can execute contracts with the digital television network provider which wins the forthcoming tendering procedure. Private television stations have been broadcasting under temporary licences for the past 23 years in Greece, despite legislative provisions to the contrary, without any checks on their technical or financial standing or viability. In 2009, the seven biggest private television stations in Greece formed a consortium (Digea), which obtained a temporary digital television network provider's licence for the first phase of digital television and which today has a dominant position on the Greek digital television network market; basically, it is the only such service provider. The specifications of the forthcoming procedure to award a digital television network provider's contract basically prevent any other undertaking wishing to bid from taking part, in breach of Directive 2002/21/EC, because: a) the timetable for the procedure states that 600 transmitters must be installed at 156 points in Greece within 315 days of the date on which the contract is awarded; this can only be done by a company which is already up and running. I need only say, by way of illustration, that it takes on average 10 months to obtain a license for an aerial system; therefore, Directive 2002/21/EC is being directly infringed and b) a company wishing to bid in the procedure would basically be competing directly with the consortium of its main potential customers. Those customers would have every reason to prevent its participation in order to benefit their consortium.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it received the tender documents from the National Telecommunications and Post Commission or from the Greek Government for review? Will it investigate the situation?

2. What method has been used to grant licences to television programme and network providers in other EU Member States?

3. Is the provision of television station broadcasting licences and, by extension, free use of public frequencies, without any tendering procedure, compatible with Union law? Will it point out to the Greek Government that television stations need to be licensed before announcing a tendering procedure for a digital television network provider, so that interested parties will know who their lawful customers are?

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

The Commission is aware of the EETT consultation documents published on 28 May 2013 regarding the limitation of rights of use of radio-frequency for digital television broadcasting.

Under EC law, Member States are not required to seek the approval of the European Commission before assigning rights of use of radio-frequency, including for broadcasting purposes; their award decisions must nevertheless comply with applicable EC law. Under the latter, any limitation of the rights of use of radio-frequency must be based on objective, transparent, non-discriminatory and proportionate criteria. Member States have used different procedures that meet the above criteria to license network providers, including comparative and competitive procedures (auctions), as proposed by EETT in May.

Under EC law, the authorisation of content providers is not a prerequisite for the assignment of frequencies to network operators. Moreover, the procedures for the granting of licences for television channels have not been harmonised at EU level. Member States are thus free to operate licensing regimes in line with domestic requirements if these comply with the freedoms to provide services and of establishment set out in the TFEU. Licensing without a dedicated tender procedure thus is not incompatible per se. The Commission is aware of competitive tenders, beauty contests as well as bundled assignment procedures having been or being in use in Member States, with the view to the licensing of content providers.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012590/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μέσο επιμερισμού κινδύνου

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 36α, παράγραφος 5 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου της 11ης Ιουλίου 2006 «περί καθορισμού γενικών διατάξεων για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο και το Ταμείο Συνοχής και την κατάργηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1260/1999», ένα κράτος μέλος που επιθυμεί να επωφεληθεί από το μέσο επιμερισμού του κινδύνου, υποβάλλει γραπτή αίτηση στην Επιτροπή έως τις 31 Αυγούστου 2013.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπέβαλε η Ελλάδα αίτηση ένταξής της στο μέσο επιμερισμού του κινδύνου; Εάν ναι, ποιον όρο του άρθρου 77 παράγραφος 2 στοιχεία (α), (β) και (γ) ή ποια άλλη νομική πράξη επικαλέστηκε που να αποδεικνύει την επιλεξιμότητά της;

2. Μπορεί να μου κοινοποιήσει τον κατάλογο των προγραμμάτων του άρθρου 36α παράγραφος 6β που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το ΕΤΠΑ ή από το Ταμείο Συνοχής ο οποίος δηλώθηκε από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση; Ποιο το μέρος των πιστώσεων του 2012 και του 2013 γι' αυτά τα προγράμματα, το οποίο δηλώνει ότι επιθυμεί να ανακατανείμει στο μέσο επιμερισμού του κινδύνου;

3. Η Επιτροπή έχει επαληθεύσει την αίτηση της Ελλάδας κατά τα οριζόμενα στο άρθρο 36α, παράγραφος 7; Αν όχι, γιατί;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Ελλάδα δεν υπέβαλε αίτηση για μέσο καταμερισμού των κινδύνων, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 36α του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012590/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Risk-sharing instrument

According to Article 36a(5) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, a Member State seeking to benefit from a risk-sharing mechanism had to submit a written request to the Commission by 31 August 2013.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Did Greece submit a request for inclusion in the risk-sharing mechanism? If so, which condition of Article 77(2)(a), (b) and (c) or which other legal act was cited in proof of its eligibility?

2. Can it send me the list of programmes under Article 36a(6)(b) co-financed either by the ERDF or by the Cohesion Fund which was provided by the Greek government? Which part of 2012 and 2013 allocations for those programmes does it want to reallocate to the risk-sharing instrument?

3. Has the Commission verified Greece's request in accordance with the requirements of Article 36a(7)? If not, why?

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

Greece did not submit a request for a risk-sharing instrument under the terms of Article 36(a) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012591/13
to the Commission
Giles Chichester (ECR)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Telecoms

Why has the Commission chosen to ignore the third critical (although not formally 'negative') opinion of its own impact assessment board; a critical opinion which therefore remains entirely valid?

Why is it deemed more effective to aggregate so many measures in one new proposal, when it would surely be better and more manageable to have a series of smaller, sector-specific proposals and to build upon the existing framework where possible?

How exactly does the Commission arrive at the figure of EUR 110 billion per year for the potential GDP increase resulting from implementation of the proposals, even though the proposals do not contain all the measures recommended in the Ecorys report which produced the EUR 110 billion figure?

When, if at all, does the Commission envisage a comprehensive review of the framework for electronic communications? Why is the current piecemeal approach deemed to be better than a comprehensive review?

What is your answer to the suggestion that the EU market is actually less fragmented than the US one, with the big four possessing a 60% market share?

Given the progress towards regulatory harmonisation made by the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), why does the Commission wish to override the proven strength of these mechanisms?

Why was there no specific assessment of the expected impact of this proposal on small and medium-sized enterprises (the SME test)?

With regard to radio spectrum, why is the Commission attempting to seize more power from Member States when it has so far failed to use powers already at its disposal to speed up spectrum auctioning/allocation? Why does the Commission not cancel the derogations which it has granted to certain Member States?

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

As regards the final opinion of the IAB ([1]), the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-010572/2013 ([2]).

The Commission's proposal removes single market barriers through a set of tailored measures that do in fact build upon the existing regulatory framework. The European telecoms market is still divided in 28 national ones, and operators are not able to treat Europe as a single market.

Although the benefits of the single market are difficult to quantify, the impact assessment estimates those benefits as 0.89% of annual GDP if the current barriers to the internal market are removed and the necessary standardisation takes place. The Commission also assessed impacts on SMEs and concluded, *inter alia*, that improved connectivity would enable growth possibilities across all economic sectors, driving productivity gains, especially for SMEs.

Rather than a piecemeal approach, the proposal identifies a targeted set of measures that should take effect quickly, which would not be achieved by carrying out a full review of the regulatory framework at this stage. However, the Commission will prepare the ground for the next Commission mandate, by preparing a review of how the existing mechanisms for ensuring regulatory consistency might be further enhanced.

On the other specific points, the Commission stresses that BEREC, with new tasks and a more stable structure, will continue to have an important role in ensuring consistent regulation in Europe. Regarding spectrum the Commission is not seeking a transfer of competence from the national to the European level, but the coordination of use of radio spectrum ensuring synchronization and the application of consistent conditions across Europe.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012593/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Regolamentazione degli scarichi dei wc

A metà novembre sarà all'esame, in una riunione della Commissione, nell'ambito della fissazione dei criteri dell'attribuzione del marchio di conformità alle direttive UE, quella di uno standard UE per i wc, esame iniziatosi nel gennaio 2011, mentre una prima riunione del Gruppo di lavoro appositamente costituito si era svolta a Bruxelles nell'ottobre 2011, seguita da un'altra riunione a Siviglia nel giugno 2012.

Si rileva che il Gruppo di lavoro ha affrontato la tematica degli scarichi dei wc europei, definendo i sei punti chiave che devono essere alla base del processo regolamentativo, a cominciare dalla portata dello scarico, per poi definire il prodotto, realizzare una analisi economica e di mercato, studiare il comportamento degli utenti, esprimere una valutazione sulla base di un case history e analizzare le migliori tecnologie disponibili ora ed in futuro.

Occorre rilevare che gli esperti hanno anche segnalato che nei Paesi Bassi, e forse presto anche in Francia, non potranno essere installati servizi igienici con meno di 6 litri per scarico così come in Portogallo e che inoltre nel Regno Unito nuovi servizi igienici con più di 6 litri per scarico sono proibiti mentre sono incoraggiate le installazioni di servizi igienici con meno di 6 litri per scarico anche se l'installazione di scarichi con questa caratteristica dipende da una serie di condizioni tecniche.

Gli esperti consultati dalla Commissione poi, nella distinzione tra orinatoi e wc, hanno inoltre suggerito che i primi non possano avere flussi inferiori al mezzo litro e per i secondi non inferiori ai 5, elaborando poi una formula matematica da applicare per determinare la portata del «flusso aureo».

Visto l'impegno profuso in merito, anche con la consultazione di esimi esperti in materia, può la Commissione dire se è sicura e certa del fatto che regolamentare i flussi degli scarichi dei wc abbia dei riflessi rilevanti sulle politiche di tutela dell'ambiente e non invece che questo tipo di interventi rappresentino solo uno spreco di danaro pubblico?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta data all'interrogazione scritta E-12341/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012593/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Regulation of toilet flushes

In mid-November 2013 the Commission will meet to discuss the creation of an EU standard for toilets as part of the efforts to establish criteria for awarding the mark of conformity with EU directives. This work began in January 2011, while a first meeting of the specially created working group was held in Brussels in October 2011, followed by a second meeting in Seville in June 2012.

The working group has addressed the issue of toilet flushes in Europe and identified the six key points that should underpin the regulatory process: scoping, product definition, economic and market analysis, user behaviour analysis, base case assessment, and Best Available Technology (BAT) and Best Not Yet Available Technology (BNAT) analysis.

It should be noted that the experts also reported that in the Netherlands and Portugal, and possibly soon in France, too, it is forbidden to install toilets using more than six litres per flush. Moreover, in the United Kingdom new toilets using more than six litres per flush are prohibited, while installations of toilets using less than six litres per flush are encouraged, although the installation of these kinds of flushes is subject to various technical conditions.

The experts consulted by the Commission also suggested, when distinguishing between urinals and toilets, that the flush volume should be not less than half a litre for urinals and not less than five litres for toilets, and devised a mathematical formula for use in determining the optimal flush volume.

Given the huge amount of work that has been done on this issue, including consulting leading experts in the field, can the Commission say whether it is sure that regulating toilet flushing will have a significant impact on environmental protection policies and not that this kind of measure will simply be a waste of public money?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-12341/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012594/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Accordo di intelligence Turchia-Iran

Secondo la testata di informazione israeliana Debkafile, i ministri degli Esteri della Turchia e quello dell'Iran, si sarebbero di recente incontrati ad Ankara dove avrebbero siglato un patto di cooperazione dei servizi di intelligence dei due Paesi.

A lavorare all'accordo sarebbero stati il capo dei Servizi segreti turchi e il viceministro iraniano con delega all'intelligence; alle sessioni preparatorie, durate sei settimane, avrebbe preso parte anche il capo dei Servizi iraniani.

La notizia ovviamente scuote il già complesso panorama politico del Medio Oriente.

Con il patto di Ankara, la Turchia, che pure è membro della Nato, si è impegnata a non spiare la Repubblica islamica dell'Iran, anche per conto di terzi (come gli Stati Uniti), come anche ad interrompere le attività di intelligence presso i confini con l'Iran.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

È l'Alto Rappresentante dell'UE a conoscenza di questo patto tra la Turchia e l'Iran?

Non ritiene l'Alto Rappresentante dell'UE che questo accordo sia un ulteriore segnale negativo in riferimento al processo di adesione della Turchia all'Unione europea?

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

Secondo le informazioni disponibili, l'oggetto principale della recente visita ad Ankara del ministro degli Esteri iraniano Zarif era l'intensificazione della cooperazione tra i due paesi per contrastare l'estremismo e la violenza settaria nella regione in seguito alla crisi siriana. Durante la visita, i due ministri degli Esteri si sono detti disponibili a migliorare il dialogo nonostante le loro posizioni divergenti sulla crisi siriana. Non vi è stata alcuna dichiarazione o comunicazione ufficiale circa il «patto di cooperazione» tra i servizi di intelligence dei due paesi a cui fa riferimento il sito internet israeliano Debkafile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012594/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Turkey-Iran intelligence agreement

According to the Israeli website Debkafile, the Turkish and Iranian foreign ministers recently met in Ankara where they reportedly signed a cooperation pact between the two countries' intelligence services.

It is understood that the head of the Turkish intelligence service and Iran's deputy intelligence minister worked out the details of the pact, while the head of the Iranian intelligence service is also said to have taken part in the six-week-long preparatory sessions.

The news is obviously disturbing from the point of view of the already complicated political situation in the Middle East. Despite being a member of NATO, Turkey has made a commitment under the Ankara pact not to spy on the Islamic Republic of Iran, including on behalf of others (such as the United States), and to stop intelligence activities at the borders with Iran.

Is the High Representative of the Union aware of this pact between Turkey and Iran?

Does she not believe that this pact is a further negative signal as far as Turkey's accession to the European Union is concerned?

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

The recent visit of Iranian Foreign Minister (FM) Zarif to Ankara reportedly focused on increased cooperation between the two countries on fighting extremism and sectarian violence in the region as a result of the Syrian crisis. During the visit, the two FMs indicated readiness to improve dialogue despite their divergent positions on the Syrian crisis. There was no official statement or report about a 'cooperation pact' being signed between the two countries' intelligence services as reported on the Israeli website Debkafile.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012595/13
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Documento di lavoro di Søndergaard sul terremoto in Abruzzo

Lo scorso lunedì 4 novembre è stato presentato, in una conferenza stampa, il documento di lavoro sulla relazione speciale n. 24/2012 «risposta del Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea al terremoto del 2009 in Abruzzo: pertinenza e costo delle operazioni», elaborato dal deputato Søren Bo Søndergaard.

Considerato il clamore mediatico e il forte impatto registrato in Italia come in altri Stati membri sulla vicenda;

considerate le accuse e le forti allusioni contenute nel documento nei riguardi dell'operato dell'Italia ma anche della stessa Commissione, per lo più risultanti in una serie di dati non verificati, presunti e estrapolati in maniera confusa dal contesto;

considerate le dichiarazioni del portavoce della Commissione della giornata di lunedì 4 novembre;

può la Commissione far sapere:

la propria posizione circa le affermazioni del deputato Søndergaard e in particolare sulla possibilità di restituzioni di somme eventualmente percepite dall'Italia a valere sul Fondo di solidarietà per il terremoto in Abruzzo?

Se ritiene che l'Italia abbia mal operato rispetto alla gestione della tragedia del post terremoto da un punto di vista della spesa effettuata con l'ausilio del Fondo di solidarietà?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(9 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione ha esaminato attentamente il documento di lavoro dell'onorevole Søndergaard. Come la Commissione ha spiegato in occasione della presentazione del documento il 4 novembre alla commissione per il controllo dei bilanci, essa ritiene che il documento contenga diverse inesattezze fattuali ed errori che possono aver condotto il relatore a formulare conclusioni ingiustificate.

La Commissione ha spiegato in particolare che, nonostante il numero di irregolarità rilevate nel suo audit degli aiuti a valere sul Fondo di solidarietà per l'Abruzzo, la spesa per la quale vi sono ragionevoli garanzie di regolarità e legalità supera di gran lunga l'importo erogato dal Fondo di solidarietà. La Commissione non ravvisa pertanto nessun motivo giuridico per cui l'Italia dovrebbe restituire eventuali importi dell'aiuto del Fondo di solidarietà per il terremoto in Abruzzo.

Al di là delle irregolarità che hanno interessato in particolare le regole sugli appalti pubblici, la Commissione ritiene che la sovvenzione del Fondo di solidarietà per l'Abruzzo sia stata essenzialmente implementata in modo rapido ed efficace.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012595/13
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Working document by Søren Bo Søndergaard on the Abruzzo earthquake

On Monday 4 November 2013 the working document on Special Report No 24/2012 'The European Union Solidarity Fund's response to the 2009 Abruzzi earthquake: The relevance and cost of the operations', by the MEP Søren Bo Søndergaard, was presented during a press conference.

The document has caused a media storm and had a major impact in Italy and in other Member States.

It contains accusations and serious insinuations regarding the conduct not only of Italy but also of the Commission, the majority of which appear as a set of unverified, hypothetical data that have been taken out of context in a way that is difficult to understand.

In view of the above and of the statements made by the Commission's spokesperson on Monday 4 November 2013,

can the Commission explain its position regarding the claims made by Mr Søndergaard and, in particular, regarding the possibility that Italy may have to pay back any sums it has received from the Solidarity Fund for the Abruzzo earthquake?

Does the Commission believe that Italy has managed the post-earthquake tragedy badly in terms of the way in which it has spent the monies received from the Solidarity Fund?

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

The Commission has carefully examined Mr Søndergaard's working document. As the Commission explained on the occasion of the presentation of the document to the Committee on Budget Control on 4 November, it considers that the document contains a number of factual inaccuracies and errors which may have led the rapporteur to unjustified conclusions.

The Commission explained in particular that, in spite of a number of irregularities detected in its audit of the Solidarity Fund aid for Abruzzo, the expenditure for which it has reasonable assurance of its regularity and legality exceeds by far the amount granted by the Solidarity Fund. The Commission therefore sees no legal reason for which Italy would have to pay back any sum of the Solidarity Fund aid for the Abruzzo earthquake.

Apart from the irregularities that occurred in particular relating to public procurement rules, the Commission considers that the Solidarity Fund grant for Abruzzo was for the most part implemented in a rapid and effective manner.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012600/13
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: VAT zero rates

Annex III of Council Directive 2006/112/EC lists goods and services to which Member States may apply a reduced rate of VAT. Books are on the list, including maps and hydrographic or similar charts.

The directive also allows Member States to continue to apply a zero rate of VAT to products that were already zero-rated before 1991.

The UK currently applies a zero rate of VAT to books and maps, but this is not applied to globes, which are subject to the standard VAT rate of 20%.

Can the Commission confirm whether educational globes can be classed as maps or hydraulic or similar charts, and if the UK is permitted to extend its zero rate to cover them?

Directive 2009/47/EC amending Directive 2006/112/EC allows zero VAT rates to be extended to correct certain inconsistencies, for example by allowing Member States to extend zero rates for books to include ebooks. If globes are not already included in the list in Annex III, can the Commission say whether the amending directive would also allow zero rates for maps to be extended to include educational globes?

If globes are not currently eligible for a reduced rate of VAT, will the Commission consider revising Annex III of Directive 2006/112/EC to include educational globes?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(10 December 2013)

Zero rates constitute exceptions to the general rules on VAT rates which have been agreed by the unanimity of Member States. Zero rates form part of temporary derogations granted to certain Member States on the basis that such rates were in force before 1 January 1991 and continue to be limited to the goods to which they were applied at the time. Applying a zero rate to globes would therefore not be in line with the current EU VAT law.

Directive 2009/47/EC amended Annex III of the VAT Directive ([1]), in particular Category C. However, the revised text does not allow zero VAT rates to be extended but it clarifies and updates the reference to books in order to specify that books 'on all physical means of support' are covered by this category and are thus eligible for a reduced VAT rate.

There are no plans to extend zero rates to any new supply, as zero rates conflict with VAT being a general consumption tax levied on all taxable supplies of goods and services and reduce the economic efficiency of the VAT system.

In its communication adopted on 6 December 2011 ([2]), the Commission has suggested the way forward to achieve a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system adapted to the single market. In the area of VAT rates, the main objectives are to increase the efficiency of the VAT system and tackle the legal uncertainty and the compliance costs triggered by differences in the VAT rates across Member States. In order to achieve these objectives, the Commission favours a restricted use of reduced VAT rates. Proposing a reduced VAT rate for globes does not fit within the criteria of the current review of reduced rates.

Member States who so wish have other means at disposal (subsidies,…) than using a general tax such as VAT to promote educational policies.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0851:FIN:EN:PDF

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012602/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μη εκπλήρωση των υποχρεώσεων της Τουρκίας έναντι της ΕΕ

Πέρασε άλλος ένας χρόνος χωρίς η Τουρκία να εκπληρώσει την υποχρέωσή της να εξασφαλίσει την πλήρη και χωρίς διακρίσεις εφαρμογή του πρόσθετου πρωτοκόλλου στη συμφωνία σύνδεσης. Η Τουρκία δεν έχει άρει όλα τα εμπόδια στην ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία των εμπορευμάτων, μεταξύ των οποίων τους περιορισμούς που επιβάλλει στην άμεση μεταφορική σύνδεση με την Κύπρο. Δεν έχει ομαλοποιήσει τις διμερείς σχέσεις με την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία και δεν έχει άρει το βέτο στη συμμετοχή της Κύπρου σε διάφορους διεθνείς οργανισμούς. Κατά τη διάρκεια της κυπριακής προεδρίας του Συμβουλίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η Τουρκία απέστειλε εγκύκλιο σε όλες τις πρεσβείες της σε διεθνείς οργανισμούς με την εντολή να αποφεύγουν τις επαφές με την προεδρία του Συμβουλίου της ΕΕ το δεύτερο εξάμηνο του 2012.

Ερωτάται, κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει ότι, λόγω της μακροχρόνιας αδιαλλαξίας της Τουρκίας και της αδυναμίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης να λάβει συγκεκριμένη δέσμευση από την πλευρά της Τουρκίας ότι θα ρυθμίσει όλα τα ανωτέρω εκκρεμή θέματα και θα εργαστεί πράγματι για την επίτευξη σφαιρικής λύσης του κυπριακού προβλήματος, οι Κύπριοι χάνουν την εμπιστοσύνη τους στην ΕΕ;

2. Πώς μπορεί η ΕΕ να ανέχεται τη διαιωνιζόμενη παραβίαση βασικών ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και τους περιορισμούς στην ελεύθερη κυκλοφορία προσώπων, αγαθών και υπηρεσιών για τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες;

3. Πώς μπορούν να πεισθούν οι Κύπριοι ότι δεν υπάρχουν δύο μέτρα και σταθμά στην ΕΕ, όταν η Τουρκία δεν υπέστη ποτέ πολιτικές κυρώσεις για τις επιζήμιες και τραγικές συνέπειες της βάρβαρης εισβολής στην Κύπρο το 1974, ενώ, για οικονομικούς λόγους, η Ευρωομάδα εφαρμόζει αυστηρές κυρώσεις, μια άδικη διάσωση των καταθέσεων με ίδια μέσα και απάνθρωπα μέτρα λιτότητας που πλήττουν χιλιάδες σκληρά εργαζόμενους κύπριους πολίτες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των προσφύγων;

4. Έχει αποφασίσει να λάβει πολιτικά μέτρα κατά της Τουρκίας αυτή τη φορά;

5. Ποιο μήνυμα στέλνει η ΕΕ στην Τουρκία όταν, αντί να επιβάλει πολιτικές κυρώσεις, αποφασίζει να ανοίξει ένα νέο κεφάλαιο διαπραγματεύσεων, το υπ' αριθμόν 22, και μάλιστα μελετά το ενδεχόμενο να ασκήσει πιέσεις στην Κύπρο προκειμένου να άρει το βέτο σε άλλα κεφάλαια των διαπραγματεύσεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Τα θέματα που έθεσε ο κ. βουλευτής θίγονται συχνά από την Επιτροπή στην έκθεση προόδου για την Τουρκία και στη στρατηγική διεύρυνσης ([1]).

Στην έκθεση προόδου του 2013, η Επιτροπή παρατηρεί ότι: «Όπως τονίζεται στο πλαίσιο διαπραγμάτευσης και τις δηλώσεις του Συμβουλίου, η Τουρκία αναμένεται να υποστηρίξει ενεργά τις διαπραγματεύσεις με σκοπό τη δίκαιη, συνολική και βιώσιμη επίλυση του Κυπριακού στο πλαίσιο του ΟΗΕ, σύμφωνα με τις αντίστοιχες αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών, καθώς και με τις αρχές στις οποίες θεμελιώνεται η ΕΕ. Η δέσμευση της Τουρκίας με συγκεκριμένους όρους για μια τέτοια συνολική επίλυση είναι κρίσιμης σημασίας.»

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012602/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Turkey's unfulfilled obligations towards the EU

For yet another year, Turkey has not fulfilled its obligation to ensure full and non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement. It has not removed all obstacles to the free movement of goods, including restrictions on a direct transport link with Cyprus. It did not normalise its bilateral relations with the Republic of Cyprus and has not lifted the veto on Cyprus's membership of several international organisations. During the Cyprus Presidency of the European Council, Turkey issued a circular to all its multilateral embassies instructing them to avoid contact with the EU Council Presidency in the second half of 2012.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. Is it aware that, because of Turkey's long-standing intransigence and the EU's failure to obtain a concrete commitment on the part of Turkey to settle all the above pending issues and to truly work towards a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, Cypriots are losing trust in the EU?

2. How can the EU tolerate such a long-standing violation of basic human rights and restrictions on the free movement of people, goods and services for European citizens?

3. How can Cypriots be convinced that there are no double standards in the EU, when Turkey has never experienced political sanctions for the detrimental and tragic consequences of its barbaric invasion of Cyprus in 1974, whereas for economic reasons the Eurogroup implemented severe sanctions, an unfair bail-in of deposits and cruel austerity measures affecting thousands of hard-working European Cypriot citizens, including refugees?

4. Has the Commission decided to take political measures against Turkey this time?

5. What message does the EU give to Turkey when, instead of imposing political sanctions, it decides to open a new negotiation chapter, number 22, and is even considering pressing Cyprus to lift its veto on other negotiation chapters?

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

The Commission addresses regularly issues raised by the Honourable Member in its Progress Report on Turkey and in the Enlargement Strategy ([1]).

In the 2013 Progress Report, the Commission noted that: 'As emphasised in the negotiating framework and Council declarations, Turkey is expected to actively support the negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus issue within the UN framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the EU is founded. Turkey's commitment in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial.'

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012603/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φόροι επί της περιουσίας

Δεδομένης της σφοδρότητας με την οποία η οικονομική κρίση έπληξε τις χώρες της ΕΕ, το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο πρότεινε την επιβολή φόρων περιουσίας.

1. Τελεί η Επιτροπή σε γνώση των εν λόγω δηλώσεων και ποια είναι η γνώμη της για αυτές;

2. Σε σχέση με τις δηλώσεις του ΔΝΤ, έχει η ΕΕ ή το ΔΝΤ κάποιες προτάσεις για ανάπτυξη, πλην της επιβολής περισσότερων περικοπών και φόρων σε ήδη δοκιμαζόμενες οικονομίες;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Όσον αφορά το ερώτημα 1, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση που έδωσε στην ερώτηση P-011736-13 ([1]), η οποία καλύπτει ένα ανάλογο θέμα.

Όσον αφορά το ερώτημα 2, η Επιτροπή καθόρισε σειρά προτεραιοτήτων για τη στήριξη της ανάκαμψης στην ετήσια Ανασκόπηση της ανάπτυξης για το 2014, που δρομολογεί το Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο οικονομικού συντονισμού. Τα σχετικά έγγραφα διατίθενται στον δικτυακό τόπο της Επιτροπής:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012603/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Taxes on wealth

Given the severity with which the economic crisis has hit EU countries, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has suggested implementing taxes on wealth.

1. Is the Commission aware of these statements and what is its opinion of them?

2. With reference to these statements, does the EU or the IMF have any suggestions for growth other than implementing more cuts and taxes on already struggling economies?

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

With reference to the question under 1, the Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to the Question P-011736-13 ([1]), which covers a similar issue.

With reference to the question under 2, the Commission has set out a number of priorities to sustain the recovery in the Annual Growth Survey 2014, which launches the European Semester of economic coordination. The relevant documents can be found on the Commission's website:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012604/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αύξηση της ανεργίας και της φτώχειας

Σύμφωνα με στοιχεία που δημοσίευσε η Στατιστική Υπηρεσία της Κύπρου, η αυξανόμενη ανεργία στην Κύπρο έχει πλήξει περισσότερο τα άτομα χαμηλής ειδίκευσης, και το ποσοστό της ανήλθε στο 15,5% του εργατικού δυναμικού το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2013. Πρόκειται για το πέμπτο υψηλότερο ποσοστό στην ΕΕ. Εκτός αυτού, το ποσοστό της ανεργίας των νέων ηλικίας κάτω των 25 ετών ισούται πλέον με 40,3%, ενώ ο μέσος όρος της ΕΕ είναι 23,1%, και το αντίστοιχο ποσοστό στην Κύπρο το 2007 ήταν 10,9%.

Πρέπει επιπλέον να ληφθεί υπόψη ότι έχει επίσης αυξηθεί η χρονική διάρκεια της ανεργίας. Ένας στους δέκα ανέργους αδυνατεί να βρει κάποια θέση εργασίας για διάστημα 2 έως 4 ετών, ενώ ένα ποσοστό 36% παραμένει άνεργο για διάστημα ενός έτους. Έχει σημειωθεί τεράστια αύξηση σε σύγκριση με το 2008, που το ποσοστό των ανθρώπων που παρέμεναν άνεργοι για διάστημα μεγαλύτερο του ενός έτους ήταν 12% και το ποσοστό των ανθρώπων που παρέμεναν άνεργοι για διάστημα μικρότερο των έξι μηνών ήταν 64%.

Ερωτάται, κατά συνέπεια, η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια συγκεκριμένα μέτρα μπορεί να λάβει άμεσα η ΕΕ, ώστε να αντιμετωπιστεί η άνευ προηγουμένου κρίσιμη κατάσταση στην οποία βρίσκεται η Κύπρος αυτό το διάστημα; Ποιες συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες και επιπρόσθετες πηγές χρηματοδότησης μπορεί να προτείνει η Επιτροπή στην κυπριακή κυβέρνηση, ώστε να αντιμετωπίσει τη ραγδαία αύξηση της ανεργίας και να βοηθήσει όσους χρειάζονται μια αξιοπρεπή θέση απασχόλησης για να μπορέσουν να ζήσουν;

2. Έχοντας κατά νου ότι πάνω από 120 εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι στην ΕΕ ζουν σε συνθήκες φτώχειας το 2013, σε σύγκριση με 90 εκατομμύρια το 2012, πόσο αισιόδοξη αισθάνεται η Επιτροπή όσον αφορά την επίτευξη των στόχων της για το 2020 αναφορικά με τη μείωση της φτώχειας, εάν δεν αντιμετωπιστούν επιτυχώς, άμεσα και αποτελεσματικά οι επιπτώσεις της οικονομικής ύφεσης και της χρηματοπιστωτικής κρίσης στην αγορά εργασίας;

3. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να αλλάξει τους στόχους της για το 2020, ορίζοντας ένα μεταγενέστερο έτος-στόχο;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η ΕΕ υποστηρίζει την Κύπρο στην προσπάθειά της να αποκαταστήσει τη χρηματοπιστωτική και οικονομική σταθερότητα. Τα Ταμεία της ΕΕ ενεργοποιούνται για να συμβάλλουν στην οικονομική ανάκαμψη, να υποστηρίξουν περισσότερο τους ανέργους, τη νεολαία και τις ομάδες που μειονεκτούν καθώς και να αμβλύνουν τις κοινωνικές συνέπειες της κρίσης. Το ΕΚΤ υποστηρίζει τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας μέσω στοχευμένων μέτρων. Το ΕΤΠΑ ευνοεί τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας με την υποστήριξη των ΜΜΕ, καθώς και της έρευνας και της καινοτομίας και των μέτρων για την υποστήριξη της πράσινης ανάπτυξης.

Όπως συμφωνήθηκε στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας, οι κυπριακές αρχές προχωρούν επί του παρόντος σε μεταρρυθμίσεις του συστήματος κοινωνικής πρόνοιας προκειμένου να υπάρξει ένα πιο αποτελεσματικό δίχτυ ασφάλειας και καταρτίζουν σχέδιο δράσης για την εφαρμογή μέτρων για τους νέους που χρηματοδοτούνται στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων, με πρόσθετη χρηματοδότηση ύψους 10,8 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ. Πρόσθετα κονδύλια της ΕΕ θα είναι διαθέσιμα από το 2014 για να συμβάλλουν στην αναδιάρθρωση της οικονομίας στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής συνοχής (695,2 εκατομμύρια ευρώ) και του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση. Η ομάδα υποστήριξης της Κύπρου, με την αποστολή να βοηθήσει στην άμβλυνση των κοινωνικών συνεπειών της οικονομικής κρίσης στην Κύπρο, είναι έτοιμη να βοηθήσει τις κυπριακές αρχές στις προσπάθειές τους να αποκαταστήσουν τη χρηματοπιστωτική, οικονομική και κοινωνική σταθερότητα.

Οι πρόσφατες τάσεις δείχνουν ότι ο αριθμός των ατόμων που ζουν κάτω από συνθήκες φτώχειας ή κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού αυξήθηκε κατά 2,9 εκατομμύρια μεταξύ του 2011 και του 2012. Σε επίπεδο ΕΕ απέχουμε κατά 27 εκατομμύρια άτομα από τον στόχο που έχουμε θέσει για τη φτώχεια. Με βάση αυτές τις τάσεις, είναι απίθανο να εκπληρωθεί ο στόχος του 2020 για τη μείωση της φτώχειας. Για το λόγο αυτό, η Επιτροπή μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου και της δέσμης μέτρων για κοινωνικές επενδύσεις, προτείνει συνολικές δημοσιονομικές, οικονομικές και κοινωνικές προτεραιότητες και παρέχει πολιτική καθοδήγηση για την τόνωση της ανάπτυξης, της απασχόλησης και της κοινωνικής συνοχής σύμφωνα με τη στρατηγική της ΕΕ για μακροπρόθεσμη ανάπτυξη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012604/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Increase in unemployment and poverty

According to data released by the Statistical Services of Cyprus, Cyprus's rising unemployment has hit low-skilled adults the hardest, reaching a level of 15.5% of the workforce in the first quarter of 2013. This makes it the fifth highest in the EU. Furthermore, unemployment among people under the age of 25 is now 40.3%, compared with the EU average of 23.1% and the level in Cyprus in 2007 of 10.9%.

What must be further noted is that the length of time that workers are unemployed has also increased; one in ten unemployed people cannot find work for two to four years and about 36% remain unemployed for one year. This has greatly increased since 2008, when only 12% remained unemployed for over a year and 64% remained unemployed for less than six months.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What specific measures can be urgently taken by the EU to combat the unprecedented crisis situation currently experienced in Cyprus? What practical actions and additional sources of funding can the Commission suggest to the Cyprus Government in order to overcome this dramatic increase in unemployment and to help people who need decent employment in order to live?

2. Bearing in mind that in 2013 more than 120 million people in the EU are living in poverty, compared with 90 million in 2012, how optimistic does the Commission feel that its 2020 goals for reducing poverty will ever be met if the effects of the economic downturn on the labour market and the financial crisis are not successfully, urgently and efficiently addressed?

3. Will the Commission change its Europe 2020 targets by setting a later target year?

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

The EU supports Cyprus in its effort to restore financial and economic stability. EU Funds are mobilised to contribute to economic recovery, to provide increased support to the unemployed, youth and disadvantaged groups and to alleviate the social consequences of the crisis. The ESF supports job creation through targeted measures. The ERDF creates employment through supporting SMEs as well as research and innovation and measures supporting green growth.

As agreed in the memorandum of understanding, the Cypriot authorities are currently reforming the social assistance in order to provide a more effective safety net, and are drafting a youth employment action plan to implement measures for young people financed under the Youth Employment Initiative with an additional funding of EUR 10.8 million. Additional EU funds will be available as of 2014 to contribute to the restructuring of the economy under Cohesion Policy (EUR 695.2 million) and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund. The Support Group for Cyprus, with the mission of helping alleviate also the social consequences of the economic crisis in Cyprus, stands ready to assist the Cypriot authorities in their efforts to restore financial, economic and social stability.

Recent trends show 2.9 million more people living in poverty or social exclusion between 2011 and 2012. In the EU we are 27 million away from the poverty target. Based on these trends, it is unlikely that the 2020 goal on poverty reduction will be met. This is why the Commission, through the European Semester and the Social Investment Package, is proposing overall budgetary, economic and social priorities, and gives policy guidance to boost growth, employment and social cohesion in line with the EU's long-term growth strategy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012605/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi e PMI in Europa

Nella sua risposta alla mia interrogazione E-002282/2011 «PMI europee e oneri burocratici e fiscali», la Commissione afferma che «per quanto riguarda le statistiche sulle PMI i dati a disposizione mostrano che il numero delle PMI nell'Unione europea è aumentato da 18,7 milioni nel 2003 a 21,4 milioni nel 2008».

La Commissione:

1. è in grado di fornire oggi dati più aggiornati sul numero di piccole, medie e micro imprese presenti in Europa?

2. Quali sono le regioni europee che ne registrano la concentrazione maggiore?

3. Può indicare dal 2010 ad oggi qual è il tasso di «mortalità delle piccole e medie imprese»? Il suo trend è in crescita o in rallentamento?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

1. Nel 2011, nell'UE28, erano attive 22 054 605 piccole e medie imprese (PMI) ([1]); di queste, 20 448 910 erano microimprese, 1 380 272 piccole imprese e 225 357 medie imprese. Dopo la modifica della classificazione dell'attività di (dalla NACE Rev. 1.1 alla NACE Rev. 2) e dopo i mutamenti metodologici introdotti in alcuni Stati membri, i dati relativi alle PMI non sono più del tutto comparabili con quelli disponibili per il 2008.

2. Quanto alle cifre relative alle piccole e medie imprese, non esistono differenze significative in termini di quote delle PMI sulla popolazione totale delle imprese. Riguardo all'occupazione, la percentuale minima di PMI si registra nel Regno Unito (53,6 %); quella massima, in Italia (79.8 %) e Portogallo (79.2 %); non esiste un'ulteriore disaggregazione a livello regionale.

3. Dati sulla scomparsa delle PMI non sono disponibili. Per le imprese con meno di 10 dipendenti, il tasso di mortalità (numero delle cessazioni delle imprese diviso per il numero delle imprese attive) è stato del 10 % nel 2010, a livello UE28 ma Grecia e Croazia escluse; per esse non sono ancora disponibili dati convalidati per il 2010. Nel 2008 e nel 2009 ([2]) i tassi di mortalità delle microimprese nella UE28, Grecia, Croazia e Malta escluse, sono stati rispettivamente del 9,6 % e del 10 %.

([1]) Per ulteriori informazioni:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/european_business/special_sbs_topics/small_medium_sized_enterprises_SMEs e
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/index_en.htm

([2]) Dati per gli anni precedenti non sono comparabili a causa di una copertura differente delle attività.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012605/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Crisis and SMEs in Europe

In its answer to my written question E-002282/2011 on 'European SMEs, red tape and taxation', the Commission claims that 'concerning statistical data on SMEs, the available data show that the number of SMEs in the EU rose from 18.7 million in 2003 to 21.4 million in 2008'.

1. Is the Commission able today to provide more up-to-date information on the number of small, medium-sized and micro-enterprises in Europe?

2. Which European regions have the largest concentration of SMEs?

3. Can the Commission say what the failure rate among SMEs has been since 2010? Is there a rising or falling trend?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

1. In 2011, 22 054 605 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) ([1]) were active in EU28 of which 20 448 910 were micro enterprise, 1 380 272 small enterprises and 225 357 medium-sized enterprises. With the change of the activity classification (from NACE Rev.1.1 to NACE Rev.2) and methodological changes in some Member States, these data are not fully comparable with the data that were available for 2008.

2. In terms of the number of small and medium-sized enterprises, there are no significant differences in terms of shares of SMEs in the total enterprise population. In terms of employment the share of small and medium-sized enterprises is the lowest in the United Kingdom (53.6%) and highest in Italy (79.8%) and Portugal (79.2%) A further breakdown at regional level is not available.

3. Data on deaths of SMEs are not available. For enterprises with less than 10 employees the death rate (number of deaths of enterprises divided by number of active enterprises) was of 10% in 2010 in EU28 excluding Greece and Croatia for which validated data for 2010 are not yet available. In 2008 and 2009 ([2]) death rates for micro-enterprises in EU28 excluding Greece, Croatia and Malta were of 9.6% and 10% respectively.

([1]) For further information : http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/european_business/special_sbs_topics/small_medium_sized_enterprises_SMEs and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/index_en.htm

([2]) Data for previous years are not comparable because of a different coverage of activities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012606/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Blocco dei pagamenti anticipati dei premi per la domanda unica 2013: problemi per gli agricoltori veneti

Nonostante la Commissione europea abbia autorizzato il pagamento anticipato dei premi per la domanda unica 2013, gli imprenditori agricoli del Veneto non potranno essere liquidati.

Il Ministero dell'Economia e delle finanze ha, infatti, terminato la disponibilità di cassa per poter continuare a effettuare i pagamenti e, nonostante la stessa Regione Veneto abbia autorizzato un anticipo che le ha permesso di liquidare 98 milioni di euro, ne mancano all'appello ancora 56 milioni.

Il problema della mancanza di liquidità non riguarda solo la domanda unica ma anche il pagamento delle domande relative al Programma per lo sviluppo rurale (PSR).

Preso atto che per le imprese, in questo momento di crisi, disporre di risorse immediate stabilite dall'UE può fare la differenza tra la sopravvivenza e il fallimento, la Commissione:

1. Ravvisa una violazione del diritto comunitario? Se sì, si potrebbero configurare gli estremi per l'apertura di una procedura d'infrazione?

2. Come intende tutelare gli imprenditori agricoli italiani che, al pari di quelli degli altri Stati membri, dovrebbero poter far affidamento su queste risorse?

3. Ritiene opportuno sollecitare il governo italiano a erogare i restanti fondi?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(17 dicembre 2013)

1. A norma del regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 946/2013 della Commissione ([1]), a decorrere dal 16 ottobre 2013 gli Stati membri possono versare agli agricoltori anticipi dei pagamenti diretti di cui all'allegato I del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009 ([2]) e dei pagamenti per i bovini di cui alla sezione 11 dello stesso regolamento. Gli Stati membri non sono obbligati dalla normativa dell'UE a versare anticipi.

2. A norma dell'articolo 29, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 73/2009, i pagamenti nell'ambito dei regimi di sostegno elencati nell'allegato I di detto regolamento sono effettuati tra il 1º dicembre e il 30 giugno dell'anno civile successivo. Pertanto, il termine ultimo per il pagamento è il 30 giugno 2014.

3. Ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 1290/2005 del Consiglio ([3]), le autorità italiane devono essere rimborsate entro il 3º giorno lavorativo del secondo mese successivo al pagamento al beneficiario. Per i pagamenti diretti nell'ambito del Fondo europeo agricolo di garanzia, la Commissione non è al corrente dei motivi per cui dovrebbe esserci una carenza di fondi a tale riguardo.

([1]) GU L 261 del 3.10.2013, pagg. 25-26.
([2]) GU L 30 del 31.1.2009, pagg. 16-99.
([3]) GU L 209 dell'11.8.2005, pagg. 1-25.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012606/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Freeze on advance payments of premiums via the 2013 single application: problems for farmers in the Veneto Region

Despite the fact that the Commission has authorised the advance payment of premiums via the 2013 single application, farmers in the Veneto Region will not be able to be paid.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance has stopped making funds available for these ongoing payments and, even though the Veneto Region itself has authorised an advance enabling it to pay out EUR 98 million, there is still a EUR 56 million shortfall.

The lack of available funds is a problem that concerns not only single application payments but also the payment of applications made under the Rural Development Programme (RDP).

In these times of crisis, having access to EU direct funds can be the difference between survival and failure for holdings.

1. Does the Commission believe that Community law has been violated? If so, could this be grounds for opening an infringement procedure?

2. How does the Commission intend to protect Italian farmers, who, like farmers in other Member States, should be able to rely on these resources?

3. Does it believe that the Italian Government should be asked to pay the remaining funds?

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

1. According to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 946/2013 ([1]) Member States may pay, from 16 October 2013, advances to farmers of the direct payments listed in Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([2]) and regarding beef and veal payments provided for in Section 11 of the same Regulation. Member States are not obliged by EC law to pay advances.

2. According to Article 29(2) of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, payments under support schemes listed in Annex I to that regulation are to be made within the period from 1 December to 30 June of the following calendar year. Thus, the payment deadline is 30 June 2014.

3. According to Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 ([3]), the Italian authorities must be reimbursed at the latest on the 3rd working day of the second month after payment to the beneficiary. For direct payments in the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund, the Commission is not aware of why there should be a shortfall of funds in this respect.

([1]) OJ L 261, 3.10.2013, p. 25-26.
([2]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009, p. 16-99.
([3]) OJ L 209, 11.8.2005, p. 1-25.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012607/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Direttiva Servizi: aggiornamento dello stato di recepimento

Con il recepimento della direttiva 2006/123/CE, cosiddetta Bolkestein, hanno avuto luogo manifestazioni e proteste da parte di diverse categorie professionali, in particolare ambulanti e balneari, preoccupate dalle conseguenze della sua entrata in vigore.

Ciò premesso, in riferimento al periodo dal 2010 a oggi, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quale sia lo stato di avanzamento del recepimento della direttiva Bolkestein nei 28 Stati membri;

2. quali sono le ricadute giuridiche, sociali ed economiche dell'attuazione della direttiva nel settore del commercio ambulante e balneare degli altri Stati membri;

3. se vi siano state proteste, manifestazioni o segnalazioni — come in Italia — da parte di venditori ambulanti e balneari o da parte di altre categorie professionali?

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

1. Il termine per il recepimento della direttiva 2006/123/CE cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare era il 28 dicembre 2009. A tale data, 21 Stati membri non avevano ancora comunicato tutte le misure di recepimento adottate e, di conseguenza, sono stati aperti 21 procedimenti di infrazione per mancata comunicazione. In seguito alla notifica delle pertinenti misure di recepimento, tutti i casi sono stati successivamente chiusi, l'ultimo nell'aprile 2012.

Nel giugno 2012 la Commissione ha pubblicato una relazione sull'attuazione della direttiva «servizi» in cui si fa il punto dei progressi compiuti dagli Stati membri nell'eliminazione degli ostacoli giuridici e amministrativi superflui. La relazione individua le barriere non ancora rimosse e invita gli Stati membri a puntare a un'attuazione ambiziosa della citata direttiva, che genererebbe un'ulteriore crescita dell'1,8 % del PIL per le loro economie.

Il Consiglio europeo ha inoltre approvato le raccomandazioni specifiche per paese proposte dalla Commissione riguardanti alcuni settori dei servizi. Tuttavia, nessuna di queste raccomandazioni si occupa dei venditori ambulanti e balneari.

2. La Commissione non ha a disposizione alcuno studio particolare sulle ricadute giuridiche, sociali ed economiche nel settore del commercio ambulante e balneare.

3. La Commissione non è stata informata di manifestazioni da parte di venditori ambulanti e balneari in altri Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012607/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Services Directive: update on transposition status

The transposition of the Bolkestein Directive (2006/123/EC) was accompanied by demonstrations and protests by various occupational groups, including in particular street and beach traders worried about the consequences that its entry into force would have.

With reference, therefore, to the period since 2010, can the Commission say:

1. what the Bolkestein Directive's current transposition status is in the 28 Member States;

2. what legal, social and financial impact implementation of the directive has had on street and beach traders in the other Member States;

3. whether there have been any protests, demonstrations or placarding, like in Italy, by street and beach traders or by other occupational groups?

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

1. The deadline for transposition of Directive 2006/123/EC that the Honourable Member refers to was 28 December 2009. On that date, 21 Member States had not yet completely communicated their transposition measures. Consequently, 21 infringement cases for non-communication had been opened. Following communication of the relevant transposition measures, all of these cases have been subsequently closed, the last one in April 2012.

In June 2012, the Commission published a report on the implementation of the Services Directive in which it takes stock of how much progress has been achieved by the Member States in removing unnecessary legal and administrative barriers. The report identified the restrictions that have not yet been abolished and called on Member States to aim for an ambitious implementation of the Services Directive which would offer an additional growth of 1.8% GDP for the economies of the Member States.

The European Council has also endorsed country-specific recommendations proposed by the Commission which concern certain service sectors. However, none of these recommendations focus on street or beach traders.

2. The Commission is not in possession of any particular studies concerning the legal, social and financial impact on street and beach traders.

3. The Commission has not been alerted about any demonstrations by street or beach traders in Member States other than Italy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012608/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Il caso Electrolux: nuovi licenziamenti e delocalizzazione

La multinazionale svedese Electrolux ha annunciato 461 nuovi esuberi nell'ambito del proprio piano di riassetto aziendale, che prevede lo spostamento di gran parte della sua produzione italiana, attualmente svolta nei quattro stabilimenti italiani di Susegana (Treviso), Porcia (Pordenone), Solaro (Milano) e Forlì.

L'azienda delocalizzerà in Ungheria e Polonia, in modo tale da poter beneficiare di un sistema di tassazione meno oneroso e di una forza lavoro stipendiata a condizioni salariali inferiori rispetto a quelle italiane; così facendo risulteranno in esubero: 75 dipendenti nello stabilimento di Solaro, 246 in quello di Porcia e 140 in quello di Susegana.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se è al corrente dei fatti sopra esposti;

2. se intende attivare il Fondo Europeo di adeguamento alla Globalizzazione (FEG) a sostegno di questi lavoratori;

3. se è a conoscenza di finanziamenti comunitari, diretti o indiretti, erogati a favore di questa multinazionale;

4. se, considerando che sempre più spesso si verificano casi di delocalizzazione all'interno del mercato unico, non riterrebbe doveroso intervenire bloccando ogni tipo di finanziamento sotto la forma di fondi europei, verso le aziende che mettono in atto piani industriali di questo tipo, e qualora queste avessero già usufruito di tali aiuti, obbligarle alla restituzione;

5. se intende sviluppare delle linee guida comuni per tutta l'UE tese ad armonizzare la normativa a livello fiscale e previdenziale così da scoraggiare il ricorso alla delocalizzazione, che sta sempre più impoverendo il tessuto socioeconomico del nostro territorio?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è in effetti preoccupata per le conseguenze socioeconomiche che i licenziamenti presso gli impianti di produzione di Electrolux in Italia possono comportare.

La Commissione può mobilitare il FEG soltanto dopo aver ricevuto una domanda dallo Stato membro interessato e dopo aver valutato tale domanda alla luce dei criteri di cui al regolamento FEG.

Informazioni sulle organizzazioni e imprese che hanno ricevuto finanziamenti a valere sul bilancio dell'UE possono essere reperite attraverso il motore di ricerca posto in atto nell'ambito del sistema di trasparenza finanziaria disponibile su BudgWeb ([1]).

La Commissione non è contraria alle rilocalizzazioni in quanto tali poiché le imprese devono rimanere libere di decidere dove insediarsi a seconda dei loro modelli imprenditoriali specifici e dell'evolversi delle condizioni di mercato. La Commissione non caldeggia però l'uso dei fondi ESI ([2]) a tal fine ed il regolamento prevede condizioni rigorose per la concessione di aiuti.

La Commissione è consapevole dell'importanza degli aspetti fiscali su queste decisioni imprenditoriali. Tuttavia, la definizione delle aliquote fiscali rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri. La Commissione al momento attuale non ritiene pertanto di intraprendere azioni in questo ambito.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/beneficiaries_en.htm
([2]) Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012608/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Electrolux: further redundancies and relocation

The Swedish multinational Electrolux has announced that it is cutting a further 461 jobs as part of its corporate restructuring plan, which will see the majority of its Italian production, currently carried out in its four Italian factories in Susegana (Treviso), Porcia (Pordenone), Solaro (Milan) and Forlì, moved elsewhere.

The company is relocating to Hungary and Poland in order to take advantage of the lower taxes and of a workforce that is paid less than the one in Italy. As a result, it will be laying off 75 employees at the Solaro factory, 246 at the Porcia factory and 140 at the Susegana factory.

1. Is the Commission aware of the facts outlined above?

2. Will it mobilise the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) to support these workers?

3. Is it aware of direct or indirect EU funding which has been granted to this multinational?

4. Given that relocations are happening more and more within the single market, does it not believe that it should intervene by blocking all types of financial support in the form of EU funds paid to companies that implement industrial plans of this kind, and if they have already taken advantage of such aid, that it should make them pay it back?

5. Does it intend to develop common EU guidelines aimed at harmonising tax and benefit rules so as to discourage relocations, which are increasingly destroying the socioeconomic fabric of our region?

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

The Commission is, indeed, concerned about the social and economic consequences that the redundancies in the Electrolux production plants in Italy may bring.

The Commission can mobilise the EGF only after having received an application from the Member State concerned and after having assessed the application in the light of the criteria set by the EGF Regulation.

Information on which organisations and companies have received funding from the EU budget may be found by using the search engine set up within the Financial Transparency System available on BudgWeb ([1]).

The Commission is not opposed to relocations as such, since companies should remain free to decide where to locate according to their specific business models and evolving market conditions. However, the Commission does not support the use of ESIF ([2]) for this purpose and the regulation foresees strict conditions under which aid should be granted.

The Commission is aware of the importance of taxes on such business decisions. However, setting tax rates is a competence of the Member States. The Commission therefore does not currently plan to take action in this respect.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/beneficiaries_en.htm
([2]) European Structural and Investments Funds.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012609/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Il multilinguismo nelle future strategie europee

Nel 2010, rispondendo alla mia interrogazione E-007027/2010, la Commissione ha sottolineato che «il rispetto per la diversità linguistica e culturale rappresenta effettivamente un asse portante dell'Unione europea, come stabilisce l'articolo 22 della carta europea dei diritti fondamentali».

Con riferimento al nuovo periodo di programmazione delle risorse comunitarie, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Quali misure intende assumere per sostenere e preservare la diversità linguistica e culturale dei 28 Stati membri?

2. Quali programmi sono stati destinati alla promozione delle lingue regionali e locali?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(10 gennaio 2014)

Entro i limiti delle sue competenze la Commissione continuerà a portare avanti la propria politica a sostegno della diversità linguistica e culturale nell'UE. I suoi nuovi programmi, Erasmus+ ([1]) e Europa creativa ([2]), offriranno maggiori possibilità di finanziamento delle organizzazioni che lavorano su progetti atti a promuovere la diversità linguistica e culturale.

L'apprendimento delle lingue e la diversità linguistica saranno inseriti in tutti i filoni di Erasmus+. Questo mainstreaming offrirà la possibilità di chiedere finanziamenti in relazione a partenariati strategici nel campo delle lingue regionali e minoritarie nell'ambito dell'azione chiave 2 del programma. In seguito all'adozione della guida al programma per i candidati e dei documenti correlati, la Commissione caricherà informazioni sul sito web ([3]) in relazione a tutti i finanziamenti disponibili a valere sul programma unionale per i progetti che possono comprendere anche la promozione delle lingue regionali e minoritarie.

Applicando il metodo di coordinamento aperto la Commissione continuerà inoltre a procedere di conserva con le autorità degli Stati membri e gli stakeholder per esplorare le modalità di accrescere l'efficienza dell'insegnamento e dell'apprendimento delle lingue. L'obiettivo precipuo è di consentire a ogni cittadino europeo di apprendere due lingue straniere sin dalla più tenera età. ([4]) La Commissione sostiene ed integra le politiche educative nazionali volte a raggiungere questo obiettivo. Tali politiche possono comprendere misure volte a incoraggiare l'apprendimento delle lingue regionali e minoritarie.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/71025.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012609/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Multilingualism in future EU strategies

In 2010 the Commission stressed, in its answer to my written question E-007027/2010, that 'respect for linguistic and cultural diversity is indeed one of the cornerstones of the European Union, as stipulated in Article 22 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights'.

With reference to the new EU financial programming period, can the Commission say:

1. what action it will take to support and preserve the linguistic and cultural diversity of the 28 Member States;

2. what programmes have been planned to promote regional and local languages?

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

Within the limits of its competences, the Commission will continue to pursue its policy of supporting linguistic and cultural diversity in the EU. Its new programmes, Erasmus+ ([1]) and Creative Europe ([2]), will offer increased funding possibilities for organisations working on projects that promote linguistic and cultural diversity.

Language learning and linguistic diversity will be mainstreamed throughout Erasmus+. This mainstreaming will create opportunities to apply for funding for strategic partnerships in the field of regional and minority languages within key action 2 of the programme. Following the adoption of the Programme Guide for Applicants and related documents, the Commission will provide information on its website ([3]) about all available EU programme funding for projects that can include the promotion of regional and minority languages.

Through the open method of coordination, the Commission will also continue to work closely with authorities in Member States and stakeholders to explore ways of increasing the efficiency of language teaching and learning. The over-arching aim is to enable every European citizen to learn two foreign languages from an early age. ([4]) The Commission supports and complements national education policies aimed at reaching this objective. Such policies can include measures to encourage the learning of regional and minority languages.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/index_en.htm
([4]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/71025.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012612/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Inwigilacja przywódców politycznych UE

Media europejskie wiele miejsca poświęcają inwigilacji przywódców politycznych (w tym polityków europejskich) przez amerykańskie służby specjalne. Podsłuchiwane miały być zarówno przedstawicielstwa UE w Stanach Zjednoczonych ,jak i przy ONZ. Podsłuchiwano także posiedzenia Rady Europejskiej oraz posiedzenia Rady na szczeblu ministrów. Komisja Europejska w lipcu br. przeprowadziła kontrole pod kątem inwigilacji.

1. Jak Komisja ocenia skalę inwigilacji instytucji unijnych przez USA?

2. Jak Komisja ocenia stopień zagrożenia, jakie powstało w wyniku tego rodzaju inwigilacji?

3. Czy Komisja zleciła przeprowadzenie profesjonalnego audytu bezpieczeństwa pod kątem ewentualnych inwigilacji?

4. Jeśli tak, to jak wielka, w ocenie Komisji, była skala inwigilacji przez USA?

5. Czy Komisja pracuje nad procedurami zabezpieczenia instytucji unijnych przed inwigilacją ze strony państw trzecich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Maroša Šefčoviča w imieniu Komisji
(6 stycznia 2014 r.)

W odpowiedzi na pytanie Szanownego Pana Posła Komisja może potwierdzić, że w granicach swoich kompetencji podejmuje odpowiednie działania w odpowiedzi na doniesienia medialne o inwigilacji, mając na względzie zapewnienie bezpieczeństwa osób, budynków, mienia, informacji i działalności w lokalach Komisji.

Przyjęte w Komisji zasady i procedury bezpieczeństwa w zakresie ochrony informacji są ujęte w szeregu aktów prawnych i regulacyjnych ([1]). W kontekście ogólnego przeglądu przyjętych zasad bezpieczeństwa Komisja analizuje obecnie swoje wewnętrzne przepisy dotyczące ochrony informacji niejawnych Unii Europejskiej (EUCI) ([2]).

Procedury i środki w zakresie bezpieczeństwa stosowane przez Komisję opierają się na ciągłym procesie zarządzania ryzykiem, w którym, w ramach zwykłego procesu bezpieczeństwa działalności, uwzględnia się wszelkie zdarzenia mogące stanowić zagrożenie dla jej bezpieczeństwa, co obejmuje również inwigilację przez państwa trzecie. W oparciu o wspomniany proces zarządzania ryzykiem Komisja opracowuje i stosuje odpowiednie środki ochronne, mające przeciwdziałać zagrożeniom dla jej bezpieczeństwa.

Mając na względzie zachowanie skuteczności przyjętych procedur i stosowanych środków w zakresie bezpieczeństwa, Komisja nie wypowiada się w konkretnych kwestiach dotyczących stosowania tych środków. Ochrona innych instytucji UE nie leży w zakresie kompetencji Komisji – odpowiadają za nią poszczególne instytucje.

([1]) Np. w rozporządzeniu (Euratom) nr 3 w sprawie wykonania art. 24 Traktatu ustanawiającego Europejską Wspólnotę Energii Atomowej, Dz.U. 17 z 6.10.1958, s. 406-416.

([2]) Decyzja Komisji 2001/844/WE, EWWiS, Euratom z dnia 29 listopada 2001 r. zmieniająca jej regulamin wewnętrzny, Dz.U. L 317 z 3.12.2001, s. 1-55.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012612/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Surveillance of EU political leaders

The surveillance of political leaders (including EU politicians) by the US special services has received a great deal of media coverage in the EU. It has been claimed that EU offices both in the US and at the UN were bugged, as well as meetings of the European Council and the Council of Ministers. In July 2013 the European Commission undertook an inquiry into this issue.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the scale of US surveillance of EU institutions?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the threat posed by this type of surveillance?

3. Has the Commission arranged for a professional security audit to be carried out in connection with possible surveillance activities?

4. If so, what is the Commission's assessment of the scale of US surveillance?

5. Is the Commission working on procedures to protect the EU institutions against surveillance by third countries?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

In response to the Honourable Member's question the Commission can confirm that it has been following up on the allegations in the media on surveillance activities, within its remit to ensure the security of persons, buildings, physical assets, information and activities within Commission premises.

The Commission's security policies and procedures for protecting information are set out in series of legal and regulatory texts. ([1]) In the context of an overall review of its security policies, the Commission is currently reviewing its internal rules for protecting European Union Classified Information (EUCI) ([2]).

The security procedures and measures applied by the Commission are based on a continuous risk management process, which, as part of the normal security business process, takes into account all developments regarding threats to its security, including surveillance by third countries. On the basis of this risk management process, the Commission develops and applies appropriate protective measures to counter threats to its security.

So as to preserve the effectiveness of its security procedures and measures, the Commission does not comment on issues with regard to the concrete application of security measures. The responsibility for the protection of other EU institutions is not within the remit of the Commission, but is assumed by each of these Institutions individually.

([1]) Such as Regulation (Euratom) No 3 implementing Article 24 of the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community, OJ 17, 6.10.1958, p. 406-416.

([2]) Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal rules of procedure, OJ L 317, 3.12.2001, p. 1-55.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012613/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Egzekwowanie zapisów art 16, ustep 4 Traktatu Lizbońskiego

Protokół nr 26 „W sprawie postanowień przejściowych" (DZ. U. UE z 30.3.2010, C 83/322) stwierdza co następuje: „Zgodnie z artykułem 16 ustęp 4 Traktatu o Unii Europejskiej postanowienia tego ustępu i postanowienia artykułu 238 ustęp 2 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej, dotyczące definicji większości kwalifikowanej w Radzie Europejskiej i w Radzie, stają się skuteczne 1 listopada 2014 r." Oznacza to, że w celu wykonania postanowień traktatów w przyszłym roku będzie musiała formalnie zostać ustalona liczba ludności poszczególnych państw członkowskich. Od tego ustalenia zależeć będzie siła głosu państwa w Radzie. A zatem pozycja danego kraju w strukturach unijnych. Polska jest krajem o bardzo wysokiej emigracji do krajów unijnych. Komisja Europejska proponuje, aby przez liczbę ludności rozumieć ludność zamieszkującą dane państwo.

Według jakiej metodologii mierzona będzie ludność państwa członkowskich (moment pomiaru, uwzględnienie ruchów migracyjnych)?

Jak w tych rachubach potraktowani zostaną obywatele państwa członkowskiego, którzy w momencie pomiaru znajdują się poza granicami terytorium państwa członkowskiego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(6 stycznia 2014 r.)

Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1260/2013 z dnia 20 listopada 2013 r. w sprawie statystyk europejskich w dziedzinie demografii ([1]) wyraźnie określa definicję ludności, którą należy stosować od dnia 1 listopada 2014 r. do celów głosowania większością kwalifikowaną w Radzie. Zgodnie z art. 4 rozporządzenia liczba ludności ogółem na poziomie krajowym jest określana na podstawie definicji „miejsca zamieszkania ludności" zalecanej w skali międzynarodowej i określonej w art. 2 lit. c) i d) rozporządzenia w oparciu o kryterium 12 miesięcy. Zgodnie z art. 2 lit. d):

„»Miejsce zamieszkania« oznacza miejsce, w którym osoba zazwyczaj spędza czas przeznaczony na odpoczynek, niezależnie od czasowych nieobecności związanych z wypoczynkiem, urlopem, odwiedzinami u przyjaciół i krewnych, interesami, leczeniem medycznym lub pielgrzymkami religijnymi. Jedynie następujące osoby uważa się za osoby mające miejsce zamieszkania w danym obszarze geograficznym:

(i) osoby, które mieszkały w swoim miejscu zamieszkania nieprzerwanie przez okres co najmniej 12 miesięcy przed czasem odniesienia; lub

(ii) osoby, które przybyły do swojego miejsca zamieszkania w ciągu 12 miesięcy przed czasem odniesienia z zamiarem przebywania tam przez co najmniej rok […]."

W związku z powyższym obywatele, którzy w momencie przekazywania danych do Komisji (Eurostat) nie mają „miejsca zamieszkania", zgodnie z definicją zawartą w rozporządzeniu, w państwie członkowskim swojego pochodzenia, nie będą wliczani do ludności tego państwa członkowskiego. Każdego roku dane o liczbie ludności zamieszkującej na poziomie krajowym wykorzystywane do głosowania większością kwalifikowaną powinny być przekazywane do Eurostatu przez państwa członkowskie w ciągu 8 miesięcy od zakończenia okresu odniesienia.

([1]) Dz.U. L 330 z 10.12.2013, s. 39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012613/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Enforcement of the provisions of Article 16(4) of the Treaty of Lisbon

According to Protocol No 36 'On Transitional Provisions' (OJ C 83, 30.3.2010, p. 322), 'In accordance with Article 16(4) of the Treaty on European Union, the provisions of that paragraph and of Article 238(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union relating to the definition of the qualified majority in the European Council and the Council shall take effect on 1 November 2014'. The populations of the individual Member States must therefore be formally determined in order for the Treaties to be implemented next year. The figures obtained will determine the weighting of votes in the Council, and hence the relative importance of each country within the EU structures. A great many Polish citizens emigrate to other EU Member States, and yet the Commission has proposed that the population of a Member State should be equivalent to the number of people living there.

What method will be used to calculate Member State populations (date of calculation, allowances for migratory flows)?

How will it be ensured that citizens who are outside the territory of their home Member State on the date of calculation are included in these calculations?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

Regulation (EU) No 1260/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on European demographic statistics ([1]) clearly specifies the population definition to be used, from 1 November 2014, for the purpose of Qualified Majority Voting in the Council. In accordance with Article 4 of the regulation, the total population at national level is determined on the basis of the internationally recommended 'usual residence population' definition set out in its Article 2(c) and (d), based on a 12-month criterion. According to Article 2(d):

'"Usual residence" means the place where a person normally spends the daily period of rest, regardless of temporary absences for purposes of recreation, holidays, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. The following persons alone shall be considered to be usual residents of a specific geographical area:

(i) Those who have lived in their place of usual residence for a continuous period of at least 12 months before the reference time; or

(ii) Those who arrived in their place of usual residence during the 12 months before the reference time with the intention of staying there for at least one year[…].'

As a consequence, citizens who do not have their 'usual residence', as defined in the regulation, in their Member State of origin at the time of transmission of the data to the Commission (Eurostat) will not be counted in that Member State. Each year, data on the total usually resident population at national level to be used for Qualified Majority Voting are to be transmitted by Member States to Eurostat within 8 months from the end of the reference period.

([1]) OJ L 330, 10.12.2013, p. 39.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012614/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Implementacja dyrektywy o transgranicznej opiece medycznej

W październiku br. weszła w życie unijna dyrektywa o transgranicznej opiece medycznej. Polskie Ministerstwo Zdrowia dwa lata zwlekało z nowelizacją ustawy zdrowotnej, której celem byłaby transpozycja tej dyrektywy. Rząd polski dopiero we wrześniu br. przygotował projekty odpowiednich zmian w prawie polskim. Mają one zostać uchwalone dopiero w przyszłym roku. Rząd polski nie dokonał więc w odpowiednim czasie transpozycji.

1. Czy rząd polski nie naruszył w ten sposób zasady bezpośredniej skuteczności prawa unijnego, w tym bezpośredniej skuteczności dyrektyw (orzeczenie Van Gend en Loos oraz orzeczenie van Duyn)?

2. Czy uniemożliwienie korzystania z praw, które przyznaje ww. dyrektywa, narusza zasadę niedyskryminacji (obywatele innych państw mogą korzystać z tej dyrektywy, obywatele Polski nie)?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(19 grudnia 2013 r.)

Brak notyfikowania przez rząd polski środków transpozycji dyrektywy 2011/24/UE w sprawie stosowania praw pacjentów w transgranicznej opiece zdrowotnej ([1]) stanowi niedopełnienie przez państwo członkowskie obowiązków wynikających z Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej w odniesieniu do wdrożenia prawa UE. Komisja zastosuje przewidziane w Traktacie procedury dotyczące takich przypadków.

Odpowiadając na pierwsze pytanie: brak transpozycji dyrektywy nie stanowi *per se* naruszenia zasady bezpośredniej skuteczności prawa unijnego, jako że zasada ta działa niezależnie od krajowych środków transpozycji.

Podobnie sprawa ma się z drugą kwestią: brak transpozycji prawa unijnego nie stanowi sam w sobie naruszenia zasady niedyskryminacji; nie wiąże się on bowiem ze środkami dyskryminującymi obywateli z innych państw członkowskich UE – w wyniku nietransponowania przepisów przez dane państwo członkowskie w przewidzianym terminie w niekorzystnej sytuacji znajdują bowiem się raczej obywatele tego właśnie tego właśnie państwa członkowskiego. Z tego powodu najodpowiedniejszą reakcją ze strony Komisji są – jak już wspomniano – procedury przewidziane dla przypadków braku notyfikacji transpozycji.

([1]) Dz.U. L 88 z 4.4.2011, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012614/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the directive on cross-border healthcare

The EU Directive on cross-border healthcare entered into force in October 2013. For two years now, the Polish Ministry of Health has put off the adoption of amendments to the country's healthcare legislation which would transpose this directive into Polish law. The relevant amendments were only drafted by the Polish Government in September of this year, and they will not be adopted until next year. This means that the Polish Government has failed to transpose the directive within the necessary deadline.

1. Does this represent a violation by the Polish Government of the principle of the direct applicability of EC law, including the direct applicability of directives (Van Gend en Loos and van Duyn judgments)?

2. Does this represent a violation of the principle of non-discrimination, given that it will be impossible for Polish citizens to exercise the rights granted under the directive in the same way as citizens of other Member States?

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

The non-notification of transposition measures by the Polish Government of Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare ([1]) represents a failure by a Member State to meet its obligations under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union with regard to the implementation of EC law. The Commission will have recourse to the procedures contained within this Treaty for such instances.

With regard to the first of the two questions, failure to transpose a directive cannot per se violate the principle of the direct applicability of EC law since this is a principle which operates independently of any national transposition measures.

Similarly, a failure to transpose EC law does not by itself violate the principle of non-discrimination since it does not relate to discriminatory measures against citizens of other EU Member States, but rather the disadvantaging of a Member State's own citizens by a failure to transpose legislation on time. As noted above, it is therefore the procedures provided for in cases of non-notification of transposition which are the most appropriate recourse for the Commission.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012616/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rok bazowy dla 20 % obniżki emisji CO_2

Podczas szczytu UE w marcu 2007 r. podjęto decyzje, które stały się polityczno-ideologiczną podstawą całej unijnej polityki klimatycznej. Konkluzje wówczas sformułowane były pierwszym dokumentem tak wysokiej rangi definiującym cele i założenia w tym obszarze. Cel konkluzji był jasny. Państwa członkowskie oprócz przyjęcia wiążącego zobowiązania do 20 proc. redukcji emisji do 2020 r. wyraziły wolę na tak zwaną dekarbonizację europejskiej gospodarki o 80 proc. do 2050 r. i dały zielone światło Komisji Europejskiej na inicjatywę legislacyjną i szczegółowe regulacje stanowiące trzon europejskiej rewolucji energetyczno-klimatycznej.

W Polsce cały czas istnieje spór o rok bazowy zaproponowanej obniżki.

Dlatego proszę Komisję o następującą odpowiedź:

1. Jaki jest rok bazowy dla zapisów pakietu klimatycznego mówiących o 20 % obniżce CO_2? Proszę o podział na poszczególne państwa członkowskie.

2. Czy dla każdego kraju przyjęto rok bazowy odrębnie, czy jako liczoną średnią?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

1. Ustalony przez UE cel ograniczenia emisji gazów cieplarnianych (nie tylko CO_2) o 20 % do 2020 r. odnosi się do wielkości emisji z 1990 r. w Unii Europejskiej ogółem. Około 45 % emisji w ramach tego celu podlega pod unijny system handlu uprawnieniami do emisji ([1]) (EU ETS) obejmujący duże instalacje w sektorze przemysłu i sektorze energii, przy czym dla emisji z tych sektorów ustalono ogólnounijny limit począwszy od roku 2013. Pozostałe 55 % emisji podlega pod zakres decyzji dotyczącej wspólnego wysiłku redukcyjnego ([2]) (ESD), obejmującej sektory takie jak transport, budownictwo, rolnictwo i przetwarzanie odpadów oraz określającej dla poszczególnych państw członkowskich w odniesieniu do tych sektorów roczne wiążące cele w zakresie emisji gazów cieplarnianych na lata 2013-2020.

Rok 2005 jest pierwszym rokiem, w którym istniał podział danych dotyczących emisji objętych i nieobjętych EU ETS, w związku z tym zarówno limit emisji w ramach EU ETS, jak i krajowe cele w ramach ESD oparto na wartościach emisji z tego roku.

Cały pakiet klimatyczno-energetyczny, w tym ETS i ESD, został uzgodniony przy uwzględnieniu efektywności kosztowej, sprawiedliwości i solidarności. Zatem cele w zakresie krajowych wielkości emisji na rok 2020 określone w ESD oparto na względnej zamożności państw członkowskich i wahają się one od 20 % redukcji emisji do ich 20 % wzrostu. W EU ETS 88 % uprawnień do emisji przeznaczonych do sprzedaży aukcyjnej jest przydzielane państwom członkowskim na podstawie wielkości emisji w ramach ETS w okresie 2005-2007. 10 % uprawnień rozdziela się między państwa członkowskie o niższym PKB na mieszkańca i o większych perspektywach wzrostu gospodarczego i emisji. Kolejne 2 % jest rozdzielane między dziewięć państw członkowskich, które w 2005 r. osiągnęły co najmniej 20 % redukcję emisji gazów cieplarnianych w stosunku do roku referencyjnego ustalonego w protokole z Kioto.

2. Jak wspomniano powyżej, zgodnie z ESD rok referencyjny dla wszystkich państw członkowskich to rok 2005. W przypadku EU ETS rok 2005 jest rokiem referencyjnym dla Unii Europejskiej ogółem. Nie są stosowane żadne wartości średnie, ponieważ emisje są mierzone w całkowitej ilości.

([1]) Dyrektywa 2003/87/WE.
([2]) Decyzja 406/2009/WE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012616/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Base year for 20% reduction in CO_2 emissions

The decisions taken at the March 2007 EU summit have been used as a political and ideological basis for the EU's overall climate policy. The summit conclusions contained climate-related goals and proposals formulated for the first time at this level of governance, and their aim was clear. As well as committing to a mandatory 20% reduction in emissions by 2020, the Member States also agreed to an 80% 'decarbonisation' of the European economy by 2050 and gave the Commission the go-ahead for a legislative initiative and detailed regulations which would form the backbone of the EU's energy and climate revolution.

The base year for the proposed reduction is the subject of an ongoing dispute in Poland.

I would therefore like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. What base year will be used for the provisions of the climate package which refer to a 20% reduction in CO_2? Please provide figures for the individual Member States.

2. Has a different base year been adopted for each Member State, or has an average been used?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

1. The -20% EU target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (not only CO_2) by 2020 refers to the year 1990 for the European Union as a whole. Some 45% of the emissions under this target fall under the EU Emissions Trading System ([1]) (EU ETS), covering large installations in industry and the energy sector, with an EU-wide cap on their emissions from 2013 onwards. The remaining 55% fall under the Effort Sharing Decision ([2]) (ESD), which covers sectors such as transport, buildings, agriculture and waste and sets binding annual GHG emission targets for Member States for the period 2013-2020 for these sectors.

The year 2005 is the first year where a split of ETS and non-ETS emissions data was available, therefore both the cap under the EU ETS and the national targets under the ESD have been based on the emissions in this year.

The entire Climate and Energy package, including the ETS and the ESD, was agreed on the basis of cost-efficiency, fairness and solidarity. Thus, the 2020 national emission targets set out in the ESD have been based on Member States' relative wealth and range from a 20% emissions reduction to a 20% increase. In the EU ETS, 88% of the allowances for auctioning are distributed to Member States on the basis of ETS emissions in the 2005-2007 period. 10% of the allowances are distributed to those Member States with lower GDP per capita and higher prospects for growth and emissions. Another 2% are distributed to nine Member States which in 2005 had achieved a reduction of at least 20% in GHG emissions compared with the reference year set by the Kyoto Protocol.

2. As indicated above, under the ESD, the base year for all Member States is 2005. For the EU ETS, 2005 is a baseline year for the European Union as a whole. No averages are used as emissions are measured in total quantity.

([1]) Directive 2003/87/EC.
([2]) 406/2009/EC.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012617/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Competências do Eurostat

Considerando que:

— A Decisão da Comissão, de 17 de setembro de 2012, sobre o Eurostat (2012/504/EU) refere, no seu considerando 10, que «a definição de objetivos estratégicos e a determinação das informações exigidas para atingir esses objetivos cabem aos responsáveis políticos. Em consequência, estas atividades devem ser integradas no mandato e nas responsabilidades dos serviços da Comissão competentes, enquanto o Eurostat deve garantir a programação das atividades relacionadas com as estatísticas europeias, tendo em conta as necessidades dos utilizadores, a evolução política e os condicionalismos de recursos»;

— O Diretor-Geral do Eurostat tem a responsabilidade de decidir sobre os processos, os métodos, as normas e os procedimentos estatísticos ou sobre o teor e o calendário das publicações estatísticas, em conformidade com o Programa Estatístico Europeu e o programa de trabalho anual;

— Cabe ainda ao Diretor-Geral do Eurostat, de acordo com o n.° 3 do artigo 12.° da citada Decisão, tomar todas as medidas necessárias para proteger dados cuja revelação possam causar prejuízo aos interesses da União ou aos interesses do Estado-Membro a que dizem respeito;

— Foi publicado na imprensa portuguesa que «o Eurostat quer receber uma lista das sanções potenciais para a Região Autónoma da Madeira, por suspeita de ter escondido dívida de forma deliberada»;

— Tal notícia, que não foi até ao momento sujeita a qualquer tipo de desmentido oficial, e a conduta que lhe é imputada, parece conferir ao Eurostat um papel de ator político que claramente extravasa o seu domínio de competências, ao invés de se circunscrever ao estrito plano técnico e estatístico que lhe está delimitado nas decisões da Comissão Europeia e demais regulamentos que norteiam a sua atividade.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Teve conhecimento prévio do pedido alegadamente efetuado pelo Eurostat no relatório que se seguiu às visitas efetuadas a Portugal?

2. Confirmando-se a existência do relatório e o teor que lhe é atribuído, concorda com o tipo de pedido de informação que aí é feito?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(19 de dezembro de 2013)

1. Durante a última visita do Eurostat a Portugal, realizada em 22 e 23 de novembro de 2012, as autoridades estatísticas portuguesas informaram o Eurostat do seguimento dado ao anterior caso de comunicação incorreta de estatísticas da Região Autónoma da Madeira (questão debatida no decurso de uma visita do Eurostat a Portugal em 2011), incluindo a investigação iniciada a nível nacional pelo Ministério Público, as conversações mantidas no Conselho Estatístico e a legislação nacional no domínio estatístico, em que se preveem sanções. Esta informação faz parte do relatório da referida visita, o qual foi publicado no sítio web do Eurostat em 24 de outubro de 2013 ([1]).

2. Convém recordar que a existência de indicações sérias da ocorrência de factos suscetíveis de constituir uma comunicação incorreta de dados relativos à dívida e ao défice, quer intencionalmente, quer por negligência grave, pode dar azo ao início de uma investigação pela Comissão, nos termos do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1173/2011 e da Decisão Delegada 2012/678/UE da Comissão. A confirmar-se a existência de tais declarações incorretas, a Comissão pode recomendar ao Conselho que imponha uma sanção pecuniária ao Estado-Membro em causa. Essas sanções, contudo, só podem ser aplicadas a declarações incorretas que tiverem sido prestadas após a entrada em vigor do regulamento, em dezembro de 2011.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012617/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Eurostat's powers

According to recital 10 of the Commission decision of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat (2012/504/EU), 'setting policy objectives and determining the information required to achieve these objectives is a matter for policymakers. Those activities should therefore fall within the mandate and responsibilities of the concerned Commission services, while Eurostat should ensure the programming of activities related to European statistics, taking into account user needs, relevant policy developments and resource constraints'.

The Director-General of Eurostat has responsibility for deciding on processes, statistical methods, standards and procedures, or on the content and timing of statistical releases, in accordance with the European statistical programme and the annual work programme.

According to Article 12(3) of the aforementioned Decision, the Director-General of Eurostat is also responsible for taking all necessary measures to protect data whose disclosure would cause prejudice to Union interests, or to the interests of the Member State to which they relate.

According to reports in the Portuguese press, Eurostat wants to receive a list of potential sanctions for the Autonomous Region of Madeira, which is suspected of deliberately concealing debt.

This news, which has not yet been officially denied, and Eurostat's alleged conduct, suggest that Eurostat has a political role, which clearly goes beyond its remit, rather than sticking to the strictly technical and statistical role set out for it in Commission decisions and other regulations governing its activity.

1. Was the Commission previously aware of the request allegedly made by Eurostat in the report drawn up following its visits to Portugal?

2. If this report is confirmed to exist, along with its alleged content, does the Commission agree with the kind of request for information made therein?

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

1. During the latest visit to Portugal by Eurostat on 22-23 November 2012, the Portuguese statistical authorities informed Eurostat on the follow-up of the previous statistical misreporting case in the Autonomous Region of Madeira (discussed in a visit by Eurostat to Portugal in 2011), including the investigation launched at national level by the Public Prosecutor, the discussions held in the Statistical Council and the national statistical law, where sanctions are foreseen. This information is part of the report from the abovementioned visit, published on Eurostat's website on 24 October 2013 ([1]).

2. It is worth recalling that serious indications of the existence of facts liable to constitute a misreporting of deficit and debt data, either by intent or by serious negligence, may lead to an investigation launched by the Commission in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 and Commission Delegated Decision 2012/678/EU. If the existence of such misrepresentation is established, the Commission may recommend to the Council imposing a fine upon the Member State concerned. Such sanctions can however only be applied to misrepresentation which have taken place after the entry into force of the regulation in December 2011.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012618/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Dever de sigilo dos técnicos do Eurostat

Considerando que:

— A Decisão da Comissão de 17 de setembro de 2012 sobre o Eurostat (2012/504/EU) refere, no considerando 3, que «o Regulamento (CE) n.° 223/2009 prevê ainda a proteção dos dados confidenciais, os quais devem ser utilizados exclusivamente para fins estatísticos»;

— Segundo o artigo 4.° da mesma decisão da Comissão Europeia, «o Eurostat desenvolve, produz e divulga estatísticas europeias em conformidade com os princípios estatísticos de independência profissional, imparcialidade, objetividade, fiabilidade, segredo estatístico e relação custo-benefício»;

— As tarefas do Eurostat se resumem à garantia de que as estatísticas europeias são colocadas à disposição de todos os utilizadores, em conformidade com os princípios estatísticos, designadamente, a independência profissional, a imparcialidade e o segredo estatístico;

— O artigo 6.°, com o objetivo de proporcionar a todos os interessados informação sobre as suas atividades, refere que o Eurostat «deve fornecer as explicações técnicas e o apoio necessários à utilização das estatísticas europeias, podendo utilizar canais de comunicação específicos para comunicados de imprensa estatísticos»;

— O Diretor-Geral do Eurostat deve, além disso, tomar todas as medidas necessárias para proteger os dados cuja divulgação possa causar prejuízo aos interesses da União ou aos interesses do Estado-Membro a que dizem respeito;

— De acordo com uma notícia publicada na imprensa nacional portuguesa, há um relatório elaborado por técnicos do Eurostat na sequência de uma visita a Lisboa, em que se alega que o Eurostat «quer receber uma lista das sanções potenciais para a Região Autónoma da Madeira, por suspeita de ter escondido dívida de forma deliberada».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Existe algum código de conduta que norteie a atividade dos técnicos do Eurostat nas visitas que efetuam aos Estados-Membros? Em caso afirmativo, considera que o mesmo foi cumprido?

2. Como pretende garantir um maior sigilo nos dados obtidos e nos documentos internos elaborados pelos técnicos do Eurostat?

3. Que ações irá tomar para que situações semelhantes não se repitam nos restantes Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(17 de dezembro de 2013)

1. Os funcionários do Eurostat estão vinculados pelas normas em matéria de divulgação de informação, conforme especificadas no artigo 17.° do Estatuto dos Funcionários. Não foi detetado qualquer comportamento incorreto a este respeito.

2 e 3. O relatório a que se refere o Senhor Deputado, datado de 10 de outubro de 2013 e acessível ao público desde 24 de outubro de 2013, apresenta as conclusões finais da visita de diálogo normal no âmbito do procedimento relativo aos défices excessivos (PDE), realizada pelo Eurostat a Portugal em 22-23 de novembro de 2012 ([1]). Esse relatório foi tornado público na íntegra, em conformidade com as normas que regem os relatórios a apresentar pela Comissão (Eurostat), relativos às conclusões das visitas de diálogo, e que constam do Regulamento (CE) n.° 479/2009 do Conselho, de 25 de maio de 2009, relativo à aplicação do Protocolo sobre o procedimento relativo aos défices excessivos anexo ao Tratado que institui a Comunidade Europeia.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012618/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Duty of secrecy of Eurostat officials

According to recital 3 of the Commission decision of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat (2012/504/EU) 'Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 also provides for the protection of confidential data, which should be used exclusively for statistical purposes'.

According to Article 4 of the same Commission Decision, 'Eurostat shall develop, produce and disseminate European statistics in accordance with the statistical principles of professional independence, impartiality, objectivity, reliability, statistical confidentiality and cost-effectiveness'.

Eurostat's tasks are confined to ensuring that European statistics are made accessible to all users in accordance with statistical principles, in particular the principles of professional independence, impartiality and statistical confidentiality.

With the aim of providing all interested parties with information on its activities, Article 6 lays down that Eurostat 'shall provide the technical explanations and the support necessary for the use of European statistics and may use appropriate communication channels for the purpose of statistical news releases'.

The Director-General of Eurostat shall, in addition, take all necessary measures to protect data whose disclosure would cause prejudice to Union interests, or to the interests of the Member State to which they relate.

According to an article recently published in the Portuguese national press, a report drawn up by Eurostat officials following a visit to Lisbon claims that Eurostat wants to receive a list of potential sanctions for the Autonomous Region of Madeira, which is suspected of deliberately concealing debt.

1. Is there any code of conduct governing the activity of Eurostat officials during their visits to Member States? If so, does the Commission think it has been respected?

2. How does the Commission intend to ensure greater confidentiality in the data obtained by Eurostat officials and in the internal documents they draw up?

3. What action will the Commission take to prevent a repetition of similar situations in the other Member States?

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

1. Eurostat officials are bound by the rules on disclosure of information as specified in Article 17 of the Staff Regulations. No misbehaviour has been established in this respect.

2-3. The report referred to by the Honourable Member, dated 10 October 2013 and available to the public since 24 October 2013, presents the final findings of the EDP standard dialogue visit carried out by Eurostat to Portugal on 22-23 November 2012. ([1]) It has been made fully public in accordance with the rules for the Commission (Eurostat)'s reporting of the findings of dialogue visits in Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2009 of 25 May 2009 on the application of the Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012619/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Atuação do Eurostat no âmbito do procedimento por défice excessivo

Considerando que:

— A edição do dia 4 de novembro do Diário Económico noticiava que «o Eurostat quer receber uma lista das sanções potenciais para a Região Autónoma da Madeira, por suspeita de ter escondido dívida de forma deliberada», para além de solicitar ser informado de quaisquer desenvolvimentos no âmbito de uma investigação a cargo do Ministério Público;

— As competências do Eurostat são definidas pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 223/2009, de 11 de março de 2009, bem como pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 479/2009, de 25 de maio de 2009, que estabelece normas particulares de atuação no caso do procedimento por défice excessivo;

— A Comissão, através da Decisão de 17 de setembro de 2012 sobre o Eurostat (2012/504/UE), definiu o papel e as responsabilidades do Eurostat dentro da organização interna da Comissão, considerando que era «necessário definir e clarificar o papel e as responsabilidades do Eurostat dentro da Comissão»;

— Em 29 de maio de 2013, existiam procedimentos europeus relativos aos défices excessivos (PDE) em 20 Estados-Membros da União — com exceção apenas da Bulgária, da Alemanha, da Estónia, do Luxemburgo, de Malta, da Finlândia e da Suécia; que nesse mesmo dia, a Comissão propôs revogar o PDE relativamente à Itália, Letónia, Hungria, Lituânia e Roménia e instaurar um novo procedimento em relação a Malta;

— Atualmente, 16 países são objeto de PDE;

— De acordo com o artigo 11.° do Regulamento (CE) n.° 479/2009, o Eurostat assegura um diálogo permanente com os serviços estatísticos dos Estados-Membros e que, para este efeito, realiza periodicamente visitas de diálogo, bem como eventuais visitas metodológicas, a todos os Estados-Membros;

— O n.° 3 do artigo 11.° estabelece que «as visitas metodológicas não devem ir para além do domínio puramente estatístico».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Como classifica as recentes visitas a Portugal realizadas pelos peritos do Eurostat?

2. Qual foi o mandato que lhes foi conferido pelo Diretor-Geral do Eurostat?

3. Considera que o pedido de informação relativamente a uma investigação em curso junto das autoridades judiciais portuguesas se enquadra no «domínio puramente estatístico» de atuação do Eurostat?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(19 de dezembro de 2013)

1. A visita a que se refere o Senhor Deputado, a qual foi mencionada num artigo publicado no Diário Económico em 4 de novembro de 2013, é uma visita de diálogo normal regular, em conformidade com o Regulamento (CE) n.° 479/2009 do Conselho. O relatório dessa visita, realizada em 22 e 23 de novembro de 2012, está disponível ao público desde 24 de outubro de 2013. ([1])

2. Trata-se de uma visita é uma visita de diálogo normal regular. Não foi atribuído qualquer mandato específico para a visita.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

3. Durante a referida visita, as autoridades estatísticas portuguesas informaram o Eurostat do seguimento dado ao anterior caso de comunicação incorreta de estatísticas da Região Autónoma da Madeira (questão debatida no decurso de uma visita do Eurostat a Portugal em 2011), incluindo a investigação iniciada a nível nacional pelo Ministério Público, as conversações mantidas no Conselho Estatístico e a legislação nacional no domínio estatístico, em que se preveem sanções.

Convém recordar que a existência de indicações sérias da ocorrência de factos suscetíveis de constituir uma comunicação incorreta de dados relativos à dívida e ao défice, quer intencionalmente, quer por negligência grave, pode dar azo ao início de uma investigação pela Comissão, nos termos do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1173/2011 e da Decisão Delegada 2012/678/UE da Comissão. A confirmar-se a existência de tais declarações incorretas, a Comissão pode recomendar ao Conselho que imponha uma sanção pecuniária ao Estado-Membro em causa. Essas sanções, contudo, só podem ser aplicadas a declarações incorretas que tiverem sido prestadas após a entrada em vigor do regulamento, em 13 de dezembro de 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012619/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Eurostat's activity under the excessive deficit procedure

According to a report in the newspaper *Diário Económico* on 4 November 2013, Eurostat wants to receive a list of potential sanctions for the Autonomous Region of Madeira, which is suspected of deliberately concealing debt, and has asked to be kept abreast of any developments in the investigation by the Public Prosecutor.

Eurostat's powers are defined by Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of 11 March 2009, as well as by Regulation (EC) No 479/2009 of 25 May 2009, which lays down specific rules on conduct in the case of the excessive deficit procedure.

By means of its Decision of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat (2012/504/EU), the Commission defined Eurostat's role and responsibilities within the internal organisation of the Commission, deeming it 'necessary to further define and clarify Eurostat's role and responsibilities within the Commission.'

On 29 May 2013, there were European excessive deficit procedures (EDPs) in 20 EU Member States — with only Bulgaria, Germany, Estonia, Luxembourg, Malta, Finland and Sweden not subject to an EDP. On the same day, the Commission proposed cancelling the EDPs for Italy, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania and Romania, and instituting a new procedure for Malta.

At present, 16 countries are subject to an EDP.

In accordance with Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 479/2009, Eurostat ensures a permanent dialogue with Member States' statistical authorities and, to this end, carries out in all Member States regular dialogue visits, as well as possible methodological visits

Article 11(3) lays down that 'the methodological visits shall not go beyond the purely statistical domain'.

1. How does the Commission categorise the recent visits to Portugal by Eurostat experts?

2. What mandate were they given by Eurostat's Director-General?

3. Does the Commission think that the request for information submitted to the Portuguese judicial authorities relating to an ongoing investigation falls within the 'purely statistical domain' of Eurostat's activity?

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

1. The visit referred to by the Honourable Member, and quoted in the article of Diário Económico of 4 November 2013, is a regular standard dialogue visit, in line with Council Regulation 479/2009. The report from this visit carried out on 22-23 November 2012 has been available to the public since 24 October 2013. ([1])

2. The visit is a regular standard dialogue visit. No specific mandate was given for this visit.

3. During the abovementioned visit, the Portuguese statistical authorities informed Eurostat on the follow-up of the previous statistical misreporting case in the Autonomous Region of Madeira (discussed in a visit by Eurostat to Portugal in 2011), including the investigation launched at national level by the Public Prosecutor, the discussions held in the Statistical Council and the national statistical law, where sanctions are foreseen.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Final_findings-EDP_Dialogue_Visit-PT_22-23_Nov2012.pdf

It is worth recalling that serious indications of the existence of facts liable to constitute a misreporting of deficit and debt data, either by intent or by serious negligence, may lead to an investigation launched by the Commission in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 and Commission Delegated Decision 2012/678/EU. If the existence of such misrepresentation is established, the Commission may recommend to the Council imposing a fine upon the Member State concerned. Such sanctions can however only be applied to misrepresentation which have taken place after the entry into force of the regulation in December 2011.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012620/13
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(7 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Definiție — Cetățean european

Tratatul consolidat al UE definește la articolul 9 noțiunea de cetățean european:

„Este cetățean al Uniunii orice persoană care are cetățenia unui stat membru. Cetățenia Uniunii nu înlocuiește cetățenia națională, ci se adaugă acesteia".

De asemenea, art. 20 din Tratatul de funcționare a UE face precizări în legătură cu cetățenia europeană:

„(1) Se instituie cetățenia Uniunii. Este cetățean al Uniunii orice persoană care are cetățenia unui stat membru".

Același articol stabilește drepturile cetățenilor europeni, între care dreptul la libera circulație:

„(2) Cetățenii Uniunii au drepturile și obligațiile prevăzute în tratate. Aceștia se bucură, printre altele, de:

(a) dreptul de liberă circulație și de ședere pe teritoriul statelor membre."

Art. 26 din tratat definește piața internă europeană:

„(1) Uniunea adoptă măsurile pentru instituirea sau asigurarea funcționării pieței interne, în conformitate cu dispozițiile incidente ale tratatelor. (2) Piața internă cuprinde un spațiu fără frontiere interne, în care libera circulație a mărfurilor, a persoanelor, a serviciilor și a capitalurilor este asigurată în conformitate cu dispozițiile tratatelor".

Având în vedere aceste prevederi din Tratate și constatând că în spațiul public se vorbește din ce în ce mai mult despre „migrația economică", inclusiv cu referire la cetățenii europeni, întreb Comisia dacă nu consideră că se impune o clarificare terminologică a statutului cetățeanului european care se deplasează în spațiul UE, cetățean care nu poate fi considerat drept „migrant", iar deplasarea acestuia în spațiul UE, indiferent de scopul acesteia, nu poate fi confundată cu fenomenul migrației?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(13 ianuarie 2014)

Comisia recunoaște faptul că terminologia este importantă.

În acest sens, Comisia constată că dreptul cetățenilor UE de a se deplasa și de a se stabili în interiorul UE, fie din motive economice, fie din alte motive, în conformitate cu Tratatul UE, este fundamental diferit față de posibilitățile pe care Tratatul UE le oferă resortisanților țărilor terțe care fac obiectul normelor în materie de imigrație.

Ar trebui să nu existe nicio ambiguitate cu privire la această diferență legală între două statute și între seturi diferite de drepturi. Comisia subliniază faptul că limbajul utilizat trebuie să reflecte această diferență.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012620/13
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Definition of a European citizen

Article 9 of the consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union defines the concept of a European citizen as follows:

'Every national of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship.'

Moreover, Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union specifies aspects of European citizenship:

'1. Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union.'

The same article sets out the rights of European citizens, including the right of free movement:

'2. Citizens of the Union shall enjoy the rights and be subject to the duties provided for in the Treaties. They shall have, *inter alia*:

(a) the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.'

Article 26 of the Treaty defines the European internal market:

'1. The Union shall adopt measures with the aim of establishing or ensuring the functioning of the internal market, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Treaties. 2. The internal market shall comprise an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Treaties.'

Taking into account these provisions enshrined in the Treaties and noting the increasingly frequent public discussion about 'economic migration', including when referring to European citizens, I would like to ask the Commission whether it does not think that the terminology needs to be clarified regarding the status of a European citizen moving around the EU, who cannot be regarded as a 'migrant', and that movement around the EU, irrespective of its purpose, cannot be confused with the activity of migration.

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

The Commission agrees that terminology is important.

In this regard it notes that the right of EU citizens to move and settle within the EU, whether for economic or other purposes, according to the EU Treaty is fundamentally different from the possibilities that the EU Treaty offers to non-EU nationals who are subject to immigration rules.

There should be no ambiguity regarding this legal difference between two statuses and different sets of rights. The Commission stresses that the language used should reflect this difference.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012621/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιστολή Ντάουνερ προς Μπαρόζο

Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες από ΜΜΕ, ο Ειδικός Αντιπρόσωπος του ΓΓ του ΟΗΕ, Αλεξάντερ Ντάουνερ έστειλε επιστολή προς τον πρόεδρο της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, Ζοζέ Μανουέλ Μπαρόζο προκειμένου να αποτραπεί ο διορισμός ειδικού απεσταλμένου για το Κυπριακό από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

Παρακαλώ όπως μας ενημερώσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή κατά πόσον αληθεύει η εν λόγω πληροφορία και, αν ναι, όπως ενημερωθώ ενδελεχώς για το περιεχόμενό, βάσει του κανονισμού σχετικά με την πρόσβαση του κοινού στα έγγραφα της ΕΕ (ΕΚ αριθ. 1049/2001).

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί παρά να επιβεβαιώσει τη δήλωση του Γραφείου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών στην Κύπρο, της 29ης Οκτωβρίου 2013. 2013. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καμία επιστολή του Alexander Downer όσον αφορά το ζήτημα της αντιπροσώπου της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012621/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Letter from Alexander Downer to José Manuel Barroso

It has been reported in the media that Alexander Downer, the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Cyprus, has sent a letter to Commission President José Manuel Barroso to prevent the appointment by the European Union of a Special Envoy on Cyprus.

Will the Commission say whether these reports are correct? If so, can it brief me thoroughly about the content of this letter, in accordance with the regulation on public access to EU documents (EC No 1049/2001)?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 December 2013)

The Commission can only confirm and echo the statement of the UN office in Cyprus of 29 October 2013. The Commission has not received any letter from Alexander Downer regarding the issue of an EU representative.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012623/13
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (ECR)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Comics published by the European Union to illustrate issues, policies and activities

Among the means used by the European institutions to communicate with the citizens of Member States is a series of 13 comics which can helpfully be found on this website: http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/bundles/comics--cbTMOep2Ix19kAAAEvzTkHowsR/

These publications are for the most part available only as downloads in varying numbers of official languages of the European Union, plus, in one case, Catalan. They are presumably intended to inform and educate younger citizens of the Member States about the European project and to influence their opinion in favour of it.

Presuming that some form of cost-benefit analysis has been carried out, I would like to know, for each of these 13 publications:

1. Who was the intended target audience?

2. What was the cost of developing the storyline and producing the artwork? Was it produced in-house? If not, what tendering process was used?

3. What translation costs were allocated to the comics for each language used?

4. In the case of those comics which were produced in hard copy, what were the print runs for each language and how many have been shipped?

5. In the case of the electronic versions, how many times has each one been downloaded in each of the languages in which it was published and over what time span?

6. What measures have been taken to assess the effectiveness of these publications as a means of influencing attitudes among the target audience, and what results were obtained?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

As part of its effort to inform citizens about the European Union and its policies, the Commission pays specific attention to young people. One effective way to engage the attention of this age group is by means of comic books and, to this end, some of the Commission's services choose to use this medium as part of their information policy.

Some of the comics in question provide concrete stories on how EU money is spent on the ground and how EU policies can help citizens.

They were produced individually, by several Directorate Generals, over several years, with the help of external contractors who are specialised in the field, by means of existing framework contracts for communication and publication services. For each publication, detailed information on the target audience, creation and translation costs, the number of copies printed and shipped as well as on the number of downloads can be found in the annex to this reply.

As with any communication product, the success of these comics is measured in various ways, including qualitative feedback, the number of copies ordered and the number of downloads registered.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-012624/13
upućeno Komisiji
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(7. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Pokretanje postupka u slučaju prekomjernog deficita za Hrvatsku

Kao nova članica Europske unije, Republika Hrvatska suočena je s činjenicom da i dalje ne bilježi gospodarski rast. Nedavno objavljeni podaci Eurostata i Državnog zavoda za statistiku Republike Hrvatske pokazuju da je u Hrvatskoj manjak konsolidirane opće države u 2012. iznosio 16,35 milijardi kuna ili 5 % BDP-a, dok je konsolidirani dug opće države iznosio 183,27 milijardi kuna ili 55,5 % BDP-a.

U vezi s tim, zanima me kako Europska komisija ocjenjuje dosadašnji dijalog koji vodi s Vladom Republike Hrvatske u okviru Europskog semestra?

Zanima me namjerava li i kada Europska komisija pokrenuti primjenu postupka u slučaju prekomjernog deficita na Hrvatsku?

Ako je to slučaj, koje bi bile glavne preporuke Vladi Republike Hrvatske?

Odgovor g. Rehna u ime Komisije
(17. prosinca 2013.)

1. Do sada je dijalog s hrvatskim upravnim tijelima na području gospodarske i proračunske politike bio konstruktivan. Komisija očekuje sljedeći europski semestar kada će Hrvatska predstaviti svoj nacionalni program reformi i program konvergencije kao dio postupka koordinacije gospodarske politike EU-a.

2. Postupak u slučaju prekomjernog deficita propisan je člankom 126. Ugovora o funkcioniranju Europske unije. U skladu s člankom 126. Komisija je 10. prosinca 2013. donijela Mišljenje da u Hrvatskoj postoji prekomjerni deficit i preporučila Vijeću da donese preporuku Hrvatskoj kako bi se okončalo stanje prekomjernog državnog deficita.

3. Priopćenje za tisak o mjerama postupka u slučaju prekomjernog deficita u skladu s člankom 126. stavcima 5. — 7. nalazi se na sljedećoj stranici: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-1124_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012624/13
to the Commission
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Launching of Excessive Deficit Procedure against Croatia

Croatia, the EU's newest Member State, is still failing to achieve economic growth. Recently published data from Eurostat and the Croatian Bureau of Statistics show that the consolidated general government deficit in 2012 amounted to HRK 16.35 billion, or 5% of GDP, while consolidated general government debt amounted to HRK 183.27 billion, or 55.5% of GDP.

In this connection, what is the Commission's assessment of the dialogue it has had so far with the Croatian Government as part of the European Semester?

Does the Commission intend to launch an Excessive Deficit Procedure against Croatia? If so, when?

If such a procedure is launched, what would be the main recommendations for the Croatian Government?

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

1. So far, the dialogue with the Croatian authorities in the area of economic and budgetary policies has been constructive. The Commission looks forward to the next European Semester when Croatia will present its National Reform Programme and the Convergence Programme as part of the EU process of economic policy coordination.

2. Excessive Deficit Procedure is laid down in Article 126 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. In accordance with art.126, on 10 December 2013 the Commission adopted an Opinion that excessive deficit exists in Croatia, and recommended the Council to adopt a recommendation to Croatia with a view to bringing end to the situation of an excessive government deficit.

3. Press release on EDP measures under Article 126 (5-7) can be found here:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-1124_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-012625/13
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Período de pesca do atum rabilho com canas (isco) nas regiões ultraperiféricas (Regulamento (CE) n.° 302/2009)

No dia 2 de maio de 2013, a Comissão lançou uma proposta de Regulamento do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho que altera o Regulamento (CE) n.° 302/2009 que estabelece um plano plurianual de recuperação do atum rabilho no Atlântico Este e no Mediterrâneo (COM(2013)0250). Esta proposta da Comissão tem por objetivo transpor para o Direito da UE a Recomendação 12-03 da Comissão Internacional para a Conservação dos Tunídeos do Atlântico (ICCAT), adotada em novembro de 2012, que altera o plano plurianual de recuperação do atum rabilho e modifica as datas em que é autorizada a pesca com determinadas artes de pesca.

No âmbito desta transposição da Recomendação 12-03 da ICCAT, o n.° 3, do artigo 7.° («Campanhas de Pesca») do Regulamento (CE) n.° 302/2009 passa a ter a seguinte redação: «*A pesca do atum rabilho por navios de pesca com canas (isco) e navios de pesca ao corrico é autorizada no Atlântico Este e no Mediterrâneo no período compreendido entre 1 de julho e 31 de outubro*». Contudo, durante a sua rota migratória, o atum rabilho por vezes surge nas regiões ultraperiféricas dos Açores, Madeira e Canárias antes da abertura ou depois do fecho da referida época de pesca, impossibilitando a sua captura pelas embarcações das frotas atuneiras locais que operam com cana (isco), arte de pesca localmente designada por «salto e vara». Ou seja, é precisamente a frota europeia que usa esta arte de pesca amiga do ambiente que está impedida de pescar, o que se afigura paradoxal. Por este motivo, é urgente alterar a época de pesca do atum rabilho nestas RUP, sem modificação da sua duração efetiva e mediante a simples antecipação do respetivo calendário em dois meses, ou seja, para o período entre 1 de maio e 31 de agosto.

Perante o exposto, e tendo em consideração que a pesca de tunídeos com cana (isco) é unanimemente considerada altamente sustentável e amiga do ambiente, o reduzido peso das capturas com esta arte de pesca face às capturas globais, e a sua relevância no contexto das pescas nas RUP, pergunta-se o seguinte:

— Está a Comissão disponível para apresentar e apoiar esta proposta de alteração da época de pesca do atum rabilho nas RUP, para o período compreendido entre 1 de maio e 31 de agosto, na próxima reunião anual da ICCAT (Cidade do Cabo, 18-25 novembro 2013)?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(20 de dezembro de 2013)

As campanhas de pesca do atum rabilho no Mediterrâneo e no Atlântico, conforme estabelecidas no plano de recuperação do atum rabilho da ICCAT, têm constituído um importante instrumento de gestão que contribuiu, até agora, para o êxito do plano de recuperação. No entanto, ocorreram casos em que os períodos de pesca no âmbito das referidas campanhas impediram certas frotas de explorar plenamente a respetiva atribuição do total admissível de capturas de atum rabilho.

Esta questão foi sublinhada por diversas partes contratantes na ICCAT e Estados-Membros da União, tendo, durante a reunião anual da ICCAT deste ano na Cidade do Cabo, sido aceite uma proposta que soluciona as referidas limitações.

Nos termos dessa proposta (ICCAT doc PA2-620B/2013), as partes contratantes na ICCAT poderão especificar uma data diferente para o início das campanhas de pesca abrangidas pelo artigo 23.° da Rec 12-03 [navios de pesca com canas (isco) e navios de pesca ao corrico] para os navios que operam no Atlântico Este. As outras disposições introduzidas pela Rec 12-03 permanecerão em vigor, nelas se incluindo a duração da campanha de pesca. As novas disposições serão aplicadas durante a próxima campanha de pesca, com início em 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012625/13
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Bluefin tuna fishing season for bait boats in the outermost regions (Regulation (EC) No 302/2009)

On 2 May 2013, the Commission presented a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 302/2009 concerning a multiannual recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (COM(2013)0250 final). The aim of this Commission proposal is to transpose into EC law recommendation 12-03 of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), adopted in November 2012, which amends the multiannual recovery plan for bluefin tuna and modifies the dates when fishing is permitted using certain types of gear.

As part of this transposition of ICCAT recommendation 12-03, Article 7(3) ('Fishing seasons') of Regulation (EC) No 302/2009 will now read as follows: 'Bluefin tuna fishing by bait boats and trolling boats shall be permitted in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean during the period from 1 July to 31 October.' During migration, however, bluefin tuna are sometimes found in the outermost regions of the Azores, Madeira and the Canaries before or after this fishing season, which means that bait boats belonging to local tuna fleets, which use a type of pole-and-line gear known locally as 'salto e vara', will be unable to take any catches. It seems paradoxical that it should be precisely this segment of the European fleet, which uses an environmentally friendly type of gear, that will be prevented from fishing. Consequently, the fishing season for bluefin tuna in these outermost regions should be modified as a matter of urgency, bringing it forward by two months without any change to its actual duration, so that the period would be from 1 May to 31 August.

In the light of the above, and bearing in mind that tuna fishing with bait boats is unanimously held to be highly sustainable and environmentally friendly, that the proportion of overall catches taken with this gear is extremely small and that it is nevertheless very important for fishing in the outermost regions, can the Commission answer the following question:

Is the Commission prepared to submit and support this proposed amendment of the fishing season for bluefin tuna in the outermost regions, bringing the season forward to the period from 1 May to 31 August, at ICCAT's forthcoming annual meeting (Cape Town, 18-25 November 2013)?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

Fishing seasons for Bluefin Tuna in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, as introduced in the ICCAT Bluefin Tuna Recovery plan, have been an important management tool which has contributed to the success of the recovery plan so far. However there have been cases where the timing of the fishing seasons has precluded certain fleets from fully exploiting their allocation of the Bluefin tuna total allowable catch.

This has been highlighted by several ICCAT Contracting Parties (CPCs) and European Member States and a proposal to address these limitations have been accepted during this year's ICCAT annual meeting in Cape Town.

Under the terms of this proposal (ICCAT doc PA2-620B/2013), CPCs will be able to specify a different date for the start of the fishing seasons covered under Article 23 of Rec 12-03 (baitboats and trolling boats) for vessels operating in the Eastern Atlantic. The other provisions introduced under Rec 12-03 will remain effective, and this includes the duration of the fishing season. The new provisions will be implemented during the next fishing campaign starting in 2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012629/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(7. November 2013)

Betrifft: Christin in eritreischer Haft verstorben

Medienberichten zufolge ([1]) ist erneut eine 35 jährige Christin, Wehazit Berhane Debesai, wegen ihres Glaubens zu Beginn des Jahres in einem eritreischen Gefängnis verstorben. Der genaue Zeitpunkt des Todes ist nicht bekannt; laut Angaben ist die Christin an einer Lungenentzündung verstorben. Verursacht wurde dies durch unmenschliche Haftbedingungen im Gefängnis „Adi Quala". Eine medizinische Behandlung wurde ihr aufgrund ihres Glaubens verweigert. Die Zahl der verhafteten Christen ist im letzten Jahr massiv angestiegen. Weitere 300 Christen wurden verhaftet, weil sie sich zum Gebet trafen. Man spricht von einer der härtesten Offensiven gegen die Kirche seit der Einführung restriktiver Religionsgesetze im Jahr 2012. Das ostafrikanische Eritrea belegt auf dem Weltverfolgungsindex von Open Doors Platz 12. Die Regierung hält an ihrem Kurs gegen Gläubige fest, die sich nicht in staatlich genehmigte Kirchen registrieren lassen wollen. Schon in den vergangenen Jahren kam es zu zahlreichen Festnahmen von Christen.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Im Artikel wird von einen der härtesten Verfolgungen seit Jahren gesprochen. Ist der oben genannte Sachverhalt der Kommission bekannt?

2. Wenn ja, gibt es diesbezüglich öffentliche Aussagen seitens der Kommission bzw. der Hohe Vertreterin? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission Druck auf die eritreische Regierung auszuüben, um der Verfolgung von Christen ein Ende zu setzen? Wenn ja, mit welchen Mitteln?

4. Wie viel Entwicklungshilfe erhält die eritreische Regierung jährlich von der EU? Warum wird diese nicht an die Einhaltung von Menschenrechten, insbesondere die Wahrung der Religionsfreiheit, gekoppelt?

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

Die Kommission ist über die Menschenrechtslage in Eritrea unterrichtet und sehr besorgt, auch über die mangelnde Religionsfreiheit. Am 18. September 2013 gab die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin eine weitere Erklärung zur Lage der politischen Gefangenen in Eritrea ab.

Diese Bedenken werden auch im offiziellen und inoffiziellen Dialog zwischen der EU und Eritrea regelmäßig angesprochen. Die EU appelliert immer wieder an Eritrea, alle Personen, die wegen ihrer Überzeugung inhaftiert sind, freizulassen. Sie hat die Regierung von Eritrea zudem aufgefordert, den Betroffenen Zugang zu medizinischer Versorgung und Kontakte zu ihren Familien und zu Rechtsanwälten zu ermöglichen. Trotz all dieser Anstrengungen werden bedauerlicherweise nach wie vor grundlegende Menschenrechte verletzt.

Allerdings ist die Entwicklungszusammenarbeit der EU für die Unterstützung der unter anhaltender Not leidenden Bevölkerung von maßgeblicher Bedeutung. Die Zusammenarbeit erfolgt auf der Grundlage des Abkommens von Cotonou und wird von einem förmlichen politischen Dialog begleitet, in dem die EU ihre Bedenken zur Sprache bringt. Nach Auffassung der EU stellt dieser Ansatz in der derzeitigen Situation nach wie vor die beste politische Option dar. Die Auszahlungen in den Jahren 2011 bis 2013 beliefen sich auf 24,5 Mio. EUR bzw. 7 Mio. EUR.

([1]) Open Doors: http://www.opendoors.de/verfolgung/news/2013/10/30102013er/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012629/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Death of a Christian woman in an Eritrean prison

According to media reports [1] yet another person, a 35-year old Christian woman, Wehazit Berhane Debesai, died in an Eritrean prison at the start of the year on account of her faith. It is not known exactly when she died, but, according to reports, she died of pneumonia. This was caused by inhumane conditions of detention in the Adi Quala prison. She was denied medical treatment on account of her faith. The number of imprisoned Christians has risen sharply in the last year. A further 300 Christians were arrested because they met for prayers. People are calling this one of the most brutal offensives against the Church since the introduction of restrictive religious laws in 2012. East African Eritrea is twelfth on the Open Doors World Persecution Index. The government is maintaining its line against believers who do not want to be registered with state-approved churches. Numerous Christians have been arrested in recent years.

1. The article talks of one of the most severe cases of persecution for years. Is the Commission familiar with the facts mentioned above?

2. If so, have any official statements been made in relation to this by the Commission or the High Representative? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission intend to exert pressure on the Eritrean Government to put an end to its persecution of Christians? If so, by what means?

4. How much development assistance does the Eritrean Government receive from the EU each year? Why is this not linked to respect for human rights, in particular the freedom of religion?

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

The Commission is both aware of and concerned by the human rights situation in Eritrea, including the lack of freedom of religion. On 18 September 2013, the HR/VP issued a further statement on the situation of political prisoners in Eritrea.

These concerns are also systematically raised in formal and informal dialogue between the EU and Eritrea.The EU has regularly urged the authorities to release all prisoners of conscience; the EU has also called on the Government of Eritrea to allow them access to healthcare and to their families and lawyers. Despite all these efforts, it is regrettable that basic human rights are still being violated.

EU development cooperation is, nevertheless, important to support a population that is suffering from prolonged hardship. The cooperation takes place within the framework of Cotonou and is accompanied by a formal political dialogue, in which the EU's concerns are addressed. Given the present situation, the EU believes that this approach remains the best policy option. Disbursements in the years 2011 to 2013 were EUR 24.5 and EUR 7 million respectively.

([1]) Open Doors - http://www.opendoors.de/verfolgung/news/2013/10/30102013er/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012631/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(7 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παράνομες και καταχρηστικές οι παρακρατήσεις από την Τράπεζα Πειραιώς ποσών υπέρ τρίτων, από την Ενιαία Ενίσχυση του 2013

Η οργή και η αγανάκτηση ξεχειλίζουν στη μεγάλη πλειοψηφία των αγροτών από την παράνομη και προκλητική παρακράτηση σημαντικών ποσών από την προκαταβολή της Ενιαίας Ενίσχυσης του 2013, που δικαιούνται στο ακέραιο οι αγρότες, και τα οποία περίμεναν για να αγοράσουν αγροτικά εφόδια προκειμένου να συνεχίσουν την αγροτική δραστηριότητα, να πληρώσουν τα πιο πιεστικά χρέη και να ζήσουν την οικογένεια τους, αφού το αγροτικό εισόδημα έχει αποδεκατιστεί από τη ληστρική, άγρια πολιτική της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης. Οι παρακρατήσεις αφορούσαν ασφαλιστικές εισφορές στον Οργανισμό Γεωργικών Ασφαλίσεων (ΟΓΑ), τις εισφορές στον ΕΛΓΑ (Ελληνικές Γεωργικές Ασφαλίσεις), στις Ενώσεις Αγροτικών Συνεταιρισμών (ΕΑΣ) για την αίτηση στον ΟΣΔΕ (Ολοκληρωμένο Σύστημα Διαχείρισης και Ελέγχων), αν και πληρώνονται για την υπηρεσία αυτή από το Υπουργείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης και Τροφίμων.

Τα κονδύλια αυτών των ενισχύσεων προέρχονται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Εγγυήσεων και το Ευρωπαϊκό Γεωργικό Ταμείο Αγροτικής Ανάπτυξης, είναι λεφτά των λαών, δίνονται σε όλους τους αγρότες της ΕΕ και αποτελούν εισοδηματική ενίσχυση, χωρίς βέβαια να αναπληρώνουν τις μεγάλες εισοδηματικές απώλειες των αγροτών.

Ωστόσο στο άρθρο 28 του Κανον. (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1782/2003 του Συμβουλίου αναφέρεται σαφώς ότι οι ενισχύσεις στο πλαίσιο των καθεστώτων στήριξης καταβάλλονται στο ακέραιο στους δικαιούχους. Συνεπώς σε καμιά περίπτωση δεν επιτρέπεται η παραμικρή παρακράτηση, διαφορετικά είναι παράνομη. Οφείλει λοιπόν η κυβέρνηση να εξασφαλίζει και να δίνει καθ' ολοκληρίαν το ποσό της ενίσχυσης στον δικαιούχο, όπως άλλωστε επιβεβαίωσε ακόμα μια φορά και ο Επίτροπος Γεωργίας σε ερωτήσεις που του έγιναν στην πρόσφατη επίσκεψή του στην Ελλάδα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή τι ενέργειες θα κάνει προκειμένου να σταματήσει η παράνομη παρακράτηση και να επιστραφούν στους δικαιούχους αγρότες όσα χρήματα καταχρηστικά έχουν παρακρατηθεί από τις πληρωμές των άμεσων ενισχύσεων.

Απάντηση του κ. Ciolos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή δεν είχε γνώση των παρακρατήσεων που αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής για το έτος 2013.

Η ρήτρα πληρωμής των δικαιούχων στο ακέραιο προβλέπεται στο άρθρο 11 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1290/2005 του Συμβουλίου για τη χρηματοδότηση της κοινής γεωργικής πολιτικής ([1]).

Το 2010, η Επιτροπή έθεσε το ζήτημα των παρακρατήσεων που πραγματοποίησαν οι ελληνικές αρχές σχετικά με τις ενισχύσεις που καταβλήθηκαν στο πλαίσιο του καθεστώτος ενιαίας ενίσχυσης για διοικητικές δαπάνες που αφορούν την εφαρμογή του συστήματος διαχείρισης και ελέγχου. Η διαδικασία παράβασης που κινήθηκε κατά της Ελλάδας δεν συνεχίστηκε διότι η Ελλάδα διαβεβαίωσε ότι έχει τεθεί τέλος σε αυτό το σύστημα παρακρατήσεων και, συνεπώς, έχει συμμορφωθεί με τη ρήτρα της πλήρους πληρωμής το 2011.

Υπενθυμίζεται ότι, κατά πάγια νομολογία του Δικαστηρίου ([2]), «το κοινοτικό δίκαιο δεν απαγορεύει σε κράτος μέλος να προβαίνει σε συμψηφισμό του ποσού που οφείλεται στον δικαιούχο ενισχύσεως βάσει κοινοτικής πράξεως με τις ανεξόφλητες απαιτήσεις του κράτους μέλους αυτού, υπό τον όρο ότι οι εθνικές αρχές ενεργούν κατά τρόπο μη θίγοντα την αποτελεσματικότητα του κοινοτικού δικαίου και διασφαλίζοντα την ίση μεταχείριση των επιχειρηματιών. της αποτελεσματικότητας του κοινοτικού δικαίου και να διασφαλιστεί η ίση μεταχείριση των οικονομικών φορέων. Ωστόσο, εναπόκειται στο εθνικό δικαστήριο να κρίνει αν συντρέχει τέτοια περίπτωση».

Η Επιτροπή θα πραγματοποιήσει τις απαραίτητες επαφές με τις ελληνικές αρχές για τη συλλογή πληροφοριών σχετικά με τις αναφερόμενες παρακρατήσεις.

([1]) ΕΕ L 209 της 11.8.2005, σ. 1-25.
([2]) Βλ. σχετικά την απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου της 19ης Μαΐου 1998 στην υπόθεση C-132/95, Bent Jensen, Lorn- og Foderstofkompagniet A/S και Landbrugsministeriet — EF-Direktoratet, Συλλογή I-3007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012631/13
to the Commission
Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Illegal and wrongful deductions on behalf of third parties by the Bank of Piraeus from 2013 Single Farm Payments

The anger and resentment felt by the vast majority of Greek farmers is now reaching boiling point following the illegal and wrongful deduction of substantial amounts of the 2013 Single Farm Payment advances, to which they are entitled in full and which they need to purchase farm supplies, pay off their most pressing debts and provide for their families, following the drastic loss of farm revenues caused by the ruthless and irresponsible policies adopted by the Greek Government. The deductions were intended for contributions to the Agricultural Insurance Fund (OGA), the Greek Farmers' Insurance Fund (ELGA) and Agricultural Cooperatives (EAS) for completion of Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) formalities, despite the fact that the relevant fees are payable by the Ministry for Rural Development and Food.

The aid in question is drawn from the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. While these public funds provide income support intended for all EU farmers, it is insufficient to cover their losses in full.

Article 28 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 clearly states that payments under the support scheme shall be made in full to the beneficiaries. Consequently, it is illegal to withhold even the smallest amount thereof. The Greek Government is accordingly required to ensure that the support payment is made in full and without deductions to intended recipients, as reiterated by the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture in reply to questions during a recent visit to Greece.

In view of this:

What action will the Commission take to end any such illegal direct aid deductions and ensure appropriate refunds for farmers entitled to them?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(17 décembre 2013)

La Commission n'a pas eu connaissance des retenues évoquées par l'Honorable Parlementaire portant sur l'année 2013.

La clause du paiement intégral aux bénéficiaires est prévue à l'Article 11 du Règlement (CE) n° 1290/2005 du Conseil relatif au financement de la politique agricole commune ([1]).

En 2010, la Commission avait soulevé la question des prélèvements effectués par les autorités helléniques sur les aides au titre du régime de paiement unique pour des frais administratifs concernant l'application du système de gestion et de contrôle. La procédure d'infraction ouverte contre la Grèce n'a pas été poursuivie car celle-ci a assuré avoir mis fin à ce régime de prélèvements et partant s'être conformée à la clause du paiement intégral en 2011.

Il y a lieu de rappeler que selon la jurisprudence constante de la Cour ([2]), «le droit communautaire ne s'oppose pas à ce qu'un État membre opère une compensation entre un montant dû au bénéficiaire d'une aide au titre d'un acte communautaire et des arriérés de créances de cet État membre, à condition que les autorités nationales procèdent de manière à éviter toute atteinte à l'efficacité du droit communautaire et à assurer un traitement égal des opérateurs économiques. Il appartient cependant à la juridiction nationale de déterminer si tel est le cas».

La Commission prendra les contacts nécessaires auprès des autorités helléniques afin de recueillir des précisions sur les retenues évoquées.

([1]) JO L 209, 11.8.2005, pp. 1-25.

([2]) Voir à cet égard arrêt de la Cour du 19 mai 1998 dans l'affaire C-132/95, Bent Jensen, Lorn— og Foderstofkompagniet A/S et Landbrugsministeriet — EF-Direktoratet, Recueil I-3007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012632/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Walshaw Moor, West Yorkshire, UK

The Commission has recently received a complaint regarding the management and protection of part of the South Pennine Moors managed by Walshaw Moor Estate Limited. The Commission will be aware that blanket bog habitats in the UK are not only home to protected species, such as the hen harrier (Circus cyaneus), the European golden plover (Pluvialis apricaria) and the dunlin (Calidris alpina schinzii), but that they also store billions of tonnes of carbon.

It is alleged that the blanket bog habitats of Walshaw Moor have been severely degraded as a result of inappropriate management measures, including the repeated burning of blanket bog areas to provide a habitat for red grouse. Although these areas are protected under the habitats and birds directives, the competent authority, Natural England, has apparently failed to take the steps needed to prevent ongoing damage and to restore the degraded areas of Walshaw Moor.

Can the Commission confirm whether or not the competent authorities in the UK are fulfilling their obligations to prevent the deterioration of natural habitats and habitats of species under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive?

Given the importance of blanket bog for biodiversity and carbon storage, is the Commission satisfied that this is an isolated incident or does it have concerns that similar damage to blanket bog habitats is taking place elsewhere in the UK?

What action does the Commission intend to take?

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

The Commission has received two complaints regarding the management of Walshaw Moor and in particular the issue of the burning of blanket bog habitats. As a result the Commission has started an investigation and contacted the UK authorities on their views of the problems outlined, including the question whether the problem is of a more general nature. An answer has been received and the Commission has informed the complainants about the main elements of the answer from the UK in order for them to provide additional comments. So far comments have been received only from one of the two complainants. Once all the necessary information is collected, the Commission will finalise its assessment and take appropriate action.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012633/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Environmental improvement schemes in France

I have been contacted by a constituent who owns a second home in Saint-Geniès-De-Fontedit, France.

My constituent informs me that there are environmental improvement schemes in the UK, such as the Green Deal ([1]), which help domestic households to reduce their heat losses by improving the internal and external insulation on their houses. He says that the government and electricity and gas companies offer grants and loans as part of these schemes.

My constituent tells me that his house in France is an old village house built from stone and that the external walls are poorly insulated, which means that he has high heating costs outside the summer months. He says that his electricity supplier in France is EDF, which seems to have various extra taxes and levies when it comes to reducing wasteful consumption.

1. Could the Commission confirm if there are any energy saving improvement grants available in France which are similar to the UK's Green Deal?

2. If so, could it inform me how my constituent can apply for such a grant?

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

Regarding French support schemes for energy efficiency measures in buildings, the Commission would advise the Honourable Member to contact directly the French Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy. You can however already find relevant information about specific support programmes on their website: http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/-Economies-d-energie,154-.html

([1]) www.gov.uk/greendeal

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012634/13
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(7 novembre 2013)

Objet: Propositions de la Commission européenne contre le chômage des jeunes

Le 22 octobre 2013, le rapport de Madame Katarina Neveďalová a été adopté par le Parlement européen en séance plénière. Alors que le taux de chômage des jeunes atteint un record jusqu'à présent inégalé dans l'Union européenne et qu'une partie de la jeunesse européenne peine à intégrer le marché du travail, ce rapport d'initiative est une avancée considérable.

Au vu de ce rapport d'initiative:

1. La Commission européenne a-t-elle mené des études sur les moyens de lutter contre le chômage des jeunes en Europe?

2. La Commission juge-t-elle opportun d'élaborer une proposition législative spécifiquement axée sur l'emploi des jeunes?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(7 janvier 2014)

La Commission s'est constamment attachée à trouver des moyens pour lutter contre le chômage des jeunes en Europe. Elle a présenté en décembre 2012 le train de mesures sur l'emploi des jeunes ([1]). Sur la base de la proposition de la Commission, le Conseil a adopté la recommandation sur la garantie pour la jeunesse en avril 2013. La Commission travaille actuellement avec les États membres, les partenaires sociaux, les services publics de l'emploi et toutes les parties intéressées pour mettre efficacement en œuvre la garantie pour la jeunesse.

Afin d'accroître le financement destiné à l'emploi des jeunes et, en particulier, à la garantie pour la jeunesse dans les régions européennes qui en ont le plus besoin, la Commission a présenté cette année une proposition législative, l'initiative pour l'emploi des jeunes, dotée d'un budget de 6 milliards d'euros, qui va maintenant être mise en œuvre avec les États membres. De plus, le règlement relatif à un Fonds social européen, récemment adopté, contribuera également de manière substantielle à la lutte contre le chômage des jeunes. Le nouveau programme Erasmus+ permettra de renforcer le soutien à la mobilité, aux partenariats stratégiques et aux réformes pouvant faciliter le passage de l'éducation et de la formation à l'emploi.

En outre, la Commission a lancé le 2 juillet 2013 une Alliance européenne pour l'apprentissage et a présenté le 4 décembre 2013 une proposition de recommandation du Conseil relative à un cadre de qualité pour les stages. Ces initiatives visent à faire en sorte que les apprentissages et les stages aident de manière efficace les jeunes à passer de l'enseignement à la vie active. Par conséquent, à ce stade, il convient de se concentrer sur la bonne mise en œuvre des initiatives précitées.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012634/13
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Proposals for tackling youth unemployment

On 22 October 2013, Katarina Neveďalová's report was adopted by Parliament in plenary. With so many young people struggling to gain a foothold on the job market and youth unemployment reaching a historic peak in the EU, this own-initiative report represents a major step forward.

In the light of this own-initiative report:

1. Has the Commission looked at ways of tackling youth unemployment in Europe?

2. Does the Commission think it would be helpful to draft a legislative proposal focusing specifically on youth employment?

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

The Commission has constantly been looking at ways of tackling youth unemployment in Europe. The Commission presented in December 2012 the Youth Employment Package ([1]). On the basis of the Commission's proposal the Council adopted the recommendation on the Youth Guarantee in April 2013. The Commission is now working together with Member States, social partners, public employment services and all relevant stakeholders in order to efficiently implement the Youth Guarantee.

In order to increase funding for youth employment and in particular the Youth Guarantee for the European regions most in need, the Commission made this year a legislative proposal, the Youth Employment Initiative with a EUR 6 billion budget, which will now be implemented with the Member States. Moreover the recently adopted Regulation for a European Social Fund will also contribute substantially to the fight against youth employment. The new Erasmus+ programme will boost support to mobility, strategic partnerships and reforms that can improve transition from education and training to jobs.

In addition, the Commission launched on 2 July 2013 a European Alliance for Apprenticeships, and presented on 4 December 2013 a proposal for a Council Recommendation for a Quality Framework for Traineeships. These initiatives aim to ensure that both apprenticeships and traineeships effectively help young people's transitions from education to work. Therefore, at this stage, attention should be focused on the proper implementation of the above initiatives.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-012638/13
upućeno Komisiji
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(7. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Zapošljavanje hrvatskih državljana u službe Europske komisije

Tijekom proteklih mjeseci raspisano je nekoliko natječaja za prijem hrvatskih državljana u službe Europske komisije. Ovaj proces odvija se u okviru šireg konteksta proračunskih ograničenja na razini EU-a i tendencije postupnog smanjivanja broja zaposlenika.

Istodobno dinamika zapošljavanja hrvatskih državljana važna je za zainteresirane građane Republike Hrvatske i ima refleksije na ukupnu sliku i percepciju o Europskoj uniji u hrvatskoj javnosti.

U vezi s tim, zanima me koliko je do sada ukupno primljeno hrvatskih državljana u službe Komisije u različitim kategorijama natječaja?

Koliki broj hrvatskih državljana Komisija planira zaposliti tijekom 2014. godine?

Kakva je dinamika zapošljavanja hrvatskih državljana na upravljačkim razinama u Komisiji i koliko je točno takvih radnih mjesta predviđeno za Hrvatsku?

Odgovor g. Šefčoviča u ime Komisije
(8. siječnja 2014.)

Informacije povezane s planom zapošljavanja za Hrvatsku iscrpno su opisane u komunikacijama potpredsjednika Šefčoviča Komisiji od 12.7.2012. [SEC (2012) 436] i od 27.3.2013. [SEC (2013)190].

Komisija je do sada zaposlila 57 hrvatskih državljana na mjestima dužnosnika.

Ne postoji određeni plan zapošljavanja hrvatskih državljana na godišnjoj razini već za cijelo prijelazno razdoblje. Broj novozaposlenih u 2014. (dužnosnici, privremeno i ugovorno osoblje) ovisit će o potrebama službi Komisije.

Počelo je zapošljavanje srednjeg rukovodećeg osoblja. Odgovarajuće funkcije visokog rukovodećeg osoblja na kojima bi se mogli zaposliti hrvatski državljani bit će utvrđene s obzirom na prvu objavu/prve objave u 2014. (sve do 30.6.2018.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012638/13
to the Commission
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Recruitment of Croatian citizens to the Commission

Over the past few months, a number of competitions have been announced for positions in the Commission. This procedure is taking place against the wider backdrop of EU budget cuts and a trend for the gradual reduction of staff levels.

At the same time, the recruitment of Croatian citizens is important for those Croatian citizens who are interested, and it reflects on the overall image and perception of the European Union among the Croatian public.

In this connection, could the Commission say how many Croatian citizens in total have been recruited by the Commission as officials through the various categories of competition?

How many Croatian citizens does the Commission plan to recruit in 2014?

What is the state of play as regards the recruitment of Croatian citizens to management positions in the Commission, and precisely how many such positions are foreseen for Croatia?

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

The information regarding the recruitment targets for Croatia are detailed in the communications of Vice-President Šefčovič to the Commission of 12.7.2012 [SEC(2012) 436] and of 27.3.2013 [SEC(2013)190].

The Commission has recruited so far 57 Croatian citizens as officials.

There are no specific targets for the recruitment of Croatians per year but for whole transition period. The number of recruitments in 2014 (officials, temporary and contract staff) will depend on the needs of the Commission's services.

Recruitment of Middle Managers has started. Suitable Senior Management functions for possible recruitment of Croatians are to be identified in view of first publication(s) in 2014 (and up until 30/06/2018).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012639/13
do Komisji
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(7 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Innowacyjna instalacja produkcji ultra czystego kwasu monochlorooctowego (U-P MCAA)

Spółka PCC P4 uzyskała dofinansowanie w ramach Programu Operacyjnego Innowacyjna Gospodarka 4.5.1. na inwestycję w „Innowacyjną instalację produkcji ultraczystego kwasu monochlorooctowego". Projekt zarejestrowany pod nr 2012PL161PR045 podlega aktualnie procedurze zatwierdzenia wkładu unijnego w dużym projekcie zgodnie z art. 41 rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1083/2006 prowadzonym przez Dyrekcję Generalną ds. Polityki Regionalnej i Miejskiej w Komisji Europejskiej.

W związku z ważnym dla Polski oraz regionu Dolnego Śląska projektem innowacyjnym w obszarze chemii i nowych technologii proszę o informację, w jakiej fazie jest ta procedura i na kiedy przewidywane jest jej zakończenie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(18 grudnia 2013 r.)

W ocenie dużego projektu pt. „Innowacyjna instalacja produkcji ultraczystego kwasu monochlorooctowego" (nr 2012PL161PR045) Komisja wskazała na istotne kwestie, które wymagały udzielenia dodatkowych informacji i złożenia wyjaśnień przez polskie władze. Komisja zwróciła się o przekazanie informacji w dniu 26 lipca 2013 r., na co polskie władze odpowiedziały w dniu 27 września 2013 r. Jeśli otrzymana odpowiedź zostanie oceniona pozytywnie, Komisja prawdopodobnie zakończy prace nad decyzją w ciągu 2 miesięcy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012639/13
to the Commission
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Innovative facilities for the production of ultra pure monochloroacetic acid (UP MCAA)

The company PCC P4 was granted funding under Measure 4.5.1 of the 'Innovative Economy' Operational Programme for investment in 'Innovative facilities for the production of ultra pure monochloroacetic acid'. The project (No 2012PL161PR045) is currently awaiting approval by the Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy for co-financing as a large project pursuant to Article 41 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006. .

Given the importance for Poland and the Lower Silesian region of this innovative project in the field of chemistry and new technologies, I should like to ask for information about the current status of the procedure and when it is likely to be complete.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2013)

In the appraisal of the major project 'Innovative facilities for the production of ultra pure monochloroacetic acid' (No 2012PL161PR045), the Commission identified important points which required additional information and clarification by the Polish authorities. The Commission requested this on 26 July 2013 and the Polish authorities replied on 27 September 2013. If there is a positive assessment of the reply, the Commission expects to finalise a decision within 2 months.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012642/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. November 2013)

Betrifft: Drohende Asien-Krise durch Hortung von Dollars in asiatischen Ländern

Der letzte Bericht der Bank für Internationalen Zahlungsausgleich (BIZ) mit dem Titel „Transmitting global liquidity to East Asia" brachte zu Tage, dass die Anzahl der Dollarkredite in China und anderen asiatischen Schwellenländern seit 2008 beträchtlich angestiegen ist. Als Folge der niedrigen Leitzinsen der westlichen Zentralbanken haben sich vor allem chinesische Banken und Unternehmen bei US-amerikanischen und europäischen Banken geradezu mit Dollars eingedeckt. Allein in den letzten vier Jahren hat sich die Zahl der Dollarkredite in China vervierfacht, so dass mittlerweile über 80 % aller Fremdwährungskredite in US-Dollar laufen.

Einen Vorgeschmack dessen, was geschieht, wenn die lockere Geldpolitik endet, haben wir ja dieses Jahr schon zu spüren bekommen: Nachdem die US-Notenbank eine baldige Drosselung der Geldpolitik in Aussicht gestellt hatte, kamen die Märkte vieler wichtiger Schwellenländer ins Trudeln. Sollte die Ferderal Reserve (Fed) die Liquidität drosseln, besteht die Gefahr einer neuen Asien-Krise, ausgelöst durch Chinas milliardenschwere Dollarkredite, die auch Amerika, Europa und Japan erfassen würde. Allein die britischen Geldinstitute sollen mehr als ein Viertel der Fremdwährungskredite nach China vergeben haben. Indessen haben sich die Banken der Eurozone anscheinend zurück gehalten und die Kreditvergabe ins Reich der Mitte in den letzten Jahren sogar reduziert. Bedenklich ist diesbezüglich auch das chinesische Verhältnis von Fremdwährungskrediten zu Einlagen, welches sich der 200-Prozent-Marke angenähert haben soll.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu diesem Problem?

2. Gibt es Pläne für den Fall, dass die Fed ihre lockere Geldpolitik im „falschen Moment" mit drastischen Folgen beendet?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(23. Dezember 2013)

Der Anteil der Fremdwährungskredite in China betrug Ende 2012 etwas mehr als 8 % und hatte vor der Finanzkrise bei 7-8 % gelegen. Das Risiko von Währungsinkongruenzen ist angesichts der umfangreichen Dollareinnahmen aus dem Ausfuhrhandel Chinas und der großen Währungsreserven eher gering. Allerdings geben das rasche Kreditwachstum in China, ob in RMB oder anderen Währungen, sowie die Zunahme der atypischen Formen der Vermittlung Anlass zur Sorge hinsichtlich potenzieller Kreditrisiken und müssen aufmerksam verfolgt werden.

Auch in einigen anderen asiatischen Volkswirtschaften ist ein mit potenziellen Risiken behaftetes rasches Kreditwachstum zu beobachten. Die Währungsreserven sind jedoch größer und die wirtschaftlichen Eckdaten erscheinen solider als in früheren Phasen angespannter Finanzmärkte. Asien scheint somit besser gerüstet zu sein, sich einer Normalisierung der weltweiten währungspolitischen Bedingungen anzupassen.

Im Hinblick auf die US-Währungspolitik möchte die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Stellungnahme der Teilnehmer des G20-Gipfels verweisen, der am 5. und 6. September 2013 in Sankt Petersburg stattfand: „(…) Wir behalten die Risiken und unbeabsichtigten negativen Nebenwirkungen der ausgedehnten Zeiträume der monetären Lockerung im Auge. Wir erkennen an, dass ein verstärktes und nachhaltiges Wachstum von einem möglichen Übergang zur Normalisierung der Währungspolitik begleitet wird. Unsere Zentralbanken haben sich verpflichtet, künftige Änderungen der Währungspolitik weiterhin sorgfältig zu kalibrieren und klar mitzuteilen."

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012642/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Impending Asian crisis as a result of the hoarding of dollars in Asian countries

The latest report by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) entitled 'Transmitting global liquidity to East Asia' revealed that the number of dollar loans in China and other Asian countries with emerging economies has risen sharply since 2008. As a consequence of the low base rates of the central banks in the West, Chinese banks and companies in particular have simply stocked up on dollars from US and European banks. The number of dollar loans in China has quadrupled in the last four years alone, so that over 80% of all foreign currency loans are now issued in US dollars.

We have already had a foretaste of what will happen when the loose monetary policy ends: after the Federal Reserve of the United States indicated that it would soon tighten its monetary policy, the markets in many important countries with emerging economies were thrown into turmoil. If the Federal Reserve (Fed) were to reduce liquidity there is a risk of a new Asian crisis, triggered by China's billions in dollar loans, which would also encompass the US, Europe and Japan. UK banks alone are said to have granted more than a quarter of the foreign currency loans to China. The banks of the euro area, however, appear to have restrained themselves and even reduced their lending to China in recent years. What is also worrying in this regard is the Chinese ratio of foreign currency loans to deposits, which is said to have neared the 200% mark.

1. What is the Commission's view of this problem?

2. Are there any plans in place should the Fed end its loose monetary policy at the 'wrong moment', with dramatic consequences?

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

The share of foreign currency loans in China was just over 8% at the end of 2012, compared to the level of 7-8% seen before the financial crisis. The risk of currency mismatch is likely to be small, given China's extensive dollar export trade and large foreign currency reserves. However, rapid credit growth in China, whether in RMB or other currencies, and the growth of non-standard forms of intermediation does raise broader concerns about potential credit risk and needs to be monitored closely.

Some other Asian economies have also seen rapid credit growth which may pose risks. However foreign reserves are higher, and economic fundamentals appear more sound, than during previous episodes of financial stress. Asia thus seems to be better placed to adjust to a normalization of global monetary conditions.

Regarding the monetary policy in the US, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the statement of the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Saint Petersburg on 5-6 September 2013: '(…)We remain mindful of the risks and unintended negative side effects of extended periods of monetary easing. We recognise that strengthened and sustained growth will be accompanied by an eventual transition toward the normalization of monetary policies. Our central banks have committed that future changes to monetary policy settings will continue to be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated.'

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012643/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. November 2013)

Betrifft: Energiesparvorschriften im Rahmen der Ökodesign-Richtlinie

Auf Grundlage der 2005 beschlossenen Ökodesign-Richtlinie, die 2009 überarbeitet (und um die Frage des Energieverbrauchs erweitert wurde) wird im Komitologie-Ausschuss erörtert, welche Geräte zu viel Energie verbrauchen bzw. wo Einsparungspotential vorhanden ist.

Nach dem Verbot der Glühbirne und dem mit 1. November des Jahres in Kraft tretenden Vorschriften zur Kondensationseffizienz von Wäschetrocknern sollen anscheinend ab kommenden Jahr Höchstgrenzen für die Wattleistung von Staubsaugern festgelegt werden. Dem Vernehmen nach soll es zudem bereits Entwürfe für Haushaltskaffeemaschinen geben, die sich ab einer bestimmten Zeit automatisch in einen Energiesparmodus schalten.

1. Kann die Kommission diese Vorhaben bestätigen?

2. Welche energierelevanten Geräte sollen als nächstes unter die Lupe genommen werden?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(8. Januar 2014)

1. Im Juli 2013 wurden Verordnungen über die umweltgerechte Gestaltung (Ökodesign) ([1]) und die Energieverbrauchskennzeichnung ([2]) von Staubsaugern veröffentlicht. Die darin festgelegten Anforderungen gelten ab September 2014 (Leistung, Energieverbrauch, Staubaufnahme) und September 2017 (Staubemission, Schallleistungspegel und Haltbarkeit). Das kombinierte Einsparpotenzial dieser Maßnahmen beträgt bis 2020 jährlich 19 TWh.

Im Fall von Haushaltskaffeemaschinen wurde in Anbetracht des Einsparpotenzials beschlossen, keine umfassenden Ökodesign- und Energieverbrauchs-kennzeichnungsmaßnahmen vorzusehen. Haushaltskaffeemaschinen unterliegen jedoch der sogenannten „Standby"-Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1275/2008, die am 7. Januar 2009 in Kraft trat und später durch die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 801/2013 geändert wurde. In letzterer werden die Anforderungen an die Verbrauchsminimierung bei Kaffeemaschinen weiter präzisiert.

2. Produkte kommen nur dann für eine Verordnung zum Ökodesign und zur Energieverbrauchskennzeichnung in Betracht, wenn die sich daraus ergebenden Energieeinsparungen erheblich sind. Weitere Einzelheiten enthält der Ökodesign-Arbeitsplan 2012-2014 ([3]). Die geschätzten Einsparungen aller verabschiedeten Maßnahmen belaufen sich derzeit auf ca. 760 TWh, was einem Viertel der jährlichen Stromerzeugung in der EU entspricht.

Bei Gefriergeräten beispielsweise beträgt die durchschnittliche Differenz zwischen dem Energieverbrauch von Geräten der Klasse A^{+++} und dem von Geräten der Klasse B ca. 350 kWh pro Jahr. Dies bedeutet Stromkosteneinsparungen von jährlich 70 EUR oder von rund 1 700 EUR während der Lebensdauer des Gerätes (diese beträgt bei Gefriergeräten im Durchschnitt 17 Jahre).

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 666/2013 der Kommission.
([2]) Delegierte Verordnung (EU) Nr. 665/2013 der Kommission.
([3]) SWD(2012)434.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012643/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Energy-saving provisions within the framework of the Ecodesign Directive

On the basis of the Ecodesign Directive, adopted in 2005 and revised (and expanded to include the issue of energy consumption) in 2009, the comitology committee discusses which appliances consume too much energy and where there is potential for savings.

Following the ban on incandescent light bulbs and the entry into force on 1 November this year of the provisions concerning the condensation efficiency of tumble driers, maximum limits for the wattage of vacuum cleaners are apparently to be laid down from next year. Designs for domestic coffee machines which automatically switch to an energy-saving mode after a specified time are also reported to exist already.

1. Can the Commission confirm these plans?

2. Which energy-related appliances are to be scrutinised next?

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

1. Ecodesign ([1]) and energy labelling ([2]) regulations for vacuum cleaners were published in July 2013. Their requirements will apply from September 2014 (power, energy consumption, dust pick-up performance) and September 2017 (dust re-emission, sound power level and durability). The combined savings potential of these measures amounts to 19 TWh per year by 2020.

In light of its saving potential, it was decided not to proceed with full ecodesign and labelling measures for domestic coffee machines. However, domestic coffee machines are subject to the so-called 'standby' Regulation 1275/2008, which came into force on 7 January 2009 and was subsequently amended by Regulation (EC) No 801/2013. The latter further specified the requirements for the power management of coffee machines.

2. Products are only considered for ecodesign and energy labelling regulations when the potential savings are substantial. Further detail is provided in the Ecodesign Working Plan 2012-2014 ([3]). The estimated savings from all the adopted measures today is around 760 TWh, which is equivalent to a quarter of the EU's annual electricity production.

By way of example, for freezers the average difference between A+++ appliances and class B appliances in energy consumption is around 350 kWh per year. This represents around 70 euros electricity cost savings per year, or about 1700 euros over the lifetime of the appliance (17 years in average for freezers).

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 666/2013.
([2]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 665/2013.
([3]) SWD(2012) 434.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012646/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. November 2013)

Betrifft: Gewerbehypotheken-Deals

Experten beobachten schon seit einiger Zeit eine Abschwächung der Kreditqualität auf dem Markt für mit Gewerbehypotheken unterlegte Wertpapiere (CMBS). Um bei risikoreichen Teilen von Deals ein Rating zu umgehen (welches die Stärke der Nachfrage negativ beeinflussen könnte), verpacken Banken Gewerbehypotheken in Anleihen. Offenbar verschlechtern sich die Kredite — die Banken in neue Hypotheken-Anleihen verpacken — also wieder zusehends. So soll die Deutsche Bank AG dem Vernehmen nach planen, mit Gewerbehypotheken gesicherte und vergleichsweise niedrig bewertete Anleihen in Papiere mit einer besseren Bewertung neu zu verpacken.

Dies ähnelt dem Verfahren, welche die Verkäufe risikoreicherer Anlagen antrieben, bevor der Hypothekenmarkt vor fünf Jahren kollabierte und eine Finanzkrise einsetzte. Bei den sogenannten Collateralized-Debt-Obligations (CDOs), die während der Boomphase geschaffen wurden, wurden Anleihen oder Kredite in neue Wertpapiere mit unterschiedlichen Risiken und Renditen verpackt. Diese strukturierten Wertpapiere trugen dazu bei, die Kreditvergabe an Kunden mit geringer Bonität anzutreiben — bis die Immobilienpreise ab 2006 zusammenbrechen.

1. Kann die Kommission diesen Trend bestätigen?

2. In welchem Ausmaß werden Gewerbe-Immobilien-Anleihe-Transaktionen im Rahmen der europäischen Finanzmarktaufsicht berücksichtigt?

3. Beobachtet die Finanzmarktaufsicht auch die Auswirkungen von Hypothekenanleihen auf den Immobilienmarkt?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(8. Januar 2014)

1. Nach Angaben der EBA ([1]) wurden verschiedene vor der Finanzkrise begebene europäische CMBS ([2]) in letzter Zeit von den Ratingagenturen herabgestuft oder werden nach einem Ausfall neu strukturiert. In den nächsten Jahren ist mit weiteren Herabstufungen und Verlusten zu rechnen, da noch mehr CMBS fällig werden und die Emittenten nicht in der Lage sind, ihre Schulden zu refinanzieren.

In letzter Zeit haben die Neuemissionen europäischer CMBS wieder leicht zugenommen. Laut EBA entfielen im Jahr 2012 5 Mrd. EUR der insgesamt 250 Mrd. EUR an Verbriefungsemissionen auf CMBS und in der ersten Jahreshälfte 2013 6,3 Mrd. EUR von insgesamt 83 Mrd. EUR ([3]). Seit der Finanzkrise ist in Europa bislang keine Wiederverbriefungstransaktion (in neue Wertpapiere umverpackte Anleihe) auf den Markt gebracht worden.

2. CMBS fallen unter die Definition der Verbriefungspositionen und unterliegen als solche den Vorschriften von CRR, Solvenz II, AIFMD, CRA 3 und Prospektrichtlinie.

Darüber hinaus fallen Verbriefungstransaktionen auch unter die regelmäßigen Meldungen an die nationalen Aufsichtsbehörden (über die sogenannte COREP-Meldevorlage), so dass diese sehr genaue Kenntnis davon erhalten, welche Verbriefungspositionen ein jedes Institut, auch in CMBS, hält.

3. Gedeckte Schuldverschreibungen und Verbriefungstransaktionen (RMBS, CMBS) sind zwei der geläufigsten Kapitalmarktinstrumente, über die Banken den Immobilienmarkt finanzieren. Auf europäischer Ebene enthält insbesondere der ESRB-Bericht vom 20. Dezember 2012 über die Finanzierung der Kreditinstitute ([4]) Analysen zu diesem Thema. Darüber hinaus ist uns bekannt, dass die Zusammenhänge und die Auswirkungen der Kapitalmarktfinanzierung auf dem Immobilienmarkt auch von verschiedenen nationalen Behörden beobachtet werden.

([1]) Europäische Bankenaufsichtsbehörde.
([2]) Commercial mortgage-backed securities — durch Gewerbeimmobilien gesicherte Wertpapiere.
([3]) Von der AFME veröffentlichte Daten.
([4]) Verfügbar unter http://www.esrb.europa.eu/pub/html/index.en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012646/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Commercial mortgage deals

Experts have for some time been observing a reduction in credit quality on the market for commercial mortgage-backed securities (CMBS). In order to avoid a rating for risky portions of deals (which could adversely affect the level of demand), banks package commercial mortgages into bonds. Obviously the loans — which the banks package into new mortgage bonds — deteriorate again rapidly. Thus, the German bank, Deutsche Bank AG, is reported to be planning to repackage comparatively low graded bonds secured by commercial mortgages into securities with a better grade.

This is similar to the process driven by the sales of risky assets before the mortgage market collapsed five years ago and a financial crisis began. In the case of the so-called collateralised debt obligations (CDOs) created during the boom phase, bonds or loans were packaged into new securities with different risks and returns. These structured securities helped to drive lending to customers with a lower credit standing — until property prices collapsed from 2006 onwards.

1. Can the Commission confirm this trend?

2. To what extent are commercial property bond transactions taken into account in the supervision of the European financial markets?

3. Are the financial market supervisory authorities also monitoring the effects of mortgage bonds on the property market?

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

1. According to the information provided by the EBA ([1]) various European CMBS ([2]) transactions issued before the financial crisis have recently been downgraded by rating agencies or are in a restructuring phase following default. More downgrades and losses are still expected in the next couple of years since more CMBS transactions are reaching their maturity dates and issuers are not able to refinance the debt.

A limited increase in new issuances of European CMBS transactions has been observed in recent times. According to the EBA, EUR 5 billion out of the EUR 250 billion securitisation issuance where CMBS transactions in 2012 and EUR 6.3 billion out of the EUR 83 billion in the first half of 2013 ([3]). No re-securitisation transaction (re-packaged bonds into new securities) being sold to the market in Europe following the financial crises has been observed so far.

2. CMBS transactions fall within the definition of securitisation instruments and as such are regulated by the CRR, Solvency II, AIFMD, CRA 3 and the Prospectus directive.

Moreover, securitisation transactions are included in the regular reporting to national supervisors (through the so-called COREP reporting template) allowing them to have very detailed information on the securitisation holdings of each institution including CMBS transactions.

3. Covered bonds and securitisation transactions (RMBS/CMBS) are two of the most common capital market instruments to provide bank funding to the property market. At European level, in particular the ESRB report of 20 December 2012 on funding of credit institutions ([4]) provides some analysis on the issue. Moreover, we are also aware that a number of national authorities are monitoring the relation and effects of capital market funding on the property market.

([1]) European Banking Authority.
([2]) Commercial mortgage-backed securities.
([3]) date published by AFME.
([4]) Available at http://www.esrb.europa.eu/pub/html/index.en.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012647/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7. November 2013)

Betrifft: Scannen von Kundengesichtern

Der größte britische Einzelhändler Tesco will Kameras an den Kassen seiner Tankstellen installieren, um damit das Gesicht des Kunden zu erfassen und passende Werbung zu zeigen. Das Angebot von Tesco umfasst Lebensmittel. Kleidung, Elektrogeräte und Benzin. Der Konzern besitzt zudem eine Telefongesellschaft, eine Bank und eine Telefonauskunft. Zu Tesco gehören insgesamt mehr als 6 400 Filialen, davon 3 150 in Großbritannien. Der Konzern ist auch in Irland und Polen vertreten.

Zunächst sollen lediglich Geschlecht und ungefähres Alter ermittelt und die Einkäufe registriert werden. Die Zeit, die der Kunde zum Betrachten der Werbung aufbietet, wird ebenso überprüft wie die von ihm schließlich gekauften Waren. Eine Sprecherin der Firma Amscreen, welche die für das Vorhaben nötigen Systeme liefern soll, erklärte, kein Bild würde gespeichert und kein Kunde ohne seine Zustimmung überwacht.

Bereits jetzt ist es über das Internet möglich, Gesichtern Namen und Adressen zuzuordnen. Insbesondere ist bereits höher entwickelte Kameratechnologie verfügbar, welche einen Gesichtsabgleich mit Facebook ermöglicht.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu dem besorgniserregenden Trend zur Nutzung von invasiven Technologien in Geschäften?

2. Ist ein solches Vorhaben überhaupt mit den europäischen Datenschutzregeln vereinbar?

3. Was wird auf EU-Ebene unternommen, um zu verhindern, dass die Sammelwut zur Erfassung persönlicher Daten nicht außer Kontrolle gerät?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(8. Januar 2014)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass insbesondere Geschäfte zunehmend die Gesichtserkennungstechnik für eine Vielzahl von Zwecken wie Werbung nutzen.

Für die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten in der EU gelten unter anderem die Bestimmungen der Richtlinie 95/46/EG ([1]). Die Nutzung der Technik zur Gesichtserkennung stellt eine automatisierte Form der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten dar, da diese Technik Informationen wie Alter, Geschlecht und Rasse über Personen offenlegt, selbst wenn es sich nur um ein Foto oder eine Videoaufnahme handelt, die anschließend nicht gespeichert werden. Insofern als es sich um eine bestimmte oder bestimmbare natürliche Person („betroffene Person") handelt, geht es um personenbezogene Daten, und deren Verarbeitung hat gemäß den nationalen Rechtsvorschriften zur Durchführung der in der Richtlinie 95/46/EG festgelegten Anforderungen zu erfolgen; so muss die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten für rechtmäßige Zwecke erfolgen, einem spezifischen Zweck dienen und den Zwecken entsprechen, für die die Daten erhoben werden. Betroffene Personen müssen über die Datenverarbeitung unterrichtet werden.

Unbeschadet ihrer Befugnisse als Hüterin der Verträge ist die Kommission für die Überwachung der Anwendung der Datenschutzvorschriften durch den privaten Sektor nicht zuständig. Sie schlägt daher vor, sich mit diesem Fall an die Datenschutzbehörde der EU-Mitgliedstaaten zu wenden, in denen Tesco niedergelassen ist.

([1]) Richtlinie 95/46/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. Oktober 1995 zum Schutz natürlicher Personen bei der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten und zum freien Datenverkehr (ABl. L 281 vom 23.11.1995, S. 31-50).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012647/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Scanning of customers' faces

The UK's largest retailer, Tesco, wants to install cameras at the tills in its petrol stations to capture the faces of customers and to show appropriate advertising. Tesco sells food, clothing, electrical goods and petrol. The group also owns a telephone company, a bank and a directory enquiries service. Tesco has a total of more than 6 400 branches, with 3 150 of these in the UK. The company also has a presence in Ireland and Poland.

Initially, only gender and approximate age are to be determined and the purchases recorded. The time customers spend watching the advertising will also be examined, as well as the goods that they ultimately purchase. A spokeswoman from the company Amscreen, which is to supply the systems required for the project, explained that no images would be stored and no customers would be monitored without their consent.

It is already possible, via the Internet, to put names and address to faces. In particular, more advanced camera technology is already available which enables face matching with Facebook.

1. What is the Commission's view of the worrying trend in the use of invasive technologies in shops?

2. Is such a move actually compatible with European data protection rules?

3. What is being done at EU level to prevent the obsessive collection of personal data from getting out of the control?

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

The Commission is aware that facial recognition technology is increasingly used particularly by shops and for a range of purposes like advertising.

The processing of personal data in the EU is governed *inter alia* by the provisions of Directive 95/46/EC ([1]). The use of facial recognition technology constitutes an automated form of processing of personal data as it reveals information about individuals, such as age, gender, race, sex, even if a photo or video is taken but not saved afterwards. Insofar as that information relates to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'), it is personal data and the processing of that data needs to be carried out in line with the national laws implementing the requirements laid down in the directive 95/46/EC: inter alia, personal data must be processed on legitimate grounds, for a specific purpose and must be proportionate to the aim pursued. The data subjects concerned must be informed about the processing.

Without prejudice to its prerogatives as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission is not competent for the monitoring of the application of the data protection rules by the private sector and therefore suggests to address this case to the data protection authority of EU Member States where Tesco is established.

([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.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012650/13
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: GERYON

Following enquiries from constituents in the East Midlands region of the United Kingdom, I would like to ask the Commission to elaborate on the details of its objectives and plans for the GERYON project.

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The basis for the GERYON project is the 2011 Call for Proposals and the Work Programme of the Security Theme of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). All the relevant details on FP7 and the Security Theme can be found under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/home

The consortium of GERYON submitted a proposal for a topic from this Work Programme entitled 'Topic SEC-2011.5.2-1 Technical solutions for interoperability between first responder communication systems — Capability Project'. This proposal was successfully evaluated by independent experts and subsequently selected for co-funding by the Commission.

The objective of the GERYON project is to develop cost-effective solutions for interoperable communications of first responders in the EU. GERYON started on 1 December 2011 and is due to be completed by 31 May 2014.

Further details concerning the GERYON project itself can be found on the website of the project:
http://www.sec-geryon.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012652/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Liberalizzazione degli orari di apertura degli esercizi commerciali e tutela delle PMI

Visti/e:

— i principi e le norme del TFUE in merito alla libera concorrenza, libertà di prestazione di servizi e libera circolazione delle merci;

— le disposizioni della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea con particolare riferimento alla tutela del lavoratore, alla sua salute, attraverso condizioni di lavoro giuste, eque, sane, sicure, dignitose e alla limitazione della durata massima del lavoro e a periodi di riposo giornalieri e settimanali;

— la direttiva servizi 2006/123/CE.

Premesso che:

— la normativa italiana ha previsto la liberalizzazione totale dei giorni e degli orari di apertura degli esercizi commerciali (da ultimo, con i cosiddetti decreti Salva Italia e Cresci Italia);

— una totale deregolamentazione avvantaggia in maniera sproporzionata le grandi imprese a discapito delle PMI che non posseggono le medesime risorse economiche, strutturali ed umane per reggere la concorrenza;

— una siffatta disciplina uniforme su tutto il territorio dello Stato può mortificare importanti specificità locali e regionali che meriterebbero, attraverso il principio di proporzionalità, l'individuazione di una diversa disciplina, in ragione della protezione di un particolare tessuto economico, caratterizzato da PMI.

Può la Commissione:

1. fornire un'interpretazione chiara della libertà di concorrenza e dei limiti che lo Stato deve rispettare, con particolare riferimento alla liberalizzazione degli orari di apertura e chiusura degli esercizi commerciali?

2. indicare se, tra gli effetti anticoncorrenziali diretti e indiretti, prodotti da una disciplina nazionale di totale deregolamentazione in materia di orari di apertura degli esercizi commerciali, si possa annoverare anche il pregiudizio subito dalle PMI?

3. specificare, in termini generali, se e quali forme di tutela dalla libera concorrenza sono previste per le PMI?

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

1. La Commissione è consapevole delle difficoltà di ordine generale che i lunghi orari di apertura comportano per i piccoli esercizi commerciali al dettaglio. Tuttavia, la regolamentazione (o deregolamentazione) degli orari di apertura dei negozi non rientra nelle norme di concorrenza sancite dal trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE (TFUE). Nella giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia ([1]) è sancito che, su questa materia, gli Stati membri sono autorizzati ad adottare misure a livello nazionale per i motivi di pubblico interesse che reputano necessari.

2. La questione degli orari di apertura è solo uno dei tanti fattori che i consumatori prendono in considerazione quando decidono dove fare acquisti. Sono importanti, e incidono sulla concorrenza, anche aspetti quali il prezzo e la qualità dei prodotti, nonché servizi che vanno oltre la semplice fornitura di tali prodotti. Quanto alla liberalizzazione degli orari di apertura a livello degli Stati membri, la Commissione non dispone di informazioni specifiche circa il possibile impatto negativo sulla concorrenza per gli operatori al dettaglio e, in particolare, per quanto riguarda le PMI.

([1]) Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea.

3. Il 31 gennaio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato il piano d'azione europeo per il commercio al dettaglio ([2]), volto a migliorare la competitività del settore del commercio al dettaglio, comprese le PMI, proponendo 11 azioni concrete per affrontare un certo numero di sfide che si pongono per il settore. Una di queste riguarda l'eliminazione delle pratiche commerciali sleali nella catena di fornitura tra imprese, di cui sono vittima, in particolare, le PMI. Le azioni previste nel piano d'azione dovrebbero essere attuate entro il 2014. La Commissione valuterà gli sviluppi e nel 2015 pubblicherà una relazione per riferire sui progressi ottenuti con l'attuazione del piano. La Commissione istituirà inoltre un gruppo per la competitività nel commercio al dettaglio incaricato di sviluppare ulteriori obiettivi specifici per i settori individuati e di prestare consulenza, se necessario, alla Commissione stessa in merito ad altre nuove iniziative che potrebbero essere proposte.

([2]) COM(2013)36 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012652/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Liberalisation of shop opening hours and protection of SMEs

Having regard to:

— the principles and rules of the TFEU regarding free competition, the freedom to provide services and the free movement of goods;

— the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union with particular reference to the protection of workers and their health by means of fair and just working conditions which respect their health, safety and dignity; the limitation of maximum working hours; and daily and weekly rest periods;

— the Services Directive (2006/123/EC),

given that:

— Italian law has provided for the total liberalisation of shop opening hours and days (most recently under the 'Save Italy' and 'Economic Growth in Italy' decrees);

— total deregulation gives large enterprises a disproportionate advantage to the detriment of SMEs which do not possess the same economic, structural and human resources to allow them to compete;

— such a uniform set of rules across Italy could destroy important local and regional peculiarities. Under the principle of proportionality, different rules should be identified for them in order to protect a specific economic fabric characterised by the presence of SMEs,

can the Commission:

1. provide a clear interpretation of the freedom of competition and the limits which the State must respect, with particular reference to the liberalisation of shop opening and closing hours;

2. state whether the harm suffered by SMEs could be included among the direct and indirect anti-competitive effects caused by national rules to completely deregulate shop opening hours;

3. specify, in general terms, whether any measures to protect free competition are envisaged for SMEs, and what form they take?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the general difficulties smaller players of the retail sector face in relation to long opening hours. However, the regulation or deregulation of shop opening hours does not fall under the competition rules in the TFEU. It is well established in the case law of the ECJ ([1]) that Member States are allowed to take measures regarding shop opening hours at national level for public policy reasons, which they consider necessary.

2. The aspect of opening hours is only one of the many factors that consumers consider when choosing where to shop. The price and quality of products as well as services beyond the pure provision of these products is also relevant and influences competition. Regarding the liberalisation of opening hours at Member State level, the Commission does not have any specific information about the possible negative impact on retail competition in general and SMEs in particular.

([1]) European Court of Justice.

3. On 31 January 2013, the Commission adopted the European Retail Action Plan ([2]) which aims at improving the competitiveness of the retail sector, including SME retailers, by putting forward 11 concrete actions addressing a number of challenges the sector faces. One of the actions concerns the elimination of unfair trading practices in the business-to-business supply chain. SMEs in particular are victims of such practices. The actions set out in the action plan should be implemented by 2014. The Commission will monitor developments and report on the progress in implementing this Plan by issuing a report in 2015. The Commission will also set up a Group on Retail Competitiveness that will help develop further specific objectives for the areas identified and, where necessary, will advise the Commission on additional new actions that could be proposed.

([2]) COM(2013) 36 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012653/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuove norme sugli aspirapolvere e tutela dei consumatori

Si apprende che gli aspirapolvere sono stati oggetto di una modifica normativa da parte dell'Unione europea.

Le nuove regole entreranno in vigore tra circa un anno e avranno effetto diretto su chi produce, vende e usa questo elettrodomestico. Da settembre 2014, infatti, i nuovi aspirapolvere non potranno più avere un motore che supera la potenza di 1.600W, mentre dal 2017, la potenza massima verrà ridotta ancora fino a 900W.

Poiché si ritiene che, al momento, la maggior parte degli aspirapolvere venduti ha una potenza di 2.000W, questa modifica comporterà una vera e propria rivoluzione sul mercato. Oltre a limitare la potenza massima (a discapito dell'utilità), gli aspirapolvere verranno anche classificati da A a G secondo l'efficienza energetica e la prestazione. Le regole in questione sono state introdotte per diminuire le emissioni di diossido di carbonio, e anche per risparmiare energia. A seguito di queste nuove norme, potrebbero essere risparmiati annualmente nell'Unione europea ben 19 terawattora (un terawatt equivale a 1.000 watt, il simbolo è TWh) entro il 2020.

Le aziende produttrici mettono in dubbio l'utilità del provvedimento in termini ecologici, sostenendo che la riduzione di potenza diminuirà la capacità di aspirare lo sporco dal suolo. Di conseguenza, con i nuovi apparecchi, gli utilizzatori saranno costretti a passare l'aspirapolvere per il doppio del tempo, azzerando di fatto il risparmio di energia.

Pare inoltre che l'UE abbia testato gli aspirapolvere vuoti e senza polvere per verificarne il consumo e che quindi la metodologia usata non simuli le condizioni reali di utilizzo, rendendo i risultati di laboratorio molto diversi da ciò che accade nelle case dei consumatori.

La Commissione può specificare esattamente come sono stati testati gli aspirapolvere?

La Commissione non ritiene che l'entrata in vigore delle nuove regole non tuteli realmente il consumatore?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(19 dicembre 2013)

Il consumo energetico degli aspirapolvere dipende anche dalla capacità dell'apparecchio di raccogliere lo sporco. Per questo motivo la formula prevista dalle norme per calcolare il consumo energetico tiene conto non solo della potenza ma anche di questa prestazione. Occorre inoltre chiarire che gli aspirapolvere con tempi di pulizia lunghi sono considerati inefficienti ai fini della normativa.

Il regolamento sulla progettazione ecocompatibile ([1]) e quello sull'etichettatura energetica ([2]) prevedono l'applicazione di metodi di prova affidabili, accurati e riproducibili. La Commissione ritiene che il metodo che utilizza l'aspirapolvere con contenitore vuoto soddisfi questi requisiti. Al momento non si dispone di alcun metodo che esegua prove con contenitore parzialmente pieno ed è intenzione della Commissione chiedere agli organismi di standardizzazione di mettere a punto questo tipo di metodo in tempo per la revisione delle norme nel 2018.

La Commissione è del parere che le norme adottate vadano a beneficio dei consumatori, in quanto garantiranno loro informazioni più accurate sulle prestazioni energetiche e sulla capacità aspirante degli apparecchi in commercio, in considerazione del fatto che molti consumatori non sanno che la potenza di un aspirapolvere non va necessariamente di pari passo con l'efficacia di rimozione dello sporco. Grazie a queste misure, inoltre, si otterrà un notevole risparmio di energia elettrica, pari a 19 TWh annui entro il 2020.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 666/2013 della Commissione.
([2]) Regolamento delegato (UE) n. 665/2013 della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012653/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: New rules on vacuum cleaners and consumer protection

It has emerged that the EU is amending the law on vacuum cleaners.

The new rules will come into force around one year from now, and will directly affect manufacturers, retailers and users of this electrical household appliance. From September 2014, motors in new vacuum cleaners may no longer exceed 1 600 W, whereas from 2017, the maximum power will be further reduced to 900 W.

Since it is believed that currently the majority of vacuum cleaners sold are 2 000 W, this change will truly revolutionise the market. As well as limiting their maximum power (to the detriment of their usefulness), vacuum cleaners will also be given a rating from A to G based on their energy efficiency and performance. The rules in question were brought in to cut carbon dioxide emissions and to save energy. With the introduction of these new rules, as much as 19 terawatt-hours (TWh) could be saved annually in the EU (1 terawatt is equivalent to 1 000 watts).

Manufacturers are challenging the environmental friendliness of the measure, maintaining that by lowering the appliances' power, their capacity to suck up dirt from the floor will be reduced. Consequently, users will be forced to do the vacuuming for twice as long, thereby cancelling out any energy savings.

It also appears that the EU tested the vacuum cleaners while empty and dust-free to ascertain their energy consumption, and therefore the methodology used does not simulate real-life use, meaning that the laboratory results are very different to what happens in people's homes.

Can the Commission specify exactly how the vacuum cleaners were tested?

Does the Commission not believe that the entry into force of the new rules does not really protect consumers?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

Energy consumption of vacuum cleaners depends, among others, on how well a vacuum cleaner picks up dust. For this reason, the energy consumption formula in the regulations takes into account not only power, but also dust pick-up performance. It should therefore be clarified that vacuum cleaners with long cleaning time are considered inefficient for the purpose of the regulation.

The regulations on ecodesign ([1]) and energy labelling ([2]) require reliable, accurate and reproducible test methods to be used. The Commission considers that the test method using an empty receptacle has fulfilled these requirements. At present, a test method with a partly loaded receptacle is not available and the Commission intends to ask standardisation organisations to develop this test method in time for the review of the regulations in 2018.

The Commission believes the regulations are beneficial to consumers because they will provide more accurate information to consumers as regards the energy and dust pick-up performance of the vacuum cleaners on the market. Many consumers are not aware that vacuum cleaners with higher power do not necessarily perform better. Moreover, the measures will achieve considerable energy savings of 19 TWh of electricity per year by 2020.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 666/2013.
([2]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) no 665/2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012654/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Violazioni nei delfinari dell'UE

Alcune associazioni animaliste denunciano che i delfinari dell'Unione europea, inclusi quelli nazionali, non rispettano la direttiva 1999/22/CE relativa alla custodia degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici.

Ad oggi in Europa ci sono 34 delfinari (suddivisi in 15 Stati membri) con 305 cetacei (piccole balene, delfini e focene) tenuti in cattività. In particolare, gli Stati membri vengono meno al loro obbligo di assicurare che gli zoo partecipino ad attività di conservazione delle specie, di promuovere l'educazione e la sensibilizzazione del pubblico, di offrire agli animali ambienti in grado di soddisfare le loro esigenze biologiche e di conservazione. Si denunciano anche decessi prematuri e basso successo riproduttivo, che hanno reso insostenibile la conservazione dei delfini tursiopi, e nessuno degli attuali delfinari dell'UE ha effettuato reinserimenti nell'ambiente naturale; sono comuni situazioni di stress e comportamenti stereotipati. Inoltre, il contatto diretto fra il pubblico e i cetacei in cattività espone entrambi a notevoli rischi di contrarre malattie o riportare infortuni. Il rapporto conferma che i tassi di sopravvivenza dei cetacei tenuti in cattività sono inferiori a quelli che si riscontrano in natura.

I dati commerciali indicano che, fra il 1979 e il 2008, sono stati importati 285 cetacei vivi nell'UE, nonostante il divieto di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 (CITES) sull'importazione di cetacei nell'UE a fini prevalentemente commerciali: se il numero dei delfinari dell'UE resterà inalterato o aumenterà, saranno necessarie altre importazioni di delfini catturati in mare, una grave minaccia per le popolazioni di cetacei che vivono in natura.

La Commissione è al corrente di quanto sopra descritto?

La Commissione quali interventi intende attuare al fine di ottenere che in tutti i delfinari europei siano rispettati la direttiva 1999/22/CE e il regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 (CITES)?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei fatti cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento.

La Commissione ha intrapreso una serie di azioni volte a garantire che i delfinari dell'Unione europea siano conformi alle disposizioni della direttiva sui giardini zoologici ([1]) e ai regolamenti dell'UE relativi al commercio di animali selvatici ([2]).

Al riguardo, la Commissione sta esaminando ogni elemento ben documentato e circostanziato portato alla sua attenzione in merito al mancato recepimento o alla mancata attuazione della normativa e, se necessario, adotterà i provvedimenti del caso. Sono prese in considerazione anche le norme applicabili alle importazioni di cetacei catturati allo stato selvatico che prescrivono determinate licenze e certificazioni, le quali possono essere rilasciate solo dopo che le autorità scientifiche degli Stati membri abbiano accertato che le catture non hanno un effetto pregiudizievole sullo stato di conservazione della specie in ambiente naturale e che esse sono effettuate soltanto a fini di riproduzione, ricerca scientifica o insegnamento.

La Commissione sta inoltre elaborando un documento orientativo e di migliori pratiche volto a incoraggiare l'attuazione della direttiva sui giardini zoologici.

([1]) Direttiva 1999/22/CE del Consiglio, del 29 marzo 1999, relativa alla custodia degli animali selvatici nei giardini zoologici.
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 del Consiglio, del 9 dicembre 1996, relativo alla protezione di specie della flora e della fauna selvatiche mediante il controllo del loro commercio, e regolamento (CE) n. 865/2006 della Commissione, del 4 maggio 2006, recante modalità di applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 del Consiglio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012654/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Non-compliance of dolphinaria in the EU

Certain animal welfare associations have complained that dolphinaria in the EU, including those in Italy, do not comply with Directive 1999/22/EC relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos.

Currently there are 34 dolphinaria in Europe (in 15 Member States) with 305 cetaceans (small whales, dolphins and porpoises) kept in captivity. In particular, Member States are not meeting their obligation to ensure that zoos play a role in the conservation of species and public education and awareness, and that they accommodate the animals under conditions which satisfy their biological and conservation requirements. The associations also report premature deaths and low breeding success, making the conservation of bottlenose dolphins unsustainable, and none of the current dolphinaria in the EU have released any animals into the wild. Stress and stereotypic behaviour are commonplace. Furthermore, direct contact between the public and cetaceans exposes both groups to significant risk of disease or injury. The report confirms that the survival rates of cetaceans held in captivity are lower than those found in the wild.

Trade figures show that between 1979 and 2008, 285 live cetaceans were imported into the EU despite the ban under Regulation (EC) No 338/97 (CITES) on imports of cetaceans into the EU for primarily commercial reasons. If the number of dolphinaria in the EU remains the same or expands, imports of further wild-caught dolphins may be necessary. This poses a serious threat to cetacean populations in the wild.

Is the Commission aware of the above?

What action will the Commission take to ensure that all EU dolphinaria comply with Directive 1999/22/EC and Regulation (EC) No 338/97 (CITES)?

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

The Commission is not aware of the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The Commission has taken a number of actions to ensure that EU dolphinaria comply with the Zoos Directive ([1]) and the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations ([2]).

In that regard, the Commission is examining any well-founded and substantiated evidence that is brought to its attention as regards failures of transposition or implementation of that legislation and, if necessary, will take the appropriate steps. This includes rules applying to imports of wild-caught cetaceans that require appropriate permits and certificates, which can only be issued when the Scientific Authorities in the Member States have established that this would not have a harmful effect on the conservation status of the species in the wild and that it is intended only for breeding, scientific research or educational purposes.

The Commission is also currently preparing the production of an 'EU Zoos Directive Guidance and Best Practice Document'.

([1]) Council Directive of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos. 1999/22/EC.
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein and Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 of 4 May 2006 laying down detailed rules concerning the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012656/13
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(7 november 2013)

Betreft: Naleving Rij- en rusttijden (Verordening (EG) nr. 561/2006) voor bestuurders van tweedehandsvrachtwagens

Verordening (EG) nr. 561/2006, tot harmonisatie van bepaalde voorschriften van sociale aard voor het wegvervoer, legt de rij- en rusttijden vast voor bestuurders in het wegvervoer.

Er is onduidelijkheid over de toepassing van de Verordening voor bestuurders van tweedehandsvrachtwagens, die aangekocht worden in een ene lidstaat, en dan vervoerd moeten worden naar een andere lidstaat.

Om een verkochte tweedehandsvrachtwagen van de ene lidstaat naar de andere te brengen, is een bestuurder nodig. De lege tweedehandsvrachtwagen wordt opgehaald bijvoorbeeld in Frankrijk om die naar het Belgisch bedrijf te brengen dat de vrachtwagen aankocht. Op dit traject rijdt de vrachtwagen leeg en met een handelaarsplaat, pas als de vrachtwagen bij de koper is wordt hij ingeschreven en krijgt hij een kentekenplaat.

Het gaat hierbij dus enkel om het transporteren van de vrachtwagen van de verkoper naar de koper van die vrachtwagen of de garage waar de vrachtwagen hersteld zal worden.

Door de controleurs in de verschillende lidstaten is heel wat onduidelijkheid gerezen over dergelijk transport.

Vandaar volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Valt een vrachtwagenbestuurder, die met een lege tweedehandsvrachtwagen rijdt om die naar de koper te brengen onder de verplichtingen inzake rij- en rusttijden zoals vastgelegd in Verordening (EG) nr. 561/2006? Is hij dus verplicht zich aan de rij- en rusttijden te houden?

2. Kan een bestuurder van een dergelijke vrachtwagen uitgezonderd worden op basis van artikel 3 van Verordening (EG) nr. 561/2006 valt? Zo ja, op welke paragraaf van het artikel kan die uitzondering dan gebaseerd zijn?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(19 december 2013)

1. In artikel 4, lid a, van Verordening (EG) nr. 561/2006 tot harmonisatie van bepaalde voorschriften van sociale aard voor het wegvervoer ([1]) wordt wegvervoer omschreven als iedere verplaatsing die geheel of gedeeltelijk over voor openbaar gebruik toegankelijke wegen plaatsvindt, in lege of beladen toestand, door een voertuig, bestemd voor het vervoer van personen of goederen. Daarom moet de bestuurder van een onbeladen voertuig dat binnen de werkingssfeer van Verordening (EG) nr. 561/2006 valt en niet voor algemene of nationale vrijstellingen in aanmerking komt, de bepalingen van die Verordening eerbiedigen.

2. Verordening nr. 561/2006 voorziet niet in een afwijking voor een bestuurder die een lege (nieuw aangekochte) tweedehandsvrachtwagen van de plaats van aankoop brengt naar de plaats waar hij uiteindelijk zal worden ingeschreven. Artikel 3, lid g, van deze Verordening staat namelijk een afwijking toe voor voertuigen die op de weg worden beproefd met het oog op de technische ontwikkeling, reparatie of onderhoud, en nieuwe of vernieuwde voertuigen die nog niet in gebruik zijn genomen. Deze afwijking kan niet tot bovengenoemde voertuigen worden uitgebreid, omdat als algemene regel geldt dat alle vrijstellingen van de EU-wetgeving restrictief worden toegepast. Het is namelijk vaste rechtspraak dat de bij deze Verordening vastgestelde afwijkingen strikt moeten worden geïnterpreteerd om niet strijdig te zijn met de hoofddoelstellingen ervan, met name verkeersveiligheid (zie het arrest van het Hof van Justitie van 28 juli 2011 in zaak C-554/09 Seeger).

([1]) PB L 102 van 11.4.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012656/13
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Compliance with driving times and rest periods (Regulation (EC) No 561/2006) for drivers of second-hand goods vehicles

Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport lays down driving times and rest periods for drivers engaged in road transport.

There is a lack of clarity about the application of the regulation to drivers of second-hand goods vehicles that are bought in one Member State and then have to be transported to another Member State.

In order to get a second-hand goods vehicle sold in one Member State to a second Member State, a driver is necessary. The empty second-hand goods vehicle may, for example, be collected in France in order to be transported to the Belgian company that has bought it. On such a journey, the goods vehicle is driven empty bearing a trade licence plate. It is only when it reaches the buyer that registration takes place and a (registration) licence plate is issued.

This thus refers solely to the transportation of the goods vehicle from seller to buyer or to the garage where the goods vehicle is to be repaired.

A great deal of uncertainty has arisen among inspectors in the various Member States about this kind of transport operation.

I have the following questions for the Commission in this connection:

1. Does a goods vehicle driver who is driving an empty second-hand goods vehicle in order to deliver it to a buyer fall under the obligations laid down by Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 with regard to driving times and rest periods? Is that driver, in other words, obliged to observe these driving times and rest periods?

2. Can a driver of such a vehicle be subject to an exception under Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006? If so, on which paragraph of the said article could such an exception be based?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

1. Article 4(a) of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport ([1]) defines carriage by road as any journey made entirely or in part on roads open to the public by a vehicle, whether laden or not, used for the carriage of passengers or goods. Hence, the driver driving an empty vehicle that falls in the scope of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 and is not subject to any general or national exemptions is obliged to respect the provisions of that regulation.

2. Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 does not provide for a derogation for a driver driving an empty (newly purchased) second-hand goods vehicle from the place of purchase to the place where it will be ultimately registered. Indeed, Article 3(g) of this regulation allows for a derogation for vehicles undergoing road tests for technical development, repair or maintenance purposes and for new or rebuilt vehicles not yet put into service. This derogation cannot be extended to cover also the abovementioned vehicles, as in general, all exemptions from the EU rules should be applied restrictively. It is indeed settled case-law that the derogations established by this regulation should be interpreted strictly so as not to be contrary to its main objectives such as road safety (See the judgment of the Court of justice of 28 July 2011 in Case C-554/09 Seeger).

([1]) OJ L 102 of 11.4.2006.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012657/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Possível implementação de um imposto sobre a riqueza — relatório do FMI

Num relatório publicado no início de outubro pelo Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI), refere-se que um imposto sobre a riqueza teria «fortes hipóteses» de sucesso, precisando que uma cobrança de 10 % nos 15 países da zona euro permitiria a estes países repor os défices aos níveis de antes da crise.

A ideia suscitou polémica, porquanto é sabido que a opção para «repor os défices», plasmada, desde logo, nos programas UE-FMI, tem sido a de cortar nos rendimentos da generalidade da população (salários, reformas, prestações sociais, funções sociais do Estado), poupando as grandes fortunas, que, nalguns casos, até têm aumentado o seu pecúlio.

Em face da polémica, responsáveis do FMI vieram entretanto afirmar que o imposto sobre a riqueza era apenas uma «sugestão» de peritos do FMI e não uma recomendação política da instituição.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento do referido relatório? Que avaliação faz do mesmo?

2. Qual a sua posição relativamente à criação de um imposto sobre a riqueza?

3. Reconhece que, como é afirmado no relatório, existe «margem suficiente» em economias avançadas para aumentar os impostos sobre as grandes fortunas?

4. Em face dos dados agora dados a conhecer pelo relatório, manterá a Comissão a sua posição de defesa de cortes nos rendimentos da generalidade da população (salários, reformas, prestações sociais, funções sociais do Estado), sob o pretexto de «repor os défices»?

Resposta dada por Algirdas Šemeta em nome da Comissão
(19 de dezembro de 2013)

1. Sim. O relatório reflete o crescente relevo dado à tributação da riqueza nos meios académicos e no debate político, favorecido por uma maior disponibilidade de dados e necessidades prementes de mais receitas. Dá conta de uma posição equilibrada quando reflete sobre os prós e os contras das opções em matéria de tributação da riqueza.

2. A introdução/alargamento da tributação da riqueza tem sido suscitada pela Comissão em relação aos bens imóveis, enquanto parte de uma transição da carga fiscal recomendada no âmbito do Semestre Europeu. No que diz respeito à tributação de outras formas de riqueza, a Comissão não tomou posição até à data.

3. É amplamente reconhecido que a tributação da riqueza é menos prejudicial para o crescimento do que a de outras bases tributáveis, como, por exemplo, os rendimentos do trabalho. As conclusões do relatório parecem, no entanto, ser menos simples. O relatório analisa cuidadosamente as dificuldades de tributar diferentes tipos de ativos e salienta a necessidade de cooperação internacional. Só são apresentadas conclusões firmes no que se refere aos impostos sobre imóveis destinados a habitação. É necessária mais investigação para compreender a dinâmica das desigualdades em termos de riqueza e a margem para tributação.

4. A Comissão não defende a ideia de cortes generalizados nos rendimentos da população em geral. Continua a defender que a consolidação orçamental é inevitável em países que não disponham de sustentabilidade orçamental, deve ser realizada com um impacto negativo mínimo sobre o crescimento e a criação de emprego, tendo em devida conta os possíveis efeitos sociais prejudiciais e a necessidade de proteger os mais vulneráveis. As orientações da Comissão em matéria de reforma fiscal em países que estão sob pressão para garantir a consolidação orçamental evidenciam preocupações de natureza social e de equidade. A Comissão partilha a opinião de que devem ser exploradas todas as fontes de rendimento possíveis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012657/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Possible introduction of a wealth tax — IMF report

A report published at the beginning of October by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) states that the 'conditions for success are strong' for a wealth tax, with a tax rate of 10% in the 15 euro area countries required to bring down public debt to pre-crisis levels.

This proposal has sparked controversy, as it is recognised that the chosen method, reflected in EU-IMF programmes from the beginning, to 'reset the deficits' has been to cut the income of the general population (salaries, pensions, benefits and State social responsibilities), and to protect large fortunes, which have in some cases, even grown in size.

IMF representatives have responded to the controversy by stating that the wealth tax was only a 'suggestion' from IMF experts and not a policy proposal from the institution.

1. Is the Commission aware of this report? What is its opinion of it?

2. What is its view of introducing a wealth tax?

3. Does it agree that, as stated in the report, there is 'sufficient margin' in advanced economies to increase the taxes on large fortunes?

4. Given the data in this report, does the Commission continue to defend the cuts to the income of the general population (salaries, pensions, benefits and State social responsibilities), under the pretext that it will 'reset the deficits'?

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

1. Yes. The report reflects increasing consideration of wealth taxation in academia and policy debate, spurred by improved data availability and pressing revenue needs. It gives a balanced view when reflecting the pros and cons of wealth taxation options.

2. Introducing/broadening wealth taxation has been urged by the Commission with regard to recurrent taxation of immovable property as part of the 'tax shift' recommended in the European Semester. As regards the taxation of other forms of wealth, the Commission has not taken a position to date.

3. It is widely held that the taxation of wealth is less detrimental to growth than other bases, e.g. labour income. The report's conclusions seem however to be less straightforward. The report carefully discusses difficulties of taxation of different types of assets, and highlights the need for international cooperation. Strong conclusions are only presented for taxes on residential property. More research is needed to understand the dynamics of wealth inequalities and the scope for taxation.

4. The Commission does not defend the idea of cuts in the income of the general population across the board. It continues to posit that fiscal consolidation is inevitable in countries lacking fiscal sustainability, and should be achieved with the least detrimental impact on growth and employment creation, taking due account of possible harmful social impacts and of the protection to the most vulnerable. The Commission's guidance on fiscal reform in countries under consolidation pressure has emphasised the issues of social concern and equity. The Commission shares the view that all possible sources of revenue have to be exploited.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012658/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Despedimentos na multinacional Alstom

Notícias publicadas hoje na imprensa portuguesa dão conta de que a multinacional Alstom se prepara para despedir 1300 trabalhadores, sobretudo na Europa. Todavia, o comunicado do grupo industrial francês, citado nas notícias, não esclarece em que países serão suprimidos postos de trabalho.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? Em particular, sabe que países da UE serão afetados e quais os postos de trabalho em causa em cada caso?

2. Que diligências efetuou ou vai efetuar tendo em vista a salvaguarda dos postos de trabalho destes trabalhadores?

3. Recebeu a Alstom, em algum momento, financiamentos da UE? Em caso afirmativo, em que países e quais os montantes em causa em cada caso?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de janeiro de 2014)

1. A Comissão não tem conhecimento dos pormenores dos planos da Alstom no que respeita aos países abrangidos e ao número de trabalhadores em cada país.

2. A Comissão não tem competência para intervir em decisões específicas das empresas. No entanto, a Comissão insta as empresas a adotar boas práticas relacionadas com a antecipação e a gestão socialmente responsável da reestruturação. Na sequência do seu Livro Verde de janeiro de 2012 ([1])e da aprovação pelo Parlamento Europeu do relatório Cercas ([2]), em 15 de janeiro de 2013, a Comissão proporá, em dezembro de 2013, uma comunicação relativa a um quadro de qualidade para as operações de reestruturação, que irá enquadrar a legislação da UE e as iniciativas relevantes para a reestruturação e apresentará as melhores práticas a serem implementadas por todas as partes interessadas.

Além disso, a Comissão recorda que, em caso de encerramento de empresas, a entidade patronal tem de respeitar as suas obrigações em matéria de informação e consulta dos trabalhadores, em conformidade com a legislação da UE ([3]).

3. As informações sobre quais as organizações e empresas que receberam financiamento proveniente do orçamento da UE podem ser consultadas utilizando o motor de pesquisa criado no quadro do sistema de transparência financeira, disponível em BudgWeb ([4]).

A Comissão também salienta que os trabalhadores afetados pela reestruturação podem candidatar-se ao apoio do FSE e, se reunirem as condições necessárias para tal, do Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização.

([1]) Ver as respostas e um resumo em: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

([2]) Resolução do Parlamento Europeu, de 15 de janeiro de 2013, em matéria de informação e consulta dos trabalhadores, antecipação e a gestão da reestruturação http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0005+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

([3]) Ver, em especial, as Diretivas 2009/38/CE, 2002/14/CE e 98/59/CE.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/beneficiaries_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012658/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Dismissals at the multinational Alstom

The Portuguese press has today reported that the multinational Alstom is preparing to dismiss 1300 workers, mainly in the EU. However, the statement from the French industrial group, quoted in the reports, does not make it clear in which countries the jobs will be lost.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? If so, does it know in which EU countries the jobs will be lost and the numbers involved in each case?

2. What measures has the Commission taken or does it intend to take to safeguard the jobs of these workers?

3. Has Alstom received EU funding at any time? If so, in which countries and how much in each case?

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

1. The Commission is not aware of the details of Alstom plans with regard to the countries covered and the number of workers in each country.

2. The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company's decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practices anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring. Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([1]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report ([2]), the Commission will present in December 2013 a communication establishing a EU Quality Framework for Restructuring that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and will present the best practices to be followed by all stakeholders.

In addition, the Commission reminds that, in case of closure of undertakings, the employer has to respect his/her obligations relating to information and consultation of workers in accordance with EC law ([3]).

3. Information on which organisations and companies have received funding from the EU budget may be found by using the search engine set up within the Financial Transparency System available on BudgWeb ([4]).

The Commission would also point out that workers affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en
([2]) EP Resolution of 15 January 2013 on Information and consultation of workers, anticipation and management of restructuring, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0005+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN
([3]) In particular, Directives 2009/38/EC, 2002/14/EC, 98/59/EC.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/beneficiaries_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012659/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(7 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Tentativa de despedimentos ilegais na McDonald's

Em Portugal, jovens trabalhadores de restaurantes da cadeia norte-americana McDonald's, confrontados com uma abrupta série de propostas de rescisão de contratos — que o Sindicato da Hotelaria do Sul considerou como despedimento coletivo ilegal — decidiram unir-se e organizar-se, para resistirem e defenderem os postos de trabalho e os seus direitos.

Na semana passada vários trabalhadores foram impedidos de entrar ao serviço, sendo-lhes comunicado que deveriam comparecer numa reunião mais tarde e noutro local. Foram, então, confrontados com propostas para rescisão de contratos, apresentadas em escritórios de advogados e com fortes pressões para aceitarem, o que alguns recusaram tendo solicitado o apoio do Sindicato da Hotelaria do Sul, da CGTP-IN.

Os trabalhadores desmentem a versão da empresa, que diz tratar-se de 53 funcionários que «não correspondem ao perfil traçado», existindo mesmo relatos de discriminação racial por parte da empresa.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento de situações idênticas, de tentativas de despedimentos ilegais e de existência de relatos de práticas de discriminação racial por parte da McDonald's, noutros países da UE?

2. Em caso afirmativo, que diligências efetuou ou pensa efetuar para evitar situações de abuso sobre os trabalhadores?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(6 de janeiro de 2014)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de que a McDonald's tenha tentado despedir trabalhadores em Portugal ou em qualquer outro Estado-Membro da forma descrita pelo Senhor Deputado.

A Comissão recorda que a legislação da UE ([1]) proíbe a discriminação em razão da raça ou da origem étnica no que diz respeito às condições de emprego e de trabalho, incluindo o despedimento.

A legislação da UE ([2]) estabelece igualmente que os empregadores devem informar e consultar os representantes dos trabalhadores antes de decidir efetuar despedimentos coletivos, em função de determinados limiares que variam com o Estado-Membro em causa. O termo «despedimentos coletivos» refere-se aos despedimentos efetuados por um empregador, por um ou vários motivos não relacionados com as pessoas dos trabalhadores em causa ([3]).

A Comissão não está em posição de avaliar os factos ou de decidir se uma empresa privada cumpriu ou não as disposições nacionais que transpõem as diretivas da UE. Cabe às autoridades nacionais competentes, nomeadamente os tribunais, assegurar que a legislação nacional que transpõe as diretivas da UE é correta e eficazmente aplicada pelo empregador em causa, tendo em conta as circunstâncias específicas de cada caso.

([1]) Em especial, a Diretiva 2000/43/CE do Conselho, de 29 de junho de 2000, que aplica o princípio da igualdade de tratamento entre as pessoas, sem distinção de origem racial ou étnica (JOL 180 de 19.7.2000).
([2]) Em especial, a Diretiva 98/59/CE do Conselho , de 20 de julho de 1998, relativa à aproximação das legislações dos Estados-Membros respeitantes aos despedimentos coletivos, JO L 225 de 12.8.1998.
([3]) Artigo 1.°, n.° 1, alínea a), da Diretiva 98/59/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012659/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: McDonald's illegal attempts to dismiss workers

In Portugal, young employees of the US chain, McDonald's, when confronted with the sudden threat of redundancy — which the Southern Union of Hotel Workers considers as illegal collective dismissal — have responded by uniting and organising themselves to stand up for and defend their jobs and their rights.

Last week several employees were prevented from entering their workplace and were told they must attend a meeting later at another location. They were presented with proposals to terminate their contracts at lawyers' offices and were pressured strongly to accept these. Some refused, having accepted the support of the Southern Union of Hotel Workers of the General Portuguese Trade Union.

The workers contest the company's version of event, which is that the 53 workers 'did not meet the required profile'. There are also reports of racial discrimination within the company.

1. Is the Commission aware of McDonald's attempting to illegally dismiss workers in the same way, or of racial discrimination within the company, in other EU countries?

2. If so, what measures has the Commission taken or does it intend to take to safeguard the jobs of these workers?

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

The Commission is not aware that McDonald's has attempted to dismiss workers in Portugal or in any other Member State in the manner described by the Honourable Member.

It would point out that EC law ([1]) prohibits discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin with regard to employment and working conditions, including dismissal.

EC law ([2]) also provides that employers inform and consult employees' representatives before they decide to effect collective redundancies, subject to certain thresholds varying with the Member State concerned. The term 'collective redundancies' means dismissals effected by an employer for one or more reasons not related to the individual workers concerned ([3]).

The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with any national provisions which serve to implement EU directives. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing EC law is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

([1]) In particular, Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000.
([2]) In particular, Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998.
([3]) Article 1(1)(a) of Directive 98/59/EC.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub P-012660/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(7 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Tniġġis akustiku

Skont l-aħħar rapport ippubblikat mill-WHO u miċ-Ċentru Konġunt tar-Riċerka tal-Kummissjoni, it-tniġġis akustiku maħluq mit-traffiku huwa responsabbli għat-telfa ta' madwar miljun sena ta' ħajja f'saħħitha kull sena fl-Unjoni Ewropea. L-Artikolu 5 tad-Direttiva dwar l-Istorbju Ambjentali (2002/49/KE) iqiegħed ir-responsabbiltà tal-istabbiliment u r-rappurtar tal-valuri limitu tal-istorbju fuq l-Istati Membri stess permezz tas-sussidjarjetà, u kull Stat Membru ttraspona d-Direttiva f'liġi nazzjonali sal-2004. Għaldaqstant, l-awtoritajiet lokali huma meħtieġa joħolqu "mapep strateġiċi dwar l-istorbju" għal toroq, ferroviji u ajruporti ewlenin minflok valur limitu vinkolanti tal-istorbju fl-UE kollha.

X'proċeduri hemm li jiżguraw li l-Kummissjoni tkun tista' tissorvelja lill-Istati Membri hekk kif dawn jinfurzaw din id-direttiva fuq livelli lokali? Barra minn hekk, kif jistgħu, iċ-ċittadini tal-UE, ikunu appoġġjati mill-KE jekk l-awtoritajiet lokali ma jieħduxmiżuri korrettivi u f'waqthom biex itejbu l-fluss tat-traffiku sabiex jitnaqqas it-tniġġis akustiku fiż-żoni residenzjali tagħhom għal livelli aċċettabbli?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' Diċembru 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni, — flimkien mal-Aġenzija Ewropea għall-Ambjent, — tevalwa l-informazzjoni mressqa formalment mill-Istati Membri fil-kuntest tad-Direttiva 2002/49/KE [1] tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill li tirrigwardja l-istudju u l-amministrazzjoni tal-ħsejjes ambjentali. Il-Kummissjoni rrevediet il-mapep tal-istorbju mħejjija mill-Istati Membri, u se tlesti r-rieżami tal-pjanijiet ta' azzjoni fix-xhur li ġejjin.

Fl-Artikolu 8(7) tagħha, id-Direttiva tirrikjedi li l-awtoritajiet kompetenti nazzjonali jikkonsultaw mal-pubbliku dwar il-pjanijiet ta' azzjoni proposti. Barra minn hekk, l-Artikolu 9 jobbliga lill-Istati Membri jxerrdu l-mapep tal-istorbju u l-pjanijiet ta' azzjoni, u li jqegħduhom għad-dispożizzjoni tal-pubbliku.

[1] ĠU L 189, 18.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012660/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(7 November 2013)

Subject: Noise pollution

According to the latest report published by the World Health Organisation and the Commission's Joint Research Centre, noise pollution created by traffic is responsible for the loss of approximately 1 million healthy years of life per year within the European Union. Article 5 of the environmental noise directive (2002/49/EC) places the responsibility of establishing and reporting noise limit values on Member States themselves through subsidiarity, and each Member State transposed the directive into national law by 2004. Thus, local authorities are required to create 'strategic noise maps' for major roads, railways, and airports in place of a binding EU-wide noise limit value.

What procedures are in place to ensure that the Commission is able to monitor Member States as they enforce this directive at local levels? Moreover, how can EU citizens be supported by the Commission if local authorities do not take corrective and timely measures to improve traffic flow in order to reduce noise pollution in their residential areas to acceptable levels?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

The Commission — together with the European Environment Agency — evaluates the information formally submitted by Member States in the context of Directive 2002/49/EC [1] of the European Parliament and Council relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. The Commission has reviewed the noise maps prepared by the Member States and will complete its review of the action plans in the coming months.

The directive requires, in its Articles 8(7), that national competent authorities shall consult the public about proposed action plans. In addition, Article 9 obliges the Member States to disseminate the noise maps and action plans and make them available to the public.

[1] OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-012662/13
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(8 novembre 2013)

Objet: Demande d'autorisation de culture du maïs GT 1507 de la firme Pioneer

Le maïs 1507 génétiquement modifié a été mis au point par la firme américaine Pioneer afin de rendre le maïs résistant à certaines larves d'insectes nuisibles tels que la pyrale d'Europe. Ce type de maïs est actuellement autorisé dans l'Union européenne à des fins d'alimentation humaine et animale, mais sa culture est encore interdite. En 2001, la société Pioneer a déposé une demande d'autorisation de culture du maïs 1507 conformément à la directive 2001/18/CE relative à la dissémination volontaire d'organismes génétiquement modifiés dans l'environnement.

Le 18 novembre 2011, l'Agence européenne pour la sécurité alimentaire (AESA) a mis à jour son avis du 19 octobre 2011 relatif à la sécurité du maïs GM 1507 pour l'environnement (référence: EFSA Journal 2011; 9(11): 2429 [73 pp.] et reconnaît que «dans certaines conditions de culture, quelques espèces de papillons diurnes et nocturnes non cibles très sensibles pouvaient être menacées en cas d'exposition au pollen du maïs 1507». Dans ce même avis, l'AESA reconnaît également ne pas s'être prononcée sur l'évaluation des risques liés à la tolérance aux herbicides (dont le glufosinate d'ammonium) du maïs GT 1507. L'AESA a toutefois demandé à la firme Pioneer de préciser son plan de surveillance post-commercialisation pour limiter un possible impact environnemental de la mise en culture de ce maïs. Sur cette base, la Commission européenne a demandé à la société Pioneer de modifier sa demande d'autorisation, demande que la firme Pioneer a … tout simplement rejetée!

Le 6 novembre 2013, la Commission européenne, faisant suite au recours en manquement introduit par la firme Pioneer et à l'arrêt (affaire T-164/10) du 26 septembre 2013, a «demandé une discussion avec les États membres pendant le prochain Conseil environnement» qui se tiendra le 13 décembre 2013.

Autrement dit, en proposant aux États membres d'autoriser la culture du maïs 1507, la Commission européenne n'a donc pas suivi son propre constat d'un possible impact sur l'environnement, et autorise de facto la culture d'un OGM dont l'évaluation des risques n'a été que partielle. En effet, Comment l'exécutif européen justifie-t-il son positionnement qui fait fi du principe de précaution (article 191, paragraphe 2, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne) et des préoccupations d'une majorité de citoyens européens (l'Eurobaromètre de 2010 indique en effet que 61 % des citoyens européens se méfient des OGM)? Compte tenu des risques encourus et eux-mêmes reconnus par l'AESA, pourquoi la Commission européenne n'a-t-elle pas insisté pour que la firme Pioneer modifie sa demande d'autorisation?

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

La proposition de décision du Conseil d'autorisation de culture du maïs 1507 ([1]) n'est pas fondée sur une évaluation partielle des risques. Le premier avis ([2]) de l'AESA ([3]) a pris en considération, ente autres, les effets nuisibles potentiels sur l'environnement de l'utilisation de l'herbicide glufosinate dans la culture du maïs 1507. La requérante a informé la Commission en 2007 que le maïs 1507 ne serait pas commercialisé dans l'UE pour la tolérance au glufosinate, mais seulement pour la résistance aux insectes, ce qui modifie la portée de la demande. L'AESA, dans ses derniers avis, a évalué cette modification à sa juste valeur et n'a pas estimé devoir adapter l'analyse de l'impact éventuel de l'utilisation du glufosinate. La proposition énonce clairement le changement de portée de la notification originale. Elle signale que les conditions d'approbation du glufosinate ont été récemment restreintes ([4]) et que, par conséquent, l'épandage généralisé sur les champs de maïs ne peut plus être autorisé.

Il a été demandé en 2011 à la requérante d'appliquer les recommandations de l'AESA sur le plan de contrôle et les mesures d'atténuation du développement d'une résistance chez les ennemis des cultures ciblés, ce qu'elle a refusé de faire dans le cadre de l'action judiciaire ([5]). Dans son arrêt, le Tribunal a indiqué que ce refus ne justifiait pas que la Commission n'ait pas soumis la proposition au Conseil et l'a condamnée pour sa carence. La Commission a modifié la proposition pour refléter les recommandations de l'AESA et a demandé que le plan de contrôle soit actualisé avant que l'accord puisse être accordé.

([1]) Définition complète: proposition de décision du Conseil d'autorisation du maïs 1507 adoptée par la Commission le 6 novembre 2013. Ci-après «la proposition».
([2]) En 2005.
([3]) Agence européenne de la sécurité alimentaire.
([4]) Par le règlement d'exécution de la Commission (UE) nº 365/2013.
([5]) affaire T-164/10.

La Commission a été tenue de publier la proposition après l'arrêt du Tribunal. Cela confirme qu'il est urgent d'harmoniser des règles européennes d'autorisation de la culture des OGM qui soient à la fois strictes et prévisibles, en prenant dûment en considération les contextes nationaux. C'est pourquoi elle a demandé aux États membres de trouver un accord sur la «proposition de culture d'OGM».

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012662/13
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Pioneer's application for GM maize 1507 to be authorised for cultivation

Genetically modified maize 1507 was developed by the American company Pioneer to be resistant to certain harmful insect larvae, such as that of the European corn borer. This type of maize is currently authorised in the EU for use as food and feed, but not for cultivation. In 2001, Pioneer submitted an application for maize 1507 to be authorised for cultivation under Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment.

On 18 November 2011, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) updated its opinion of 19 October 2011 on the environmental safety of GM maize 1507 (reference: EFSA Journal 2011; 9(11): 2429 [73 pp.]), acknowledging that 'in certain cultivation conditions, some species of highly sensitive non-target butterflies and moths may be at risk when exposed to maize 1507 pollen'. In the same opinion, the EFSA also acknowledged that it had not considered the potential risks linked to the tolerance of maize 1507 to herbicides, such as glufosinate-ammonium, and thus called on Pioneer to clarify its post-market monitoring plan designed to limit the potential adverse effects on the environment of the cultivation of GM maize 1507. On that basis, the Commission asked Pioneer to revise its application for authorisation, but the American company simply refused!

On 6 November 2013, in the wake of the action for failure to act initiated by Pioneer against the Commission and the judgment (Case T-164/10) handed down on 26 September 2013, the Commission 'requested a discussion with Member States at the next Environment Council', to be held on 13 December 2013.

In other words, in proposing to authorise the cultivation of maize 1507 the Commission is disregarding its own conclusions regarding the potential adverse impact on the environment and in effect is authorising the cultivation of a GMO on the basis of partial risk assessment. How does the European executive justify this attitude, which flies in the face of the precautionary principle (Article 191(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) and the concerns of a majority of Europeans (the 2010 Eurobarometer survey showed that 61% of Europeans were wary of GMOs)? Bearing in mind the risks acknowledged by the EFSA, why has the Commission not insisted that Pioneer modify its application for authorisation?

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

The proposal for a Council Decision for authorisation of the 1507 maize ([1]) is not based on a partial risk assessment. The first EFSA ([2]) opinion ([3]) considered *inter alia* potential adverse effects on the environment of the use of the glufosinate herbicide during cultivation of 1507 maize. The applicant informed the Commission in 2007 that the 1507 maize would not be marketed in the EU for glufosinate tolerance, but only for insect resistance, thus modifying the application's scope. The later EFSA opinions considered correctly this change of scope and did not update the risk assessment on possible impacts of the use of glufosinate. The proposal sets out clearly the change in scope of the original notification. It notes that conditions of approval of glufosinate have been recently restricted ([4]) and therefore broadcast applications on maize fields cannot be authorised anymore.

The applicant was asked in 2011 to implement EFSA recommendations on the monitoring plan and mitigation measures for resistance development in the target pest, which they refused to do in the framework of the Court case ([5]). In its judgment, the General Court indicated that this refusal did not justify the Commission not having submitted the proposal to the Council, and condemned it for failure to act. The Commission amended the proposal to reflect EFSA recommendations and required the monitoring plan to be updated before consent can be granted.

The Commission was duty bound to issue the proposal after the ruling of the General Court. This confirms the urgency of reconciling strict and predictable European authorisation rules for GMO cultivation, with fair consideration of national contexts. This is why it urged in parallel Member States to find an agreement on the 'Cultivation proposal'.

([1]) Complete definition: The proposal for a Council Decision for authorisation of the 1507 maize adopted by the Commission on 6 November 2013. Thereafter 'the proposal'.
([2]) European Food Safety Authority.
([3]) in 2005.
([4]) By Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 365/2013.
([5]) Case T-164/10.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-012663/13
til Kommissionen
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(8. november 2013)

Om: Undersøgelse om mulig korruption i Bulgarien

Det er på grundlag af de halvårlige statusrapporter i henhold til Mekanismen for Samarbejde og Kontrol en velkendt kendsgerning, at der er alvorlige problemer med korruption i Bulgarien. Af denne årsag har vi holdt nøje øje med begivenheder i Bulgarien, som muligvis kan omfatte korruption.

I tv-udsendelsen *Otkrito*, som blev vist på den bulgarske nationale tv-kanal (BTN) den 11. og den 24. september 2013, blev der draget konklusioner vedrørende den igangværende retssag nr. 14/2011 mellem en gruppe ejendomsinvestorer og den bulgarske First International Bank ved byretten i Targovishte. Disse konklusioner kan påvirke resultatet af retssagen, og jeg er derfor meget bekymret for, at den pågældende gruppe investorer ikke vil få en retfærdig rettergang.

Den bank, der er under anklage, First International Bank, kan på uretmæssig vis have udøvet pression mod domstole og dommere i kraft af dens position i lokalsamfundet, og den kan endda have korrumperet dommere.

På grundlag af tv-udsendelsen lader det for mig til, at der allerede er afsagt en dom fra tv-stationens side, og at denne muligvis kan være under stærkt pres fra bankens side til at fremstille sagen på en bestemt måde. Jeg opfordrer stærkt og indtrængende Kommissionen til at holde nøje øje med denne retssag og til at træffe passende foranstaltninger, såfremt det viser sig, at der rent faktisk er foregået korruption.

Jeg vil gerne vide, om Kommissionen er blevet gjort opmærksom på nogen tilfælde af korruption, eller om der på uretmæssig vis er udøvet pression mod retten i forbindelse med denne sag, og i påkommende tilfælde, hvad Kommissionen agter at gøre ved det?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af José Manuel Barroso
(27. november 2013)

Kommissionen har ikke kompetence til at gribe ind i verserende sager ved nationale domstole med undtagelse af specifikke spørgsmål om anvendelsen af EU's regler. Tvister om sådanne sager skal fremlægges ved de nationale appeldomstole. Klager om formodede forseelser begået af enkelte retsembedsmænd i forbindelse med udførelsen af deres tjenstlige pligter skal rettes til de kompetente nationale myndigheder.

Mere generelt overvåger Kommissionen fremskridtet med hensyn til retsreformer og bekæmpelsen af korruption og organiseret kriminalitet i Bulgarien og kommer med henstillinger til de nationale myndigheder i form af regelmæssige rapporter i forbindelse med Mekanismen for Samarbejde og Kontrol. Den seneste rapport blev vedtaget i juli 2012 ([1]) og den næste vedtages i januar 2014.

Professionalisme, ansvarlighed og effektivitet i retsvæsnet samt foranstaltninger til bekæmpelse af korruption i de retshåndhævende myndigheder og ved domstolene er vigtige parametre for vurdering af fremskridtet i forbindelse med Mekanismen for Samarbejde og Kontrol.

([1]) KOM(2012)0411.
http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012663/13
to the Commission
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Investigation into possible corruption in Bulgaria

It is a well known fact from the biannual progress reports under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism that there are serious problems of corruption in Bulgaria. For this reason we have been keeping a close eye on events in Bulgaria that might involve corruption.

The television programme *Otkrito*, shown on Bulgarian National TV (BTN) on 11 and 24 September 2013, drew conclusions regarding the ongoing court case no. 14/2011 between a group of real estate investors and the Bulgarian First International Bank in the Targovishte District Court. The conclusions drawn could influence the outcome of the case and I therefore have deep concerns that the group of investors in question will not get a fair trial.

The bank accused, First International Bank, may have exerted undue pressure on the courts and judges by virtue of its position in the local community and may even have corrupted judges.

From the TV programme it seems to me that a verdict has already been passed by the TV station, which might be under strong pressure from the bank to present the case in a certain light. I strongly urge the Commission to keep a close eye on the court case and to take appropriate action if it transpires that corruption has indeed taken place.

I would like to know if the Commission has been made aware of any corruption or if any undue pressure has been put on the court regarding this case and, if so, what does the Commission intend to do about it?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(27 November 2013)

The Commission does not have the competence to intervene in cases pending before the national courts except on specific issues related to the application of European law. Disputes about such cases should be addressed to the national courts of appeal. Complaints about suspected misconduct by individual magistrates in the conduct of their official duties should be directed to the competent national authorities.

More generally, the Commission monitors the progress on judicial reform and the fight against corruption and organised crime in Bulgaria and gives recommendations to the national authorities via regular reports in the context of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM). The last report was adopted in July 2012 ([1]) and the next one will be adopted in January 2014.

Under the CVM the professionalism, accountability and efficiency of the judiciary as well as the measures taken against corruption in the law enforcement agencies and courts are important parameters on which progress is assessed.

([1]) COM(2012) 411.
http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012667/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Aggressioni ai danni di ebrei nell'isola di Djerba

Alla fine di ottobre 2013 il sito di notizie *Maghrebia* ha riferito che alcuni ebrei abitanti nell'isola tunisina di Djerba sono stati vittime di diverse aggressioni perpetrate da estremisti. Djerba è nota per la sua tolleranza e diversità in tema di religione; essa ospita la sinagoga El Ghriba, la più vecchia dell'Africa, nonché altre 18 sinagoghe, due chiese e numerose moschee.

La scuola ebraica di Djerba è stata recentemente presa di mira da due uomini che hanno danneggiato il cancello della scuola. Stando a quanto segnalato uno degli abitanti di fede ebraica era riuscito a farli desistere, ma quando l'incidente è stato denunciato ai servizi di sicurezza non è stata adottata alcuna misura e nessuno degli autori è stato tratto in custodia. Inoltre due ragazze sono state aggredite fisicamente davanti a una sinagoga in occasione del festival ebraico di Sukkot: secondo quanto riferito dal presidente dell'Associazione tunisina per la difesa delle minoranze sarebbero state aggredite a calci e scaraventate per terra.

1. Quali misure sta adottando l'UE per affrontare il tema delle minoranze tunisine vulnerabili alle aggressioni dei gruppi radicali?

2. Intende l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente chiedere alle autorità tunisine quali iniziative pratiche esse stiano adottando per contribuire a incoraggiare la tolleranza religiosa?

3. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari dell'UE in servizio a Tunisi nei confronti dei responsabili che hanno orchestrato le aggressioni contro la comunità ebraica di Djerba?

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

L'UE segue attentamente la situazione dei diritti umani in Tunisia e utilizza tutti gli strumenti disponibili, tra cui la diplomazia pubblica, il dialogo politico e il finanziamento di progetti, per promuovere il rispetto dei diritti fondamentali, compresi quelli delle minoranze.

L'UE ritiene che gli Stati membri abbiano l'obbligo di garantire la tutela dei diritti umani e di vigilare per prevenire, indagare e reprimere gli atti di violenza contro le persone fondati sulla loro religione o sul loro credo. Questi principi figurano nei recenti orientamenti dell'UE sulla libertà di religione o di credo. In questo contesto, la delegazione dell'UE a Tunisi si è incontrata di recente con esponenti della comunità ebraica che hanno espresso un parere globalmente positivo su tali questioni, sia per quanto riguarda la libertà di religione nel paese che in termini di convivenza fra le diverse componenti della società tunisina.

Attraverso lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR), l'UE sostiene specificamente progetti volti a promuovere la libertà di religione o di credo e i diritti delle minoranze in genere. Quest'anno è stato pubblicato un invito globale a presentare proposte in materia di lotta alle discriminazioni, comprese quelle fondate sulla religione o sulle convinzioni personali, con una dotazione complessiva di 20 milioni di EUR, di cui 5 milioni di EUR a sostegno di progetti relativi alla libertà di religione o di credo. Nell'ambito dell'EIDHR la libertà di religione o di credo viene promossa anche attraverso inviti locali a presentare proposte per programmi di sostegno con sede nel paese e piccole sovvenzioni a favore dei difensori dei diritti umani. I difensori dei diritti umani internazionali, regionali e tunisini e le organizzazioni non governative (ONG) possono beneficiare di questo tipo di sovvenzioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012667/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Attacks against Jewish residents on the island of Djerba

In late October 2013, the news site *Maghrebia* reported that Jewish residents on the Tunisian island of Djerba had been the victims of a number of attacks by extremists. Djerba has a reputation for religious tolerance and diversity; it is home to the El Ghriba Synagogue, which is the oldest in Africa, as well as 18 other synagogues, two churches, and many mosques.

Recently the Hebrew school in Djerba was attacked by two men who broke down the school's gate. It is reported that one Jewish resident managed to persuade them to leave, but when the incident was reported to the security services, no action was taken and none of the perpetrators were taken into custody. Similarly, during the Jewish festival of Sukkot, two girls were physically attacked whilst outside a synagogue: according to the President of the Tunisian Association for the Defence of Minorities, they were kicked and pushed to the ground.

1. What steps is the EU taking to reach out to minority groups in Tunisia who are vulnerable to attacks from radical groups?

2. Will the High Representative/Vice-President ask the Tunisian authorities what practical initiatives they are taking to help encourage religious tolerance?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in Tunis regarding those responsible for orchestrating attacks against Djerba's Jewish community?

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

The EU follows closely the human rights situation in Tunisia and is using all its available instruments, including public diplomacy, political dialogue, and project funding, in order to promote respect for fundamental rights, including those of minority groups.

The EU holds that States have an obligation to guarantee human rights protection, and to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence against persons based on their religion or belief. Those principles are included in the recent 'EU Guidelines on FoRB' (Freedom of Religion or Belief). Against this background, the EU Delegation in Tunis recently met with representatives of the Jewish Community, who expressed a general positive view on these issues, both with regard to the state of freedom of religion in the country and in terms of coexistence between the different components of Tunisian society.

Through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the EU specifically supports projects promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and the rights of minorities globally. This year a global call for proposal on combatting discrimination, including on grounds of religion or belief, was launched with a total allocation of EUR 20 million, EUR 5 million specifically to support projects on FoRB. FoRB is also promoted through other EIDHR modalities such as local Country Based Support Scheme calls and Small Grants support to Human Rights Defenders. International, regional and Tunisian human rights defenders and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are eligible to apply for these grants.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012668/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Istituzione di un governo autonomo nell'est della Libia

Il 24 ottobre 2013 alcuni leader favorevoli all'autogoverno nella Libia orientale hanno annunciato la costituzione di un governo ombra. Stando alla Associated Press (AP) alcune tribù e milizie locali hanno annunciato la costituzione di uno Stato autonomo, denominato Barqa, nell'est della Libia. Secondo quanto segnalato avrebbero assunto ampi poteri di autogoverno e il controllo delle risorse. Il governo di Tripoli ha intanto respinto il contenuto della dichiarazione. Sono in molti nella Libia orientale ad aver chiesto la reintroduzione del sistema di governo utilizzato dall'ex monarca re Idris, quando la Libia era suddivisa in tre Stati. Secondo le notizie della AP molti temono che la decisione dei libici orientali possa condurre alla completa divisione della Libia.

Le milizie orientali hanno già preso il controllo dei terminali di esportazione del petrolio, il che ha ridotto di quasi la metà la produzione petrolifera. Il capo del governo separatista Abd-Rabbo al-Barassi ha dichiarato che l'obiettivo è migliorare la distribuzione delle risorse e minare la tenuta del governo di Tripoli. Attualmente il nuovo governo non dispone di un portafoglio per gli affari esteri o la difesa, anche se la sicurezza resta una delle sue priorità chiave.

1. Qual è la posizione del VP/AR riguardo all'annuncio che la Libia orientale è stata dichiarata uno Stato autonomo?

2. Intende il VP/AR far sì che le relazioni dell'UE siano intrattenute soltanto con l'autorità centralizzata di Tripoli o riconoscerà la nuova amministrazione?

3. Intende il VP/AR discutere con le autorità di Tripoli sulle ripercussioni per la Libia se altri gruppi decidono di non riconoscere più il governo centrale?

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

L'Unione europea sta seguendo attentamente gli eventi in Libia, in particolare gli annunci da parte di alcuni gruppi nella parte orientale del paese riguardo alla costituzione di un governo autoproclamato nella regione della Cirenaica.

L'UE ritiene che il processo costituzionale in corso fornisca il quadro giuridico appropriato per discutere su questioni relative al futuro assetto dello Stato libico quali, ad esempio, il grado di decentramento.

L'Unione continuerà a sostenere le istituzioni libiche nel loro percorso verso la transizione democratica e attraverso le varie fasi previste nella *roadmap* costituzionale.

A tale proposito, l'UE continuerà a incoraggiare le autorità libiche a procedere verso le elezioni dell'assemblea costituente e a fare tutto quanto necessario per garantire un processo inclusivo di redazione e adozione della nuova Costituzione. L'Unione sta già fornendo assistenza tecnica all'Alta commissione elettorale nazionale per favorire l'organizzazione delle prossime elezioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012668/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Formation of autonomous government by eastern Libyans

On 24 October 2013, leaders in favour of self-rule in eastern Libya declared the formation of a shadow government. The Associated Press (AP) reported that some local militias and tribes had declared an autonomous state, called Barqa, in the eastern half of Libya. They are reported to have assumed broad self-rule powers and control over resources. The government in Tripoli has meanwhile rejected the declaration. Many people in eastern Libya have been advocating the reintroduction of the government system used by the former monarch, King Idris, in which Libya was divided into three states. According to AP reports, many fear that this decision by eastern Libyans could lead to the complete division of Libya.

Eastern militias have already taken control of oil exporting terminals, which has reduced the level of oil production by nearly a half. The head of the breakaway government, Abd-Rabbo al-Barassi, said that the aim is to improve distribution of resources and undermine the hold of the government in Tripoli. At present, the new government has no portfolio for foreign affairs or defence, although security remains one of its key priorities.

1. What is the position of the VP/HR regarding the announcement that an autonomous state has been declared in eastern Libya?

2. Does the VP/HR intend to maintain EU relations solely with the centralised authority in Tripoli or will it recognise the new administration?

3. Does the VP/HR intend to discuss with the authorities in Tripoli the ramifications for Libya if more groups choose to no longer recognise the central government?

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

The EU is following closely developments in Libya including the announcements by some groups in the East of the country regarding the establishment of self-appointed governments in the region of Cyrenaica.

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 and to do everything necessary 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 is support to the organisation of the upcoming elections.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012670/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Giovane ragazza aggredita in Pakistan

Il giorno 30 ottobre 2013, numerose fonti di informazione (tra cui il quotidiano britannico *Indipendent*) hanno dato conto del caso di una ragazza pakistana di 13 anni che è stata violentata e sepolta viva. La ragazza era stata data per morta dai suoi due assalitori che credevano fosse rimasta uccisa a seguito della loro aggressione. L'adolescente si stava recando alle sue lezioni di Corano nel distretto Tek Singh Tobe della provincia del Punjab, quando i due uomini l'hanno rapita. È stato riferito che, successivamente, è stata portata in un luogo isolato dove è stata violentata fino a perdere conoscenza ed è stata poi seppellita Fortunatamente, una volta ripresa conoscenza, la ragazza è stata in grado di riemergere dalla tomba.

Il padre della ragazza ha riferito l'accaduto alla polizia che, apparentemente, si è rifiutata di collaborare o di avviare un'indagine. La cellula preposta alle denunce dell'Alta Corte di giustizia di Lahore è ora intervenuta, ordinando a un giudice distrettuale di esaminare l'incidente e alla polizia di procedere all'arresto dei presunti aggressori e di presentare una relazione.

Questo caso evidenzia la mancata elaborazione, da parte del governo pakistano, di statistiche regolarmente aggiornate sulla portata degli abusi nei confronti di minori in tutto il paese. Il gruppo di attivisti Sahil (con sede a Islamabad) ha reso noto che i casi di abusi sessuali su minori riferiti dai media sono passati dai 668 del 2002 ai 2788 del 2010, ma queste statistiche non possono essere considerate esaustive.

1. Quali organizzazioni stanno operando e quali iniziative vengono adottate in Pakistan, con il sostegno dell'UE, per contrastare il problema degli abusi e della violenza sessuale nei confronti dei minori?

2. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante disposto a collaborare con alti funzionari, come l'Alto Commissario delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti umani, Navi Pillay, per chiedere al governo pakistano di raccogliere statistiche sul problema degli abusi nei confronti di minori e di lavorare per affrontare il problema garantendo che le forze dell'ordine prendano sul serio tali casi?

3. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante disposto a chiedere ai funzionari dell'UE ad Islamabad di monitorare il caso di cui sopra al fine di garantire che venga trattato dalle autorità in modo equo, giusto e appropriato?

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

1. In Pakistan diverse organizzazioni lavorano per contrastare gli abusi sui minori e molte di esse fanno parte della rete «Child Rights Movement». L'UE finanzia attualmente due progetti volti a prevenire gli abusi sui minori nell'ambito dello strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani. I progetti vengono attuati da Sahil e Groupe Développement (GD), due ONG che collaborano con soggetti delle comunità locali.

2. Nell'ambito della promozione dei diritti umani mediante i progetti avviati nel paese, l'UE sta già lavorando con il governo del Pakistan e le istituzioni indipendenti che operano a favore dei diritti umani per migliorare l'attuazione degli impegni internazionali assunti dal Pakistan in materia di diritti umani. Tale strategia comprende il sostegno per la prevista commissione sui diritti dei minori e il miglioramento della capacità istituzionale di monitorare e riferire in merito ai diritti delle donne e dei bambini e di affrontare eventuali violazioni. Inoltre, l'UE finanzia vari progetti in materia di Stato di diritto, collaborando con le autorità giudiziarie e di contrasto per garantire l'adeguato trattamento dei casi e fornire servizi legali ai soggetti più vulnerabili. L'UE solleva inoltre regolarmente le questioni relative ai diritti umani nel suo dialogo bilaterale con il governo del Pakistan, in particolare per quanto riguarda i diritti delle donne, dei bambini e delle minoranze religiose.

3. Nell'ambito del suo impegno a favore dei diritti umani in Pakistan, l'UE dialoga con le ONG locali che si occupano di diritti umani. La delegazione dell'Unione europea a Islamabad porterà il caso specifico all'attenzione di tali organizzazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012670/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Teenage girl attacked in Pakistan

On 30 October 2013, numerous media sources (including the UK's *Independent* newspaper) reported the case of a 13-year-old Pakistani girl who was raped and buried alive. The girl was left for dead by her two attackers, in the belief that their assault had killed her. The teenager had been on her way to Qur'an lessons in the Tobe Tek Singh district of Punjab province when the two men abducted her. It was reported that they took her to a remote area and raped her until she passed out before burying her. Fortunately, on regaining consciousness, she was able to dig herself out of the grave.

Her father reported the incident to the police but they allegedly refused to cooperate or launch an investigation. The Lahore High Court Chief Justice's Complaint Cell has now intervened, however, ordering that the incident be looked into by a district judge and instructing police to arrest the alleged attackers and to submit a report.

This case highlights the Pakistan Government's failure to release regularly updated statistics on the extent of child abuse across the country. The activist group Sahil (based in Islamabad) has said that the number of cases of child sexual abuse covered by the media rose from 668 in 2002 to 2 788 in 2010, but these statistics cannot be considered to be exhaustive.

1. What organisations are working and what initiatives are being taken in Pakistan with EU support to tackle the problem of child abuse and sexual violence?

2. Is the High Representative/Vice-President willing to work with senior officials such as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, in order to ask the Pakistan Government to gather statistics on the issue of child abuse, and to work to tackle the problem by ensuring that law enforcement officials take cases seriously?

3. Is the HR/VP willing to ask EU officials in Islamabad to monitor the aforementioned case in order to ensure that it is treated by the authorities in a fair, just and appropriate manner?

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

1. Several organisations work on child sexual abuse (CSA) in Pakistan, many of which are part of the network 'Child Rights Movement'. The EU currently funds two projects aiming to prevent CSA under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. They are implemented by two NGOs, Sahil and Groupe Développement (GD) working with partners in the local communities.

2. Under the Promotion of Human Rights in Pakistan project, the EU is already working with the Government of Pakistan and independent human rights institutions to strengthen the implementation of Pakistan's international human rights obligations. This includes support for a planned Commission on the Rights of the Child and for improving institutional capacity to monitor and report on, *inter alia*, the rights of women and children, and address any breaches. In addition, the EU funds several projects in the rule of law, working with law enforcement authorities and justice officials to ensure that cases are dealt with appropriately and provide legal services to the most vulnerable. The EU also consistently raises human rights issues in its bilateral dialogue with the Government of Pakistan, in particular the rights of women, children and religious minorities.

3. As part of its human rights engagement in Pakistan the EU maintains a dialogue with local human rights NGOs. The EU Delegation in Islamabad will bring the specific case to the attention of these organisations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012671/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — monito dei senatori USA sulla violenza in Iraq

Il 30 ottobre 2013 un gruppo *bipartisan* di senatori statunitensi ha scritto al Presidente Obama in vista della visita del Primo ministro iracheno, Nouri al-Maliki, negli Stati Uniti, in programma il 1° novembre 2013. Nella lettera si suggerisce che l'Iran esercita «un'influenza malefica» sul governo di Maliki, aggiungendo che la «cattiva gestione delle cose dello Stato» da parte di Maliki ha contribuito alla recente ondata di violenza e che il paese sta scivolando verso la guerra civile. La lettera è stata firmata, tra gli altri, dal democratico Carl Levin (Michigan) e dal repubblicano John McCain (Arizona). Uno dei punti più controversi sembrano essere le ripetute pressioni del Presidente Obama per un governo più aperto e meno settario in un momento in cui Maliki cerca di ottenere un maggior appoggio militare dagli USA.

In Iraq la violenza è tornata ai livelli del 2008, quando aveva toccato l'apice. Il 30 ottobre 2013 tre attentati diversi hanno provocato la morte di almeno 20 persone. Nella zona settentrionale di Baghdad due attentatori suicidi hanno ucciso 11 persone fra militari e agenti di polizia. Nel solo mese di settembre 2013 sono state uccise almeno 1 000 persone e ne sono state ferite 2 000. La maggior parte delle violenze è riconducibile alle divisioni tra i diversi gruppi settari del paese.

1. Qual è la posizione del VP/HR relativamente al modo in cui Maliki sta gestendo la crisi irachena?

2. Qual è la posizione del VP/HR sulla fornitura di armi al governo iracheno?

3. Quali sono le misure ritenute necessarie dai funzionari UE nella regione per arginare la violenza in Iraq?

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

1. L'AR/VP ritiene che il compito di promuovere la riconciliazione e, di conseguenza, la stabilità politica in Iraq spetti principalmente ai leader politici e religiosi del paese, tra cui il primo ministro al-Maliki, che l'AR/VP esorta costantemente a intensificare gli sforzi per avviare un dialogo che permetta di sconfiggere il radicalismo e di promuovere l'unità nazionale. L'AR/VP ha giudicato incoraggianti i recenti passi in questa direzione, tra cui l'organizzazione, a settembre, della conferenza nazionale sulla pace sociale e l'adozione di una nuova legge elettorale.

2. La fornitura di armi al governo iracheno è disciplinata da decisioni prese dall'UE nell'ambito della PESC, che devono poi essere attuate dagli Stati membri. Il rafforzamento della sicurezza, tuttavia, è solo uno degli elementi necessari per lottare contro la violenza in Iraq e deve essere integrato da opportune azioni politiche e sociali che affrontino i problemi alla radice e trovino una soluzione a lungo termine.

3. In Iraq la violenza ha una dimensione interna, alimentata da tensioni settarie, e una dimensione regionale, costantemente accentuata dalle ricadute del conflitto siriano. Per trovare una soluzione occorre che le diverse fazioni irachene siano disposte a lavorare insieme onde promuovere la riconciliazione e affrontare i problemi alla radice. Progredire verso la normalizzazione e la stabilità favorirebbe la crescita e lo sviluppo, allenterebbe le tensioni e renderebbe la popolazione irachena meno vulnerabile all'influenza destabilizzante di organizzazioni terroristiche come al-Qaeda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012671/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — US senators warn about violence in Iraq

On 30 October 2013, a bipartisan group of US senators drafted a letter to President Obama in advance of the visit by Iraq's President, Nouri al-Maliki, to the US on 1 November 2013. The letter suggested that Iran is exerting a 'malign influence' on Maliki's government, asserting that 'Maliki's mismanagement of Iraqi politics contributes to the recent surge of violence' and that the country is in effect heading towards civil war. The letter was signed by Carl Levin (Democrat, Michigan), John McCain (Republican, Arizona) and others. One of the most contentious issues appears to be President Obama's continued pressure for a more open and less sectarian government, at a time when Maliki is looking for increased military aid from the US.

Iraq is witnessing the worst violence it has seen since 2008. On 30 October 2013, three separate bombings killed at least 20 people. In northern Baghdad, two suicide bombers killed 11 military or police officers. Almost 1 000 people were killed and 2 000 wounded in the month of September 2013 alone. Most of the violence is motivated by sectarian divisions in the country.

1. What is the position of the VP/HR regarding President Maliki's handling of the crisis in Iraq?

2. In addition, what is the HR/VP's position on providing arms to the Iraqi Government?

3. What steps do EU officials in the region consider to be necessary to curtail violence in Iraq?

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

1. HR/VP believes that political and religious leaders in Iraq, including Prime Minister al-Maliki, bear primary responsibility for promoting reconciliation to further political stability in the country. She continues to encourage them to make further efforts to engage in dialogue to overcome radicalism and promote national unity. The HR/VP was encouraged by recent steps in this direction, including the convening of the National Conference on Social Peace in September and the passing of a new electoral law.

2. The provision of weapons to the Iraqi government is governed by EUCFSP decisions to be implemented by Member States. However, increasing security is only one of the necessary elements in addressing violence in Iraq, and that it must be complemented by appropriate political and social actions to tackle the grass-roots problems and achieve a long-term solution.

3. Violence in Iraq has both a domestic dimension driven by sectarian tensions and a regional dimension made increasingly worse by the spill over from the Syrian conflict. Finding a solution depends on the willingness of Iraq's different factions to work together to promote reconciliation and address grass-roots problems. Moving towards normalisation and stability would enable growth and development, reducing tensions and vulnerability amongst Iraq's population to the destabilising influence of terrorist organisations such as al-Qaeda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012676/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Duration of plant variety rights for clonally propagated horticultural crops

Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 of 27 July 1994 provides for intellectual property rights protection for plant varieties and allows breeders to recuperate R&D investment through the payment of royalties. The duration of the Community Plant Variety Right (CPVR) for most crops is set at 25 years, with the exception of potatoes, trees and vines, for which it has been extended to 30 years.

According to the Article 19(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 the Council, on a proposal from the Commission, may, in respect of specific genera or species, provide for an extension of up to a further five years. Moreover, in 2011 the Commission evaluated the CPVR regime and concluded that it needs to be adapted to today's agricultural, trade and market environment.

An extension of the CPVR to 30 years for clonally propagated soft fruits is essential for safeguarding innovation in the breeding of these varieties, in particular by independent SME breeders.

1. Does the Commission recognise that technical breeding difficulties in developing new clonally propagated (woody stemmed) horticultural crops such as Ribes and Rubus require longer periods of research expenditure and more time to propagate commercial quantities than most agricultural crops, and that reasonable returns on research expenditure are only possible at a late stage in the varietal protection process currently provided, compared with other crops?

2. Can the Commission clarify whether it intends to address this problem by conducting a dedicated impact assessment into an extension of CPVR for these crops to 30 years?

3. When is the Commission intending to propose a revision of Regulation (EC) No 2100/94?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

1. The Commission recognises the length of breeding for small berries, the slow renewal of varieties by growers and the time needed for production.

2. Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 ([1]) on Community Plant Variety Rights (CPVR) provides for variety protection. The duration provided in EU is five years longer to the minimum requirement of the International Union of Plant Variety Protection (UPOV). Article 19(2) states that the Council may provide for an extension of up to a further five years for specific species. It was done in 1996 for potatoes (Regulation (EC) No 2470/96 ([2])). After that, the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) received requests for other species, including small berries. The Commission services requested CPVO and stakeholders to develop criteria in order to assess demands for extension. Furthermore, considering that CPVO is in place for 18 years, CPVO hasn't yet a view about the number of surrenders of granted titles before the 25 years termination.

3. While the duration of protection is not addressed, a targeted modification of the CPVR Regulation is included in the proposal for Plant Reproductive Material Regulation in order to confer new tasks to CPVO on variety registration for marketing purposes.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1994R2100:20080131:EN:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1996:335:0010:0010:EN:PDF

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012677/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(8 november 2013)

Betreft: Druk van asielzoekers op lidstaten

In de Begrotingscommissie van maandag 4 november jl. is gesteld dat sommige lidstaten worden geconfronteerd met een plotselinge toestroom van een groot aantal asielzoekers. Dit zorgt voor een uitzonderlijk zware belasting van de opvangfaciliteiten, het asielstelsel en de infrastructuur van de betrokken lidstaten en vraagt om urgente actie. Als reactie heeft de Commissie voor 14,4 miljoen euro herschikt ter dekking van de opvang en huisvesting van de asielzoekers. Daarenboven stelt de Commissie voor om 18 miljoen euro te herschikken uit besparingen op andere programma's en toe te voegen aan begrotingsartikel 18 03 04 voor noodmaatregelen bij massale instroom van vluchtelingen.

1. Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat de toestroom van immigranten een gevolg is van beleid van de EU aangezien respect en bevordering van het recht op asiel de kern is van de inspanningen van de Unie om een gebied van vrijheid, veiligheid en recht te bouwen (Malmström)?

2. Is de Commissie van mening dat de Europese Raad in Tampere in 1999 het zoeken van asiel in de EU heeft aangemoedigd door een gemeenschappelijk Europees asielsysteem op te zetten dat zijn beslag heeft gekregen in het Stockholm-programma?

3. Als de toestroom van asielzoekers in de EU het gevolg is van bewust beleid van de EU, waarom spreekt de Begrotingscommissie dan van een noodsituatie?

4. Als de toestroom van asielzoekers in de EU het gevolg is van bewust beleid van de EU, hoe verklaart de Commissie het gat in het budget van 32,4 miljoen euro?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(6 januari 2014)

Het aantal asielzoekers in de EU lag in het begin van de jaren 2000, vóór de oprichting van het gemeenschappelijk Europees asielstelsel ([1]) (CEAS), hoger dan nu. In 2001 waren er 424 180 aanvragen, tegenover 335 380 in 2012. Ook op nationaal niveau zijn er grote verschuivingen: Nederland ontving in 2000 43 895 asielaanvragen, maar slechts 13 100 in 2012 ([2]). De veranderingen inzake asiel zijn grotendeels het gevolg van crises, zoals de oorlog in Syrië. De Commissie is het er niet mee eens dat het EU-beleid inzake asiel en migratie heeft geleid tot een instroom van migranten.

Met de eerbiediging en bevordering van het recht op asiel wordt ervoor gezorgd dat de EU haar internationale verplichtingen nakomt om personen te beschermen die op de vlucht zijn voor vervolging. Het CEAS werd ook opgericht ter bevordering van solidariteit tussen de lidstaten inzake asiel en om de asielprocedures en de uitkomst daarvan in de verschillende lidstaten beter te stroomlijnen.

De Begrotingscommissie verwees naar het feit dat sommige lidstaten momenteel onder grote druk staan als gevolg van de plotselinge toestroom aan de grenzen van grote aantallen migranten die internationale bescherming nodig kunnen hebben. Hierdoor worden uitzonderlijk zware en dringende eisen gesteld aan het asielstelsel van de betrokken lidstaat en kunnen risico's ontstaan voor het leven van mensen, hun welzijn of de toegang tot de bescherming die deze personen volgens de EU-wetgeving verdienen.

Er is geen gat in de begroting, aangezien het bedrag van 32,4 miljoen euro werd heringedeeld via besparingen in de andere programma's.

([1]) CEAS = Common European Asylum System (gemeenschappelijk Europees asielstelsel).
Zie http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/ceas-fact-sheets/ceas_factsheet_en.pdf en http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/multimedia/infographics/index_en.htm#0801262489daa027/c_.

([2]) Alle cijfers gepubliceerd door Eurostat — zie http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012677/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Pressure on the Member States from asylum-seekers

It was stated at the meeting of the Committee on Budgets on 4 November that a number of Member States are facing a sudden influx of a large number of asylum-seekers. This will bring about an extraordinarily heavy burden on reception facilities, the asylum system and the infrastructure of the Member States in question and requires urgent action. In response, the Commission has reallocated EUR 14.4 to cover the reception and housing of asylum-seekers. In addition, the Commission is proposing to redeploy EUR 18 million from savings in other programmes to budget line 18 03 04 for emergency measures in the event of mass influxes of refugees.

1. Does the Commission agree with me that this influx of immigrants is a consequence of EU policy, given that respecting and promoting the right of asylum are at the very heart of the Union's efforts to build an area of freedom, security and justice (Commissioner Malmström)?

2. Does the Commission believe that the European Council in Tampere in 1999 encouraged applications for asylum in the EU by establishing a Common European Asylum System, which was then realised via the Stockholm Programme?

3. If the influx of asylum-seekers into the EU is the result of the conscious policy of the Union, why is the Committee on Budgets referring to an emergency situation?

4. If the influx of asylum-seekers into the EU is the result of the conscious policy of the Union, how does the Commission explain a EUR 32.4 million hole in the budget?

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

The number of asylum applicants in the EU was higher in the early 2000s, prior to the creation of the CEAS ([1]), than it is now. In 2001, there were 424 180 applications compared with 335 380 in 2012. There are also massive fluctuations at national level: the Netherlands received 43 895 asylum applications in 2000, but only 13 100 in 2012 ([2]). Asylum trends are largely the result of crises such as the war in Syria. The Commission thus does not agree that EU asylum and migration policies have led to an influx of migrants.

Respecting and promoting the right of asylum is aimed at ensuring the EU fulfils its international obligations to protect those fleeing persecution. The CEAS was also designed to promote solidarity among Member States (MS) on asylum issues and to bring greater similarity to the asylum process and outcomes across MS.

The Committee on Budgets referred to the fact that some MS are currently confronted with situations of particular pressure resulting from the sudden arrival at their borders of large numbers of migrants who may be in need of international protection. This is putting exceptionally heavy and urgent demands on the asylum system of the MS concerned and may give rise to risks to human life, wellbeing or access to the protection these persons deserve as provided under the EU legislation.

There is no hole in the budget, since the EUR 32.4 million were redeployed via savings in other programmes.

([1]) CEAS = Common European Asylum System. See http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/ceas-fact-sheets/ceas_factsheet_en.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/multimedia/infographics/index_en.htm#0801262489daa027/c_

([2]) All figures published by Eurostat — see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012679/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Sclerosi sistemica: sostegno finanziario alla ricerca sulla diagnosi precoce e il successivo trattamento

La sclerosi sistemica è una malattia multisistemica caratterizzata da una prevalenza di circa 5/105 e un'incidenza di 1/105.

Secondo i dati più recenti, in Europa le persone colpite da questa malattia sono più di 250 000.

In Ungheria il costo annuo della malattia era stimato nel 2006 a 9 619 EUR per paziente, in Canada era in media di 18 453 CAD per paziente (dati 2007), mentre in Italia, applicando una stima dei costi indiretti, era di 11 074 EUR per paziente (dati 2001).

In Spagna il costo annuo per paziente è di 21 041 EUR, rispetto ai 13 823 dell'HIV/AIDS, ai 13 826 EUR dell'ictus e ai 18 776 dell'atassia.

Nella sua forma grave, la sclerosi sistemica può divenire rapidamente mortale poiché colpisce gli organi interni, come il cuore, i polmoni e i reni, compromettendo molto rapidamente la funzionalità e causando complicazioni come le ulcere digitali e la cancrena, il che può rendere necessarie amputazioni o portare all'ipertensione arteriosa polmonare, che nella maggior parte dei casi conduce alla morte dei pazienti.

Nonostante i progressi compiuti negli ultimi decenni a livello delle terapie, la prognosi della sclerosi sistemica continua a essere grave, soprattutto se gli organi coinvolti sono i polmoni, il cuore, i reni e l'apparato gastrointestinale. Oggi la priorità principale è rappresentata da una diagnosi molto precoce, seguita da un trattamento precoce, allo scopo di conseguire la remissione della malattia.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. esiste la possibilità di un sostegno finanziario alla ricerca sulla diagnosi precoce e il successivo trattamento della malattia, in modo da impedire che essa evolva provocando danni e disabilità?

2. Quali misure hanno adottato i paesi europei per affrontare il problema?

3. Qual è la situazione generale al riguardo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 gennaio 2014)

Orizzonte 2020, il prossimo programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020), tra le altre cose nell'ambito del suo capitolo «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere» offrirà opportunità di sostegno alla ricerca sulla prevenzione, la diagnosi e il trattamento delle malattie, compresa la sclerosi sistemica.

La Commissione ha pubblicato nel dicembre 2013 il programma di lavoro 2014-2015 ([1]). Sulla pagina dedicata alla salute del sito Europa figura un documento orientativo che fornisce ai partecipanti potenziali i principali indirizzi della ricerca in campo sanitario di cui si prevede l'adozione. ([2])

Nella base dati Orphanet la sclerosi sistemica è classificata tra le malattie rare ([3]) che vengono trattate in una comunicazione specifica della Commissione. ([4]) Inoltre, la Commissione promuove la cooperazione tra gli Stati membri in tema di malattie rare e sostiene le reti volte a fornire assistenza tecnica per lo sviluppo di piani nazionali in materia di malattie rare. ([5]) ([6]) Le misure adottate per combattere malattie specifiche, come la sclerosi sistemica, sono però di competenza dei singoli Stati membri.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/work-programmes/health_draft_work_programme.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none.
([3]) http://www.orpha.net/orphacom/cahiers/docs/GB/List_of_rare_diseases_in_alphabetical_order.pdf
([4]) COM(2008) 679 def.
([5]) http://www.epirare.eu/.
([6]) http://www.europlanproject.eu/_newsite_986987/index.html

Per informazioni approfondite sulla situazione generale della sclerosi sistemica nell'Unione europea la Commissione suggerisce quale riferimento la pubblicazione «Concepts of functioning and health important to people with systemic sclerosis: a qualitative study in four European countries» (Concetti per la funzionalità e la salute rivolti ai malati di sclerosi sistemica: uno studio qualitativo in quattro paesi europei). ([7]) Inoltre, è possibile trovare informazioni su questa malattia, ad esempio tramite la Lega europea contro i reumatismi (EULAR) o il gruppo EUSTAR sulle prove e la ricerca in campo sclerodermico ([8]).

([7]) http://ard.bmj.com/content/70/6/1074.full.pdf+html.
([8]) http://www.eustar.org/index.php?module=ContentExpress&func=display&ceid=35&meid=-1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012679/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Systemic sclerosis (SSc): Financial support to implement research on early diagnosis and consequent treatment

Systemic sclerosis (SSc) is a multisystem disease with a prevalence rate of around 5/105 and an incidence rate of 1/105.

According to the most recent data, the disease affects more than 250 000 Europeans.

In 2006 the annual costs of SSc in Hungary were estimated to be EUR 9 619 per patient. In Canada SSc-related costs in 2007 were an average of CAD 18 453 per patient, and in Italy, applying an estimation for indirect costs, the total cost in 2001 was EUR 11 074 per patient.

In Spain the annual cost is EUR 21 041 per patient, compared with HIV/AIDS (EUR 13 823), strokes (EUR 13 826) and ataxia (EUR 18 776).

SSc in its severe form may be rapidly fatal as it affects internal organs such as the heart, the lungs and the kidneys, leading to very rapid function impairment and complications such as digital ulcers and gangrene. This could result in amputation or pulmonary arterial hypertension, which is fatal in most patients.

Despite therapeutic progress made in recent decades, the prognosis of SSc is still severe, especially when the lungs, the heart, the kidneys, and gastrointestinal systems are involved. The main task which is considered to be a priority today is very early diagnosis followed by precocious treatment in order to achieve remission of SSc.

In this context, I ask the Commission the following:

1. Does any possibility of financial support exist to implement research into early diagnosis and consequent treatment in order to prevent the disease from evolving and causing damage and incapacity?

2. What measures have been adopted in European countries to combat this problem?

3. What is the general situation of this problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

Horizon 2020, the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), through its 'Health, Demographic change and wellbeing' challenge amongst others, will offer opportunities to address research on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, including systemic sclerosis.

The Commission published the 2014 — 2015 work programme on 11 December 2013 ([1]). An orientation paper providing potential participants with the currently expected main lines for health research is available at the Europa health website. ([2])

According to the Orphanet database, systemic sclerosis is classified among rare diseases ([3]) which are addressed in a specific Commission communication. ([4]) Furthermore, the Commission promotes cooperation between Member States on rare diseases and supports networks to provide technical assistance for the development of national plans on rare diseases. ([5]) ([6]) However, the measures adopted to combat specific diseases, such as systemic sclerosis, fall in the competence of each Member State.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/work-programmes/health_draft_work_programme.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none
([3]) http://www.orpha.net/orphacom/cahiers/docs/GB/List_of_rare_diseases_in_alphabetical_order.pdf
([4]) COM(2008) 679 final.
([5]) http://www.epirare.eu/
([6]) http://www.europlanproject.eu/_newsite_986987/index.html

For in-depth information on the general situation of systemic sclerosis in the European Union the Commission would suggest as reference the publication 'Concepts of functioning and health important to people with systemic sclerosis: a qualitative study in four European countries'. ([7]) Moreover, information on this disease can be found, for example, through the European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) or the EUSTAR group on Scleroderma Trials And Research ([8]).

([7]) http://ard.bmj.com/content/70/6/1074.full.pdf+html
([8]) http://www.eustar.org/index.php?module=ContentExpress&func=display&ceid=35&meid=-1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012680/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Denuncia di Confartigianato San Donà di Piave

L'Associazione Artigiani e piccole e medie imprese del mandamento di San Donà di Piave, in provincia di Venezia, ha recentemente pubblicato un articolato studio che dimostra l'insostenibilità per le imprese del territorio delle attuali condizioni socioeconomiche. Tra i fattori di preoccupazione la continua diminuzione dell'occupazione sia nell'industria, -1,2 % nel 2012, sia nei servizi -0,4 % nel 2012, la diminuzione del fatturato reale, della quota delle imprese in utile e l'aumento di quelle in perdita.

Occorre rilevare le denunce che da più parti d'Europa fanno emergere una sofferenza sistemica del tessuto imprenditoriale che minaccia la sopravvivenza dell'intera economia europea. Si considerino inoltre le conclusioni del documento pubblicato dall'Associazione Artigiani e piccole e medie imprese.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Come intende intervenire sul problema dell'accesso al credito?

2. Quali sono le misure che intende implementare per garantire i pagamenti delle pubbliche amministrazioni nei confronti delle imprese che ancora rappresentano un fattore di destabilizzazione e di potenziale minaccia?

3. Come intende garantire che anche le PMI siano in grado di affrontare quel processo di internazionalizzazione necessario per proiettarle nei mercati esteri?

4. In tema di allentamento dei vincoli burocratici e della semplificazione, come intende agire per agevolare le PMI?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(10 gennaio 2014)

1. La Commissione promuoverà l'accesso al credito per le PMI tramite il nuovo programma denominato COSME ([1]), che sarà attivo dal 2014 al 2020. La maggior parte del bilancio del programma è destinata a prestiti e a venture capital in modo da attivare un valore creditizio pari a più di 20 miliardi di euro. COSME fornirà inoltre uno strumento di garanzia per i prestiti alle PMI fino a un massimo di 150 000 euro. Si prevede che entro il 2020 più di 300 000 aziende riceveranno prestiti coperti da garanzie COSME.

2. Il 16 dicembre 2012 l'Italia ha notificato le proprie misure di recepimento nazionali per attuare la direttiva 2011/7/UE relativa alla lotta contro i ritardi di pagamento nelle transazioni commerciali. La Commissione ha contattato l'Italia chiedendo ulteriori informazioni e chiarimenti. In caso di recepimento incorretto la Commissione ha facoltà di avviare una procedura di infrazione.

3. La rete Enterprise Europe Network e la Piattaforma europea per la collaborazione fra i cluster coadiuvano l'internazionalizzazione delle imprese europee. La Commissione sta inoltre portando avanti dialoghi in tema di PMI con paesi di particolare rilevanza al fine di agevolare il contesto imprenditoriale per le imprese europee. A seguito delle «missioni per la crescita», sono state firmate «lettere di intenti» con paesi in America, Asia ed Africa ([2]). Infine, i programmi COSME e H2020 ([3]) finanzieranno progetti innovativi per le PMI, tra cui anche progetti internazionali.

4. La Commissione ha avviato alla fine del 2012 il programma REFIT ([4]). Il programma comprende iniziative per semplificare la legislazione e ridurre gli oneri normativi, abrogare leggi e ritirare proposte che non sono più necessarie e contempla anche valutazioni e check up in altri ambiti per determinare gli obiettivi e l'entità delle future azioni in tema di semplificazione e di riduzione degli oneri. REFIT sarà implementato quale programma evolutivo annuale e comprende un quadro di valutazione per seguire i progressi realizzati.

([1]) Competitività delle imprese e PMI: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme/index_en.htm
([2]) Tematiche: PMI, materie prime, cooperazione industriale, questioni legate alla regolamentazione in campo industriale, spazio, turismo, ecc.
([3]) Orizzonte 2020 (compreso lo strumento per le PMI): http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm.
([4]) Programma di controllo dell'adeguatezza e dell'efficacia della regolamentazione, http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/refit/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012680/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Representation by San Donà di Piave small business confederation

The San Donà di Piave District Association of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Province of Venice recently published an in-depth study illustrating how the present socioeconomic conditions are unsustainable for SMEs in its area. Among the causes for concern are: the continued drop in employment levels both in industry (-1.2% in 2012) and in the services sector (-0.4% in 2012); lower turnovers, smaller numbers of businesses running at a profit and higher numbers running at a loss.

Warnings from other parts of Europe paint a picture of a private sector infrastructure that is suffering, which threatens the future of Europe's economy as a whole. These, like the findings of the document published by the abovementioned Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, must be taken on board.

1. What action does the Commission intend to take on the problem of access to credit?

2. What measures does the Commission plan to put in place to ensure that businesses get paid by government departments, as this is a destabilising and potentially harmful factor?

3. How does the Commission intend to ensure that SMEs are in a position to handle the internationalisation process that is needed to take them into foreign markets?

4. In terms of reducing red tape and simplifying procedures, what action does the Commission plan to take to help SMEs?

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

1. The Commission will foster access to credit for SMEs with the new programme called COSME ([1]), set to run from 2014 to 2020. Most of the programme budget is allocated to loans and venture capital, so as to activate more than EUR 20 billion lending value. COSME will provide a guarantee facility for SME loans up to EUR 150 000. It is expected that by 2020 more than 300.000 firms will receive loans backed by COSME guarantees.

2. On 16 December 2012 Italy notified its national transposition measures to implement Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions. The Commission has contacted Italy for further information and clarification. In case of incorrect transposition, the Commission may launch an infringement procedure.

3. The Enterprise Europe Network and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform assist the internationalisation of European enterprises. The Commission is also undergoing SME dialogues with key countries aimed at easing business conditions for European firms. Following 'Missions for Growth', 'Letters of Intent' have been signed with countries in America, Asia and Africa ([2]). Finally, the COSME and H2020 ([3]) programmes will fund innovation projects for SMEs -including international projects.

4. The Commission initiated a REFIT ([4]) Programme at the end of 2012. The programme includes initiatives to simplify legislation and reduce regulatory burden, the repeal of laws and withdrawal of proposals that are no longer required and evaluations and Fitness Checks in other areas to determine the focus and extent of future simplification and burden reduction actions. REFIT will be implemented as an annual rolling programme and includes a scoreboard to monitor the progress.

([1]) Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme/index_en.htm
([2]) Issues: SMEs, raw material, industrial cooperation, industrial regulatory issues, space, tourism, etc.
([3]) Horizon 2020 (including SME instrument), http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm
([4]) Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme, http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/refit/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012683/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi europei destinati al Veneto

La Commissione:

1. può indicare l'ammontare complessivo delle risorse comunitarie erogate, in via diretta o indiretta, a favore della Regione Veneto dal 2007 a oggi?

2. quante risorse sono state effettivamente spese rispetto all'ammontare totale disponibile?

3. rispetto alla media Europea delle altre Regioni, come si colloca il Veneto in termini di capacità di impiego dei fondi comunitari?

Risposta di Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

Per quanto riguarda il FEAGA ([1]), si rimanda alla risposta della Commissione all'interrogazione E-12682/2013 ([2]) dell'onorevole deputato relativa al sostegno del Fondo all'Italia. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni sufficienti per dare una risposta adeguata all'interrogazione per quanto riguarda i pagamenti del FEAGA al Veneto.

Per quanto riguarda il FEASR ([3]), 478,155 milioni di EUR sono stati assegnati al Veneto per il periodo 2007-2013. I pagamenti complessivi ([4]) a favore della regione ammontano a 313,58 milioni di EUR. Il 15.10.2013 il tasso di esecuzione finanziaria era del 65,6 %, contro una media del 58,4 % per l'Italia e del 68,5 % per l'UE.

Per quanto riguarda il FESR ([5]), l'assegnazione complessiva (nazionale + FESR) a favore del Veneto per il periodo 2007-2013 ammonta a 448,41 milioni di EUR (di cui 205,96 milioni di EUR dal FESR). Il 31.10.2013 la spesa certificata del Veneto ammontava a circa 126,38 milioni di EUR (FESR). Tutti questi pagamenti sono stati utilizzati in modo efficace. La spesa certificata rappresenta il 55 % dell'assegnazione complessiva del programma regionale, contro una media UE del 61 %.

Per quanto riguarda i pagamenti del FSE ([6]), il 3.12.2013 il Veneto aveva ricevuto un importo complessivo di 243,31 milioni di EUR (70,2 %) per il periodo 2007-2013. Secondo le ultime informazioni nazionali disponibili ([7]), il 31 ottobre i pagamenti ai beneficiari corrispondevano al 64,24 % della dotazione complessiva per l'intero periodo (222,61 milioni di EUR per il FSE). La quota dei pagamenti intermedi rispetto alla dotazione complessiva (62,7 % al 3 dicembre) supera la media per l'Italia (53,5 % al 3 dicembre) e per l'UE (54 % al 31 ottobre) ed è maggiormente in linea con la media delle regioni italiane dell'obiettivo «Competitività» (66,15 %).

Per quanto riguarda il FEP ([8]), la regione ha ricevuto un'assegnazione di 11,9 milioni di EUR e ha certificato 4,2 milioni di EUR, collocandosi all'11° posto fra tutte le regioni italiane. La classifica per Stato membro non è ancora disponibile.

L'allegato contiene ulteriori informazioni in merito.

([1]) Fondo europeo agricolo di garanzia.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale.
([4]) Escluso il 7 % di anticipi.
([5]) Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.
([6]) Fondo sociale europeo.
([7]) http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/
([8]) Fondo europeo per la pesca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012683/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: European funds for the Veneto Region

1. Can the Commission state the total amount of European funds that have been paid directly or indirectly to the Veneto Region since 2007?

2. How much of the total amount available has actually been spent?

3. With regard to the European average of the other regions, where does the Veneto Region rank in terms of capacity to utilise European funds?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

As regards the EAGF ([1]), reference is made to the Commission's reply to Question E-12682/2013 ([2]) of the Honourable Member concerning EAGF support to Italy. The Commission does not have enough information to adequately answer the question with regards to EAGF payments to Veneto.

As regards the EAFRD ([3]), EUR 478.155 million has been allocated to Veneto for the period 2007-2013. The total payments ([4]) to the region amount to EUR 313.58 million. By 15/10/2013, the financial implementation stood at 65.6%, as compared to an average for Italy of 58.4% and to an EU average of 68.5%.

As for the ERDF ([5]), the overall (national + ERDF) allocation for Veneto for 2007-2013 amounts to EUR 448.41 million (EUR 205.96 million from ERDF). As of 31/10/2013, Veneto has certified expenditure of approximately EUR 126.38 million (ERDF). All of these payments have been put to effective use. The certified expenditure represents 55% of the regional programme's overall allocation against an EU average of 61%.

In relation to payments from the ESF ([6]) for 2007-2013, as of 3/12/2013 Veneto has received an overall amount of EUR 243.31 million (70.2%). According to the latest national information ([7]), by 31/10 payments to beneficiaries equalled to 64.24% of the overall budget for the period (EUR 222.61 million for ESF). The share of interim payments to the overall budget (62.7% as at 3/12) is above the average for Italy (53.5%, as at 3/12) and of the EU (54%, as at 31/10), and more in line with the competitiveness Italian Regions average of 66.15%.

As for the EFF ([8]), the region has been allocated EUR 11.9 million and has certified EUR 4.2 million, placing the region the 11th best performing region in Italy. The ranking per MS is not available at this stage.

Further information can be found in the annex.

([1]) European Agricultural Guarantee Fund.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
([4]) 7% of advances excluded.
([5]) European Regional Development Fund.
([6]) European Social Fund.
([7]) http://www.rgs.mef.gov.it/VERSIONE-I/Attivit--i/Rapporti-f/Il-monitoraggio/
([8]) European Fisheries Fund.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012689/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Riforma del sistema pensionistico in Italia

Da quanto riportato da fonti giornalistiche, la Commissione europea starebbe avviando una procedura d'infrazione contro l'Italia.

La causa della messa in mora sarebbe la legge n. 214 del 2011 (che dovrebbe entrare in vigore il prossimo gennaio), che prevede una differenza tra gli anni minimi di contribuzione, sia per il settore pubblico che per quello privato: il periodo di contribuzione richiesto per ottenere il pensionamento anticipato è di 41 anni e 3 mesi per le donne, e 42 anni e 3 mesi per gli uomini.

Considerando che codesta disparità di trattamento contrasterebbe con le norme comunitarie, in particolare con l'art. 157 del Trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE che stabilisce la parità di trattamento tra uomini e donne;

considerando che già nel 2010, la Commissione UE, dopo la sentenza di condanna della Corte di giustizia europea, aveva ripreso l'Italia per l'adeguamento dell'età pensionabile tra uomini e donne (nella pubblica amministrazione), con conseguente risoluzione da parte del governo che aumentò l'età pensionabile delle donne a 65 anni, come quella degli uomini;

si interroga la Commissione per avere una valutazione sulla veridicità di quanto riportato dalle predette fonti.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

La direttiva 79/7/CEE attua il principio della parità di trattamento tra uomini e donne in materia di sicurezza sociale e riguarda in particolare le pensioni obbligatorie. Essa prevede tuttavia alcune deroghe al principio della parità di trattamento, soprattutto in merito alla fissazione dell'età pensionabile. Pertanto, in materia di sicurezza sociale, gli Stati membri sono autorizzati a mantenere un'età di pensionamento diversa a seconda del sesso.

La direttiva 2006/54/CE in materia di occupazione e impiego riguarda i regimi di pensioni professionali. A norma di questa direttiva non è consentito fissare età pensionabili diverse per le donne e gli uomini. Tale direttiva si applica anche ai regimi pensionistici di una categoria particolare di lavoratori come quella dei dipendenti pubblici, se le relative prestazioni sono versate al beneficiario a motivo del suo rapporto di lavoro con il datore di lavoro pubblico (v. l'articolo 7, paragrafo 2).

Dal momento che i regimi pensionistici del settore pubblico rientrano nel campo di applicazione della direttiva 2006/54/CE, una differenza nell'età pensionabile tra uomini e donne in tale settore costituisce una violazione di detta direttiva, che l'Italia ha recepito con il decreto legislativo n. 5/2010 ([1]).

La legge n. 214/2011, all'articolo 24, comma 10, stabilisce che le cosiddette pensioni di «prepensionamento» possono essere versate ai dipendenti pubblici o privati dopo un certo numero di anni di contributi finanziari, che differiscono in funzione del sesso del lavoratore e che, al 1° gennaio 2014, sarà di 41 anni e 3 mesi per le donne e 42 anni e 3 mesi per gli uomini.

Pertanto, in seguito a contatti con le autorità italiane e alla luce della sentenza della Corte di giustizia nella causa C-46/07, la Commissione ha deciso di avviare un procedimento di infrazione nei confronti dell'Italia ai sensi dell'articolo 258 del TFUE e, il 18 ottobre 2013, ha inviato una lettera di costituzione in mora all'Italia.

([1]) Gazzetta Ufficiale italiana del 5.2.2010 n. 151.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012689/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Reform of the pension system in Italy

According to news sources, the Commission is about to launch an infringement procedure against Italy.

The reason for the formal notice is Law No 214 of 2011 (due to enter into force next January), which provides for a difference in the minimum number of years of paid contributions, both in the public and the private sector: the period of contributions required for early retirement is 41 years and 3 months for women, and 42 years and 3 months for men.

This unequal treatment runs counter to EU rules, in particular Article 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union which lays down the principle of equal treatment for men and women.

As early as 2010, following a ruling of the Court of Justice, the Commission warned Italy that it would have to set the same retirement age for men and women (in the public administration sector). The Italian Government subsequently raised the retirement age of women to 65 years, the same as men.

Can the Commission confirm whether the information provided by the above sources is accurate?

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

Directive 79/7 implements the principle of equal treatment between men and women in matters of social security and notably covers statutory pensions. However it contains some exceptions to the principle of equal treatment, in particular regarding the determination of pensionable age. Therefore, in the field of social security, Member States are allowed to maintain different retirement ages for men and women.

Directive 2006/54, on employment and occupation, covers occupational pension schemes. Under this directive it is not allowed to set a different retirement age for men and women. This directive also applies to pension schemes for a particular category of workers such as that of public servants, if the benefits are paid by reason of the employment relationship with the public employer [Art. 7(2)].

As public sector pensions schemes fall within the scope of application of Directive 2006/54, a difference in the retirement age between men and women in this sector amounts to a breach of Directive 2006/54, which Italy transposed with Leg. Decree No 5/2010 ([1]).

Law No 214/2011, in its Article 24(10) establishes that the so called 'early retirement' pensions can be paid to both private or public employees, after a number of years of financial contributions, which differ depending on the sex of the worker, and on 1 January 2014 will be of 41 years and 3 months for women and 42 years and 3 months for men.

Therefore, following contacts with the Italian authorities, and taking into account the Court's ruling in Case C-46/07, the Commission has decided to open infringement proceedings against Italy under Article 258 TFEU, and sent a letter of formal notice on 18 October 2013.

([1]) OJ of 5.2.2010 No 151.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012690/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Impacto da moeda única e das políticas comuns na divergência entre Estados-Membros

Na última sessão plenária do Parlamento Europeu foi aprovada uma resolução «sobre o Semestre Europeu para a Coordenação das Políticas Económicas: aplicação das prioridades para 2013».

Nesta resolução, no seu ponto 9, o Parlamento Europeu «insta a investigar mais profundamente os motivos do enorme e visível aumento das divergências internas de competitividade, consolidação orçamental e desempenho económico entre os Estados-Membros, resultantes do funcionamento da moeda única e, nomeadamente, do impacto assimétrico das políticas comuns».

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Que estudos foram efetuados, até à data, sobre as consequências do funcionamento da moeda única, designadamente ao nível do aumento das divergências de desempenho económico entre os Estados-Membros?

2. Que estudos foram efetuados, até à data, sobre o impacto assimétrico das políticas comuns nos diferentes Estados-Membros?

3. Que medidas tomará a Comissão para «investigar mais profundamente os motivos do enorme e visível aumento das divergências internas de competitividade, consolidação orçamental e desempenho económico entre os Estados-Membros, resultantes do funcionamento da moeda única e, nomeadamente, do impacto assimétrico das políticas comuns»?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(23 de dezembro de 2013)

A Comissão realizou um estudo exaustivo do impacto económico do euro (EMU@10). Além disso, efetuou uma série de análises das divergências de competitividade e desempenho económico entre os Estados-Membros. Estas análises foram publicadas nomeadamente nos relatórios *Surveillance of intra-euro-area competitiveness and imbalances*, Economia Europeia 2010(1), *Current Accounts Surplus in the EU*, European Economy 2012(9), *Macroeconomic Imbalances*, European Economy-Occasional Papers, 99-110 e 132-144. Acresce que vários números do *Quarterly Report on the Euro Area* também fornecem a análise solicitada pelo Parlamento Europeu.

A Comissão publica avaliações regulares das políticas orçamentais e estruturais dos Estados-Membros. Citemos: *Report on Public finances in EMU*, publicado anualmente (última edição: European Economy 2013(4)), *Labour market Developments in Europe* (última edição: European Economy 2013(6)) e *Product Market Review* (a publicar na próxima edição da European Economy, 2013). A Comissão não se pronuncia sobre a política monetária, a fim de preservar a independência do BCE.

A Comissão adota, todos os anos, o relatório sobre o mecanismo de alerta que, com base num quadro de referência de indicadores, identifica os Estados-Membros em relação aos quais os riscos de desequilíbrios justificam uma análise mais aprofundada (apreciação aprofundada). As análises aprofundadas examinam se um país está a ser afetado por um desequilíbrio e, em caso afirmativo, qual é a origem, a natureza e a gravidade do eventual desequilíbrio. A Comissão efetua ainda vastas análises transnacionais no contexto das recomendações específicas para cada país. Estas análises são realizadas regularmente, ou seja, prosseguidas e atualizadas todos os anos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012690/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: The impact of the single currency and common policies on divergence between Member States

The last plenary session of the Parliament passed a resolution 'on the European Semester for Economic Policy Coordination: implementing the priorities for 2013'.

In point nine of this resolution, the Parliament, 'Calls for deeper investigation of the reasons for the huge and visible increase in internal divergences in competitiveness, fiscal consolidation and economic performance across Member States that have resulted from the functioning of the single currency, and in particular of the asymmetric impact of common policies'

1. Can the Commission explain what studies have so far been conducted on the consequences of the operation of the single currency, particularly at the level of increased divergences in the economic performance of the Member States?

2. What studies have so far been conducted on the asymmetric impact of common policies on different Member States?

3. What measures will the Commission take for 'deeper investigation of the reasons for the huge and visible increase in internal divergences in competitiveness, fiscal consolidation and economic performance across Member States that have resulted from the functioning of the single currency, and in particular of the asymmetric impact of common policies'?

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

The Commission has carried out an extensive study of the economic impact of the Euro (EMU@10). It has also produced a range of analyses on divergences in competitiveness and economic performance across Member States. These analyses have appeared notably in the reports 'Surveillance of intra-euro-area competitiveness and imbalances,' European Economy 2010(1), 'Current Accounts Surplus in the EU,' European Economy 2012(9), 'Macroeconomic Imbalances,' European Economy-Occasional Papers, 99-110 and 132-144. Besides, several issues on the Quarterly Report of the Euro Area also provide the analysis requested by Parliament.

The Commission publishes a regular assessment of fiscal and structural policies in Member States. These include the annual 'Report on Public finances in EMU' (latest issue: European Economy 2013(4)), the 'Labour market Developments in Europe,' (latest issue: European Economy 2013(6)), and the 'Product Market Review' (next issue: European Economy, 2013 (forthcoming)). The Commission does not comment on monetary policy in order to safeguard the ECB's independence.

The Commission adopts every year the Alert Mechanism Report, which, based on a scoreboard of indicators, identifies for which Member States risks of imbalances justify a closer analysis (in-depth review). The in-depth reviews assess whether a country is affected by an imbalance, and if it is, what the origin, nature, and severity of the possible imbalance is. The Commission also conducts extensive cross-country analysis in the context of the Country Specific Recommendations. These analyses are conducted regularly, and therefore they are continued and updated every year.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012691/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Situação dos trabalhadores portugueses na região de Narbonne, França

A Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses — Intersindical Nacional (CGTP-IN) denunciou recentemente a «dramática situação» laboral que vivem os trabalhadores portugueses na região de Narbonne, no Sul de França.

Estes trabalhadores, que se encontram maioritariamente a trabalhar nas vindimas, noutros trabalhos agrícolas e na construção civil, recebem em muitos casos o salário mínimo nacional de Portugal, apesar de lhes ter sido prometido cerca do triplo, trabalhando por vezes 70 horas semanais e não tendo alojamento condigno.

Sucedem-se as denúncias de casos classificados como «escravatura moderna». Num caso que avançou para tribunal, com o apoio do sindicato geral de trabalhadores (CGT) de Narbonne, as promessas eram de um salário de 700 euros por mês, menos cerca de 400 euros que o ordenado mínimo francês, com comida e alojamento incluídos, por 35 horas de trabalho semanais. O alojamento prometido era partilhado entre «dez adultos e duas crianças», numa casa com uma casa de banho, onde «só podiam tomar banho de dois em dois dias», segundo os portugueses contactados pela Agência de Notícias Lusa. Estes trabalhadores acabaram por ser forçados a trabalhar vinte e quatro dias consecutivos, sem folgar, até cerca de dez horas por dia, recebendo menos de metade do acordado.

De acordo com a CGTP-IN, a central sindical e a CGT de França (União Sindical de Narbonne) estão a desenvolver esforços conjuntos para resolver os graves problemas que estes portugueses enfrentam e para exigir o respeito pela legalidade contratual, de acordo com a legislação francesa e europeia sobre os direitos dos cidadãos europeus que trabalham noutro país da UE.

Em aditamento a anterior pergunta (E-011923/2013), sobre trabalhadores portugueses explorados em Inglaterra, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento deste caso concreto?

2. Que medidas tomou ou vai tomar em face do mesmo?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de janeiro de 2014)

1. A Comissão não tinha conhecimento do caso a que se refere o Senhor Deputado.

2. A nível da UE, a Diretiva Tempo de Trabalho ([1]) regula determinados aspetos do tempo de trabalho, incluindo as horas extraordinárias. Estabelece normas mínimas comuns para a proteção da saúde e da segurança dos trabalhadores em todos os Estados-Membros, incluindo um limite para o tempo de trabalho semanal; uma duração máxima de trabalho de 48 horas, em média, por semana, incluindo as horas extraordinárias; e períodos mínimos de descanso diário e semanal de, pelo menos, 11 horas consecutivas por período de 24 horas e, pelo menos, 24 horas de descanso ininterrupto, mais as 11 horas de descanso diário para cada período de sete dias. Certas derrogações podem ser aplicadas no setor da agricultura, desde que sejam concedidos aos trabalhadores em causa períodos equivalentes de descanso compensatório ou, em casos excecionais, uma proteção adequada.

O regime do tempo de trabalho descrito pelo Senhor Deputado parece constituir uma violação da Diretiva Tempo de Trabalho. No entanto, cabe aos Estados-Membros garantir que as condições de trabalho e de emprego, incluindo as dos trabalhadores destacados, sejam corretamente aplicadas e executadas na prática.

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta E-11923/13 no que se refere às outras questões colocadas.

([1]) Diretiva 2003/88/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 4 de novembro de 2003, relativa a determinados aspetos da organização do tempo de trabalho, JO L 299 de 18.11.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012691/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: The situation of Portuguese workers in the Narbonne region of France

The Portuguese General Confederation of Workers — National Trades Union (CGTP-IN) recently denounced the 'dramatic' employment situation faced by Portuguese workers in the Narbonne region of southern France.

These workers, the majority of whom work in the harvest, and others in agriculture and civil construction, often receive the Portuguese national minimum wage, despite their having been promised triple this sum. They may be expected to work up to 70 hours a week, and are not provided with suitable accommodation.

There have been successive cases denouncing this 'modern slavery'. In a case that went to court with the backing of the Narbonne Trade Union, the promised wage was EUR 700 per month for a 35 hour week, with food and accommodation included, which is about EUR 400 less than the French legal minimum wage. The promised accommodation was shared with 'ten adults and two children', in a house with one bathroom, where, according to the Portuguese workers contacted by the Lusa news agency, they 'could only take a bath every two days'. These workers were forced to work twenty four consecutive days without a break, for up to ten hours a day, and received less than half the agreed wage.

The CGTP-IN has stated that the union office and the French CGT (Narbonne Trade Union) are making joint efforts to resolve the serious problems faced by the Portuguese workers and are demanding that contract law be respected, in accordance with French and EU legislation on the rights of EU citizens who work in other EU countries.

Following the earlier Question (E-011923/2013) on Portuguese workers exploited in England, can the Commission state:

1. Is it aware of this specific case?

2. What measures has it taken or will it take in response to this?

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

1. The Commission was not aware of the case to which the Honourable Members refer.

2. At EU level, the Working Time Directive ([1]) governs certain aspects of working time, including overtime. It lays down common minimum standards for the protection of workers' health and safety in all Member States, including a limit to weekly working time; a maximum working time of 48 hours on average, including overtime; and minimum daily and weekly rest periods of at least 11 consecutive hours per 24-hour period and at least 24 hours of uninterrupted rest, plus the 11 hours' daily rest per seven-day period. Certain derogations may be applied in agriculture, provided that the workers concerned are afforded equivalent periods of compensatory rest or, in exceptional cases, appropriate protection.

The working time scheme described by the Honourable Members appears to be in breach of the Working Time Directive. Nonetheless, it is for the Member States to ensure that the working and employment conditions, including those of posted workers, are correctly implemented, applied and enforced in practice.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Question E-11923/13 as regards the other points raised.

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012694/13
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL) e Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Parque de Ciência e Inovação nos concelhos de Aveiro e Ílhavo

Em 23 de janeiro de 2012, colocámos à Comissão uma pergunta sobre o Parque de Ciência e Inovação, um parque industrial de produção científica, tecnológica e educativa projetado para os concelhos de Aveiro e Ílhavo. Esta infraestrutura, recorde-se, está orçamentada em 35 milhões de euros, dos quais 85 % serão provenientes de programas de financiamento da União Europeia.

Na altura, a resposta a esta pergunta, de acordo com as informações fornecidas pelo governo português à Comissão, foi de que não havia qualquer projeto aprovado para o Parque de Ciência e Inovação, pelo que não se chegou a conclusão alguma.

Volvido mais de um ano, solicitamos novamente informações:

1. Existe já algum projeto aprovado?

2. Organizações ambientalistas portuguesas já por diversas vezes apontaram localizações alternativas, designadamente numa das numerosas zonas industriais degradadas que existem na região. No entanto, nos moldes atuais, o projeto terá de ser construído todo de raiz. Não acha a Comissão que isto contraria as atuais políticas europeias de investimento na reabilitação do território?

3. O projeto situa-se em terrenos agrícolas em atividade e em terrenos da Reserva Ecológica Nacional. Como pode a Comissão permitir o financiamento de um projeto com estas características?

4. Recentemente a Quercus — Associação Nacional para a Conservação da Natureza fez uma denúncia à Comissão Europeia com base em informações de que uma parte do projeto vai ocupar a Zona de Proteção Especial da Ria de Aveiro. A Comissão já analisou este caso de manifesta violação da legislação comunitária?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(9 de janeiro de 2014)

1. As autoridades portuguesas informaram a Comissão de que uma decisão relativa à primeira fase do projeto «Parque de Ciência e Inovação» será tomada até ao final do corrente mês.

2.-3. A Comissão tem uma política de limitar a ocupação de terras de espaços verdes ([1]) e elaborou orientações nesse sentido ([2]). Neste caso, realizou-se uma avaliação de impacto ambiental, tendo sido analisadas localizações alternativas e sendo a localização atual considerada aceitável. Também foram recebidos pareceres favoráveis da Administração da Região Hidrográfica do Centro e da Direção Regional de Agricultura e Pescas do Centro. O município de Ílhavo escolheu a localização com base na proximidade da Universidade de Aveiro, que é considerada extremamente importante em termos de produção científica e tecnológica, bem como de transferência de conhecimentos. O quadro jurídico da REN permite construir em áreas REN se tal for considerado de interesse público, como é o caso em apreço.

As autoridades portuguesas explicaram também que a fase 1 do projeto não afetaria a Zona de Proteção Especial da Ria de Aveiro, uma vez que diz respeito ao município de Ílhavo. A fase 2 do projeto no município de Aveiro ficaria situada na zona de proteção especial, tendo recebido um parecer favorável do Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas.

4. A Comissão recebeu recentemente uma queixa, alegando uma aplicação incorreta da legislação ambiental da UE neste caso, estando atualmente a avaliar essa queixa.

([1]) Ver, por exemplo, a secção 4.6 do COM(2011) 571.
([2]) SWD(2012) 101 final/2
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/pdf/guidelines/pub/soil_pt.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012694/13
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL) and Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Science and Technology Park in the municipalities of Ílhavo and Aveiro

On 23 January 2012, we asked the Commission about the Science and Technology Park, an industrial estate for scientific, technological and educational production planned for the municipalities of Ílhavo and Aveiro. This infrastructure, it should be remembered, has a budget of EUR 35 million, of which 85% will come from EU funding programmes.

At the time, the answer to this question, according to the information supplied by the Portuguese Government to the Commission, was that no project had been approved for the Science and Technology Park, and therefore no conclusion could be drawn.

Now that another year has passed, we ask again:

1. Has any project been approved yet?

2. Portuguese environmental organisations have repeatedly highlighted alternative locations, specifically in the numerous derelict industrial areas that exist in the region. However, the current plan is to build the project on a greenfield site. Does the Commission not think that this is contrary to current EU policies of investing in rehabilitating land?

3. The project is located on working agricultural land and on land in the national ecological reserve. How can the Commission allow a project with these characteristics to be funded?

4. Recently QUERCUS (the national nature conservation association) has complained to the Commission on the basis of information suggesting that one part of the project will be in the Ria de Aveiro special protection area. Has the Commission yet examined this case of a clear breach of EU legislation?

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

1. The Commission has received from the Portuguese authorities the information that a decision on the first phase of the project 'Science and Technology Park' will be taken by the end of this month.

2-3. The Commission has a policy of limiting land intake of greenfields ([1]) and has produced guidance accordingly ([2]). In this case, an environmental impact assessment was carried out where alternative locations were investigated and the current location was considered acceptable. Favourable opinions were also received by the Administração da Região Hidrigráfica do Centro and Direcção Regional de Agricultura e Pescas do Centro. The municipality of Ílhavo chose the location based on the proximity to the university of Aveiro which is considered highly important in terms of scientific and tehnological output as well as knowledge transfer. The REN legal framework allows building on REN areas if it is considered to be in the public interest, as is the case here.

The Portuguese authorities also explained that phase 1 of the project would not affect the Ria de Aveiro Special Protection Area since it concerns the municipality of Ílhavo. Phase 2 of the project in the Aveiro municipality would be located within the Special Protection Area but has received a favourable opinion from the Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas.

4. The Commission received a complaint recently, alleging a wrong application of EU environmental law in this case, and is currently assessing it.

([1]) See for example Section 4.6 in COM(2011) 571.
([2]) SWD(2012) 101 final/2 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/pdf/guidelines/pub/soil_pt.pdf).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012695/13
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL) e Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Incumprimento pelo Estado português da legislação relativa à identificação dos riscos da exposição ao amianto para os trabalhadores

Na última semana, a Quercus — Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza enviou ao Comité dos Altos Responsáveis de Inspeção do Trabalho uma denúncia contra o Governo português por incumprimento na identificação dos riscos da exposição ao amianto para os trabalhadores, prevista ao nível comunitário pela Diretiva-Quadro 89/391/CEE e pela Diretiva 2009/148/CE.

Apesar de a Comissão já ter informado previamente a Quercus de que o levantamento dos edifícios, instalações e equipamentos públicos é uma responsabilidade nacional, parece-nos inaceitável que o Governo português tenha vindo a adiar sistematicamente essa identificação (da existência de amianto em edifícios públicos).

Recordamos uma das considerações da Diretiva 2009/148/CE segundo a qual «o amianto é um agente particularmente perigoso que pode causar doenças graves e que está presente em grande número de situações de trabalho e, em consequência, numerosos trabalhadores estão expostos a um risco potencial para a saúde».

Segundo informações a que tivemos acesso, existem já denúncias de doenças que vieram a ser desenvolvidas por exposição ao amianto, nomeadamente numa fábrica no concelho de Oeiras, no edifício do IVA e na Biblioteca Nacional. Recordamos que os efeitos do amianto surgem 15 a 20 anos após exposição e que todos os dias funcionários públicos estão expostos a riscos que desconhecem e que estão a ser negligenciados pelo seu Governo. A própria Ministra responsável pela pasta do Ambiente veio há alguns meses declarar que o levantamento supra referido não era uma «prioridade número um».

Dito isto, pergunta-se à Comissão se irá pactuar com a atitude negligente do Governo português, ou se, em vez disso, fará cumprir, no mínimo, todas as disposições da legislação pertinente (Diretiva-Quadro 89/391/CEE e Diretiva 2009/148/CE) com a maior brevidade possível, não deixando de alertar devidamente o Governo português para uma situação que nos parece por demais urgente.

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(7 de janeiro de 2014)

A Diretiva 89/391/CEE ([1]) estabelece princípios gerais em matéria de saúde e segurança no trabalho, em especial no que se refere à prevenção de riscos profissionais e à eliminação de fatores de risco e de acidente. A Diretiva 2009/148/CE ([2]) estabelece legislação específica para proteger os trabalhadores contra os riscos de exposição ao amianto durante o trabalho. Em conformidade com o artigo 153.° do TFUE, as duas diretivas estabelecem requisitos mínimos e não obstam ao direito de os Estados-Membros aplicarem ou introduzirem disposições que assegurem uma melhor proteção dos trabalhadores.

O artigo 3.°, n.° 2, da Diretiva 2009/148/CE exige, nomeadamente, que a avaliação dos riscos seja efetuada «relativamente às atividades suscetíveis de apresentar um risco de exposição às poeiras provenientes do amianto ou de materiais contendo amianto», de forma a determinar a natureza e o grau de exposição. Em função dos resultados, as fibras de amianto no ar devem ser medidas regularmente. Esta diretiva também especifica medidas para reduzir ao mínimo a exposição dos trabalhadores ao amianto e estabelece uma obrigação específica caso os valores-limite sejam excedidos. Todavia, o rastreio obrigatório de amianto em edifícios públicos não constitui um requisito formal no âmbito da Diretiva 2009/148/CE, pelo que a correta aplicação das disposições nacionais que exijam tal tipo de rastreio é da competência dos Estados-Membros.

No entanto, a Comissão tenciona analisar se as autoridades portuguesas cumprem as disposições relativas à proteção dos trabalhadores do setor público contra os riscos ligados à exposição ao amianto durante o trabalho.

([1]) Diretiva 89/391/CEE do Conselho, de 12 de junho de 1989, relativa à aplicação de medidas destinadas a promover a melhoria da segurança e da saúde dos trabalhadores no trabalho, JO L 183 de 29.6.1989.

([2]) Diretiva 2009/148/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 30 de novembro de 2009, relativa à proteção dos trabalhadores contra os riscos de exposição ao amianto durante o trabalho, JO L 330 de 16.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012695/13
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL) and Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Failure of the Portuguese Government to comply with legislation relating to the identification of the risks of workers being exposed to asbestos

Last week, Quercus (the national nature conservation association) sent a complaint to the Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors about the Portuguese Government's failure to identify the risks of workers being exposed to asbestos, as required by Community Framework-Directive 89/391/EEC and Directive 2009/148/EC.

Although the Commission has already informed Quercus that the survey of public buildings, installations and equipment is a national responsibility, it appears unacceptable that the Portuguese Government has been systematically postponing this identification (of the existence of asbestos in public buildings).

We recall that one of the recitals in Directive 2009/148/EC states that **'**asbestos is a particularly dangerous agent which may cause serious diseases and which is found in a large number of circumstances at work. Many workers are therefore exposed to a potential health risk'.

According to our information, there are already reports of diseases that have arisen due to exposure to asbestos, particularly in a factory in the municipality of Oeiras, in the VAT building and in the National Library. We would point out that the effects of asbestos appear 15 to 20 years after exposure and that every day public workers are being exposed to risks of which they are unaware and which are being ignored by their government. The Minister for the Environment herself stated a few months ago that the aforementioned survey was not 'priority number one'.

Given the above, we ask the Commission whether it will be complicit in the negligent attitude of the Portuguese Government, or whether it will instead call for the Government at the very least to comply with all of the provisions of the pertinent legislation (Framework-Directive 89/391/EEC and Directive 2009/148/EC) as quickly as possible, and whether it will duly alert the Portuguese Government to this situation, which we consider to be extremely urgent?

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

Directive 89/391/EEC ([1]) lays down general principles on health and safety at work, and in particular on the prevention of occupational risks and the elimination of risk and accident factors. Directive 2009/148/EC ([2]) lays down specific legislation to protect workers from risks related to exposure to asbestos at work. In accordance with Article 153 TFEU, those two Directives lay down minimum requirements and are without prejudice to the right of the Member States to apply or introduce provisions ensuring greater protection of workers.

Article 3(2) of Directive 2009/148/EC requires in particular that a risk assessment be carried out 'in the case of any activity likely to involve a risk of exposure to dust arising from asbestos or materials containing asbestos' and in such a way as to determine the nature and degree of exposure. Depending on the findings, the asbestos fibres in the air are to be measured regularly. That directive also details measures to reduce workers' exposure to asbestos to a minimum and specific obligation where the limit values are exceeded. However, mandatory asbestos screening of public buildings is not a formal requirement under Directive 2009/148/EC, and the proper implementation of national provisions requiring such screening is consequently a Member State competence.

Nevertheless, the Commission intends to examine whether the Portuguese authorities are complying with the provisions on the protection of public-sector workers from risks related to exposure to asbestos at work.

([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]) Directive 2009/148/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work, OJ L 330, 16.12.2009.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012696/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Milhares de portugueses sem direito a subsídio de desemprego e rendimento social de inserção

Segundo dados da Segurança Social portuguesa, mais de metade dos desempregados em Portugal não recebem subsídio de desemprego. Em setembro, o Estado pagou 390 477 prestações de desemprego, mês em que o número oficial de desempregados se cifrou em 877 mil. Assim, 487 mil desempregados inscritos nos centros de emprego não auferiram qualquer das prestações existentes. O valor médio das prestações também caiu para 485,33 euros, face aos 505,03 euros observados um ano antes.

Por outro lado, desde a entrada em vigor das novas regras de atribuição do rendimento social de inserção, em junho de 2012, mais de 45 mil pessoas perderam direito a este mínimo de sobrevivência. Só entre agosto e setembro, a Segurança Social retirou este apoio a 9 381 pessoas, reduzindo o total para 255 00501 beneficiários. O valor médio por beneficiário foi de 83,49 euros em setembro, sendo de 243,23 euros por família. Assim, perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Está consciente de que o fim do subsídio de desemprego e/ou do rendimento social de inserção significará para estas pessoas e as respetivas famílias, incluindo crianças e jovens em idade escolar, ficar sem qualquer rendimento e sem os meios básicos de sobrevivência?

2. Não considera desumano que se estejam a empurrar milhares de pessoas para a fome e para a miséria devido a uma política que enriquece a banca e o capital financeiro, por exemplo através do pagamento de uma dívida que em vez de ser reduzida é aumentada?

3. Que apoios da UE podem ser facultados Estados-Membros que enfrentam maiores dificuldades económicas para ajudar a garantir aos mais carenciados uma dieta estável, saudável e de qualidade, incluindo às crianças e aos jovens em idade escolar, e vestuário, habitação, material escolar e cuidados de saúde a crianças carenciadas, bem como ajudar a garantir que nenhuma família fique sem água, eletricidade ou outros produtos essenciais?

4. Não considera que a sua atuação, no quadro da troika, é profundamente contraditória com as metas que a própria Comissão definiu, de reduzir em 20 milhões, até 2020, o número de pessoas em risco de pobreza?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(7 de janeiro de 2014)

A Comissão está ciente do impacto dramático do aumento do desemprego em muitas famílias portuguesas. Por este motivo, as medidas do Programa de Ajustamento Económico foram concebidas de forma a proteger as pessoas mais vulneráveis da sociedade. Em seu resultado, em 2011 e 2012, a despesa pública relativa às prestações sociais manteve-se estável em torno de 37 mil milhões de EUR, a um nível semelhante ao de 2010 e superior aos níveis anteriores à crise, em 2007 e 2008. Estes números são comparáveis, por exemplo, com reduções significativas noutras áreas, tais como o investimento público ou o nível total de remunerações pagas no setor público.

Os instrumentos financeiros europeus ajudam a reduzir o impacto da crise nas famílias e nas crianças. Ao abrigo da vertente «Inclusão social» do Programa Operacional «Potencial Humano» (POPH), o Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) tem ajudado a resolver o problema do desemprego e da exclusão social (644 milhões de EUR entre 2007 e 2013). O Regulamento do FSE para o próximo período de programação de 2014-20 assegurará uma quota mínima de 20 % do Fundo a atribuir à inclusão social. O novo Fundo de Auxílio Europeu às Pessoas mais Carenciadas, colocará 3,5 mil milhões de EUR à disposição dos Estados-Membros para o fornecimento de alimentos e de ajuda de emergência de base.

O Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal visa criar condições a favor do crescimento e da criação de emprego e, portanto, de melhoria das condições de vida em Portugal. Prosseguir a consolidação orçamental e reformas estruturais ambiciosas é muito importante e constitui a estratégia adequada para atingir aqueles objetivos. A inexistência de um programa de ajustamento teria sido mais devastadora e teria conduzido a uma consolidação fiscal com impacto imediato e a uma crise orçamental mais grave, com repercussões muito mais desastrosas para a atividade económica, o emprego e a disponibilidade dos serviços públicos básicos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012696/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Thousands of Portuguese with no right to unemployment benefit and income support allowance

According to Portuguese social security data, more than half of the unemployed in Portugal do not receive unemployment benefit. In September, the state made 390 477 unemployment payments, while the official unemployment figure for the month was 877 000. Therefore, 487 000 unemployed workers registered at job centres did not receive any of the existing benefit payments. The average amount of the payments also fell to EUR 485.33 from EUR 505.03 the previous year.

At the same time, since new rules for allocating income support allowance came into force in June 2012, more than 45 000 people lost the right to this minimum for survival. Between August and September alone, social security removed this support from 9 381 people, reducing the total to 255 501 recipients. The average value per recipient was EUR 83.49 in September, and EUR 243.23 per family.

1. Is the Commission aware that ending unemployment benefit and/or income support allowance for these people and their families, including children and young people of school age, will mean they will have no income or the basic means for survival?

2. Does it not find it inhuman that thousands of people will be forced into hunger and misery due to policies that enrich the banking and financial capital sectors, for example by repaying a debt that continues to rise instead of fall?

3. What EU support can be provided to Member States facing the greatest economic difficulties to help ensure that the most needy, including children and young people of school age, have a stable, healthy and quality diet, and clothing, housing, school materials and healthcare for children in need, as well as to help ensure that no family is without water, electricity or other essential products?

4. Does it agree that its action, as part of the troika, is profoundly at odds with the goals the Commission itself set to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty by 20 million by 2020?

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

The Commission is aware of the dramatic impact of the increase in unemployment on many Portuguese families. For this reason, the measures of the economic adjustment programme have been devised so as to protect the most vulnerable groups. As a result, public expenditure in social benefits has been stable at around EUR 37 billion both in 2011 and 2012, which is the same level as in 2010 and higher than pre-crisis levels in 2007 and 2008. These figures compare for instance with significant reductions in other areas such as public investment or the total level paid as remunerations in the public sector.

The European financial instruments help to reduce the impact of the crisis on families and children. Under the social inclusion axis of the Human Potential Operational Programme (POPH), the European Social Fund (ESF) has been tackling unemployment and social exclusion (EUR 644 mill/2007-13). The ESF regulation for the next programming period 2014-20 will ensure a minimum share of 20% of the fund to be allocated to social inclusion. The new European Fund for Aid to the Most Deprived will make EUR 3.5 billion available to Member States for the provision of food and basic emergency aid .

The economic adjustment programme for Portugal aims at creating conditions for growth and jobs and thereby improving living conditions in Portugal. Pursuing fiscal consolidation and ambitious structural reforms are instrumental is the right strategy to achieve those objectives. The absence of an adjustment programme would have been more devastating as it would have led to a more front-loaded fiscal consolidation and to a more acute fiscal crisis, with much more disastrous effects on economic activity, employment, and availability of basic public services.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012697/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações da OIT e necessidade de aumentar salários, nomeadamente o salário mínimo nacional

Na sua deslocação a Portugal, o diretor-geral da Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT) considerou que é necessário repensar a ideia de que o aumento do salário mínimo não aumenta a competitividade da economia.

O diretor-geral da OIT desafiou o governo português e a troika a repensarem a «ideia de que o salário mínimo é um impedimento à competitividade e ao crescimento da economia portuguesa».

Assim, perguntamos à Comissão:

Não considera que existe uma contradição entre o discurso da Comissão sobre o combate à pobreza e a defesa da manutenção/redução ou mesmo do fim do salário mínimo nacional, o qual se encontra abaixo do limiar mínimo da pobreza em Portugal?

Está disponível para rever a sua posição e apoiar o aumento de salários em Portugal, incluindo do salário mínimo nacional para 515 euros, e das pensões de reforma como algumas das medidas centrais para promover o relançamento da procura interna e da economia nacional?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(7 de janeiro de 2014)

Em Portugal o salário mínimo é de 485 EUR desde 1 de janeiro de 2011, pago 14 vezes por ano. Segundo o Eurostat, o limiar da «taxa de risco de pobreza» (60 % do rendimento mediano equivalente), para uma única pessoa foi de 4 994 EUR em 2012. Embora o salário mínimo tenha aumentado 2,1 % em 2011 e se tenha mantido constante em 2012, a remuneração nominal por trabalhador diminuiu no mesmo período, respetivamente, 0,6 % e 2 %.

O Memorando de Entendimento assinado por Portugal e os seus parceiros internacionais prevê que, ao longo do período do programa, o aumento dos salários mínimos só ocorrerá se tal se justificar em resultado da evolução da economia e do mercado de trabalho e de um acordo no âmbito da revisão do programa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012697/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: ILO declarations and the need to increase wages, particularly the national minimum wage

The Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) said on a visit to Portugal that it is necessary to rethink the idea that increasing the minimum wage does not increase economic competitiveness.

The Director-General of the ILO challenged the Portuguese Government and the troika to rethink the 'idea that the minimum wage is an obstacle to Portuguese competitiveness and economic growth'.

Does the Commission agree that there is a contradiction between its discourse on fighting poverty and its defence of freezing, cutting or even scrapping the national minimum wage, which is already below the poverty line in Portugal?

Is it willing to review its position and support increasing wages in Portugal, including increasing the national minimum wage to EUR 515, and retirement pensions, as some of the key measures for encouraging internal demand and reigniting the national economy?

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

The minimum wage in Portugal is EUR 485 since 1 January 2011, paid 14 times a year. According to Eurostat, the 'at-risk-of-poverty' threshold (60% of median equivalent income) for a single person was EUR 4994 in 2012. While the minimum wage increased by 2.1% in 2011 and kept constant in 2012, nominal compensation per employee fell in the same period by 0.6 and 2% respectively.

The Memorandum of Understanding agreed by Portugal and its international partners foresees that over the programme period, any increase in the minimum wage will take place only if justified by economic and labour market developments and agreed in the framework of the programme review.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012698/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Consequências da implementação de acordos de comércio livre na economia portuguesa

Apesar do aparente bloqueio das negociações tendo em vista o avanço do processo de liberalização do comércio mundial no quadro da Organização Mundial de Comércio (OMC), esse objetivo da UE vai avançando através de acordos chamados de comércio livre, acordos de associação, acordos de parceria económica, etc. Estão em vias de conclusão, em negociação ou já concluídos acordos com Marrocos, EUA, Canadá, ASEAN, Índia, Japão, Peru, Colômbia, Ucrânia e países ACP, entre outros.

Não é difícil antecipar a acentuação das desigualdades existentes, dos efeitos graves da desregulamentação do comércio, da livre circulação de capitais e do investimento, ou seja o aprofundamento do modelo neoliberal que temos hoje, particularmente em países de economias mais débeis, como Portugal.

Assim, perguntamos à Comissão:

Que estudos foram feitos sobre os impactos económicos e sociais de cada um dos acordos atualmente em vigor e dos acordos atualmente em negociação, cujo fundamento é o chamado livre comércio?

Quais serão os impactos concretos de cada um destes acordos sobre Portugal nos diferentes setores de atividade?

Resposta dada por Karel De Gucht em nome da Comissão
(13 de janeiro de 2014)

A Comissão encomenda avaliações do impacto sobre a sustentabilidade do comércio (*Sustainability Impact Assessments* — SIA) independentes, que analisam o impacto de potenciais acordos de comércio livre (ACL) sobre a UE e os parceiros da UE. As referidas SIA incluem uma avaliação exaustiva dos impactos económico, ambiental e social desses ACL, incluindo no que respeita às alterações previstas em termos de produção e valor acrescentado, tanto ao nível setorial pormenorizado como da produção total, salários, quer da mão de obra altamente especializada como da pouco qualificada, preços no produtor e no consumidor, importações, exportações, bem-estar dos consumidores, pobreza, desigualdades de rendimentos e efeitos sobre a Agenda para o Trabalho Digno.

Embora as SIA não estimem o impacto dos ACL sobre cada Estado-Membro, as informações relativas ao impacto sobre setores específicos podem ser mais relevantes para alguns Estados-Membros do que para outros.

No sítio Web da Comissão ([1]), estão disponíveis informações sobre SIA relativas a negociações comerciais específicas.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/policy-making/analysis/sustainability-impact-assessments/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012698/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: The impact of implementing free trade agreements on the Portuguese economy

Although negotiations to advance the process of world trade liberalisation under the framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) appear to have been blocked, this EU objective has been advancing through so-called free trade agreements, association agreements, economic partnership agreements, etc. Agreements are in the process of being negotiated or completed or have already been concluded with Morocco, the United States, Canada, ASEAN, India, Japan, Peru, Colombia, Ukraine and the ACP countries, amongst others.

It is not difficult to predict the deterioration of existing inequalities and the serious impact of trade deregulation and free capital and investment flows, that is, the further entrenchment of the neoliberal model in place today, particularly in countries with weaker economies, such as Portugal.

Can the Commission explain what studies have been carried out on the economic and social impact of each of the agreements currently in force and the agreements currently being negotiated, where the rationale is so-called free trade?

What actual impact will these agreements have on the different sectors of activity in Portugal?

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

The Commission outsources independent Trade Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIAs) which examine the impact of potential Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) on both the EU and EU partners. These SIAs include a comprehensive assessment of the economic, environmental and social impacts of such FTAs, including with regard to estimated changes in production and value-added, at both detailed sectorial level and total output, in wages for the high and low-skilled labour force, producer and consumer prices, imports, exports, consumer welfare, poverty, income inequality, and effects on decent work agenda.

While SIAs do not estimate the impact of FTAs on individual Member States, information regarding impact on particular sectors may be more relevant to some Member States than others.

Information on SIAs for specific trade negotiations can be found on the Commission's website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/policy-making/analysis/sustainability-impact-assessments/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012699/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Necessidade urgente de renegociação da dívida pública portuguesa

Na sua resposta E-003614/2013, a Comissão reconhece que o rácio da dívida pública portuguesa é muito elevado «principalmente devido ao legado da política orçamental deficiente nos anos anteriores ao pedido de assistência financeira de Portugal». Os factos evidenciam precisamente o contrário: a dívida pública portuguesa disparou com o atual governo e com o Memorando de Entendimento da «troika». Segundo o Eurostat, em 2011 e 2012 (já com o atual governo português e a «troika») a dívida pública cresceu 25 300 milhões de euros por ano, ou seja, a um ritmo 6,4 vezes superior ao verificado entre 2001 e 2004, e 2,7 vezes superior ao registado entre 2005 e 2010. Não é sequer necessário recuar mais no tempo. A dívida publica entrou num verdadeiro descalabro, o que constitui uma inegável prova do falhanço do Memorando de Entendimento e dos seus propagandeados objetivos de redução do défice (de -4,4 % em 2011 para os esperados -4,0 % em 2014) e da dívida pública. Em agosto de 2013, segundo o Banco de Portugal, a dívida das Administrações Públicas atingiu 254 638 milhões de euros (155,2 % do PIB) e a dívida pública, segundo os critérios de Maastricht, que não inclui a totalidade da divida, alcançou 214 880 milhões de euros (131,4 % do PIB), ou seja um valor nunca antes atingido.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

Em face destes dados, está disponível para apoiar o início urgente da renegociação da dívida pública portuguesa nos seus prazos, montantes e juros, estabelecendo como limite para o pagamento de juros, já em 2014, um montante máximo correspondente a 2,5 % do valor das exportações de bens e serviços, o que permitiria no imediato anular o corte de salários, pensões e em serviços públicos fundamentais no corrente ano?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(13 de janeiro de 2014)

Segundo os dados comunicados por Portugal e validados pelo Eurostat, a dívida pública portuguesa passou de 162,5 mil milhões de EUR em 2010 para 204,8 mil milhões de EUR em 2012. De acordo com as previsões da Comissão do outono de 2013, a dívida pública portuguesa aumentará para 216,6 mil milhões de EUR até 2015, ou seja, um aumento anual de 4 mil milhões de EUR.

Quando comparada com o PIB, prevê-se que o rácio da dívida estabilize praticamente em cerca de 125 % entre 2012 e 2015. Como revelam os relatórios regulares da Comissão sobre o cumprimento da aplicação do Programa de Ajustamento Económico, pressupondo que Portugal prossegue o seu ritmo de reforma, a dívida pública também se manterá sustentável a longo prazo.

A Comissão recorda que, em junho de 2013, o Conselho deu o seu acordo a uma extensão substancial dos prazos de vencimento dos empréstimos concedidos a Portugal pela União Europeia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012699/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Urgent need to renegotiate Portuguese public debt

It its answer to Question E-003614/2013, the Commission stated that the debt ratio in Portugal is very high 'mainly because of the legacy of an ill-devised budgetary policy in the years up to Portugal's request for financial assistance'. The facts show exactly the opposite to be the case: Portuguese public debt has taken off under the current Government and since the memorandum of understanding with the 'troika'. According to Eurostat, in 2011 and 2012 (already under the current Portuguese Government and the 'troika'), the public debt grew by EUR 25.3 billion per year, that is, at a rate 6.4 times greater than that recorded between 2001 and 2004, and 2.7 times greater than that recorded between 2005 and 2010. It is unnecessary to look further back in time. The public debt has clearly run out of control, providing undeniable proof of the failure of the memorandum of understanding and its widely publicised objectives of reducing the deficit (from -4.4% in 2011 to the predicted -4.0% in 2014) and the public debt. In August 2013, according to the Banco de Portugal, general Government debt hit EUR 254 638 million (155.2% of GDP) and the public debt, as defined by the Maastricht criteria, which does not include all of the debt, hit a record EUR 214 880 million (131.4% of GDP).

Given this data, is the Commission prepared to support the urgent renegotiation of Portuguese public debt in terms of its duration, amount and interest, setting a maximum limit for interest payments in 2014 at the equivalent of 2.5% of the value of exports of goods and services, which would allow the cuts to wages, pensions and fundamental public services in the current year to be immediately cancelled?

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

According to the data notified by Portugal and validated by Eurostat, Portuguese Government debt rose from EUR 162.5 billion in 2010 to EUR 204.8 billion in 2012. According to the Commission's Autumn 2013 forecast, Portuguese Government debt will further increase to EUR 216.6 billion by 2015, i.e. an annual increase by EUR 4 billion.

When measured against GDP, the debt ratio is projected to nearly stabilise between 2012 and 2015, at around 125%. As shown in the regular compliance reports of the European Commission on the implementation of the Economic Adjustment Programme, under the assumption that Portugal continues the reform course, government debt will remain sustainable also in the longer term.

The Commission recalls that in June 2013 the Council agreed to a substantial extension of the maturities of the loans provided to Portugal by the European Union.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012700/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: E-urile periculoase din medicamentele pentru copii

Studiile de specialitate realizate până acum au arătat că sănătatea fizică și mentală a copiilor este cu atât mai afectată cu cât crește cantitatea de E-uri consumate. Sucurile carbogazoase și dulciurile nu sunt însă singurele produse a căror compoziție poate avea consecințe negative asupra sănătății copiilor. Vitaminele și suplimentele nutritive destinate celor mici conțin la rândul lor extrem de multe E-uri cu efecte dintre cele mai nocive.

În această categorie intră și aspartamul (E 951), unul dintre cei mai controversați aditivi chimici de pe piața alimentară. Un raport al Administrației Alimentelor și Medicamentelor din Statele Unite ale Americii relevă faptul că peste 75% din reacțiile adverse reclamate de aditivii sintetici se datorează aspartamului. Din aceste motive nu se recomandă consumul frecvent și nici depășirea dozei zilnice admise de 40 mg/kg corp. Acesulfamul de potasiu (E 950) are o doză zilnică admisă de 15 mg/kg corp. Această cantitate atât de mică a fost stabilită în urma numeroaselor studii care au arătat că este foarte periculos pentru organism. Ambii îndulcitori au posibile efecte cancerigene. De asemenea, Societatea Americană de Pediatrie pune la îndoială lipsa de toxicitate a propilenglicolului (E 1520), sorbitolului (E 420) și a coloranților artificiali.

În acest context, prevede Comisia o reglementare la nivel european care să limiteze sau chiar să interzică folosirea aditivilor alimentari periculoși în fabricarea medicamentelor destinate copiilor, al căror organism este mult mai sensibil decât al unei persoane adulte?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(20 decembrie 2013)

Aditivii alimentari pot fi autorizați numai dacă utilizarea lor nu pune nicio problemă de siguranță pentru sănătatea consumatorului la nivelul de utilizare propus, pe baza dovezilor științifice disponibile. Prin urmare, utilizarea în condiții de siguranță a aditivilor trebuie să fie evaluată înainte de a fi introduși pe piața Uniunii. Toți aditivii care sunt pe lista Uniunii au fost evaluați de către Comitetul științific pentru alimentație și/sau Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară (EFSA).

Excipienții din medicamente, inclusiv coloranții, îndulcitorii și aromele, sunt evaluați ca parte a evaluării medicamentului înainte de autorizarea acestuia. Eventualele sensibilități ale diferitor grupe de vârstă sunt luate în considerare. În plus, formularea adecvată pentru noi medicamente de uz pediatric trebuie în prezent să fie justificată în mod regulat de studii sau de elemente de probă specifice. Coloranții utilizați în medicamente trebuie să îndeplinească cerințele relevante ale legislației UE în materie de coloranți alimentari.

În plus, Comisia a instituit un program de reevaluare de către EFSA a siguranței aditivilor alimentari care au fost deja autorizați în Uniunea Europeană înainte de 20 ianuarie 2009. ([1]) Pentru această reevaluare, EFSA ia în considerare informațiile privind expunerea umană la aditivii alimentari din alimente (de exemplu, tiparul de consum și utilizările, nivelurile efective de utilizare și nivelurile maxime de utilizare, frecvența consumului și alți factori care influențează expunerea, inclusiv marii consumatori și grupurile vulnerabile, precum copiii).

Comisia urmărește îndeaproape programul de reevaluare și, dacă este necesar, vor fi luate măsurile care se impun, în funcție de rezultatele indicate în avizele științifice.

([1]) Regulamentul (UE) nr. 257/2010 al Comisiei din 25 martie 2010 de stabilire a unui program de reevaluare a aditivilor alimentari autorizați în conformitate cu Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind aditivii alimentari.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012700/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(8 November 2013)

Subject: Dangerous E-number additives in children's medicines

Specialist studies to date have shown that the physical and mental health of children is adversely affected in proportion to increased consumption of E-number food additives. Fizzy drinks and confectionary are not the only culprits in this respect, since vitamins and food supplements intended for children also contain high levels of these extremely harmful substances.

This category includes aspartame (E 951), one of the most controversial chemical food additives. According to a report by the US Food and Drugs Administration, over 75% of adverse reactions caused by synthetic additives can be ascribed to this substance. For this reason, frequent consumption thereof is not recommended, the maximum admissible daily intake being 40 mg/kg body weight. The maximum limit for acesulfame potassium (E 950) is 15 mg/kg body weight. This extremely low level was established following numerous studies showing that the substance is extremely dangerous to the organism and that both sweeteners are potentially carcinogenic. The American Paediatric Society has also expressed fears regarding the toxicity of propylene glycol (E 1520), sorbitol (E 420) and artificial colouring.

In view of this, is the Commission envisaging an EU regulation to limit or even ban the use of dangerous food additives in the manufacture of medicines intended for children, whose organisms are much more sensitive than those of adults?

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

Food additives may only be authorised if their use does not, on the basis of the scientific evidence available, pose a safety concern to the health of the consumer at the level of use proposed. Therefore, the safe use of additives must be assessed before they are placed on the Union market. All additives that are on the Union list have been assessed by the Scientific Committee for Food and/or the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

Excipient in medicinal products, including colours, sweeteners and flavourings, are assessed as part of the evaluation of the medicinal product prior to its authorisation. Possible sensitivities of the different age groups are taken into consideration. Moreover, the appropriate formulation for new paediatric medicines has nowadays to be regularly substantiated by specific studies or evidence. Colours used in medicines need to satisfy the requirements of the EU legislation relevant to food colours.

In addition, the Commission set up a programme for the re-evaluation, by EFSA, of the safety of food additives that were already permitted in the Union before 20 January 2009 ([1]). For this re-evaluation EFSA takes into account information on the human exposure to the food additives from food (e.g. consumption pattern and uses, actual use levels and maximum use levels, frequency of consumption and other factors influencing exposure, including high level consumers and vulnerable groups such as children).

The Commission is closely following the re-evaluation programme and, if needed, appropriate measures will be taken based on the outcomes indicated in the scientific opinions.

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 of 25 March 2010 setting up a programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on food additives.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-012704/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Espetro de guerra civil em Moçambique

Considerando o seguinte:

— Moçambique vive a sua pior crise política e militar desde a assinatura do Acordo Geral de Paz em 1992;

— Vários cidadãos portugueses e de outras nacionalidades, entre os quais crianças em idade escolar, têm vindo a abandonar o país devido a uma onda de raptos que, num processo de crescente instabilidade, e tendo em conta as atuais circunstâncias, colocam em risco o património e a integridade física de nacionais e estrangeiros;

— Moçambique é um país largamente beneficiário da ajuda externa, sendo que no caso da UE representa cerca de 70 % da ajuda ao desenvolvimento ao país;

— Obviamente, este auxílio tem em vista um processo de paz e uma consolidação do regime democrático, agora afetados pelo conflito entre a Renamo e o exército nacional;

— Consequentemente, a UE deve ser muito mais do que um simples espetador perante um conflito que terá tanto melhor resolução quanto mais rápida e decidida for a intervenção da UE como parceiro fundamental do país;

— Importa ainda realizar todas as diligências necessárias à localização e libertação dos cidadãos e demais europeus raptados.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Qual foi, até ao momento, a intervenção da Comissão junto do Estado Moçambicano, bem como dos representantes políticos da Renamo e da Frelimo, com vista ao termo do conflito?

Qual foi ou será a intervenção da Comissão com vista à localização e libertação dos cidadãos portugueses raptados?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012706/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Espetro de guerra civil em Moçambique

Considerando o seguinte:

— Moçambique vive a sua pior crise política e militar desde a assinatura do Acordo Geral de Paz em 1992;

— Vários cidadãos portugueses e de outras nacionalidades, entre os quais crianças em idade escolar, têm vindo a abandonar o país devido a uma onda de raptos que, num processo de crescente instabilidade, e tendo em conta as atuais circunstâncias, colocam em risco o património e a integridade física de nacionais e estrangeiros;

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— Consequentemente, a UE deve ser muito mais do que um simples espetador perante um conflito que terá tanto melhor resolução quanto mais rápida e decidida for a intervenção da UE como parceiro fundamental do país;

— Importa ainda realizar todas as diligências necessárias à localização e libertação dos cidadãos e demais europeus raptados.

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante:

Qual foi, até ao momento, a intervenção da política externa da União Europeia junto do Estado Moçambicano, bem como dos representantes políticos da Renamo e da Frelimo, com vista ao termo do conflito?

Qual foi ou será a intervenção da política externa da União Europeia com vista à localização e libertação dos cidadãos portugueses raptados?

Resposta conjunta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(23 de dezembro de 2013)

Nos últimos anos, Moçambique tem realizado progressos importantes em matéria de reconciliação e de democratização. Neste contexto, a cooperação da UE tem sido e continua a ser um fator importante, apoiando os esforços de Moçambique para abordar os desafios da boa governação, bem como para promover objetivos políticos, económicos e de desenvolvimento social.

A UE também está a acompanhar de perto a situação em Moçambique, na sequência dos eventos mencionados pelo Senhor Deputado. O porta-voz da Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente já manifestou publicamente preocupação quanto à recente onda de violência e ao aumento da tensão entre a Renamo e as autoridades moçambicanas. Para contrariar o clima de insegurança crescente em determinadas regiões do país, a UE convidou todas as partes interessadas a se empenharem num diálogo construtivo, com expectativas realistas, baseado num processo político pacífico no quadro da Constituição moçambicana.

A UE teve também manteve contactos a nível adequado com as autoridades moçambicanas e outras partes interessadas, incluindo a Renamo, a fim de incentivar o diálogo como base para promover o respeito pelo Estado de direito, os direitos políticos e as instituições democráticas.

No que respeita ao rapto de cidadãos portugueses e de outras nacionalidades, bem como moçambicanos, a UE encorajou as autoridades de Moçambique a reforçar os seus esforços para resolver esta grave ameaça à estabilidade em geral e à segurança da população em particular. Deve igualmente notar-se que Portugal e outros Estados-Membros têm oferecido apoio às autoridades de Moçambique e estão dispostos a estudar formas de contribuir para estes esforços gerais se tal for solicitado pelas autoridades.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012704/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Spectre of civil war in Mozambique

Mozambique is currently experiencing its worst political and military crisis since the signing of the general peace accord in 1992. A number of Portuguese citizens and citizens of other nationalities, including children of school age, have fled the country following a wave of kidnappings which, given current conditions and against a backdrop of growing instability, are jeopardising the property and physical integrity of Mozambicans and foreign nationals alike.

Mozambique is a major beneficiary of foreign aid, and the EU accounts for around 70% of development assistance to the country. Clearly, the aim of this aid is to consolidate the peace process and the democratic regime, both of which are now being affected by the conflict between Renamo and the national army.

Consequently, the EU should do much more than watch from the sidelines in the face of a conflict whose resolution will depend to a considerable extent on rapid and decisive intervention by the EU as a key partner. Furthermore, every effort should be made to locate and secure the release of Portuguese and other European citizens who have been kidnapped.

In what way has the Commission intervened to date with the government of Mozambique and with political representatives of Renamo and Frelimo with a view to ending the conflict?

How has the Commission intervened or how will it intervene with a view to locating and securing the release of Portuguese citizens who have been kidnapped?

Question for written answer E-012706/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Spectre of civil war in Mozambique

Mozambique is currently experiencing its worst political and military crisis since the signing of the general peace accord in 1992. A number of Portuguese citizens and citizens of other nationalities, including children of school age, have fled the country following a wave of kidnappings which, given current conditions and against a backdrop of growing instability, are jeopardising the property and physical integrity of Mozambicans and foreign nationals alike.

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Consequently, the EU should do much more than watch from the sidelines in the face of a conflict whose resolution will depend to a considerable extent on rapid and decisive intervention by the EU as a key partner. Furthermore, every effort should be made to locate and secure the release of Portuguese and other European citizens who have been kidnapped.

In what way has the European Union's external policy intervened to date with the government of Mozambique and with political representatives of Renamo and Frelimo with a view to ending the conflict?

How has the European Union's external policy intervened or how will it intervene with a view to locating and securing the release of Portuguese citizens who have been kidnapped?

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

In recent years, Mozambique has accomplished important progress in the reconciliation and democratisation areas. In this regard, the EU cooperation has been and remains instrumental, supporting Mozambique efforts in addressing good governance challenges as well as the promotion of political, economic and social development goals.

The EU is also closely following the situation in Mozambique in the wake of developments mentioned by the Honourable Member. Concerns over recent violence and increasing tension between the Renamo and the Mozambique authorities have been publically stated by the HR/VP spokesperson. As a way to curb down an emerging climate of insecurity in certain areas of the country, the EU invited all stakeholders to abide by a constructive dialogue, nurturing realistic expectations, on the basis of a peaceful political process and in the framework of the Mozambique Constitution.

The EU has also had contacts at adequate level with Mozambique authorities and other stakeholders including Renamo in order to encourage dialogue as a basis to promote respect for the rule of law, political rights and the democratic institutions.

Regarding the kidnapping of Portuguese and other nationals as well as Mozambique citizens, the EU encouraged the Mozambique authorities to improve efforts in addressing this serious threat to stability in general and the security of the population in particular. It also noted that Portugal and other Member States have offered support to the Mozambique authorities and is ready to envisage ways to contribute to these general efforts if requested by the authorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012895/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(13. November 2013)

Betrifft: Trans-Fettsäuren in Nahrungsmitteln

Die US-amerikanische Lebensmittelkontrollbehörde FDA will den Gebrauch industriell hergestellter trans-Fettsäuren aufgrund möglicher Risiken für die menschliche Gesundheit in Lebensmitteln weitestgehend verbannen.

Auch innerhalb der Europäischen Union werden seit längerem die Zusammenhänge zwischen Herz-Kreislauf-Erkrankungen und dem Vorhandensein von trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln untersucht und diskutiert. Die EFSA empfahl vor Jahren, trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln weiter zu reduzieren und Verbraucher über die negativen Effekte aufzuklären.

Ich frage daher die Kommission:

1. Welche Forschungsergebnisse liegen der Kommission hinsichtlich der Auswirkungen von trans-Fettsäuren auf die menschliche Gesundheit vor?

2. Wie stellt sich die Situation hinsichtlich des Vorkommens von trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln und möglicher nationaler Regelungen diesbezüglich innerhalb der EU dar?

3. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission hinsichtlich der Verwendung von industriell produzierten trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln in Europa?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(20. Dezember 2013)

Auf Ersuchen der Kommission hat die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit zwei wissenschaftliche Gutachten — zum Vorhandensein von trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln und zu den gesundheitlichen Folgen des Verzehrs dieser Säuren ([1]) sowie zu Referenzwerten für Fette, einschließlich trans-Fettsäuren ([2]) — abgegeben.

Die Kommission weiß, dass der Verzehr von trans-Fettsäuren, neben der Aufnahme von gesättigten Fettsäuren und von Fett überhaupt, einen Risikofaktor für die Entwicklung von Herz-Kreislauf-Erkrankungen darstellt.

Gemäß Artikel 30 Absatz 7 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel ([3]) muss die Kommission bis zum 13. Dezember 2014 „einen Bericht über trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln und in der generellen Ernährung der Bevölkerung der Union vorlegen. Mit diesem Bericht sollen die Auswirkungen geeigneter Mittel bewertet werden, die den Verbrauchern die Möglichkeit an die Hand geben könnten, sich für gesündere Lebensmittel und für eine gesündere generelle Ernährung zu entscheiden, oder mit denen ein größeres Angebot an gesünderen Lebensmitteln für die Verbraucher gefördert werden kann; dazu gehört auch die Bereitstellung von Verbraucherinformationen über trans-Fettsäuren oder die Beschränkung ihrer Verwendung.“ Die Kommission soll dem Bericht gegebenenfalls einen entsprechenden Gesetzgebungsvorschlag beifügen. Dieser Bericht wird auf die Frage der Wahrnehmung von trans-Fettsäuren durch die Verbraucher eingehen.

Bislang haben Dänemark, Österreich und Ungarn nationale Maßnahmen zur Beschränkung des Vorhandenseins von aus Nichtwiederkäuern gewonnenen trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln mitgeteilt.

Darüber hinaus unterstützt die Kommission Selbstregulierungsmaßnahmen, um den Gehalt an trans-Fettsäuren in Lebensmitteln weiter zu verringern. Im Rahmen der EU-Plattform für Ernährung, Bewegung und Gesundheit existieren Selbstverpflichtungen, den Gehalt an trans-Fettsäuren durch Reformulierung der Produkte zu verringern ([4]).

([1]) The EFSA Journal (2004) 81, 1-49.
([2]) The EFSA Journal (2010) 8(3), 1461.
([3]) ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_de.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012853/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(12 november 2013)

Betreft: Transvetzuren

Transvetzuren bevinden zich onder andere in harde margarine, bak- en braadvet, diepvriespizza's, diepvriessnacks, fastfood, industriële koekjes en cakes, … Sinds 1990 weet men echter dat transvetzuren het cholesterolgehalte in het bloed verhogen en ook het risico op hart en vaatziekten vergroten.

In de Verenigde Staten heeft de Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) verklaard dat transvetzuren niet langer als veilig kunnen worden beschouwd en dat ze een risico voor de volksgezondheid inhouden. Jaarlijks zouden volgens het FDA 7 000 doden en 20 000 hartaanvallen in de VS vermeden worden als er een verbod op transvetzuren zou ingevoerd worden. Het FDA lanceert nu een plan om transvetzuren geleidelijk uit het voedsel te weren.

Is de Commissie zich bewust van deze problematiek?

Welke maatregelen plant de Commissie om het gezondheidsrisico van transvetzuren aan te pakken? Wordt er ook aan een verbod voor transvetzuren gedacht?

Is de Commissie van oordeel dat de bevolking voldoende geïnformeerd is over de risico's van transvetzuren?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(20 december 2013)

Naar aanleiding van verzoeken van de Commissie heeft de Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid twee wetenschappelijke adviezen gepubliceerd, een over de aanwezigheid van transvetzuren in voedsel en hun effect op de menselijke gezondheid ([1]) en een over de referentiehoeveelheden voor de opname van voedingstoffen voor vetten, met inbegrip van transvetzuren ([2]).

De Commissie is ervan op de hoogte dat de consumptie van transvetzuren, samen met verzadigde vetten en de algehele vetinname, een bekende risicofactor is bij de ontwikkeling van hart- en vaatziekten.

Artikel 30, lid 7, van Verordening (EU) nr. 1169/2011 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende de verstrekking van voedselinformatie aan consumenten ([3]) vereist dat de Commissie uiterlijk 13 december 2014 een verslag indient „over de aanwezigheid van transvetzuren in levensmiddelen en in de totale voeding van de bevolking van de Unie. Dit verslag heeft tot doel de gevolgen te beoordelen van passende middelen die de consumenten in staat zouden kunnen stellen gezondere voedsel- en voedingskeuzes te maken of die de productie kunnen bevorderen van gezondere voedselalternatieven die worden aangeboden aan de consumenten, met inbegrip van onder meer de verstrekking van informatie over transvetzuren aan consumenten of beperkingen van het gebruik ervan." De Commissie wordt ook verzocht om, zo nodig, een wetgevingsvoorstel bij dat verslag te voegen. In het verslag zal de perceptie die consumenten hebben van transvetzuren aan bod komen.

Momenteel hebben Denemarken, Oostenrijk en Hongarije nationale maatregelen medegedeeld ter beperking van transvetzuren afkomstig van niet-herkauwers in voeding.

Verder moet worden opgemerkt dat de Commissie zelfreguleringsactie aanmoedigt om het transvetzuurgehalte in voedingsproducten verder te verlagen. In het EU-actieplatform op het gebied van voeding, lichaamsbeweging en gezondheid zijn verbintenissen aangegaan die betrekking hebben op de herformulering van producten om het transvetzuurgehalte te verlagen ([4]).

([1]) The EFSA Journal (2004) 81, 1-49.
([2]) The EFSA Journal (2010) 8(3), 1461.
([3]) PB L 304 van 22.11.2011, blz. 18.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_nl.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012709/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(11 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Interzicerea grăsimilor trans artificiale

Administrația pentru Produse Alimentare și Medicamente din Statele Unite ale Americii (FDA) a catalogat grăsimile trans artificiale drept un risc la adresa sănătății publice, anunțând că va lua măsuri pentru a determina companiile de profil să nu le mai folosească. În prezent, un american consumă, în medie, un gram de grăsimi trans artificiale zilnic. Conform estimărilor FDA, ca urmare a interzicerii acestor acizi, numărul persoanelor care suferă atacuri cardiovasculare va scădea cu 20 000, iar numărul celor care mor din cauza acestora va fi cu 7 000 mai mic în fiecare an. Mâncarea de tip fast-food, floricelele de porumb pregătite în cuptorul cu microunde, margarina și aluaturile congelate sunt principalele produse care conțin astfel de grăsimi nocive.

În acest context, intenționează Comisia să propună măsuri similare și în Uniunea Europeană?

Răspuns comun dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(20 decembrie 2013)

În baza cererilor Comisiei, Autoritatea Europeană pentru Siguranța Alimentară a adoptat două avize științifice: unul privind prezența acizilor grași trans în produsele alimentare și efectele acestora asupra sănătății umane ([1]) și un altul referitor la valorile nutriționale de referință pentru grăsimi, inclusiv acizii grași trans ([2]).

Comisia este conștientă de faptul că, pe lângă aportul în grăsimi saturate și în grăsimi în general, consumul de acizi grași trans este un factor de risc pentru apariția bolilor cardiovasculare.

Conform articolului 30 alineatul (7) din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/20011 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind furnizarea de informații consumatorilor referitoare la produsele alimentare ([3]), Comisia are obligația de a prezenta, până la 13 decembrie 2014, „un raport privind prezența acizilor grași trans în produsele alimentare și în regimul alimentar de zi cu zi al populației Uniunii. Obiectivul raportului este evaluarea impactului mijloacelor adecvate care le-ar permite consumatorilor să aleagă un regim alimentar și produse alimentare mai sănătoase sau care ar putea promova furnizarea de opțiuni alimentare mai sănătoase pentru consumatori, inclusiv, printre altele, informarea consumatorilor cu privire la acizii grași trans sau la restricțiile privind utilizarea lor". De asemenea, Comisia este invitată să prezinte și o propunere legislativă în acest sens, dacă este cazul. Acest raport va aborda problema percepției consumatorilor asupra acizilor grași trans.

În prezent, Danemarca, Austria și Ungaria au comunicat măsurile naționale de limitare a prezenței acizilor grași trans în produsele alimentare, care nu provin de la animale rumegătoare.

De asemenea, Comisia încurajează inițiativele de autoreglementare pentru a reduce în continuare conținutul de acizi grași trans în produsele alimentare. În cadrul Platformei de acțiune a UE privind alimentația, activitatea fizică și sănătatea, există angajamente cu privire la reformularea produselor, pentru a reduce conținutul de acizi grași trans ([4]).

([1]) The EFSA Journal (2004) 81, p. 1-49.
([2]) The EFSA Journal (2010) 8(3):1461.
([3]) JO L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012777/13
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(12 november 2013)

Angående: Förbud mot transfetter i EU

USA:s livsmedelsmyndighet FDA har den 8 november publicerat en ny utredning ([1]) där man rekommenderar ett förbud mot transfetter. FDAs utredning visar att ett transfettsförbud under en 20-årsperiod skulle innebära en besparing på omkring 200 miljarder US-dollar i USA. Man räknar med att minska antalet hjärtinfarkter per år med 20 000.

EU-parlamentet har sedan tidigare gjort en egen utredning som visar att ett tranfettsförbud är det enskilt mest kostnadseffektiva sättet att minska hjärt- och kärlsjukdomar. Besparingarna av ett förbud mot transfetter skulle vara större än åtskilliga krispaket.

Med beaktande av ovanstående samt att EU-parlamentet redan år 2008 uttalade sig för ett förbud mot transfetter,

Avser kommissionen att göra en konsekvensutredning för att utreda möjligheterna för ett förbud mot transfetter i EU? Om inte, avser kommissionen att på något annat sätt agera för ett förbud av transfetter inom EU?

Samlat svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(20 december 2013)

På kommissionens begäran har Europeiska myndigheten för livsmedelssäkerhet antagit två vetenskapliga yttranden, ett om förekomsten av transfettsyror i livsmedel och hur de påverkar människors hälsa ([2]) och ett om referensvärden för näringsintag av fett, däribland transfettsyror ([3]).

Kommissionen är medveten om att transfettsyror, mättat fett och det totala fettintaget är en känd riskfaktor för utveckling av hjärt- och kärlsjukdomar.

Enligt artikel 30.7 i Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EU) nr 1169/2011 om livsmedelsinformation till konsumenterna ([4]) ska kommissionen senast den 13 december 2014 lägga fram en rapport om förekomsten av transfetter i livsmedel och i EU-befolkningens samlade kostintag. Rapporten ska också ta upp konsumenternas uppfattning om transfettsyror. Syftet är att bedöma effekten av metoder som kan få dem att välja hälsosammare mat, bland annat genom att informera dem om transfetter eller begränsa användningen av dem. Kommissionen ska vid behov lägga fram ett lagförslag tillsammans med rapporten.

Danmark, Österrike och Ungern har redan anmält nationella åtgärder för att begränsa förekomsten av transfettsyror från icke idisslare i livsmedel.

Kommissionen uppmuntrar också självreglerande åtgärder för att ytterligare minska förekomsten av transfettsyror. EU:s plattform för kost, fysisk aktivitet och hälsa vill förändra livsmedlens sammansättning för att minska halten ([5]).

([1]) https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/11/08/2013-26854/tentative-determination-regarding-partially-hydrogenated-oils-request-for-comments-and-for
([2]) *The EFSA Journal* (2004) 81, 1–49.
([3]) *The EFSA Journal* (2010) 8(3), 1461.
([4]) EUT L 304, 22.11.2011, s. 18.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012709/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Ban on artificial trans fats

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has drawn up a list of artificial trans fats harmful to public health as a prelude to a high-profile campaign to discourage the consumption thereof. In the USA, the average per capita daily intake of artificial trans fats is currently around one gram. The FDA estimates that a ban on these trans fatty acids could reduce the number of victims of cardiovascular failure by 20 000 and resulting annual mortalities by 7 000. Fast foods, microwaved popcorn, margarine and frozen pastries are the main culprits in terms of harmful fat content.

In view of this, does the Commission intend to propose the adoption of similar measures in the European Union?

Question for written answer E-012777/13
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Prohibition of trans fats in the EU

On 8 November, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a new study ([1]) recommending the prohibition of trans fats. The FDA's study indicates that, over a 20-year period, a ban on trans fats would result in a saving of around USD 200 billion in the US. The number of heart attacks per year is expected to decrease by 20 000.

The European Parliament previously carried out a study of its own, which showed that a ban on trans fats is the single most cost-effective way to reduce cardiovascular diseases. The savings resulting from a ban on trans fats would be larger than several rescue packages.

In view of the above, and of the fact that Parliament already advocated a ban on trans fats back in 2008:

Does the Commission intend to carry out an impact assessment to explore the possibility of a ban on trans fats in the EU? If not, does it intend to take another form of action to put in place a ban on trans fats within the EU?

Question for written answer E-012853/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Trans fatty acids

Trans fatty acids can be found in foodstuffs including hard margarine, cooking fat, frozen pizzas, frozen snacks, fast foods and industrially produced biscuits and cakes. However, it has been known since 1990 that trans fatty acids increase blood cholesterol levels and the risk of coronary heart disease.

In the United States, the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has stated that trans fatty acids can no longer be regarded as safe and that they represent a risk to public health. According to the FDA, 7 000 deaths and 20 000 heart attacks could be prevented in the US each year if a ban on trans fatty acids were introduced. The FDA is now launching a plan to gradually exclude trans fatty acids from food supplies.

Is the Commission aware of this problem?

What measures is it planning in order to tackle the health risks posed by trans fatty acids? Is it also considering a ban on trans fatty acids?

Does the Commission believe that citizens are sufficiently well informed about the risks posed by trans fatty acids?

([1]) https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/11/08/2013-26854/tentative-determination-regarding-partially-hydrogenated-oils-request-for-comments-and-for

Question for written answer E-012895/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Trans fatty acids in food

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) wants to prohibit the use of industrially produced trans fatty acids in food as far as possible on account of potential risks to human health.

Studies and discussions of the links between cardiovascular diseases and the presence of trans fatty acids in food have also been taking place within the European Union for some time. Several years ago, the European Food Safety Authority recommended that levels of trans fatty acids in food be further reduced and the negative effects explained to consumers.

1. What research results relating to the effects of trans fatty acids on human health are available to the Commission?

2. What is the situation within the EU with regard to the presence of trans fatty acids in food and possible national regulations in this regard?

3. What measures does the Commission plan to take in respect of the use of industrially produced trans fatty acids in food in Europe?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

Based on requests of the Commission, the European Food Safety Authority adopted two Scientific Opinions, one on the presence of trans fatty acids in foods and their effect on human health ([2]) and one on Dietary Reference Values for fats, including trans fatty acids ([3]).

The Commission is aware that the consumption of trans fatty acids is, along with saturated fat and overall fat intake, known to be a risk factor for the development of cardiovascular disease.

Article 30(7) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/20011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers ([4]) requires the Commission to submit by 13 December 2014 'a report on the presence of trans fats in foods and in the overall diet of the Union population. The aim of the report shall be to assess the impact of appropriate means that could enable consumers to make healthier food and overall dietary choices or that could promote the provision of healthier food options to consumers, including, among others, the provision of information on trans fats to consumers or restrictions on their use.' The Commission is also asked to accompany this report with a legislative proposal, if appropriate. This report will address the issue of consumers' perception of trans fatty acids.

Currently, Denmark, Austria and Hungary have notified national measures limiting the presence of trans fatty acids of non-ruminant origin in foods.

Further, it should be noted that the Commission is encouraging self-regulatory action in order to further decrease the content of trans fatty acids in food products. There are commitments in the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health that concern the reformulation of products to reduce the content of trans fatty acids ([5]).

([2]) The EFSA Journal (2004) 81, 1-49.
([3]) The EFSA Journal (2010) 8(3), 1461.
([4]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-012721/13
до Комисията
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(11 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Проблеми в България с окончателните плащания по изпълнени проекти, реализирани по Европейския фонд за рибарство

Бенефициентите в България по Европейския фонд за рибарство срещат особено големи трудности в последно време, особено когато става въпрос за проекти за развиване на аквакултурите. Става въпрос за одобрени проекти, които са получили първоначалните плащания и които вече са в процес на изпълнение. Проблемът не засяга само българските граждани, тъй като немалка част от проектите в България, особено тези в областта на аквакултурите, са съвместни, т.е. те често се изграждат заедно от български инвеститори и инвеститори от други държави — членки на ЕС. Българските власти, обаче, заявяват, че окончателното плащане ще бъде в размер, по-малък от първоначално договорения, тъй като според тях има изрично изискване от страна на ЕК за преразглеждане на одобрените проекти и намаляване на субсидиите. В тази връзка:

1. Това преразглеждане на проектите и взетите съответно рестриктивни мерки само за проекти в България ли се отнасят?

2. Какво мерки би следвало да вземат бенефициентите, когато проектът им вече е одобрен, реализирането му е в ход, а накрая се оказва, че субсидиите, които ще получат, ще бъдат значително намалени в сравнение с първоначално предвиденото?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Даманаки от името на Комисията
(8 януари 2014 г.)

При споделеното управление основната отговорност за управлението и изпълнението на оперативните програми се носи от държавите членки, като националните одитни органи проверяват ефективността на системата за управление и контрол и докладват на Комисията.

През 2012 г. българският одитен орган установи системен пропуск във функционирането на системата, след като откри, че цените за строителните работи, както и за доставките в одитираните проекти, свързани с аквакултури, са били по-високи от пазарните, и предложи финансови корекции, които са били приети и приложени от управляващия орган.

Съгласно Регламента за ЕФР, когато са налице системни недостатъци, държавите членки следва да разширят извършваните разследвания, за да бъдат обхванати всички операции, които биха могли да бъдат засегнати. Управляващият орган създаде специален комитет за оценка, който до 30 ноември 2013 г. да направи преоценка на цените на всички проекти, одобрени по мярка „Производствени инвестиции в аквакултурата“. Комисията следи процеса, но все още не са докладвани конкретни резултати.

Препоръките на националния одитен орган са насочени към гарантиране на спазването на принципа на добро финансово управление. Неспазването на това изискване води до финансови корекции, състоящи се в частично или цялостно оттегляне на публичното финансово участие.

Средствата за правна защита, с които разполагат бенефициерите във връзка с решение на управляващия орган за намаляване размера на публичното финансово участие, са предвидените в националното законодателство. Уважаемият член може да получи информация относно правата на бенефициентите от управляващия орган.

Държавите членки, които оттеглят неправомерно отпуснати суми, могат да използват повторно освободените финансови ресурси за други проекти в рамките на оперативната програма.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012721/13
to the Commission
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Problems in Bulgaria concerning final payments for projects implemented under the European Fisheries Fund

Persons eligible for funding from the European Fisheries Fund in Bulgaria have recently been experiencing particularly serious difficulties, especially when it comes to aquaculture development projects. The projects in question have been approved, the initial payments have been made and the projects are already under way. The issue does not only affect Bulgarian citizens, as a large proportion of the projects running in Bulgaria, and especially those in the field of aquaculture, are joint projects, which is to say that they are often developed together by Bulgarian investors and investors from other EU Member States. The fact is that the Bulgarian authorities have announced that the final payments will be smaller than those originally agreed since, they say, the Commission has made it an explicit requirement to review approved projects and reduce the level of support granted. Can the Commission therefore state:

1. Whether or not this review of projects and the resulting restrictive measures only apply to Bulgaria?

2. What those eligible for funding can do when their projects have already been approved and are in progress, but they then discover that the amounts they are going to receive will be considerably lower than originally anticipated?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

In shared management, primary responsibility for managing and implementing the operational programmes lies within the Member States where national Audit Authorities verify the effective functioning of the management and control system and report to the Commission.

In 2012, the Bulgarian Audit Authority found a systemic deficiency in the system as it considered that the prices for the construction works and delivery of goods in the audited aquaculture projects were higher than on the market and proposed financial corrections which were accepted and implemented by the Managing Authority.

Under the EFF Regulation, where there are systemic deficiencies Member States should extend their enquiries to cover all operations liable to be affected. A specific evaluation Committee was set up by the Managing Authority to re-evaluate by 30 November 2013 the prices of all projects approved under measure 'Productive investments in aquaculture'. The Commission is following this process but the results have not yet been reported.

The recommendations of the national Audit Authority aim at ensuring compliance with the principle of sound financial management, and non-compliance with this requirement leads to financial corrections consisting of cancellation of all or part of the public contribution.

The remedies available to a beneficiary subject to a decision of the Managing Authority which reduces the amount of the public contribution are those provided for by the national legislation. The Honorable Member can obtain information on the beneficiaries' rights from the Managing Authority.

Member States who withdraw irregular amounts can re-use the financial ressources released for other projects within the operational programme.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-012722/13
до Комисията
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(11 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Нарушаване на европейското законодателство в областта на конкуренцията на вътрешния пазар

В продължение на десет години българската фирма „Арда-Русе“ ООД и немските „Кавита Фешън“ ООД и „Априори Текстилфертрийбс“ ООД имат успешни търговски взаимоотношения. След продажбата им двете немски фирми преминават под управлението на Endurance Capital AG. „Арда-Русе“ работи по метода поръчка на конфекция и заплащане на парче въз основа на предварителни планови поръчки, модели и одобрени от поръчващите търговски мостри. През последната година (2012—2013 г.) „Априори“ ООД извършва дължимите плащания с голяма забава. От фирмата уверяват, че проблемът идва от забава на заплащанията на страна на клиентите. Впоследствие се изготвя план на плащанията за погасяване на задълженията. През юни 2013 г. „Априори“ с регистрация в Мюнстер обявява временна неплатежоспособност. Въпреки това фирмата прави поръчка с уверение, че същата ще бъде изплатена. Готовите облекла на обща стойност 32 875,00 EUR остават на склад в „Арда-Русе“ и не подлежат на фактуриране, тъй като синдикът не изисква тяхното експедиране преди откриване на производството по несъстоятелност. Отговорът на „Априори“ е, че удовлетворяване на старите вземания преди 06.06.2013 г. (9527,42 EUR) няма да има, тъй като няма пари и имущество в масата по несъстоятелност, че не желае да получи изработените облекла, няма да плати дължимите възнаграждения и не е съгласен „Арда-Русе“ да продава готовата продукция, за да компенсира понесените щети.

Смята ли Комисията, че е нарушено европейското законодателство в областта на конкуренцията на вътрешния пазар?

Отговор, даден от г-н Алмуния от името на Комисията
(16 декември 2013 г.)

На въпроса за това дали евентуално не е нарушено законодателството на ЕС в областта на конкуренцията, може да се отговори само чрез задълбочена оценка на конкретните непосредствени обстоятелства, по-специално на структурата на пазара и на възможността едно или повече предприятия да държат пазарната мощ, както и чрез оценка на последиците от поведението на тези предприятия и на възможната обосновка за това.

Фактите, както са описани от уважаемия член на Парламента, не дават индикации на пръв поглед, че е приложимо законодателството на ЕС в областта на конкуренцията. Ситуацията изглежда по-скоро като търговски спор, по който трябва да се произнесат компетентните национални съдилища.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012722/13
to the Commission
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Breach of EU rules on competition in the internal market

For 10 years, the Bulgarian clothing company Arda Ruse Ltd has had successful commercial ties with the German firms Cavita Fashion GmbH and Apriori Textilvertrieb GmbH. Following their sale, the two German companies came under the control of Endurance Capital AG. It was Arda Ruse's practice to take orders for garments with payment by the job, on the basis of pre-planned ordering and patterns, with the ordering companies approving trade samples. Over the year 2012-2013, Apriori fell badly behind with its payments. It claimed the problem had arisen because its customers were paying late. A plan was then drawn up for paying off the accumulated debt. In June 2013, Apriori, which is registered in Münster, was declared provisionally insolvent. In spite of this, the company placed an order with an assurance that it would be paid for. The finished garments, to a total value of EUR 32 875, are still in Arda Ruse's warehouse and no invoice has been issued for them as the receiver did not ask for their delivery before the insolvency proceedings opened. Apriori has responded to this situation by stating that the debts predating 6 June 2013 (totalling EUR 9527 42) will not be paid because its cash and physical assets are insufficient to cover its insolvency, that it does not want to take delivery of the finished garments, that it will not pay what it owes and that it does not agree to Arda Ruse selling the finished goods to offset its losses.

Does the Commission consider that European rules on competition in the internal market have been breached here?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

The question as to whether the EU competition rules may have been infringed can only be addressed through an in-depth assessment of the particular circumstances at hand, in particular of the market structure and the possibility that one or more undertakings may hold market power, and of the effects of and possible justification for the conduct of such undertakings.

The facts, as described by the Honourable Member, do not provide any prima facie indication that EU competition rules are applicable. The situation rather appears to be a commercial dispute for the competent national courts to adjudicate.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013592/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(2 décembre 2013)

Objet: Projet de péages autoroutiers — Allemagne

La presse européenne vient de se faire l'écho d'un accord de coalition gouvernementale en Allemagne comportant l'instauration, dès 2014, d'un péage sur les autoroutes allemandes. Ce péage ne serait cependant acquitté que par les seuls automobilistes étrangers. Il y aurait donc un traitement différencié entre, d'une part, les automobilistes allemands et, d'autre part, les ressortissants des autres pays de l'Union européenne.

La Commission peut-elle préciser si cette discrimination lui semble conforme ou non avec les règles communautaires garantissant l'égalité de traitement entre ressortissants des différents États membres?

Par ailleurs, dans l'hypothèse où une telle disposition lui paraîtrait infondée, quelles initiatives serait-elle amenée à prendre, compte tenu du fait que ce projet est d'application imminente?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(19 décembre 2013)

La Commission n'a pas été informée officiellement de la possible adoption du système de taxe routière pour les véhicules particuliers visé dans votre question. Tant que les modalités d'un tel système lui sont inconnues, elle ne pourra pas se prononcer sur le sujet.

La communication publiée par la Commission le 14 mai 2012 [COM(2012)199 final] fixe des principes généraux concernant l'imposition aux véhicules particuliers légers de redevances nationales sur les infrastructures routières. Dans cette communication, le principe général d'absence de discrimination fondée sur la nationalité ou le lieu de résidence est mis en évidence comme particulièrement important lorsqu'il est envisagé d'introduire un système de facturation des coûts d'infrastructures.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012734/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Pedaggio autostradale per stranieri in Germania

In Germania si sta discutendo pubblicamente un progetto di legge che prevede l'introduzione dell'obbligo di pagamento di una «vignetta» annuale per l'accesso alle autostrade nazionali (Autobahnen), attualmente obbligatorio solo per gli autotrasportatori con carichi superiori alle 12 tonnellate.

Tale pagamento sarebbe istituito solo per gli automobilisti stranieri e, di conseguenza, potrebbe violare il principio di non discriminazione fra cittadini degli Stati membri.

Secondo le agenzie stampa, per aggirare questa violazione il progetto di legge potrà prevedere l'obbligo di esporre la «vignetta» per tutti gli utenti, salvo poi recapitare la stessa senza spese ai contribuenti tedeschi, o prevedere sgravi fiscali per il suo pagamento.

La natura discriminatoria della proposta di legge tedesca è, peraltro, aggravata dalle recenti dichiarazioni, in campagna elettorale, dei promotori dell'iniziativa tra cui il leader della CSU, che definiscono il «pedaggio per gli stranieri» un tassello cardine per la formazione del nuovo governo tedesco.

La Commissione, inspiegabilmente, ha dichiarato di considerare tale possibile norma tedesca compatibile con le normative europee.

Considerato che la Commissione:

— ha assunto, il 14 maggio 2012, una chiara posizione in merito, pubblicando orientamenti secondo i quali «i sistemi di tariffazione stradale non devono discriminare i conducenti stranieri» e «devono essere trasparenti ed equi per tutti», garantendo «la stessa facilità di un conducente residente»;

— ha espresso una netta preferenza per un sistema di pedaggio basato sulla distanza percorsa, rispetto a un sistema di «bolli adesivi» basato sulla durata;

si chiede alla Commissione:

di formulare un parere definitivo, motivato e univoco sui potenziali effetti discriminatori che i sistemi di bollo possono comportare per i conducenti esteri che si limitano a transitare attraverso un paese, come quello citato nella proposta di legge tedesca e fatto oggetto di campagna elettorale.

Risposta congiunta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(19 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni ufficiali circa l'eventuale introduzione in Germania di un sistema di pedaggio per veicoli privati, cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare. Essa non può formulare un parere al riguardo fino a quando non saranno noti i dettagli di un siffatto sistema.

La comunicazione pubblicata dalla Commissione il 14 maggio 2012 (COM(2012) 199 final) definisce i principi generali relativi all'imposizione di diritti nazionali sulle infrastrutture stradali ai veicoli leggeri privati. Nella comunicazione, il principio generale di non discriminazione degli stranieri viene considerato di particolare rilievo per quanto riguarda l'introduzione di diritti sulle infrastrutture.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012734/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Toll for foreigners on German motorways

Public debate is under way in Germany over a bill which would introduce a compulsory annual tax disc ('Eurovignette') for motorists wishing to access the national motorways (Autobahnen). At present, this is only a requirement for hauliers carrying loads of over 12 tonnes.

The payment would apply to foreign motorists only and could therefore breach the principle of non-discrimination between citizens of different Member States.

According to the press agencies, to get around this breach the bill may make it compulsory for all users to display the tax disc, but German taxpayers would get it free of charge or would receive a tax credit when they pay for it.

The discriminatory nature of the German bill is made worse, moreover, by recent declarations during the election campaign by the scheme's promoters, including the leader of the Christian Social Union (CSU), who spoke of the 'toll on foreigners' as a cornerstone of the new German Government.

The Commission has inexplicably expressed a view that the bill, which could become German law, is compatible with EU legislation.

However, on 14 May 2012 the Commission adopted a clear stance on this subject, when it published guidelines stating that 'road charging schemes must not discriminate against foreign drivers', that 'they must be transparent and fair to all' and that 'it must be as easy to drive […] as it is for a resident driver'.

The Commission also expressed a strong preference for a distance-based toll system, rather than a system based on vignettes valid for a set period.

Can the Commission therefore formulate a definitive, reasoned and unequivocal opinion on the potential discriminatory effect on foreign drivers who are simply driving through a country of a vignette system such as the one which the German bill proposes and which featured in the country's election campaign?

Question for written answer P-013592/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(2 December 2013)

Subject: Plan for motorway toll — Germany

The European press has recently reported an agreement by Germany's coalition government to introduce a toll charge for German motorways, as from 2014. However, only foreign drivers will pay these tolls. There will, it seems, be a difference in the treatment meted out to German motorists on the one hand and citizens of other EU countries on the other.

Could the Commission clarify whether or not, in its view, this discrimination complies with Community rules guaranteeing nationals of different Member States equal treatment?

What action will the Commission take should it decide that this measure is unfounded, bearing in mind that application of this plan is imminent?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

The Commission has not been officially informed of a possible future German charging scheme for private vehicles as referred to in your question. As long as the details of such a scheme are not available, the Commission cannot provide an opinion on the subject.

The communication issued by the Commission on 14 May 2012 (COM(2012) 199 final) sets out the general principles on the application of national road infrastructure charges levied on light private vehicles. In the communication, the general principle of non-discrimination of foreigners is highlighted as particularly relevant when introducing infrastructure charging schemes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012735/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile rapporto tra alluminio e malattie neurodegenerative

Un recente studio del National Center for Biotechnology Information ha fornito nuovi dati riguardo all'annosa questione riguardante i possibili legami tra i livelli di alluminio assunti e le malattie neurodegenerative, in particolare il morbo di Alzheimer.

L'alluminio è il più abbondante metallo neurotossico sulla terra, ampiamente biodisponibile per gli esseri umani e è stato più volte dimostrato che si accumula nei punti focali neuronali soggetti al morbo di Alzheimer.

La ricerca rivela inoltre che:

1. piccole quantità di alluminio sono necessarie per produrre neurotossicità e questo criterio è soddisfatto attraverso l'assunzione di alluminio presente nella dieta quotidiana;

2. l'alluminio sfrutta diversi meccanismi di trasporto per attraversare attivamente le barriere cerebrali;

3. l'assunzione ripetuta di piccole quantità di alluminio nel corso della vita favorisce l'accumulo selettivo nei tessuti cerebrali;

4. dal 1911, l'evidenza sperimentale ha più volte dimostrato che l'intossicazione cronica da alluminio riproduce le caratteristiche neuropatologiche del morbo di Alzheimer. Fraintendimenti riguardo alla biodisponibilità dell'alluminio possono aver fuorviato gli scienziati riguardo al ruolo dell'alluminio nella patogenesi del morbo di Alzheimer.

Considerato che l'ipotesi che l'alluminio contribuisca in modo significativo al morbo di Alzheimer si basa su un'evidenza sperimentale molto solida, può la Commissione riferire se intende acquisire e valutare i risultati di tale studio e prendere misure immediate per limitare l'esposizione umana all'alluminio?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(10 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'articolo pubblicato di recente da S.C Bondy «Prolonged exposure to low levels of aluminium leads to changes associated with brain aging and neuro-degeneration» ([1]), e segue le ricerche che vengono condotte nel merito.

Nel campo della protezione della salute e sicurezza dei lavoratori dai rischi legati all'esposizione professionale alle sostanze chimiche si applica la direttiva 98/24/CE ([2]). Conformemente a tale direttiva, che fa parte dell'ampio quadro legislativo in materia di salute e sicurezza professionali nell'UE, il datore di lavoro ha l'obbligo di valutare i rischi e di prendere le misure opportune per proteggere la salute e la sicurezza dei lavoratori dagli effetti dell'esposizione alle sostanze chimiche presenti sul posto di lavoro.

([1]) Toxicology, 2013 Nov 1, 315C:1-7.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1998:131:0011:0023:IT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012735/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Possible link between aluminium and neurodegenerative diseases

A recent study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information has supplied new data on the thorny issue of possible links between the amount of aluminium we absorb and neurodegenerative diseases, in particular Alzheimer's disease.

Aluminium is the most abundant neurotoxic metal on earth and has high bioavailability in humans. It has been demonstrated numerous times that aluminium accumulates in the neuronal focal points affected by Alzheimer's disease.

Research has also shown that:

1. only small quantities of aluminium are needed to produce neurotoxic effects and the aluminium present in our daily diets is enough to fulfil this criterion;

2. there are various transportation mechanisms whereby aluminium actively crosses the blood-brain barrier;

3. continuous intake of small quantities of aluminium throughout a person's life favours selective build-up in the brain tissues;

4. since 1911, research evidence has demonstrated on many occasions that chronic aluminium poisoning mimics the neuropathological characteristics of Alzheimer's disease. Misunderstandings about the bioavailability of aluminium may have misled scientists about the role of aluminium in the pathogenesis of Alzheimer's disease.

The theory that aluminium plays a significant role in Alzheimer's disease is based on very sound research evidence. Does the Commission therefore intend to obtain and assess the results of the abovementioned study and to take immediate steps to restrict human exposure to aluminium?

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

The Commission is aware of the recently published article by S.C Bondy 'Prolonged exposure to low levels of aluminium leads to changes associated with brain aging and neuro-degeneration' ([1]), and it is following research into this subject.

In the field of the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to occupational exposure to chemicals, Directive 98/24/EC ([2]) applies. According to this directive, which is part of the comprehensive legislative framework on Occupational Health and Safety in the EU, the employer has the obligation to assess the risks and take the suitable measures to protect the health and safety of workers from the effects of exposure to any hazardous chemical present at work.

([1]) Toxicology, 2013 Nov 1, 315C:1-7.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1998:131:0011:0023:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012737/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Sicurezza del plasma e dei plasmaderivati

La recente legge di stabilità 2012 varata in Italia include un emendamento che consente l'importazione di plasma e plasmaderivati raccolti e prodotti in Canada e negli Stati Uniti; in tali paesi ancora oggi una quota importante (oltre il 30 %) della raccolta di plasma è effettuata attraverso centri privati, che pagano le unità tra i 6 e i 23 dollari.

Tale prassi appare in chiaro contrasto con la Convenzione di Oviedo (Convenzione sui diritti dell'uomo e la biomedicina) approvata dal Consiglio d'Europa il 4 aprile 1997, il cui articolo 21 recita: «Il corpo umano e le sue parti non debbono essere, in quanto tali, fonte di profitto».

Tale prassi rende inoltre possibile, per le aziende che raccolgono e producono plasma e plasmaderivati in Canada o negli Stati Uniti, introdurre tali prodotti in Italia senza i controlli previsti dalle normative nazionali ed europee, avvantaggiandosi in maniera assolutamente scorretta nei confronti dei concorrenti, visto che i farmaci in questione entrerebbero in commercio avvalendosi semplicemente della dichiarazione di conformità dell'azienda produttrice.

Considerato che:

— negli Stati Uniti è in vigore una legge federale che permette l'adozione di due diversi standard, uno più restrittivo per il plasma ad uso interno e uno meno restrittivo specificatamente dedicato all'esportazione,

— la prassi in oggetto è stata confermata con l'individuazione, in un porto europeo, di pallet di plasma congelato raccolto nei Caraibi e importato tramite gli USA,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. di intervenire il più rapidamente possibile, direttamente o attraverso solleciti agli Stati membri, per evitare il libero commercio di prodotti pericolosi per la salute all'interno dello spazio di libero commercio europeo;

2. se intende raccogliere informazioni ed esprimere un parere riguardo alla questione.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

La politica e la legislazione dell'Unione europea in relazione al sangue umano e alle componenti del sangue caldeggiano il principio della donazione volontaria non retribuita ([1]). La direttiva 2002/98/CE stabilisce che «gli Stati membri adottano le misure necessarie per incoraggiare le donazioni volontarie e gratuite di sangue».

La direttiva 2002/98/CE prevede inoltre che gli Stati membri possano introdurre «requisiti per le donazioni volontarie e gratuite, che includono il divieto o la restrizione delle importazioni di sangue e dei suoi componenti, per assicurare un elevato livello di tutela della salute», purché siano soddisfatte le condizioni del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea ([2]).

Gli Stati membri hanno l'obbligo di adottare tutte le misure necessarie per assicurare che il sangue umano e i suoi componenti, compresi quelli utilizzati per produrre medicinali, importati dai paesi terzi, soddisfino tutti i requisiti legali della legislazione unionale in tema di qualità e sicurezza ([3]).

Inoltre, tutti i medicinali importati devono essere testati per accertarne la conformità a rigorosi standard di qualità e sicurezza prima di poter essere autorizzati all'immissione in commercio sul mercato dell'UE ([4]).

([1]) Articolo 20 e considerando 8), 9) e 23), direttiva 2002/98/CE, del 27 gennaio 2003, che stabilisce norme di qualità e di sicurezza per la raccolta, il controllo, la lavorazione, la conservazione e la distribuzione del sangue umano e dei suoi componenti e che modifica la direttiva 2001/83/CE.

([2]) Articolo 4, direttiva 2002/98/CE, del 27 gennaio 2003, che stabilisce norme di qualità e di sicurezza per la raccolta, il controllo, la lavorazione, la conservazione e la distribuzione del sangue umano e dei suoi componenti e che modifica la direttiva 2001/83/CE.

([3]) 2.3, ALLEGATO V, Requisiti di qualità e sicurezza del sangue e degli emocomponenti, direttiva 2004/33/CE della Commissione, del 22 marzo 2004, che applica la direttiva 2002/98/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 27 gennaio 2003, relativa a taluni requisiti tecnici del sangue e degli emocomponenti.

([4]) Articolo 51, lettera b), direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano.

La Commissione riferisce regolarmente al Parlamento europeo sul modo in cui il principio della donazione volontaria non retribuita è attuato negli Stati membri. La relazione 2011 ([5]) è giunta alla conclusione che gli Stati membri osservano nel complesso il principio della donazione volontaria non retribuita tramite orientamenti invalsi e disposizioni legislative. La Commissione prevede di presentare nel 2014 una relazione aggiornata ([6]).

([5]) COM(2011) 138 def. — Relazione della Commissione al Parlamento europeo, al Consiglio, al Comitato economico e sociale europeo e al Comitato delle regioni, Seconda relazione sulla donazione volontaria e gratuita di sangue e suoi componenti.

([6]) Articolo 20, direttiva 2002/98/CE, del 27 gennaio 2003, che stabilisce norme di qualità e di sicurezza per la raccolta, il controllo, la lavorazione, la conservazione e la distribuzione del sangue umano e dei suoi componenti e che modifica la direttiva 2001/83/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012737/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Safety of plasma and plasma-derived products

Italy's 'Stability Act' of 2012 contains an amendment permitting imports of plasma and plasma-derived products collected and processed in Canada and the United States. In those countries, a high proportion (over 30%) of plasma collections still takes place in private centres, which pay between USD 6.00 and USD 23.00 per unit.

This practice goes against the Council of Europe Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine of 4 April 1997 (the Oviedo Convention), which states that: 'The human body and its parts shall not, as such, give rise to financial gain' (Article 21).

The practice also allows the companies which collect and process plasma and plasma-derived products in Canada or the United States to bring these products into Italy without the controls required under Italian and European law, thus giving them a completely unfair advantage over their competitors, since the products in question could enter the market purely on the basis of the manufacturers' declarations of conformity.

In the US, there is a federal law which allows two different standards to be implemented: a stricter standard governing plasma for use within the US and a more relaxed standard for plasma destined for exportation.

This practice has been confirmed by the fact that a pallet of frozen plasma collected in the Caribbean and imported via the US was identified at a European port.

1. Can the Commission intervene as quickly as possible, either directly or by calling upon Member States, to prevent free trade in products that are a health risk from entering European free trade areas?

2. Does the Commission intend to gather information and issue an opinion on this subject?

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

The European Union's policy and legislation in the field of human blood and blood components supports the principle of voluntary unpaid donation ([1]). Directive 2002/98/EC stipulates that 'Member States shall take the necessary measures to encourage voluntary and unpaid donations'.

Directive 2002/98/EC further foresees that Member States may introduce 'requirements for voluntary unpaid donations, which include the prohibition or restriction of imports of blood and blood components to ensure a high level of health protection', provided such measures comply with provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([2]).

Member States have the obligation to take all necessary measures to ensure that human blood and blood components, including those used to produce medicinal products, imported from third countries, meet all the legal requirements of the EU legislation on quality and safety ([3]).

Furthermore, all imported medicinal products are requested to be tested for compliance with strict safety and quality standards before being released for sale on the EU market ([4]).

([1]) Article 20 and recitals (8), (9) and (23) Directive 2002/98/EC of 27 January 2003 setting standards of quality and safety for collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution of human blood and blood components and amending Directive 2001/83/EC.

([2]) Article 4Directive 2002/98/EC of 27 January 2003 setting standards of quality and safety for collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution of human blood and blood components and amending Directive 2001/83/EC.

([3]) 2.3, ANNEX V, Quality and safety requirements for blood and blood components Commission Directive 2004/33/EC of 22 March 2004 implementing Directive 2002/98/EC of 27 January 2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards certain technical requirements for blood and blood components.

([4]) Article 51b, Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community Code relating to medicinal products for human use.

The Commission reports regularly to the European Parliament on how the principle of voluntary unpaid donation is implemented in the Member States. The 2011 report ([5]) concluded that Member States overall comply with the voluntary unpaid donation principle with established guidelines and legislative provisions. The Commission envisages to present an updated report in 2014 ([6]).

([5]) COM(2011) 138 final — Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Second Report on Voluntary and Unpaid Donation of Blood and Blood Components.

([6]) Article20, Implementation, Directive 2002/98/EC of 27 January 2003 setting standards of quality and safety for collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution of human blood and blood components and amending Directive 2001/83/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012738/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Stato delle relazioni tra l'Unione europea e Taiwan

Taiwan, anche detta Repubblica di Cina (RDC) o Formosa, è costituita dal gruppo di isole di Formosa, Pescadores, Quemoy e Matsu e, nella sua costituzione, rivendica anche la Cina Continentale e la Mongolia Esterna.

A livello formale, non è riconosciuta come Stato dai membri del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU, dagli altri paesi dell'Unione europea né dalla Cina. Tuttavia Taiwan è membro dell'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio dal 2002 e intrattiene intensi rapporti commerciali ed economici con tutti gli Stati menzionati. A luglio 2013, ha firmato il suo primo Accordo di libero scambio (FTA) con la Nuova Zelanda, gettando le basi per accordi simili con gli altri paesi.

Per quanto riguarda l'Europa, nel 2003 la Commissione ha aperto un ufficio europeo di rappresentanza economica e commerciale a Taipei. Attualmente l'Unione europea rappresenta per Taiwan il quarto partner commerciale dopo Cina, Stati Uniti e Giappone; mentre nel 2011 Taiwan risultava il settimo maggior partner commerciale in Asia dell'UE. Oltretutto l'Europa detiene una parte considerevole degli stock di investimenti diretti esteri in tale area ed è un investitore attivo.

Gli scambi riguardano settori come la ricerca e la tecnologia, le società di informazioni, l'educazione e la cultura, l'ambiente, il cambiamento climatico, i diritti di proprietà intellettuale.

Considerato che l'UE non riconosce formalmente Taiwan come Stato indipendente in quanto riconosce «una sola Cina»; che, tuttavia, negli ultimi anni gli scambi con tale potenza economica sono aumentati di oltre 12 volte e presentano un elevato potenziale di crescita futura; e che il 9 ottobre il Parlamento europeo ha adottato una risoluzione sulle relazioni commerciali UE-Taiwan con cui invita la Commissione ad avviare colloqui con il governo di Taipei al fine di approfondire le relazione economiche e commerciali, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali rapporti intrattiene con tale paese?

2. In che modo intende sostenere il sistema democratico e il pluralismo sociale nel rispetto dei diritti umani e dello Stato di diritto di Taiwan?

3. Intende promuovere un dialogo costruttivo tra Cina e Taiwan?

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

L'UE intrattiene importanti rapporti con Taiwan in materia di scambi commerciali, sicurezza, diritti umani e democrazia, nonché relativamente a questioni globali e settoriali, quali i cambiamenti climatici. Un sistema ben consolidato di consultazioni annuali offre una buona occasione per fare il punto sui progressi compiuti.

L'Unione europea continua a promuovere le cause della democrazia e dello Stato di diritto nei suoi contatti con Taiwan ed esprime soddisfazione per il recepimento, nel 2009, del Patto internazionale sui diritti civili e politici (ICCPR) e del Patto internazionale sui diritti economici, sociali e culturali (ICESCR) nel diritto interno di Taiwan. La pena di morte rimane la più seria preoccupazione in merito a Taiwan. Attraverso una serie di scambi di esperienze, richieste e azioni di sensibilizzazione, l'UE continua a manifestare il proprio impegno nei confronti delle autorità locali e della società civile, concentrandosi su attività volte a promuovere l'abolizione della pena di morte.

L'Unione europea continuerà a perseguire la politica di «una sola Cina», sostenendo il dialogo tra le due sponde dello Stretto e la risoluzione pacifica delle differenze inerenti alla sovranità. La Commissione incoraggia le iniziative volte a promuovere il dialogo, la cooperazione pratica e la creazione di un clima di fiducia attraverso lo Stretto di Taiwan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012738/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: State of relations between the European Union and Taiwan

Taiwan, also known as the Republic of China (ROC) or Formosa, is made up of the islands of Formosa, Pescadores, Quemoy and Matsu and also lays claim in its constitution to mainland China and Outer Mongolia.

It is not formally recognised as a State by the members of the UN Security Council, the other European Union countries or China. Nonetheless, Taiwan has been a member of the World Trade Organisation since 2002 and maintains intensive trade and economic relations with all of the abovementioned States. In July 2013, Taiwan signed its first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with New Zealand, paving the way for similar agreements with other countries.

As regards Europe, in 2003 the Commission opened a European Economic and Trade Office in Taipei. At present, the EU is Taiwan's fourth largest trade partner after China, the United States and Japan, while in 2011 Taiwan was the EU's seventh largest trade partner in Asia. In addition, Europe holds a considerable proportion of the direct foreign investment stocks in the area and is an active investor.

Our trade relations involve sectors such as research and technology, information society, education and culture, the environment, climate change and intellectual property rights.

Even though the EU has a 'one China' policy and does not formally recognise Taiwan as an independent State, over the last few years our trade with this economic power has increased more than twelve-fold and represents strong potential for future growth. On 9 October, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on EU-Taiwan trade relations, in which it called on the Commission to initiate talks with the Taiwanese Government with a view to strengthening our economic and trade relations.

1. What kind of relations does the Commission have with Taiwan?

2. How does it intend to support a democratic system and pluralist society which uphold human rights and the rule of law in the country?

3. Does the Commission intend to promote constructive dialogue between China and Taiwan?

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

The EU has significant stakes in its relations with Taiwan from the point of view of trade, security, human rights and democracy, and global and sectoral issues such as climate change. A well established system of annual consultations provides a good opportunity to take stock of progress made.

The EU continues to promote the issues of democracy and rule of law in its contacts with Taiwan, and welcomes the adoption of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) into Taiwan's domestic law in 2009. The death penalty remains the most serious concern in Taiwan. Through a series of exchanges of experience, advocacy and outreach events, the EU remains engaged with local authorities and civil society, focusing on activities aimed at promoting the abolition of the death penalty.

The EU will continue to follow its 'One China' policy, and supports cross-straits dialogue and the peaceful resolution of differences over sovereignty. The Commission encourages initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue, practical cooperation and confidence-building across the Taiwan Strait.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012739/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Arresto immotivato di un cittadino italiano in Ghana

La stampa locale ha riportato la notizia del fermo in Ghana di Luigi Serradura, 62enne di Solagna (VI) sospettato dalla polizia ghanese dell'omicidio, avvenuto martedì 29 ottobre ad Amasaman, di Egle Bellunato, 74enne di Romano d'Ezzelino (VI). Ad oggi l'arresto di Serradura sembra non essere motivato da evidenti prove a suo carico e, stando alle testimonianze raccolte, sembrerebbe trattarsi di un fermo che pone seri interrogativi sul corretto operato delle autorità ghanesi. Inoltre, Serradura svolge da alcuni anni attività di volontariato in Ghana, attività che, svolta da centinaia di cittadini europei nel mondo, è spesso oggetto di ripercussioni violente.

Premesso ciò, può l'Alto Rappresentante Vicepresidente della Commissione far sapere:

1. se intende interessarsi a questa vicenda al fine di supportare l'attività dell'Ambasciata d'Italia in Ghana;

2. nel caso si protrasse lo stato di fermo immotivato, se ritiene opportuna un'iniziativa dell'Unione europea per tutelare i diritti di un suo cittadino tenuto in custodia cautelare impropriamente e, se sì, con quali azioni operative;

3. quali strumenti l'Unione europea può mettere in campo al fine di tutelare l'incolumità dei cittadini europei impegnati in attività di volontariato fuori dai confini dell'Unione?

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

1. La delegazione dell'Unione europea in Ghana è in contatto con l'ambasciata d'Italia relativamente al fermo di Luigi Serradura. La delegazione dell'Unione è pronta ad aiutare l'ambasciata d'Italia in conformità della decisione del Consiglio che istituisce il servizio europeo per l'azione esterna (SEAE) ([1]). L'ambasciata italiana non ha chiesto sostegno in questo caso specifico.

2. Nel caso in cui l'ambasciata italiana in Ghana chieda il sostegno della delegazione UE, quest'ultima discuterà con l'ambasciata del modo in cui potrebbe contribuire agli sforzi da essa prodigati per garantire la tutela dei diritti dei cittadini.

3. In situazioni di questo tipo la delegazione può sollevare, su richiesta dell'ambasciata di uno Stato membro, il problema della sicurezza e del benessere dei cittadini europei nei paesi terzi. I diversi strumenti di cooperazione dell'UE possono inoltre essere utilizzati per favorire il rafforzamento dello Stato di diritto.

([1]) Decisione 2010/427/UE del Consiglio, del 26 luglio 2010, che fissa l'organizzazione e il funzionamento del servizio europeo per l'azione esterna, GU L 201 del 3.8.2010, pag. 30.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012739/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Unwarranted arrest of an Italian citizen in Ghana

Local press have reported the arrest in Ghana of Luigi Serradura, a 62-year-old from Solagna (Province of Vicenza), suspected by the Ghanaian police of the murder of 74-year-old Egle Bellunato of Romano d'Ezzelino (Province of Vicenza also), in Amasaman on Tuesday 29 October. At present, there appears to be no clear evidence against Serradura that would constitute grounds for his arrest, and judging by witnesses' accounts, the arrest raises serious questions over the Ghanaian authorities' proper conduct of the matter. Furthermore, Serradura has been doing voluntary work in Ghana for several years, like hundreds of other European citizens throughout the world. This work often meets a violent response.

1. Does the High Representative/Commission Vice-President intend to get involved in this affair and to support the Italian Embassy in Ghana?

2. In the event that this unwarranted detention continues, does she believe that European intervention would be in order, with a view to protecting the rights of a European citizen who is being wrongfully held in custody? If so, what practical action would she envisage?

3. What instruments can the European Union introduce to protect the personal safety of European citizens involved in voluntary work outside the EU?

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

1. The Delegation of the European Union to Ghana is in contact with the Embassy of Italy about the arrest. The Union delegation stands ready to support the Embassy of Italy in accordance with the Council Decision establishing the European External Action Service (EEAS) ([1]). The Italian Embassy has not requested support in this case.

2. If the delegation's support is requested by the Embassy of Italy to Ghana, the Delegation will discuss with the Italian Embassy which actions could be undertaken by the Delegation to assist the Italian Embassy's efforts to ensure the protection of the rights of the citizen.

3. In such circumstances, on request of a Member State embassy, the Delegation can raise the issue of the safety and welfare of European citizens in third countries. The EU's various cooperation instruments can also be used to assist in the enhancement of the rule of law.

([1]) 2010/427/: Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service, OJ L 201, 3.8.2010.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012741/13
à Comissão
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL) e Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(11 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Cidadãos europeus sujeitos a escravatura no espaço da UE

Há pouco dias foi noticiado pela imprensa portuguesa o caso de trabalhadores recrutados em Portugal para trabalho dito «escravo» no sudoeste francês. Falamos de trabalhadores que cumprem horários de trabalho mais do que excessivos e cujas horas pagas ficam muito aquém das realizadas, em casos flagrantes de ludíbrio.

Numa situação semelhante, recebemos neste gabinete um pedido de intervenção por parte de um cidadão português, vítima de outro recrutamento ludibrioso, desta feita no sul da Bélgica. Neste caso particular, em que dispomos de informação detalhada, o trabalhador denuncia as nulas condições de higiene e segurança no trabalho, o que obriga vários trabalhadores, num esquema repetitivo, a um despedimento forçado sem nunca receberem qualquer tipo de remuneração.

Noutra denúncia que recebemos neste gabinete fomos confrontados com o caso de cidadãos romenos que, em 2012, foram recrutados no seu país para trabalharem na apanha da azeitona no Alentejo, com promessas de salários de 800 euros. Em vez disso são explorados, vítimas de abusos físicos, passam fome e regressam ao seu país sem ter recebido um tostão. Esta situação vem-se repetindo ano após ano e, há pouco mais de uma semana, a imprensa portuguesa dava conta de vários cidadãos romenos na mesma situação: em condições de trabalho deploráveis e a receberem menos de 1 euro por dia.

Infelizmente, casos como os que acabamos de mencionar multiplicam-se todos os dias. Hoje, cada vez mais cidadãos se veem obrigados a procurar oportunidades no exterior, ou são aliciados com ofertas de trabalho que se revelam ser enganosas, tudo para poderem sustentar as suas famílias.

Assim sendo, pergunta-se à Comissão se está a par desta realidade e de que modo está a agir para combater este tipo de situações. Solicita-se também à Comissão que se pronuncie em particular sobre o estatuto dos trabalhadores em situação de mobilidade no espaço comunitário, com base na realidade acima exemplificada.

Parece-nos evidente que o que quer que esteja a ser feito não está a produzir resultados e que inúmeros cidadãos pagam todos os dias na pele por essa má política.

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(8 de janeiro de 2014)

A legislação laboral da UE estabelece normas mínimas comuns em matéria de condições de trabalho, que têm de ser respeitadas em todos os Estados-Membros. No entanto, o controlo e a implementação das condições de trabalho e de emprego e a remuneração efetiva dos trabalhadores são questões da competência dos Estados-Membros, que possuem entidades de execução especializadas para levar a cabo essas verificações e definir as medidas corretivas adequadas. Incumbe às autoridades nacionais competentes, incluindo os tribunais, garantir que a legislação nacional de transposição das diretivas da UE é aplicada correta e eficazmente.

Em março de 2012, a Comissão adotou uma proposta ([1]) de diretiva de execução para melhorar a forma como a Diretiva 96/71/CE ([2]) é implementada, aplicada e executada na prática pelos Estados-Membros. A diretiva proposta pretende conferir aos Estados-Membros instrumentos mais eficazes para controlar e implementar as condições de emprego, em especial no que se refere à evasão às regras aplicáveis.

Além disso, a fim de tornar a legislação da UE em matéria de livre circulação de trabalhadores mais eficaz e combater a discriminação em razão da nacionalidade e os obstáculos injustificados à livre circulação de trabalhadores, a Comissão adotou, em abril de 2013, uma proposta ([3]) de diretiva destinada a facilitar o exercício dos direitos dos trabalhadores da UE. A proposta melhora a aplicação prática dos direitos existentes e pretende obrigar os Estados-Membros a fornecer aos trabalhadores da UE informações sobre os seus direitos, bem como uma assistência acrescida para os exercerem.

As duas propostas estão atualmente a ser analisadas pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho.

([1]) Proposta de Diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho respeitante à execução da Diretiva 96/71/CE relativa ao destacamento de trabalhadores no âmbito de uma prestação de serviços (COM(2012) 131 final, de 21 de março de 2012).

([2]) Diretiva 96/71/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 16 de dezembro de 1996, relativa ao destacamento de trabalhadores no âmbito de uma prestação de serviços, JO L 18 de 21.1.1997.

([3]) Proposta de Diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho relativa a medidas destinadas a facilitar o exercício dos direitos conferidos aos trabalhadores no contexto da livre circulação de trabalhadores (COM(2013) 236 final, de 26 de abril de 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012741/13
to the Commission
Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL) and Alda Sousa (GUE/NGL)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: EU citizens subject to slavery within the EU

A few days ago, the Portuguese press reported on workers being recruited in Portugal for what might be termed 'slave labour' in southern France. We are talking about workers who work an excessive number of hours and are paid for far fewer hours than they have worked, in flagrant cases of deception.

Our office received a request to intervene in a similar situation from a Portuguese citizen, a victim of another deceptive offer of work, this time in southern Belgium. In this particular case, on which we have detailed information, the worker complained of the atrocious health and safety conditions at work, which forced several workers to quit without ever receiving payment of any kind.

In another complaint we received in our office, Romanian citizens were recruited in 2012 in their country to work picking olives in Alentejo and were promised wages of EUR 800. Instead they are exploited, subjected to physical abuse and left hungry, and they return to their country without receiving a cent. This situation has been repeated year after year. A week or so ago, the Portuguese press reported on various Romanian citizens in the same situation: deplorable working conditions and earning less than a euro a day.

Unhappily, cases such as these are repeated every day. Today, an increasing number of citizens are obliged to seek opportunities abroad, or are lured there with misleading offers of work, just so they can support their families.

We ask the Commission if it is aware of this reality and in what way it is acting to combat such situations. We also ask the Commission to comment in particular on the status of mobile workers in the EU, based on the reality described above.

It is clear to us that whatever is being done is not producing results and that countless citizens are paying dearly for this poor policy every day.

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

EU labour law lays down minimum common standards regarding working conditions that have to be respected in all Member States. However, the monitoring and enforcement of working and employment conditions and the actual remuneration of workers fall within the competence of the Member States, which have specialised enforcement bodies to conduct such verifications and determine the appropriate corrective measures. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives is correctly and effectively applied.

In March 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) for an enforcement directive to improve the way Directive 96/71/EC ([2]) is implemented, applied and enforced in practice by the Member States. The proposed directive would offer the Member States more effective instruments for monitoring and enforcing employment conditions, particularly with regard to the circumvention of the applicable rules.

Furthermore, in order to make EC law on free movement of workers more effective and to fight against discrimination on the basis of nationality and unjustified obstacles to free movement of workers, in April 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal ([3]) for a directive to facilitate the exercise of their rights by EU workers. That proposal improves the enforcement of existing rights and would require the Member States to provide EU workers with information on their rights and more assistance in asserting them.

The two proposals are currently being considered by Parliament and the Council.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of service (COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012).

([2]) Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, OJ L 18, 21.1.1997.

([3]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers (COM(2013) 236 final of 26 April 2013).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-012742/13
à la Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Objet: L'ethoxyquine en tant qu'additif alimentaire dans l'alimentation animale — le cas des poissons d'élevage

En 2010, des chimistes suisses ont retrouvé dans les chairs de poissons d'élevage issus de pays européens (membres et non membres de l'UE) des teneurs en ethoxyquine très élevées.

À l'origine, l'ethoxyquine était utilisé comme pesticide et a été interdit dans l'Union européenne, mais il est toujours utilisé comme additif alimentaire, en tant que conservateur (antioxydant) pour empêcher le rancissement des farines animales servant à nourrir les poissons d'élevage.

Dans une opinion émise en 2013, l'EFSA reconnaissait n'avoir pas suffisamment de données pour évaluer l'impact sur la santé humaine de l'ethoxyquine. Les rares données disponibles montrent un possible effet sur la santé humaine.

D'autre part, la législation européenne sur les limites maximales de résidus de pesticides (règlement (CE) n° 396/2005) n'inclut pas les poissons, notamment issus de l'aquaculture, alors que d'autres pays le font (le Japon, notamment).

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas approprié de demander à l'EFSA de lancer une étude propre sur la toxicité de l'éthoxyquine ainsi que sur le dimère de l'éthoxyquine, afin de réviser l'avis de 2013 quand les conclusions seront disponibles?

La Commission ne pense-t-elle pas que les produits de la pêche et de l'aquaculture et les compléments pour l'alimentation animale devraient aussi être inclus dans les teneurs maximales en résidus autorisées?

Les dangers de l'ethoxyquine en tant que pesticide sont connus et son utilisation est interdite dans l'Union européenne. En conséquence, sur quelle base l'ethoxyquine est-il autorisé en tant qu'additif alimentaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(16 décembre 2013)

L'éthoxyquine a été autorisée en tant qu'additif (antioxydant) pour l'alimentation animale de toutes les espèces, selon les conditions prévues dans la directive 70/524/CEE ([1]) et moyennant la fixation d'une quantité maximale d'utilisation dans les aliments pour animaux. En sa qualité d'additif déjà autorisé, il est soumis à la procédure de réévaluation définie par le règlement (CE) nº 1831/2003 ([2]). Lors de cette procédure, la Commission a estimé que l'éthoxyquine était une substance prioritaire, en accord avec l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA). Une évaluation scientifique de l'EFSA est en cours à la suite d'une demande de renouvellement d'autorisation de l'éthoxyquine dans l'alimentation animale. Au cours de cette évaluation, tous les aspects concernant les animaux, les êtres humains et l'environnement seront examinés et analysés. La nécessité de fixer des limites maximales de résidus (LMR) pour l'éthoxyquine dans les chairs des poissons et les produits de la pêche ainsi que dans d'autres denrées alimentaires d'origine animale, ou de restreindre son utilisation en tant qu'additif dans l'alimentation animale, sera étudiée, compte étant tenu de l'avis rendu par l'EFSA.

([1]) Directive 70/524/CEE du Conseil du 23 novembre 1970 concernant les additifs dans l'alimentation des animaux, JO L 270 du 14.12.1970, p. 1.
([2]) Règlement (CE) nº 1831/2003 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 22 septembre 2003 relatif aux additifs destinés à l'alimentation des animaux, JO L 268 du 18.10.2003, p. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012742/13
to the Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Ethoxyquin as an additive in animal feed: the case of farmed fish

In 2010, Swiss chemists found very high levels of ethoxyquin in farmed fish from a number of European countries (EU Member States and others).

Ethoxyquin was originally used as a pesticide and then banned in the EU, but it is still being used as a food preservative (antioxidant) to prevent the rancidification of animal meal used to feed farmed fish.

In a 2013 opinion, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) acknowledged that it lacked sufficient information to evaluate the impact of ethoxyquin on human health. The scant information that is available does indeed point to a health risk.

What is more, unlike the corresponding laws in force in other countries (Japan, for example) European legislation on maximum levels of pesticide residues (Regulation (EC) No 396/2005) does not apply to fish, and thus not even to farmed fish.

Does the Commission intend to ask the EFSA to carry out a study into the toxicity of ethoxyquin and into ethoxyquin dimer with a view to then revising its 2013 opinion once the results are available?

Does the Commission not think that the rules on maximum authorised residue levels should also cover fishery and aquaculture products and animal feed supplements?

The risks associated with the use of ethoxyquin as a pesticide are well known, and it may no longer be employed for that purpose in the EU. On what basis, then, is ethoxyquin authorised as a food additive?

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

Ethoxyquin was authorised as feed additive as antioxidant for all species under the conditions of Directive 70/524 ([1]) with limitation on the quantity to be used in feed. As additive already authorised, it is subject to the re-evaluation procedure under Regulation 1831/2003 ([2]). Ethoxyquin was considered by the Commission as one of the priority substances in its re-evaluation process, in agreement with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Following a request for re-authorisation of ethoxyquin in feed, a scientific assessment by EFSA is ongoing. During this assessment, all animal, human and environmental issues are checked and examined. The need for setting Maximum Residues Limits (MRLs) for ethoxyquin in fish and fishery products and in other food of animal origin or restrictions in its use as feed additive will be considered, taking into account the outcome of the EFSA opinion.

([1]) Council Directive 70/524/EEC of 23 November 1970 concerning additives in feeding-stuffs (English special edition: Series V Volume 1952-1972 P. 0080).

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on additives for use in animal nutrition. OJ L 268, 18.10.2003, p. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012747/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Overseas aid

Could the Commission advise me of the percentage of EU overseas aid that derives from the UK (2009-2013)?

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

The EU overseas aid is financed from the EU budget composed by EU's own resources (TFEU Article 311) in respect, between others, of the principle of Universality (Article 20 of the Financial Regulation).

Nevertheless, for Official Development Assistance (ODA) reporting, a longstanding practice is to estimate and communicate to Member States the share of EU budget's ODA that derives from their participation in the general budget.

For the period 2009 -2012, EUR 3 billion or 11.4% of the total EU budget ODA derived from the United Kingdom (UK). The percentage for 2013 is expected to be 12.37% or EUR 696 million.

Besides the EU budget, EU overseas aid is also provided through the Commission managed European Development Fund (EDF) funded by Member States contributions. Information on the UK contribution to EDF has already been given to previous Written Question E-006994/2013 ([1]). For easy reference please find below the answer: 'The 10th EDF contributions per Member State are laid down in Article 1.2 of the 10th EDF Internal agreement. The total for the 10th EDF fund is EUR 22 682 000 000, of which the UK contribution is 14.82% of the total fund or EUR 3 361 472 400.'

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012751/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Perdurare dell'attività di bracconaggio dell'avifauna migratoria a Cipro in violazione della direttiva Uccelli 2009/147/CE e violenze sui membri del CABS

A Cipro è presente un intenso fenomeno di bracconaggio dell'avifauna migratoria in transito per l'isola. Il relativo mercato illegale prospera, in particolare, a causa dell'esistenza di un piatto tipico denominato «ambelopoulia», costituito da piccoli uccelli selvatici spellati e grigliati interi ovvero messi sott'aceto, pietanza illegale nell'isola sin dagli anni '70 del secolo scorso, ma ancora tristemente diffusa.

Due volte all'anno, pertanto, il CABS (Committee Against Bird Slaughter) organizza un campo anti-bracconaggio volto a rimuovere gli strumenti utilizzati dagli abitanti per catturare gli uccelli vivi, quali bastoni di vischio, reti da uccellagione e richiami elettronici. Qualora tali strumenti si trovino in siti di proprietà privata, i volontari provvedono a segnalare gli stessi alla Polizia locale che procede al sequestro e avvia il procedimento penale contro i responsabili. L'attività dei volontari, inoltre, si declina altresì nella ricerca di pietanze a base di tali uccelli vendute illegalmente in ristoranti, negozi di alimentari, macellerie e altro.

Secondo quanto riferito dai volontari del CABS, la collaborazione con le autorità locali competenti — in particolare l'Antipoaching Squad APS (la locale unità anti-bracconaggio), le guardie del GameFund e i responsabili della base militare britannica SBA — è stata particolarmente proficua negli anni 2011 e 2012 e ha dato i suoi frutti con un numero sempre maggiore di bracconieri denunciati.

Il campo anti-bracconaggio del 2013, tuttavia, è stato caratterizzato da un'inversione di tendenza nell'atteggiamento delle autorità cipriote, che hanno ritirato il loro sostegno e ostacolato i volontari, nonostante costoro abbiano denunciato la situazione di pericolo e di isolamento in cui si sono venuti a trovare, nonché i ripetuti atti di violenza subìti. I volontari, infatti, hanno subìto il taglio delle gomme di un'automobile ferma in sosta davanti all'ingresso del Parco nazionale «Cape Greko», sono stati più volte inseguiti in auto, minacciati e, in un'occasione, anche presi a pugni, colpiti con un randello e, infine, derubati di una macchina fotografica e di un cellulare ([1]).

Sulla base di quanto esposto, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali azioni intende intraprendere per assicurare il rispetto della direttiva Uccelli nell'isola di Cipro e reagire alle violazioni in atto;

2. se ritiene che i tempi siano maturi per avviare una procedura di infrazione al riguardo;

3. se intende approfondire le ragioni che hanno spinto le autorità cipriote a mutare il loro atteggiamento, in passato caratterizzato dalla massima collaborazione con i volontari del CABS, prendendo contatto con le autorità medesime?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è stata informata dell'intenzione delle autorità cipriote di ridurre o sospendere la collaborazione con le organizzazioni che lottano contro il bracconaggio dell'avifauna durante il periodo di migrazione di questo autunno.

Ritenendo che la collaborazione di autorità quali la squadra antibracconaggio della polizia cipriota con le organizzazioni che lottano contro il bracconaggio dell'avifauna sia fondamentale per l'applicazione della normativa pertinente da parte di Cipro, la Commissione ha sollevato la questione con le autorità cipriote esortandole a garantire che le attività di lotta al bracconaggio continuino a ricevere il sostegno necessario.

([1]) Per un riassunto dell'attività anti-bracconaggio 2013 del CABS a Cipro e delle difficoltà incontrate dai volontari, cfr. resoconto presente nel sito web del comitato: http://www.komitee.de/it/antibracconaggio/cipro/campo-cipro-autunno-2013. Dai primi resoconti forniti dalle tre ONG che lavorano sul campo — BirdLife Cyprus, CABS e MBCC (Migratory Bird Conservation Cyprus) — emerge che l'uccellagione ha raggiunto livelli elevatissimi nell'autunno del 2013.

La Commissione continuerà a sorvegliare con attenzione le misure adottate da Cipro per lottare contro il bracconaggio e valuterà l'opportunità di ulteriori interventi dopo aver ricevuto e analizzato i dati sulle catture relativi all'autunno 2013, tenendo conto altresì delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato e della strategia nazionale cipriota per la lotta contro il bracconaggio la cui elaborazione è prevista entro la fine del 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012751/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Continuing poaching of migratory birds in Cyprus, in breach of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, and violence against members of CABS

In Cyprus, there is widespread poaching of migratory birds flying across the island, with a thriving illegal market. This is due, in particular, to the existence of a local traditional dish called 'ambelopoulia', made up of small wild birds that are skinned and grilled whole, or pickled in vinegar. This dish has been illegal on the island since the 1970s, but sadly, is still widespread.

Twice a year, therefore, CABS (Committee Against Bird Slaughter) organises an anti-poaching camp aimed at removing the tools used by local residents to capture live birds, such as mistletoe sticks, clap nets and electronic decoy devices. If these tools are on private property, the volunteers report the matter to the local police, who then seize the tools and start criminal proceedings against those responsible. The volunteer activists also seek out dishes based on these birds, which are illegally sold in restaurants, grocery stores, butcher shops, etc.

As reported by the CABS volunteers, cooperation with the local authorities responsible — in particular the APS Anti-Poaching Squad, Game Fund guards and authorities on the British SBA military base — was particularly successful in 2011 and 2012 and paid off with an increasing number of poachers being reported.

However, the 2013 anti-poaching camp was characterised by a U-turn by the Cypriot authorities, who have withdrawn their support and obstructed the volunteers, despite the latter reporting the dangerous and isolated situation they were in and despite repeated acts of violence against them. The volunteers, in fact, have had the tyres of a car parked in front of the entrance to the Cape Greko National Park slashed, have been repeatedly chased by cars, threatened, were once beaten up and bludgeoned and, last but not least, robbed of a camera and a mobile phone ([1]).

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. What measures does it intend to take to ensure compliance with the Birds Directive in Cyprus and react to the infringements currently taking place?

2. Does it not agree that the time is ripe to commence infringement proceedings in relation to this matter?

3. Will it contact the Cypriot authorities to discover why have changed their attitude, when previously they had given their maximum cooperation to the CABS volunteers?

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

The Commission was informed of the intentions of the Cyprus authorities to reduce or discontinue their cooperation with organisations fighting illegal bird trapping during this year's autumn migration period.

The Commission considers the cooperation of authorities such as the Anti-Poaching Squad of the Cyprus Police with organisations fighting illegal bird trapping on the ground as a key element of enforcement efforts in Cyprus. It therefore raised the matter with the Cypriot authorities, urging them to ensure that anti-poaching activities will continue receiving the necessary support.

The Commission will continue monitoring closely measures taken in Cyprus to combat illegal trapping. It will consider further action on the matter, after receiving and assessing the autumn 2013 trapping data, taking also into account the information provided by the Honourable Member, as well as the national strategy of Cyprus for combatting illegal bird trapping to be drawn up by the end of 2013.

([1]) For a summary of the anti-poaching activities carried out in 2013 by CABS in Cyprus and the difficulties encountered by the volunteers, see the report on the following committee website: http://www.komitee.de/it/antibracconaggio/cipro/campo-cipro-autunno-2013
From the initial reports provided by the three NGOs working locally — BirdLife Cyprus, CABS and MBCC (Migratory Bird Conservation Cyprus) — it has emerged that bird trapping reached extremely high levels in autumn 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012752/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(11 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Perdurare dell'attività di bracconaggi dell'ortolano nel dipartimento delle Landes in Francia in violazione della direttiva Uccelli 2009/147/CE e violenze sui membri del CABS

Facendo seguito all'interrogazione n. E-008250/2012 — presentata dallo scrivente deputato unitamente a 12 colleghi — si desidera fornire un aggiornamento alla Commissione sulla questione ivi denunciata, rimasta del tutto immutata a un anno di distanza. Perdura, infatti, il diffuso bracconaggio dell'ortolano (Emberiza hortulana) nel dipartimento francese delle Landes ([1]) e si sono verificati nuovi episodi di ostruzionismo e di violenza nei confronti dei volontari del CABS (Committee Against Bird Slaughter) impegnati nell'annuale campo anti-bracconaggio in loco ([2]).

Anche per il corrente anno 2013, infatti, il CABS ha organizzato il campo contro il bracconaggio del piccolo uccello, che si ricorda essere oggetto della massima tutela da parte della direttiva Uccelli, essendo inserito tra quelli di cui all'allegato I. L'azione dei volontari, che ha consentito di localizzare in pochi giorni più di 15 siti di bracconaggio e di denunciare gli stessi alla Gendarmerie, è stata da quest'ultima costantemente seguita e controllata, ma non in termini cooperativi. In nessun caso le pattuglie di gendarmi presenti sul posto al fianco dei volontari hanno voluto provvedere a recarsi direttamente nei siti di bracconaggio e/o a rimuovere le trappole. Anche quest'anno, infine, i membri del CABS sono stati allontanati dalla zona per ordine del locale Prefetto, in previsione di una crescente aggressività da parte dei «cacciatori».

Quanto ai bracconieri, ben 30 di loro hanno circondato due volontari aggredendoli con minacce, spintoni e, addirittura, lanciando loro contro diversi litri di urina di maiale e rubando loro il tablet che conteneva il database dei punti da controllare. Si segnala, tuttavia, un parziale cambiamento dell'opinione pubblica francese riguardo al bracconaggio degli ortolani, ora meno solidarizzante, come riportato anche dai media ([3]).

Nella risposta alla prima interrogazione presentata sull'argomento, la Commissione precisava di voler prendere contatti con le autorità locali per sorvegliare l'attività di repressione dell'illegale pratica e di non escludere la possibilità di avviare un procedimento di infrazione.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è in grado di riferire sull'esito di contatti intercorsi con le autorità francesi;

2. se ritiene opportuno a questo punto avviare una procedura di infrazione visti il permanere della situazione di illegalità, le nuove violenze subìte dai membri del CABS e l'indifferenza, se non addirittura benevolenza, dimostrata dalle autorità locali verso quella che viene considerata una tradizione venatoria, nonostante essa sia del tutto illegale in base alla normativa UE?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(17 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-12160/2013 ([4]).

([1]) Descrizione della pratica del bracconaggio dell'ortolano, dal sito del CABS: http: //www.komitee.de/it/antibracconaggio/francia-ortolani-liberi. Secondo il CABS, la cattura illegale in Francia è una delle principali ragioni del declino della popolazione europea del piccolo uccello.

([2]) Per un riassunto del campo anti-bracconaggio 2013 del CABS in Francia e delle difficoltà incontrate dai volontari, cfr. resoconto presente nel sito web del CABS: http://www.komitee.de/it/antibracconaggio/francia-campo-ortolani/campo-ortolani-2013

([3]) Cfr. http://www.sudouest.fr/2013/09/02/les-matoles-visees-1156163-3350.php

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012752/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Continuing poaching of ortolan bunting in the Landes region of France, in breach of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, and violence against members of CABS

Further to Written Question E-008250/2012, tabled by myself and 12 colleagues, I would like to provide the Commission with an update of the situation, which has not changed at all one year on. Indeed, the widespread poaching of ortolan bunting (Emberiza hortulana) in the French department of the Landes ([1]) is continuing to this very day and there have been new incidents of obstructionism and violence against CABS (Committee Against Bird Slaughter) volunteers working in the local annual anti-poaching camp ([2]).

This year (2013) too, in fact, CABS has organised a camp to protest against the poaching of these small birds, which, it should be pointed out, are subject to the maximum level of protection under the Birds Directive, given that they are among those listed in Annex I. The action taken by the volunteers, who have located more than 15 poaching sites in just a few days and reported them to the police (gendarmerie), has been constantly monitored and controlled by the latter, but not in a cooperative way. The police patrols present at the scene alongside the volunteers have never wanted to go directly to the poaching sites and/or remove the traps. This year, too, CABS members have been removed from the area by order of the local prefect, in anticipation of the growing aggressiveness of the 'hunters'.

As for the poachers, as many as 30 of them surrounded two of the volunteers, aggressively threatening and shoving them, and even throwing several litres of pig urine at them and stealing their computer tablet, which contained the database of the places to be checked. It is worth noting, however, that there has been a partial change in French public opinion regarding the poaching of ortolan bunting, to which the public is now less sympathetic, as reported also by the media ([3]).

In its answer to the first question on this subject, the Commission stated its intention to contact the local authorities with a view to monitoring the curbing of this illegal practice, and did not rule out the possibility of opening infringement proceedings.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Can it report on the outcome of its contacts with the French authorities?

2. Does it not think it is appropriate, at this juncture, to start infringement proceedings given the ongoing situation of lawlessness, the fresh violence to which members of CABS have been subjected and the indifference, if not to say benevolence, shown by the local authorities towards what is considered to be a hunting tradition, even though it is completely illegal under EC law?

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

The Commission would refer the Honorable Member to its answer to Written Question E-12160/2013. ([4])

([1]) For a description of ortolan bunting poaching, see the CABS website: http: //www.komitee.de/it/antibracconaggio/francia-ortolani-liberi According to CABS, the illegal capture of these small birds in France is one of the main reasons for their decline in Europe.

([2]) For a summary of the 2013 CABS anti-poaching camp in France and the difficulties encountered by the volunteers, see the report on the CABS website: http: //www.komitee.de/it/antibracconaggio/francia-campo-ortolani/campo-ortolani-2013

([3]) Cfr. http://www.sudouest.fr/2013/09/02/les-matoles-visees-1156163-3350.php

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012755/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Moçambique: raptos

Notícias recentes dão conta de diversos raptos na capital de Moçambique, os quais visaram nomeadamente cidadãos portugueses, alguns dos quais menores. Diversas famílias já evacuaram os seus filhos para a Europa.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? Está a acompanhá-la?

2. De que informações dispõe acerca destes casos?

3. A União Europeia estará disposta a colaborar com as autoridades moçambicanas a propósito destes casos, se tal lhe for solicitado?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(18 de dezembro de 2013)

A AR/VP é regularmente informada da situação e da evolução no que respeita ao rapto de cidadãos portugueses e de outros países, bem como moçambicanos, nas zonas urbanas do país, em particular em Maputo e na Beira.

A AR/VP teve a oportunidade de expressar a sua preocupação sobre estes acontecimentos inquietantes às autoridades de Moçambique, que, em contrapartida, sublinharam a presença de importantes redes criminosas, algumas das quais de origem estrangeira. Foram-nos igualmente dadas garantias quanto ao compromisso de Moçambique para resolver o problema.

Neste contexto, a UE incentivou as autoridades nacionais a envidarem esforços no combate a esta grave ameaça para a estabilidade, em geral, e para a segurança da população, em especial. A UE observou igualmente que Portugal e outros parceiros ofereceram o seu apoio a Moçambique, a fim de reforçar a sua capacidade para lidar com o problema dos raptos e está disposta a considerar formas de contribuir para estes esforços gerais, se tal for solicitado pelas autoridades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012755/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Mozambique: kidnappings

Kidnappings have been reported recently in the capital of Mozambique, including those of Portuguese citizens, in some cases minors. Several families have already evacuated their children to Europe.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this situation? Is it being monitored?

2. What information does she have about these events?

3. Is the EU ready to cooperate with the Mozambican authorities regarding these cases, if requested to do so?

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

The HR/VP is being regularly informed of the situation and developements regarding the kidnapping of Portuguese and other nationals as well as Mozambique citizens in the urban areas of the country, in particular Maputo and Beira.

The HR/VP had the opportunity to express her concerns on these worrying events to the Mozambique authorities, which in return have highlighted the presence of important criminal networks, some of them of possible foreign origin. Reassurance has also been given on the Mozambique commitment to address the problem.

In this context, the EU encouraged the national authorities to improve efforts in addressing this serious threat to stability in general and the security of the population in particular. It also noted that Portugal and other partners have offered their support to Mozambique in order to strengthen their capacity to deal with the kidnapping problem. The EU stands ready to envisage ways to contribute to these general efforts, if requested by the authorities.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012761/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Clean Sky

Το 2008 συνομολογήθηκε η Κοινή Τεχνολογική Πρωτοβουλία Clean Sky ([1]) μεταξύ της Επιτροπής και εταίρων από τον ιδιωτικό τομέα στον κλάδο της αεροναυπηγικής, με προϋπολογισμό 1,6 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, με στόχο, ανάμεσα σ' άλλα, την πλήρη ανάπτυξη τεχνολογιών για τη μείωση του επιπέδου του αντιληπτού θορύβου από αεροσκάφη κατά 50%, έως το 2020.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχουν αναπτυχθεί τέτοιου είδους τεχνολογίες;

2. Έχουν τεθεί σε εφαρμογή;

3. Πώς αξιολογείται η αποτελεσματικότητά τους, με βάση τους προσδοκώμενους στόχους;

Απάντηση της κ. Geoghegan-Quinn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(16 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η κοινή τεχνολογική πρωτοβουλία Καθαρός Ουρανός (Clean Sky) συνιστά μία σύμπραξη στο πλαίσιο του ΠΠ7 ([2]) μεταξύ της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής και της αεροναυπηγικής βιομηχανίας. Κύριος σκοπός της είναι η ανάπτυξη φιλικών προς το περιβάλλον τεχνολογιών για την εμπορική αεροπορία, ούτως ώστε να συμβάλει στην επίτευξη των στόχων του ACARE ([3]) για το 2020, σχετικά με τη μείωση των εκπομπών και του θορύβου. Το πρόγραμμα έχει τους φιλόδοξους στόχους μείωσης των εκπομπών CO_2 κατά 20-40% περίπου, των εκπομπών NO_X κατά 60% περίπου, και του θορύβου κατά 10 dB σε σύγκριση με αεροσκάφη του 2000.

Σχετικά με τους στόχους για το θόρυβο, μια σειρά τεχνολογιών για τη μείωση του αντιληπτού θορύβου μελετάται στο πλαίσιο του Clean Sky. Στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος θα σχεδιαστούν και θα κατασκευαστούν αρκετά υποκείμενα επίδειξης με σκοπό να ενοποιήσουν τεχνολογίες για χαμηλότερα επίπεδα θορύβου. Για παράδειγμα ο κινητήρας Open Rotor ή οι τεχνολογίες Large 3-Shaft Turbofan έχουν τη δυνατότητα να μειώσουν κατά 30% τη ζώνη θορύβου κατά την απογείωση των εμπορικών αεροσκαφών. Στον τομέα της ιδιωτικής αεροπλοΐας με αεριωθούμενα, ένας ριζικός ανασχεδιασμός του ουραίου πτερώματος (επιφάνειες) προκαλεί ουσιαστική μείωση του θορύβου του κινητήρα. Ο σχεδιασμός αυτός αναμένεται να ισχύσει για μεγάλα εμπορικά αεροσκάφη που έχουν επίσης κινητήρες στην ουρά. Όλες αυτές οι τεχνολογίες, εάν επιδειχθούν επιτυχώς στο τέλος του προγράμματος, θα περιληφθούν στις νέες γενεές αεροσκαφών που θα εισέλθουν στην αγορά από το 2020.

Η τεχνολογική πρόοδος του προγράμματος μετράται μέσω ενός μοναδικού αξιολογητή τεχνολογίας — ενός εργαλείου προσομοίωσης για την εκτίμηση των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων των τεχνολογιών σε σύγκριση με τα αεροσκάφη αναφοράς και ο οποίος θα προσδιορίζει την πρόοδο προς τους καθορισμένους στόχους. Τα πρώτα αποτελέσματα της εκτίμησης επιβεβαιώνουν ότι το πρόγραμμα Clean Sky βρίσκεται σε καλό δρόμο για να επιτύχει τους στόχους του μέχρι το τέλος του προγράμματος, το 2017.

([1]) http://www.cleansky.eu
([2]) Έβδομο πρόγραμμα πλαίσιο δραστηριοτήτων έρευνας, τεχνολογικής ανάπτυξης και επίδειξης (ΠΠ7, 2007-2013).
([3]) Συμβουλευτική Επιτροπή για την Αεροναυτική Έρευνα στην Ευρώπη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012761/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Clean Sky

The Clean Sky Joint Technology Initiative ([1]) concluded between the Commission and its private sector partners in the aerospace sector in 2008 with a budget of EUR 1.6 billion targeted, among other things, the full development of technologies for reducing the level of perceived noise from aircraft by 50% by 2020.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Have such technologies been developed?

2. Have they been implemented?

3. How is their effectiveness being evaluated in relation to the set objectives?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

The Clean Sky Joint Undertaking is a Public-Private Partnership in FP7 ([2]) between the European Commission and the aeronautics industry. Its main goal is to develop environmentally friendly technologies for commercial aviation in order to contribute to the ACARE ([3]) 2020 targets for the reduction of emissions and noise. The programme has the ambitious objectives to reduce at the aircraft level, CO_2 emissions by around 20-40%, NO_x emissions by around 60%, and noise by up to 10dB compared to year 2000 aircraft.

Regarding the noise targets, a number of technologies to reduce the perceived noise are currently studied in Clean Sky. The programme will design and build several demonstrators to integrate technologies for lower noise levels. For instance, the Open Rotor engine or the Large 3-Shaft Turbofan technologies have the potential to reduce by 30% the noise area at take-off for commercial aviation aircraft. In the business jet sector, a radical re-design of the empennage (tail surfaces) generates substantial reductions in engine noise. This configuration is expected to be valid for large commercial aircraft using tail-mounted engines as well. All these technologies, if successfully demonstrated by the end of the programme, will be included in the new aircraft generations entering into market as from 2020.

The technological progress in the programme is measured by a unique Technology Evaluator — a simulation tool estimating the environmental impact of the technologies compared to reference aircraft and identifying the progress towards the defined targets. Its first assessment results confirm that the Clean Sky programme is on track to achieve its goals by the end of the programme in 2017.

([1]) http://www.cleansky.eu
([2]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([3]) Advisory Council for Aeronautics Research in Europe.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012763/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ηχορρύπανση

Ποια μέτρα λαμβάνονται για πρόληψη και καταπολέμηση της ηχορρύπανσης σε κατοικημένες περιοχές από τροχαία κίνηση, αεροπορικές μεταφορές, κατασκευαστικά έργα κ.λπ., και πόσο επικαιροποιημένη είναι η σχετική στρατηγική, η νομοθεσία και οι οδηγίες της ΕΕ για την αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου, πανομοιότυπα σ' όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η οδηγία 2002/49/ΕΚ ([1]) σχετικά με την αξιολόγηση και τη διαχείριση του περιβαλλοντικού θορύβου («οδηγία της ΕΕ για τον περιβαλλοντικό θόρυβο») υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να εκπονούν τακτικά (ανά πενταετία) (1), στρατηγικούς χάρτες θορύβου για την κατάσταση που επικρατεί σε πολεοδομικά συγκροτήματα, μεγάλους οδικούς άξονες, μεγάλους σιδηροδρομικούς άξονες και μεγάλα αεροδρόμια στην επικράτειά τους, και (2) σχέδια δράσης για τη διαχείριση των προβλημάτων του θορύβου, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του περιορισμού του θορύβου σε πολεοδομικά συγκροτήματα και περιοχές κοντά σε μεγάλους οδικούς άξονες, μεγάλα αεροδρόμια και μεγάλους σιδηροδρομικούς άξονες. Η επόμενη προθεσμία για την υποβολή σχεδίων δράσης από τα κράτη μέλη λήγει την 18η Ιανουαρίου 2014.

Η οδηγία δεν εφαρμόζεται στο θόρυβο από οικιακές δραστηριότητες ή το θόρυβο στο χώρο εργασίας.

Η Επιτροπή ελέγχει τις πληροφορίες που προσκομίζονται από τα κράτη μέλη και διαπιστώνει ότι πολλά κράτη μέλη δεν έχουν συμμορφωθεί με την οδηγία. Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη κινήσει νομικές διαδικασίες κατά ορισμένων κρατών μελών.

Η αξιολόγηση της οδηγίας θα πραγματοποιηθεί το 2014, με έμφαση στην καταλληλότητα του κανονιστικού πλαισίου.

Η μείωση του θορύβου των μηχανοκίνητων οχημάτων στην πηγή, αποτελεί μέρος των στόχων της ΕΕ από τη δεκαετία του 1970, όταν θεσπίστηκε για πρώτη φορά νομοθεσία της ΕΕ για την έγκριση τύπου σχετικά με το θόρυβο αυτοκινήτων και εμπορικών οχημάτων. Επιπλέον, ο θόρυβος των οχημάτων ελέγχεται μέσω τακτικών δοκιμών ελέγχου, όπως απαιτείται από την οδηγία 2009/40/ΕΚ ([2]). Το εν λόγω πλαίσιο επανεξετάζεται σε τακτική βάση· για παράδειγμα, η Επιτροπή έχει προτείνει αυστηρότερα όρια θορύβου των οχημάτων ([3]) και νέα μέτρα για τους τεχνικούς ελέγχους οχημάτων ([4]), τα οποία αποτελούν αντικείμενο εξέτασης από τον νομοθέτη.

([1]) ΕΕ L 189 της 18.7.2002.
([2]) Οδηγία 2009/40/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 6ης Μαΐου 2009, σχετικά με τον τεχνικό έλεγχο των μηχανοκίνητων οχημάτων και των ρυμουλκουμένων τους (ΕΕ L 141 της 6.6.2009).
([3]) COM(2011)0856 τελικό.
([4]) COM(2012)380 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012763/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Noise pollution

What measures are being taken in order to prevent and combat noise pollution from road transport, aviation, construction work etc. in residential areas, and how up-to-date are the relevant strategy, legislation and EU directives on dealing with this phenomenon in a consistent manner in all EU Member States?

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

Directive 2002/49/EC ([1]) relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise ('EU Environmental Noise Directive') obliges Member States to regularly (every five years) (1) establish strategic noise maps showing the situation in their countries for agglomerations, major roads, major railways and major airports, and (2) draw up action plans designed to manage noise issues, including noise reduction, for agglomerations and places near major roads, major airports and major railways. The next deadline for the submission of action plans by Member States is 18 January 2014.

The directive does not apply to domestic activities or noise at work places.

The Commission checks the information provided by Member States and has noted that many Member States are not in compliance with the directive. The Commission has therefore already started legal actions against some Member States.

The directive will be evaluated — with a focus on regulatory fitness — 2014.

Reducing noise from motor vehicles at source has been part of the EU objectives since the 70s when the first type-approval EU legislation on noise from cars and commercial vehicles was adopted. Furthermore, vehicle noise is tested during periodical inspection tests as required by Directive 2009/40/EC ([2]). This framework is reviewed on a regular basis and for instance the Commission proposed stricter vehicle noise limits ([3]).and new measures on road worthiness tests ([4]) which are being currently discussed by the legislator.

([1]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.
([2]) Directive 2009/40/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 may 2009 on roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers (OJ L 141, 6.6.2009).
([3]) COM(2011) 0856 final.
([4]) COM(2012) 380 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012764/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σοβαρή ενόχληση από θορύβους σιδηροδρόμων

Ποια μέτρα λαμβάνονται για τη μείωση του θορύβου από τις σιδηροδρομικές μεταφορές, που εκθέτουν ένα μεγάλο ποσοστό του πληθυσμού της ΕΕ σε επίπεδα «σοβαρής ενόχλησης» από θόρυβο πέραν από τα ανώτατα επιτρεπτά όρια;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Προβλέπονται ήδη αρκετά μέτρα που μπορούν να αμβλύνουν το πρόβλημα του υπερβολικού θορύβου από τους σιδηροδρόμους και της ενόχλησης που προκαλεί στον πληθυσμό. Σε αυτά συγκαταλέγονται:

— η οδηγία 2002/49/ΕΚ (οδηγία για τον περιβαλλοντικό θόρυβο) ([1]), δυνάμει της οποίας τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να εκπονούν χάρτες θορύβου και σχέδια δράσης κατά μήκος των μεγάλων σιδηροδρομικών αξόνων, τα οποία πρέπει να τίθενται στη διάθεση του κοινού για διαβούλευση·

— η τεχνική προδιαγραφή διαλειτουργικότητας (ΤΠΔ) για το θόρυβο (2011/229/ΕΕ ([2])), με την οποία καθορίζονται όρια θορύβου για καινούργιο και αναβαθμισμένο τροχαίο υλικό·

— η οδηγία 2012/34/ΕΕ για τη δημιουργία ενιαίου ευρωπαϊκού σιδηροδρομικού χώρου ([3]), με την οποία παρέχεται η δυνατότητα διαφοροποίησης των τελών χρήσης υποδομής ανάλογα με το επίπεδο θορύβου·

— η διευκόλυνση «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη» (COM(2011)665/3 ([4])), με την οποία παρέχεται η δυνατότητα να συγχρηματοδοτείται ο εκ των υστέρων εξοπλισμός υφισταμένων φορταμαξών με αθόρυβα πέδιλα πέδησης, ώστε να καθίσταται λιγότερο θορυβώδης.

([1]) ΕΕ L 189 της 18.7.2002.
([2]) ΕΕ L 99 της 13.4.2011.
([3]) ΕΕ L 343 της 14.12.2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/interoperability/doc/com_2011_665_3_-_connecting_europe_facility.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012764/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Severe annoyance from railway noise

What measures are being taken to reduce rail transport noise, which exposes a large proportion of the EU population to levels of 'severe annoyance' from noise over and above the maximum permissible limits?

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

A number of measures that can alleviate the problem of excessive rail noise and its annoyance to the population are already in place. These comprise:

— Directive 2002/49/EC ([1]) (Environmental Noise Directive), requesting Member States to produce noise maps and noise action plans along main rail routes, to be consulted and made available to the public.

— Technical Specification for Interoperability (TSI) on Noise (2011/229/EU ([2])), setting noise limits for new and upgraded rolling stock;

— Directive 2012/34/EU ([3]) establishing a single European railway area, giving possibility to differentiate infrastructure charges according to noise levels;

— The Connecting Europe Facility (COM(2011)665/3 ([4])), giving possibility to co-fund the retrofitting of existing freight wagons with silent brake blocks, in order to make them less noisy.

([1]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.
([2]) OJ L 99, 13.4.2011.
([3]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/interoperability/doc/com_2011_665_3_-_connecting_europe_facility.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012765/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Συνολική πολιτική πρόληψης της παραγωγής αποβλήτων

Πολλοί πολίτες των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ εκφράζουν παράπονα ότι δεν εφαρμόζεται αποτελεσματικά η περί αποβλήτων κοινοτική νομοθεσία, καθώς επίσης και οι ενισχυμένες διατάξεις της οδηγίας πλαισίου για τα απόβλητα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, ως θεματοφύλακας των κανονισμών και της νομοθεσίας:

1. Έχει διαπιστώσει σοβαρές παραβιάσεις του κοινοτικού δικαίου σ' αυτόν τον τομέα;

2. Εάν ναι, έχει κινήσει διαδικασίες για να εξασφαλίσει την ορθή εφαρμογή και εκτέλεση της κοινοτικής νομοθεσίας σε εθνικό επίπεδο;

3. Πώς αξιολογεί την πρόοδο του «σχεδίου αγροτικής ανάπτυξης» 2007-2013 για την Κύπρο και, ειδικά, το τμήμα του με τίτλο «διαχείριση των αποβλήτων στις γεωργικές εκμεταλλεύσεις», όσον αφορά την προαγωγή επενδύσεων για την ανακύκλωση των αποβλήτων ζωικής προέλευσης και για την ορθολογική περιβαλλοντική διαχείριση;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει με διάφορους τρόπους τις παραβιάσεις και την ανεπαρκή εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας περί αποβλήτων στην ΕΕ. Αυτό συνεπάγεται την έναρξη ερευνών και την κίνηση διαδικασιών επί παραβάσει κατά κρατών μελών για σοβαρές παραβάσεις ([1]) ([2]) και την εφαρμογή προγραμμάτων υποβοήθησης της συμμόρφωσης ([3]). Κάθε χρόνο, η Επιτροπή καταρτίζει ετήσια έκθεση σχετικά με την παρακολούθηση της εφαρμογής της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ ανά την ΕΕ ([4]).

Η γενική προσέγγιση της Επιτροπής για να αναβαθμιστεί η καλύτερη εφαρμογή και η επιβολή της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ για τα απόβλητα περιλήφθηκε σε δύο διαδοχικές ανακοινώσεις, του 2008 ([5]) και του 2012 ([6]). Η βελτίωση της εφαρμογής της ευρωπαϊκής περιβαλλοντικής νομοθεσίας (συμπεριλαμβανομένων των αποβλήτων) αποτελεί επίσης μία από τις προτεραιότητες του 7ου προγράμματος δράσης για το περιβάλλον ([7]), που θα δημοσιευθεί σύντομα στην Επίσημη Εφημερίδα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Η εφαρμογή του προγράμματος αγροτικής ανάπτυξης (ΠΑΑ) 2007-2013 της Κύπρου αξιολογείται ετησίως με βάση έκθεση προόδου, η οποία υποβάλλεται από τη Διαχειριστική Αρχή του ΠΑΑ ([8]). Η πρόοδος, η αποδοτικότητα και η αποτελεσματικότητα κάθε μέτρου ΠΑΑ (συμπεριλαμβανομένου του μέτρου 121 σχετικά με τη «Διαχείριση αποβλήτων σε χοιροστάσια, βουστάσια και σφαγεία πουλερικών») αξιολογείται μέσω δεικτών σχετικών με την αρχική κατάσταση, τη δημοσιονομική εκτέλεση και τα αποτελέσματα. Οι δικαιούχοι του μέτρου 121 πρέπει να πληρούν τα περιβαλλοντικά κριτήρια που ορίζει η εθνική νομοθεσία και η νομοθεσία της ΕΕ για τη νιτρορρύπανση, τον έλεγχο της ρύπανσης των υδάτων και την ολοκληρωμένη πρόληψη και έλεγχο της ρύπανσης, όπως περιγράφεται στο ΣΑΑ της Κύπρου. Στο πλαίσιο της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης του ΠΑΑ ([9]), η συμμόρφωση των δικαιούχων με τις περιβαλλοντικές απαιτήσεις του μέτρου αυτού ελέγχεται από την διαχειριστική αρχή του ΠΑΑ της Κύπρου.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-143_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-575_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_annual_report_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/pdf/7EAP_Proposal/en.pdf
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0095:FIN:EN:PDF
([7]) Βλ. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/index.htm
([8]) Άρθρα 82 και 83 του κανονισμού 1695/2005 του Συμβουλίου, ΕΕ L 277 της 21.10.2005.
([9]) Τίτλος VI, άρθρα 73-75 του κανονισμού 1695/2005 του Συμβουλίου, ΕΕ L 277 της 21.10.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012765/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Overall policy on the prevention of waste production

Many EU Member State citizens complain that Community legislation on waste is not being implemented effectively, and neither are the strengthened clauses of the Waste Framework Directive.

In view of the above, will the Commission, as guardian of the regulations and legislation, say:

1. Has it found any serious violations of Community law in this sector?

2. If so, has it put in place procedures for ensuring the correct implementation and execution of Community legislation at national level?

3. How does it evaluate the progress of the 2007-2013 Rural Development Plan for Cyprus and, especially, the section entitled 'Waste Management in agricultural enterprises', in relation to the promotion of investment in animal waste recycling and rational management of the environment?

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

The Commission addresses breaches and insufficient implementation of EU waste law in various ways. These include the initiation of investigations and infringement proceedings against Member States for serious offenses ([1]) ([2]) and the development of compliance-assistance programmes ([3]). Every year, the Commission draws up an annual report on its monitoring of the application of EC law across the EU ([4]).

The Commission's overall approach to ensure better implementation and enforcement of EU waste law is set in two consecutive communications of 2008 ([5]) and 2012 ([6]). Better implementation of EU environmental (including waste) legislation is also one of the priorities of the 7th Environment Action Programme ([7]) that will soon be published in the Official Journal.

The implementation of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 of Cyprus is evaluated annually on the basis of a progress report submitted by RDP Managing Authority ([8]). The progress, efficiency and effectiveness of each RDP measure (including of measure 121 on 'Waste management in piggeries, ox-stalls and poultry slaughterhouses') is assessed by means of indicators relating to the baseline situation, the financial execution, outputs and results. Beneficiaries of Measure 121 need to satisfy environmental criteria set by the national law and by the EU legislation on nitrates, water pollution control and integrated prevention and pollution control, as described in the Cyprus RDP. In the context of shared management of the RDP ([9]), compliance of beneficiaries with the environmental requirements of this measure is verified by the Cypriot Managing Authority.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-143_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-575_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_annual_report_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/pdf/7EAP_Proposal/en.pdf
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0095:FIN:EN:PDF
([7]) See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/index.htm
([8]) Articles 82 and 83 of Council Regulation 1695/2005, OJ L 277 of 21.10.2005.
([9]) Title VI, Articles 73-75 of Council Regulation 1695/2005, OJ L 277 of 21.10.2005.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-012766/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(11. November 2013)

Betrifft: Schwerwiegende Menschenrechtsverletzungen an den griechischen Außengrenzen

Die Nichtregierungsorganisation ProAsyl berichtet in ihrem Bericht „Pushed Back" über schwerwiegende Menschenrechtsverletzungen an der griechisch-türkischen Grenze sowie in der Ägäis. Dem Bericht zufolge werden Menschen, die in Europa Schutz suchen, systematisch und brutal daran gehindert, griechisches Territorium zu betreten. Flüchtlinge werden von griechischen Einsatzkräften geschlagen, auf hoher See in seeuntüchtigen Booten wieder ausgesetzt; Geld, Handys und Ausweisdokumente werden ihnen abgenommen. Ob jemand schutzbedürftig ist, prüfen die griechischen Einsatzkräfte nicht. Fast alle Menschenrechtsverletzungen fanden im Einsatzgebiet von Frontex statt.

Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass Frontex die Operation an der griechisch-türkischen Grenze und in der Ägäis beenden sollte?

Prüft Frontex die Aussetzung oder Beendigung der Operation aufgrund schwerwiegender Menschenrechtsverletzungen nach Artikel 3 Absatz 1 der Frontex-Verordnung? Wenn ja, wann ist mit einer Entscheidung des Exekutivdirektors dazu zu rechnen?

In der Frontex-Verordnung wird vorgeschrieben, dass der Herkunftsmitgliedstaat von Grenzschutzbeamten bei Verstößen gegen die Grundrechte oder die Verpflichtung zum internationalen Schutz geeignete Disziplinarmaßnahmen ergreift. Hat Griechenland solche Maßnahmen eingeleitet? Wenn ja, in wie vielen Fällen ist dies seit Beginn des Jahres geschehen?

Was unternimmt die Kommission, um zu verhindern, dass Griechenland Menschen- und Flüchtlingsrechte offenbar systematisch verletzt, und wie kontrolliert die Kommission, dass dafür keine EU-Mittel, etwa aus dem Außengrenzenfonds, verwendet werden?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(16. Dezember 2013)

Die Entscheidung, ob ein Frontex-Einsatz ausgesetzt oder beendet werden soll, liegt beim Exekutivdirektor von Frontex. Bis jetzt wurde darüber noch nicht entschieden.

Frontex hat die Kommission darüber informiert, dass sie Berichte über angebliches „Zurückdrängen" erhalten hat, und in jedem einzelnen Fall hat Frontex mit Unterstützung des Grundrechtebeauftragten die griechischen Behörden aufgefordert, die notwendigen Untersuchungen durchzuführen. Die griechischen Behörden sind in allen Fällen jedoch zu dem Schluss gelangt, dass es zu keinem Fehlverhalten gekommen ist.

Die Kommission beobachtet die Migrations- und Asylsituation in Griechenland aufmerksam und steht mit den griechischen Behörden in ständigem Kontakt, um die vollständige Einhaltung der EU-Grundrechtecharta und der speziellen EU-Vorschriften über Migration, Grenzverwaltung und Asyl zu gewährleisten. Die Kommission nimmt die Anschuldigungen in dem Bericht von „ProAsyl" sehr ernst und prüft ihn derzeit genau im Hinblick auf die Schritte, die sie eventuell in ihrer Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge ergreifen könnte.

Die Mittel des Außengrenzenfonds werden von den Mitgliedstaaten und der Kommission geteilt verwaltet. Die Kommission kontrolliert die Maßnahmen, die die Mitgliedstaaten in ihren nationalen Programmen vorschlagen, auf ihre Vereinbarkeit mit der EU-Grundrechtecharta und den entsprechenden EU-Vorschriften. Während die griechischen Behörden für die Projektdurchführung zuständig sind, kann die Kommission etwaige Vorfälle in Bezug auf die Verletzung der Grundrechte in einzelnen Projekten im Zuge des Abschlussverfahrens prüfen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012766/13
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Serious human rights violations at Greece's external borders

In its report 'Pushed Back', the nongovernmental organisation ProAsyl describes serious human rights violations at the border between Greece and Turkey and in the Aegean. According to the report, people seeking protection in Europe are systematically and brutally prevented from entering Greek territory. Refugees are beaten by Greek forces, re-exposed to the elements in unseaworthy boats on the high seas; money, mobile telephones and identity documents are taken from them. The Greek forces do not check whether people need protection. Nearly all these human rights violations have been committed within the operating area of Frontex.

Does the Commission consider that Frontex should put an end to the operation at the border between Greece and Turkey and in the Aegean?

Is Frontex considering suspending or terminating the operation because of serious human rights violations as referred to in Article 3(1) of the Frontex Regulation? If so, when can a decision by the Executive Director be expected?

The Frontex Regulation stipulates that the home Member State of border guards must take appropriate disciplinary measures if they violate fundamental rights or international protection obligations. Has Greece taken such measures? If so, in how many cases has it done so since the beginning of the year?

What will the Commission do to prevent Greece from — evidently — systematically breaching human rights and the rights of refugees, and how will the Commission check that no EU funds — for example from the External Borders Fund — are used to commit such breaches?

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

A decision as to whether or not Frontex operations are to be suspended or terminated rests with the Executive Director of Frontex. For the time being, no decision has been taken on the matter.

Frontex has informed the Commission that it had received reports of alleged push-backs, and in each case Frontex, with the support of the Fundamental Rights Officer, has prompted Greek authorities to carry out the necessary investigation. However, in each of these cases, the Greek authorities did not come to the conclusion that wrong-doing had occurred.

The Commission is carefully monitoring the migration and asylum situation in Greece and has been and continues to be in close contact with the Greek authorities to ensure full compliance with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the specific EU *acquis* in the area of migration, border management and asylum. The Commission takes very seriously the allegations contained in the ProAsyl report, which it is currently closely scrutinising, with a view to deciding on the steps that it may take in its role as guardian of the Treaties.

The External Borders Fund is mainly implemented under the shared management mode. When assessing the measures proposed in Member States' national programmes, the Commission verifies the compliance of the proposed actions with the respect of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the relevant EU *acquis*. While the implementation of projects lies within the competence of the Greek authorities, if there are allegations about the violation of fundamental rights affecting individual projects, the Commission would investigate in the process of closure.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie P-012767/13
Komisii
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(11. novembra 2013)

Vec: Dôsledky európskej iniciatívy občanov (2012)000005 Jeden z nás na začatie programu Horizont 2020

Európska iniciatíva občanov ECI (2012)000005 Jeden z nás, ktorá požaduje, aby EÚ nepovoľovala financovanie kontroverzných výskumných projektov, získala podporu 1 885 000 občanov. Ide zatiaľ o najúspešnejšiu európsku iniciatívu občanov.

ECI (2012)000005 Jeden z nás priamo súvisí s rámcovým programom pre výskum Horizont 2020, pretože výslovne navrhuje, aby sa do tohto programu zapracovali ustanovenia, na základe ktorých by sa zakazovalo využívanie finančných prostriedkov EÚ na financovanie výskumu, ktorý sa priamo alebo nepriamo týka ničenia ľudských embryí.

Komisia zatiaľ nezaujala stanovisko v súvislosti s týmto návrhom.

1. Vzhľadom na to, že na jednej strane by sa program Horizont 2020 mal prijať do konca roka 2013, pričom na druhej strane inštitúcie EÚ musia riadne posúdiť otázku, ktorá by mohla vyvolávať vážne obavy mnohých občanov, aké opatrenia Komisia prijme v záujme zabezpečenia, aby prijatie programu Horizont 2020 netvorilo prekážku alebo neohrozovalo platnosť možného prijatia a realizácie návrhov obsiahnutých v iniciatíve občanov?

2. Predovšetkým, možno program Horizont 2020 upraviť v neskoršej fáze, aby sa z financovania EÚ vylúčili eticky kontroverzné výskumné projekty, ako to požaduje európska iniciatíva občanov?

3. Uplatní Komisia moratórium na financovanie týchto výskumných projektov, pokým sa riadne nevyrieši európska iniciatíva občanov?

Odpoveď pani Geogheganovej-Quinnovej v mene Komisie
(5. decembra 2013)

Obdobie, počas ktorého mohli signatári získať vyhlásenia o podpore týkajúce sa navrhovanej iniciatívy občanov platným spôsobom, uplynulo 1. novembra 2013. Vnútroštátne orgány majú teraz 3 mesiace na overenie počtu platných vyhlásení o podpore. Komisia preto v tomto okamihu nemôže uviesť, aká bude jej odpoveď.

Prístup Komisie k podpore výskumu ľudských embryonálnych kmeňových buniek v rámci siedmeho rámcového programu v oblasti výskumu, technického rozvoja a demonštračných činností (RP7, 2007 – 2013) je uvedený vo vyhlásení ([1]). Komisia navrhla v prípade programu Horizont 2020 zachovať rovnaký prístup. Návrh programu Horizont 2020 bol prijatý v Európskom parlamente prevažnou väčšinou 22. novembra 2013.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 412, 30.12.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012767/13
to the Commission
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(11 November 2013)

Subject: Implications of ECI(2012)000005 'One of Us' for the launch of 'Horizon 2020'

The European Citizens' Initiative ECI(2012)000005 'One of Us', which calls for the EU to refuse to fund ethically controversial research projects, has received the endorsement of 1 885 000 citizens. It is the most successful of all ECIs so far.

ECI(2012)000005 'One of Us' has a direct bearing on the research framework programme 'Horizon 2020', as it explicitly proposes to include in this programme a provision that would prohibit the use of EU funds to fund research that directly or indirectly involves the destruction of human embryos.

The Commission has so far not stated its position with regard to this proposal.

1. Given that, on the one hand, 'Horizon 2020' should be adopted before the end of 2013 while, on the other hand, the EU institutions must give due consideration to a matter that seems to be a serious concern for many citizens, what measures will the Commission take to ensure that the adoption of 'Horizon 2020' will not pre-empt or render nugatory the possible adoption and implementation of the proposals contained in the citizens' initiative?

2. In particular, can 'Horizon 2020' be modified at a later stage to exclude ethically controversial research projects from EU funding, as requested by the ECI?

3. Will the Commission apply a moratorium on the funding of such research projects until the ECI has been properly dealt with?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

The period during which statement of support could validly be collected from signatories for the proposed citizens' initiative expired on 1 November 2013. National authorities now have 3 months to certify the number of valid statements of support. The Commission cannot therefore comment at this moment on what its response will be.

The Commission's approach to support to human embryonic stem cell research in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) is set out in a statement ([1]). The Commission has proposed to maintain exactly the same approach in Horizon 2020. The proposal for Horizon 2020 has been adopted by overwhelming majority by the European Parliament on 22 November 2013.

([1]) OJ L 412, 30/12/2006.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012771/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE) und Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Notwendige Förderung von Geschäftsgründungen in Griechenland

In Anbetracht der sehr hohen Arbeitslosenrate in Griechenland, vor allem unter Frauen und Jugendlichen, wird die Kommission um Mitteilung darüber ersucht, ob sie die griechische Regierung darin zu bestärken gedenkt, leer stehende regierungseigene Gebäude Nichtregierungsorganisationen oder Einzelpersonen zur Verfügung zu stellen, um während dieser wirtschaftlich kritischen Zeit Unternehmensneugründungen zu fördern?

Durch eine solche Initiative könnten die griechischen Behörden direkt zur Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen im Land beitragen, was sich auch höchst positiv auf die griechische Wirtschaft und die Gesellschaft auswirken würde.

Antwort von Johannes Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(13. Januar 2014)

Seit Januar 2013 haben die griechischen Behörden mit Unterstützung der Strukturfonds im Rahmen der „Jugendinitiative“ mit einem Budget von 623 Mio. EUR (gesamte Mittelausstattung, einschließlich EU-Beitrag und nationaler Beitrag) ein breites Spektrum von Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit eingeleitet. Ziel dieser Maßnahmen — die von den nationalen Behörden konzipiert und umgesetzt werden — ist es, 358 980 Begünstigten Erwerbsmöglichkeiten zu eröffnen. Bis Ende Oktober 2013 profitierten 163 874 Menschen von diesen Maßnahmen. Die Vorhaben im Rahmen des Systems für „Jugendgarantien“ befinden sich noch in der Vorbereitungsphase.

Da die nationalen Behörden für die Konzeption und Umsetzung all dieser Maßnahmen zuständig sind, kann die Kommission zum Vorschlag der Fragestellerinnen, Unternehmensgründungen durch Übergabe regierungseigener Gebäude an NRO zu fördern, keine Stellung nehmen.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012771/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE) και Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη υποστήριξης της δημιουργίας νέων επιχειρήσεων στην Ελλάδα

Δεδομένου του πάρα πολύ υψηλού ποσοστού ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα, ιδίως μεταξύ των γυναικών και των νέων, σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να ενθαρρύνει την ελληνική κυβέρνηση να διαθέσει κενά δημόσια κτίρια σε μη κυβερνητικές οργανώσεις και σε μεμονωμένα πρόσωπα, προκειμένου να υποστηριχθεί η δημιουργία νέων επιχειρήσεων σε αυτή τη δύσκολη οικονομικά περίοδο;

Μια τέτοια κίνηση των ελληνικών αρχών θα συνέβαλε άμεσα στη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας εντός της χώρας, με εξαιρετικά θετικές συνέπειες για την ελληνική οικονομία και κοινωνία.

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Από τον Ιανουάριο του 2013 οι ελληνικές αρχές δρομολόγησαν με τη βοήθεια των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων ένα ευρύ φάσμα μέτρων για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων στο πλαίσιο της «πρωτοβουλίας για τους νέους», με προϋπολογισμό 623 εκατ. ευρώ (συνολικός προϋπολογισμός: περιλαμβάνεται η συνεισφορά της ΕΕ και η εθνική συνεισφορά). Ο στόχος των μέτρων αυτών, που σχεδιάζονται και εφαρμόζονται από τις εθνικές αρχές, είναι να δώσει ευκαιρίες απασχόλησης σε 358 980 δικαιούχους. Μέχρι τα τέλη Οκτωβρίου του 2013, 163 874 άτομα επωφελήθηκαν από τα μέτρα αυτά. Τα μέτρα που εντάσσονται στις «Εγγυήσεις για τη νεολαία» βρίσκονται ακόμη σε προκαταρκτικό στάδιο.

Δεδομένου ότι ο σχεδιασμός και η εφαρμογή όλων αυτών των μέτρων εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών αρχών, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να σχολιάσει την πρόταση του κ. βουλευτή για την υποστήριξη νέων επιχειρήσεων μέσω της διάθεσης κενών δημόσιων κτιρίων σε ΜΚΟ για την υποστήριξη της δημιουργίας νέων επιχειρήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012771/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE) and Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Need to support the creation of start-ups in Greece

Given the extremely high unemployment rate in Greece, especially among women and young people, does the Commission intend to encourage the Greek Government to make vacant state-owned buildings available to non-government organisations and individuals, to support the creation of business start-ups at this economically difficult time?

Such a move by the Greek authorities would directly contribute to creating jobs within the country, with hugely positive effects on the Greek economy and society.

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

Since January 2013 the Greek authorities have launched with the help of Structural Funds a wide range of measures to combat youth unemployment within the framework of the 'Youth Initiative' with a budget of EUR 623 million (total budget: EU contribution and national contribution included).The objective of these measures, designed and implemented by the national authorities, is to give job opportunities to 358 980 beneficiaries. By the end of October 2013, 163 874 people have benefited from these operations. The operations under the 'Youth Guarantee' scheme are still in the preparatory phase.

As the design and implementation of all these measures fall within the responsibility of national authorities, the Commission cannot comment on the proposal of the Honourable Member to support start-ups through delegation of vacant state-owned buildings to NGOs to support start-ups.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012773/13
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Sleep deprivation caused by unsafe noise levels

Residents in Ringsend, Dublin are being subjected to noise levels of up to 26dBs above the WHO guidelines because of the activities of Dublin Port Company/Marine Terminals Ltd The residents are being caused sleep deprivation up to three nights a week, as work continues throughout the night. The levels of night-time noise outside their homes represent a serious health risk, according to an in-depth piece of research carried out by Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin academics.

Does the Commission intend to take any action on this matter?

Question for written answer E-012851/13
to the Commission
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Environmental noise directive and Dublin Port, Ireland

Does the Commission consider that the environmental noise emanating from Dublin Port, in particular that from gantries erected without planning permission in 2002, which at night consistently exceeds the WHO guideline night-time noise limits (40 dB(A)) ([1]), and its impact on the neighbouring residents on Pigeon House Road illustrate that the Irish Government has failed to properly implement the environmental noise directive? Does it also consider that the subjection of residents to this noise may contravene Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, in particular the respect for one's private and home life?

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

Directive 2002/49/EC ('EU Environmental Noise Directive') ([2]) does not provide for a specific noise limit, but calls for the assessment and the management of environmental noise from roads, railways, aircraft and industrial sites such as those defined in Annex 1 to Council Directive 96/61/EC ([3]), which relates to integrated pollution prevention and control. This Annex, however, does not specifically list port installations or gantry cranes, leaving the decision as to whether these are considered to be industrial activities — in the sense of Directive 2002/49/EC — to the relevant national authority in each Member State.

The Irish authorities submitted their noise map and the action plan for the city of Dublin to the Commission on 15 January 2009 and indicated that 'no maps were produced for Industrial Plant or Port activities as an assessment of individual plants located in the more heavily populated areas of the agglomeration indicated that sound emissions at the boundary of the sites were below the reporting threshold required in the directive.'

The Commission has already replied to a letter of the Honourable Member Liam Aylward on this subject.

([1]) According to the paper by Murphy, E. and King, E.A. entitled 'An assessment of residential exposure to environmental noise at a shipping port', published in Environment International 2013.
([2]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.
([3]) OJ L 257, 10.10.1996.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012783/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Χρήση του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση από την Ελλάδα

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση (ΕΤΠ) δίνει κάθε χρόνο εκατομμύρια ευρώ για στήριξη οικονομικών κλάδων και περιφερειών της ΕΕ που πλήττονται από φαινόμενα αποβιομηχάνισης αλλά και για εργαζομένους που χάνουν τη δουλειά τους εξαιτίας της χρηματοοικονομικής κρίσης. Παρά το γεγονός ότι το Ταμείο υπάρχει από το 2007 και ότι η Ελλάδα είναι η χώρα που πλέον πλήττεται από την οικονομική κρίση, η Ελλάδα υπέβαλε την πρώτη αίτηση για χρηματοδότηση μόλις το 2011.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πόσες αιτήσεις έχει υποβάλει η Ελλάδα, εκτός αυτής για τους απολυμένους του super market ALDI το 2011;

2. Πόσα κονδύλια έχει συνολικά διαθέσει το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση (ΕΤΠ) το 2012 και 2013; Πόσοι απολυμένοι επωφελήθηκαν από αυτά;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1. Η Ελλάδα υπέβαλε αίτηση για συγχρηματοδότηση του ΕΤΠ μόνο στη μία περίπτωση που αναφέρεται από το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου.

2. Η Επιτροπή καλεί το Αξιότιμο Μέλος να συμβουλευθεί την έκθεση προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο σχετικά με τις δραστηριότητες του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση το 2012 ([1]) για να πληροφορηθεί τις περιπτώσεις ΕΤΠ που υλοποιούνται σε κάθε κράτος μέλος, το ποσό των πόρων που διατίθενται και τον αριθμό των εργαζομένων που έλαβαν βοήθεια κατά τη διάρκεια του εν λόγω έτους. Οι πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις αιτήσεις που ελήφθησαν από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2013, είναι διαθέσιμες στην: «Σύνοψη των αιτήσεων ΕΤΠ ([2])».

([1]) Η έκθεση επί των δραστηριοτήτων του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Προσαρμογής στην Παγκοσμιοποίηση το 2012 διατίθεται στον ιστοχώρο του ΕΤΠ (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326&langId=it), στο τμήμα «σχετικοί σύνδεσμοι».

([2]) Η σύνοψη των αιτήσεων ΕΤΠ διατίθεται επίσης στον ιστοχώρο του ΕΤΠ (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326&langId=it), στο τμήμα «σχετικοί σύνδεσμοι». Η τελευταία ενημέρωση της σύνοψης των αιτήσεων ΕΤΠ πραγματοποιήθηκε στις 16 Νοεμβρίου 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012783/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Use of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund by Greece

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) gives millions of euros every year to support economic sectors and regions of the EU hit by deindustrialisation, and also employees made redundant due to the economic crisis. Greece submitted its first application for funding only in 2011, despite the fact that the fund has been in existence since 2007 and the Greece is the country worst affected by the economic crisis.

Given the above, will the Commission answer the following:

1. How many applications has Greece submitted, apart from the one for people made redundant by the closure of ALDI supermarkets in 2011?

2. How much funding has been made available in total by the EGF in 2012 and 2013? How many people who were made redundant have benefitted from these funds?

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

1. Greece has applied for EGF co-funding only on the one occasion referred to by the Honourable Member.

2. The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the report to the European Parliament and the Council on the activities of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund in 2012 ([1]) to know the EGF cases implemented in each Member State, the amount of funds mobilised and the number of workers helped during that year. The information on the applications received since 1 January 2013 is available in the 'Summary of EGF applications' ([2]).

([1]) The report on the activities of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund in 2012 is available in the EGF website (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326&langId=it), in the 'related links' section.

([2]) The summary of EGF applications is also available in the EGF website (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=326&langId=it), in the 'related documents' section. The last update of the 'Summary of EGF applications' is dated 16 November 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012788/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi del settore industriale degli elettrodomestici e delocalizzazioni e ristrutturazioni annunciate da Electrolux, con gravi ricadute sugli stabilimenti in Italia

Il 25 ottobre 2013 Electrolux, multinazionale svedese produttrice di elettrodomestici, ha annunciato tagli del personale per 2.000 unità, di cui 1.000 in Europa (sulle 7.500 unità attualmente impegnate). Di questi esuberi, 200 interesseranno l'Italia ([1]), dove Electrolux ha quattro stabilimenti: Porcia (PN) per le lavatrici con circa 1.200 dipendenti, Susegana (TV) per i frigoriferi (1.000 dipendenti), Forlì per i forni e i piani cottura (800 dipendenti) e Solaro (MI) per le lavastoviglie (900 dipendenti).

Già a partire dalle prossime settimane alcune produzioni dovrebbero essere spostate in Polonia e in Ungheria ([2]).

Inoltre, su tutti e quattro gli stabilimenti italiani è stata avviata un'«indagine comparata sui costi e sulla competitività» della durata di sei mesi, indagine che rischia di sfociare nella chiusura delle fabbriche esaminate ([3]).

Qualora questo accadesse, le ricadute occupazionali e sociali nel Nord-Est Italia sarebbero gravissime anche considerando, oltre agli addetti direttamente coinvolti, gli ulteriori lavoratori impiegati nell'indotto.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del piano di ristrutturazione lanciato dal gruppo Electrolux?

2. Ritiene che per fare fronte a questa emergenza occupazionale annunciata potranno essere attivati il Fondo sociale europeo e il Fondo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione?

3. Come intende affrontare il fenomeno della delocalizzazione interna verso Stati membri dove pressione fiscale e trattamenti retributivi e previdenziali sono più vantaggiosi per aprire nuovi impianti industriali?

4. Quali eventuali altri provvedimenti intende attivare la Commissione per difendere il tessuto imprenditoriale e il lavoro e per disincentivare le delocalizzazioni?

5. Ritiene che l'azienda stia agendo in conformità con le misure previste dalla direttiva 98/59/CE, del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi e dalla direttiva 2002/14/CE, dell'11 marzo 2002, che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

1) La Commissione è profondamente preoccupata per le conseguenze socioeconomiche dei licenziamenti negli stabilimenti Electrolux in Italia.

2) I lavoratori colpiti dalla ristrutturazione possono avere titolo ad un sostegno dell'FSE e, a patto che siano soddisfatte le necessarie condizioni, del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione. La Commissione invita l'Onorevole deputato a rivolgersi alla persona di contatto del FEG responsabile per l'Italia ([4]) per sapere se è prevista la presentazione di una domanda di sostegno. Più in generale, la Commissione incoraggia le imprese a seguire le buone pratiche per una gestione proattiva e socialmente responsabile delle ristrutturazioni come ribadito nella sua comunicazione che stabilisce un quadro di qualità dell'UE in tale ambito ([5]).

3) La Commissione, in forza del trattato, non ha competenza per affrontare le differenze tra gli Stati membri in termini di costo del lavoro o di livelli di tassazione. Tutti gli Stati membri sono invitati a migliorare il loro contesto imprenditoriale e a renderlo maggiormente favorevole agli investimenti e all'occupazione.

([1]) In particolare, lo stabilimento pordenonese di Porcia.
([2]) Cfr. http://goo.gl/lAjDx2
([3]) Cfr. http://goo.gl/G5KlnS, http://goo.gl/X4B8kx e http://goo.gl/WWzkFg
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it
([5]) COM(2013) 882 def.

4) La Commissione non è contraria alle rilocalizzazioni in quanto tali poiché le imprese dovrebbero rimanere libere di decidere dove insediarsi a seconda dei loro modelli imprenditoriali specifici e dell'evoluzione delle condizioni di mercato. I fondi dell'UE non dovrebbero però essere usati per finanziari tali rilocalizzazioni.

5) La Commissione rammenta di non essere in condizione di valutare i fatti o di stabilire se un'impresa privata abbia ottemperato o meno alle disposizioni che danno attuazione a direttive dell'UE. Spetta alle competenti autorità nazionali assicurare, anche nelle sedi giudiziarie, che la legislazione nazionale a recepimento delle direttive UE cui fa riferimento l'Onorevole deputato sia applicata in modo corretto ed efficace dal datore di lavoro in questione tenendo conto delle circostanze specifiche di ciascun caso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012788/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Crisis in the household appliance industry and relocations and restructuring announced by Electrolux, with serious consequences for its plants in Italy

On 25 October 2013 Electrolux, the Swedish multinational household appliance manufacturer, announced that it was laying off 2 000 employees, 1 000 of them in Europe (out of the current 7 500-strong workforce). Two hundred of these redundancies will be made in Italy ([1]), where Electrolux has four plants: Porcia (Pordenone), which makes washing machines (approximately 1 200 employees); Susegana (Treviso), which makes refrigerators (1 000 employees); Forlì, which makes ovens and hobs (800 employees); and Solaro (Milan), which makes dishwashers (900 employees).

Some production is due to be relocated to Poland and Hungary as early as in the next few weeks ([2]).

Furthermore, a six-month comparative study on the costs and competitiveness of all four Italian plants is being carried out, with the risk that the plants under examination may be closed as a result ([3]).

If this were to happen, it would have very serious social and employment consequences in north-east Italy, since workers employed in related sectors would be affected alongside those employed at the plants.

1. Is the Commission aware of the restructuring plan launched by the Electrolux Group?

2. Does it believe that the European Social Fund and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund can be mobilised to deal with this predicted employment crisis?

3. How does it intend to deal with the problem of internal relocation to Member States where the tax burden and salary and benefit system are more favourable to the establishment of new industrial facilities?

4. What other possible measures does it intend to take to protect the business fabric and jobs and to discourage relocations?

5. Does it believe that the company is acting in accordance with the measures provided for in Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies and in Directive 2002/14/EC of 11 March 2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees?

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

1. The Commission is deeply concerned about the social and economic consequences that the redundancies in the Electrolux production plants in Italy may bring.

2. The workers affected by the restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund. The Commission invites the Honourable Member to contact the EGF Contact Person for Italy ([4]) to enquire whether an application for such aid is being planned. More generally, the Commission encourages companies to follow good practices on anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring as outlined in its communication establishing a EU Quality Framework in this field ([5]).

3. The Commission has no competence under the Treaty to address differences between Member States in terms of labour costs or in taxation levels. All Member States are invited to improve their business environments and to make them more conducive to investments and to job creation.

([1]) In particular, the Porcia (Pordenone) plant.
([2]) See http://goo.gl/lAjDx2
([3]) See http://goo.gl/G5KlnS
http://goo.gl/X4B8kx and http://goo.gl/WWzkFg
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it
([5]) COM(2013) 882 final.

4. The Commission is not opposed to relocations as such, since companies should remain free to decide where to locate according to their specific business models and evolving market conditions. However, EU Funds should not be used to fund such relocations.

5. The Commission recalls that it is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with any provisions implementing EU directives. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives referred to by the Honourable Member is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012789/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: La coccinella venuta dall'Asia

Da portafortuna a pericolo per i propri simili. È la coccinella asiatica, detta anche Arlecchino, originaria delle steppe dell'Asia centrale, introdotta in Europa a metà degli anni '90 perché abile cacciatrice di afidi e diventata, nel tempo, divoratrice delle specie «cugine». A farne le spese, infatti, sono stati gli esemplari a sette punte e quelli a due punte che negli ultimi dieci anni si sono addirittura dimezzati. Numerose le iniziative in loro difesa come il progetto di monitoraggio nazionale SOS Coccinella, che invita chiunque a fotografare le diverse specie di coccinelle effettuando una sorta di censimento delle oltre 50 specie in Italia e 200 in Europa che potrebbero sparire come accadde negli anni '70 a quelle americane, divorate dalla septempunctata. La voracità dell'Arlecchino può avere però anche spiacevoli conseguenze per l'uomo, perché danneggia i vigneti introducendosi negli acini di uva e modificando il sapore del mosto.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza delle conseguenze provocate dalla coccinella asiatica?

2. Tale coccinella rappresenta un rischio per l'ecosistema dei coleotteri europei?

3. Non ritiene la Commissione opportuno invitare gli Stati membri a coordinare le loro iniziative per monitorare la presenza di tali coleotteri e per limitare la voracità della coccinella asiatica, tutelando in questo modo i vigneti e la qualità del mosto?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle conseguenze negative della *Harmonia axyridis* (coccinella asiatica o arlecchino), coleottero predatore polifago ad alta propagazione che, come dimostrano ampie prove, provoca danni agli ecosistemi e costituisce una minaccia per talune specie europee di coccinella e per altri invertebrati, di cui è direttamente un predatore oppure un concorrente per le risorse. È altresì risaputo che, se schiacciate nel processo di vinificazione, le coccinelle rilasciano un fluido giallo contenente alchilmetossipirazine da cui deriva un odore sgradevole. La Commissione è convinta che il contrasto efficace delle specie alloctone invasive implichi iniziative coordinate: ha infatti adottato una proposta di regolamento sulle specie esotiche invasive ([1]) che prevede disposizioni sulla loro sorveglianza e controllo da parte degli Stati membri.

([1]) COM(2013) 620 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012789/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Asian ladybird

Once regarded as a lucky charm, the Asian ladybird, or harlequin, is now a danger to its fellow insects. Originating in the steppes of Central Asia, it was introduced to Europe in the mid-1990s because of its ability to hunt aphids, but over time it has come to devour other ladybird species. The species affected are the seven-spot ladybird and the two-spot ladybird, whose numbers have actually halved in the last decade. Numerous initiatives are in place to protect them, including the Italian monitoring project SOS Coccinella, which asks people to photograph the different species of ladybird in order to make a kind of census of the more than 50 species in Italy and the 200 species in Europe which could disappear just like those native to America did in the 1970s when they were devoured by the *Coccinella septempunctata*. However, the harlequin's voracious appetite can have undesirable consequences for humans, too, because it damages grape vines by penetrating the grapes and altering the flavour of the must.

1. Is the Commission aware of the effects had by the Asian ladybird?

2. Does this ladybird present a risk to the ecosystem of European beetles?

3. Does the Commission not believe that the Member States should be asked to coordinate their initiatives in order to monitor the presence of these beetles and control the Asian ladybird's voracious appetite, thereby protecting vines and must quality?

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

The Commission is aware of the negative effects of Harmonia axyridis, the Asian ladybird. There is ample evidence that the Asian ladybird negatively affects ecosystems, being a highly dispersive polyphagous predatory ladybird. It threatens certain European ladybirds and other invertebrate species, by direct predation and competition for resources. It is also known that ladybirds, crushed during vinification process, release a yellow fluid that contains alkylmethoxypyrazines, which creates an unpleasant odour. The Commission believes that coordinated initiatives are important to effectively tackle invasive alien species. Indeed, the Commission has adopted a proposal for a regulation on invasive alien species ([1]), which includes provisions on their surveillance and control by Member States.

([1]) COM(2013) 620 final.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-012791/13
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(12. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Socijalna dimenzija pri naplati dugovanja od prezaduženih građana

U Hrvatskoj u ovom trenutku oko 300 tisuća građana ima blokirane bankovne račune, što im onemogućuje podmirivanje financijskih obveza, ali i zadovoljavanje svakodnevnih životnih potreba. U prosjeku desetak obitelji dnevno ostaje bez imovine, najčešće bez nekretnina, jer su predmet ovršnog postupka. Prema podatcima Ministarstva pravosuđa, oko 15 tisuća građana Republike Hrvatske nalazi se pred bankrotom.

Hrvatska ima vrlo učinkovit zakonodavni okvir za prisilnu naplatu dugovanja, ali u četiri godine trajanja intenzivne gospodarske krize još uvijek nije pronašla način za uvođenje socijalne komponente u sustav naplate. Institut osobnog bankrota i reprogramiranje dugova prezaduženih građana još uvijek ne postoje, iako su hrvatski građani dužni čak 20 milijardi kuna.

S obzirom na to da Komisija često nastupa sa socijalno osjetljivih pozicija te je i sama inicirala modernizaciju pravnog okvira EU-a na području insolventnosti, želim vas pitati hoćete li Vladi Republike Hrvatske dati određene preporuke o uvođenju instituta osobnog bankrota i olakšavanju reprogramiranja duga građana kako bi dok vraćaju svoje dugove mogli živjeti život dostojan čovjeka.

Također, molim vas da se očitujete o tome je li institut osobnog bankrota u duhu socijalne politike EU-a i hoće li EU raditi na donošenju zajedničkog zakonodavnog okvira kojim bi se to pitanje reguliralo.

Odgovor gospodina Barniera u ime Komisije
(11. prosinca 2013.)

Pitanja vezana za prava nakon sklapanja ugovora u pravilu su u nadležnosti država članica.

Skupina korisnika financijskih usluga (Financial Services User Group — FSUG), koju je osnovala Glavna uprava za unutarnje tržište i usluge, 2011. naručila je studiju o „načinima zaštite potrošača koji se nalaze u financijskim poteškoćama”. Tom su studijom u prvom redu analizirani modeli rješavanja problema osobnog duga u državama članicama EU-a. Hrvatska nije obuhvaćena tom studijom jer u to vrijeme još nije bila članica EU-a.

Angažirani konzultant utvrdio je postojanje više različitih modela rješavanja problema osobnog duga u 18 država članica, od oprosta duga preko otpisa i reprogramiranja duga do modela „*datio in solutum*”.

Komisija je u ožujku 2011. predložila donošenje Direktive o hipotekarnim kreditima koju bi zakonodavci trebali konačno donijeti do kraja 2013. Direktivom o hipotekarnim kreditima od država članica zahtijeva se da donesu mjere za „poticanje zajmodavaca da odobre razumnu odgodu plaćanja prije pokretanja ovršnog postupka”. Uz to, države članice ne smiju „spriječiti stranke ugovora o kreditu da se izričito sporazume da je povrat ili uplata zajmodavcu jamstva ili prihoda od prodaje jamstva dostatna za otplatu kredita”.

Direktiva o hipotekarnim kreditima sadržava i odredbu kojom se Komisija ovlašćuje da pet godina nakon stupanja Direktive na snagu razmotri „potrebu za uvođenjem dodatnih prava i obveza u vezi s fazom ugovora o kreditu nakon sklapanja ugovora”. U tom kontekstu Komisija može odlučiti o provjeri modela rješavanja duga.

U okviru mjera za poticanje poduzetništva Komisija razmatra i odgovarajuća rješenja za skraćivanje razdoblja oprosta duga poštenim poduzetnicima kako bi im se omogućilo da pokrenu novu poduzetničku djelatnost.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012791/13
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Social dimension in the collection of debt from over-indebted citizens

Right now in Croatia, approximately 300 000 citizens have had their bank accounts blocked, preventing them from meeting their financial obligations as well as their everyday needs. On average, ten families are deprived of their assets — most often their housing — each day as a result of enforcement proceedings. According to data from the Croatian Ministry of Justice, some 15 000 Croatian citizens are facing imminent bankruptcy.

Croatia has a very effective legal framework for the enforcement of debt payments, but in four years of deep economic crisis no way has yet been found to incorporate a social component into the debt collection system. The institutions of personal bankruptcy and debt rescheduling for the over-indebted still do not exist, despite the fact that Croatian citizens are currently in debt to the tune of HRK 20 billion.

Given that the Commission often advocates socially sensitive policies and itself initiated the process of modernising the EU's legal framework for insolvency, I should like to put the following question:

Will the Commission make specific recommendations to the Croatian Government on establishing the institution of personal bankruptcy and on facilitating debt rescheduling for members of the public in order that they might lead a dignified life as they pay off their debts?

Could the Commission also say whether the institution of personal bankruptcy is in keeping with the spirit of EU social policy, and will the EU work on establishing a common legal framework to regulate this issue?

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

Post-contractual issues are generally a Member States' competence.

In 2011, the Financial Services User Group (FSUG), which was established by DG Internal Market and Services, commissioned a study on 'means to protect consumers in financial difficulty'. In particular, this study mapped the personal debt solution models in EU Member States. Croatia was not included in this study since it was not an EU Member State at the time.

The consultant in question identified different personal debt solution models in 18 Member States, ranging from debt cancellation, debt relief, debt re-organisation to '*datio in solutum*'.

The Commission proposed in March 2011 a Mortgage Credit Directive (MCD), which should be adopted finally by the co-legislators by the end of 2013. The MCD requires Member States to adopt measures to 'encourage creditors to exercise reasonable forbearance before foreclosure proceedings are initiated'. Moreover, Member States shall 'not prevent the parties to a credit agreement from expressly agreeing that return or transfer to the creditor of the security or proceeds from the sale of the security is sufficient to repay the credit'.

The MCD also includes a review clause that empowers the Commission five years after the directive's entry into force to examine the 'need to introduce additional rights and obligations with regard to the post-contractual stage of credit agreements'. In this context, the Commission may also decide to look into debt solution models.

The Commission is also examining, in the context of measures aimed at fostering entrepreneurship, appropriate solutions to reduce the discharge periods for honest entrepreneurs in order to allow them to start a new entrepreneurial activity.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012798/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Anträge auf Aufhebung der Schweigepflicht und der Immunität von Bediensteten der Kommission

1. Wie viele Anträge gab es im Jahr 2013 seitens der belgischen Justiz, Bedienstete der Kommission in strafrechtlichen Ermittlungen einzuvernehmen?

2. Wie viele Personen betrafen diese Anträge?

3. Wie viele Anträge gab es im Jahr 2013 seitens der belgischen Justiz auf Aufhebung der Schweigepflicht von Bediensteten der Kommission? Wie viele Personen betraf dies?

4. Wie viele Anträge gab es im Jahr 2013 seitens der belgischen Justiz auf Aufhebung der Immunität von Bediensteten der Kommission?

5. Wie vielen Anträgen auf

a. Aufhebung der Schweigepflicht

b. Aufhebung der Immunität

hat die Kommission bislang entsprochen?

6. Falls sie nicht allen Anträgen entsprochen hat: Was waren die Gründe dafür?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(9. Januar 2014)

1. Im Jahr 2013 erhielt die Kommission keine Anträge der belgischen Justiz, Bedienstete der Kommission in strafrechtlichen Ermittlungen einzuvernehmen.

2. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf die Antwort der Kommission auf Frage 1 verwiesen.

3. Die Kommission erhielt im Jahr 2013 seitens der belgischen Justiz 23 Anträge auf Aufhebung der Schweigepflicht von Bediensteten der Kommission. Dies betraf 15 verschiedene Bedienstete.

4. Die Kommission erhielt im Jahr 2013 keine Anträge auf Aufhebung der Immunität von Bediensteten der Kommission.

5a. Im Jahr 2013 entsprach die Kommission sämtlichen Anträgen seitens der belgischen Justiz und erteilte allen betroffenen Bediensteten der Kommission gemäß Artikel 19 des Statuts die Zustimmung, in Gerichtsverfahren auszusagen.

5b. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf die Antwort der Kommission auf Frage 4 verwiesen.

6. Die Kommission entsprach sämtlichen von der Frau Abgeordneten angesprochenen Anträgen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012798/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Requests to waive the duty of confidentiality and the immunity of Commission officials

1. How many requests to subject Commission officials to a criminal investigation were received from the Belgium judiciary in 2013?

2. To how many people did these requests relate?

3. How many requests to waive the duty of confidentiality of Commission officials were received from the Belgian judiciary in 2013? How many people did this concern?

4. How many requests to waive the immunity of Commission officials were received from the Belgian judiciary in 2013?

5. How many requests to:

(a) waive the duty of confidentiality,

(b) waive immunity,

has the Commission complied with so far?

6. If it has not complied with all of the requests, what were the reasons for this?

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

1. In 2013 the Commission did not receive any requests from the Belgian judicial authorities to subject a Commission official to a criminal investigation.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to question 1.

3. The Commission received 23 requests from the Belgian judicial authorities to waive the duty of confidentiality of Commission staff members in 2013. These concerned 15 different staff members.

4. The Commission did not receive any requests to waive the immunity of jurisdiction of Commission officials in 2013.

5a. In 2013 the Commission authorised all the Commission staff members concerned to give evidence in legal proceedings as foreseen under Article 19 of the Staff Regulations in all requests received from the Belgian judicial authorities.

5b. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to question 4.

6. The Commission complied with all requests referred to by the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012799/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Integrated Administration and Control System in Court of Auditors report

On 5 November 2013, the European Court of Auditors released a report on the EU's spending for 2012. Alarmingly, the agricultural sector showed the most significant jump in error rate. In my own constituency, the report recommended that significant improvements were necessary with regard to the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), pointing to a number of shortcomings in Northern Ireland's system as 'deficient' and using 'out-of-date' data.

Given these findings, what steps will the Commission take to aid Member States in ensuring that their IACS are of a sufficient standard, and how does the Commission envisage this will help reduce budget spending inefficiencies identified elsewhere in the Auditors' report?

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

When audits reveal weaknesses in the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), the Commission takes several steps to aid Member states in ensuring that their systems are of a sufficient standard.

Firstly, Member States are informed immediately of the weaknesses identified and are requested to take remedial actions in order to improve the quality of the IACS. Particular attention is paid to findings as regards the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS), the key element of the IACS. Poor quality of this system and/or inefficient updates inevitably causes errors in claims and finally payments. Northern Ireland has taken concrete actions to remedy the weaknesses in their LPIS.

Secondly, the Commission has introduced a legal requirement for Member States to annually assess the quality of their LPIS in order to identify pro-actively possible weaknesses and to take remedial action when required. The assessment performed by the Member States will be actively followed-up to ensure that they do take the remedial actions required to meet the proper quality standards.

Finally, it should be mentioned that a new service will be set-up in 2014 in the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development dedicated to the implementation of direct payments. This service will ensure further support to Member States in their preparatory actions for a smooth implementation of the CAP reform in 2015, including the dissemination of best practices.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012801/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Men's health

As a consequence of generations of men and women assuming certain cultural and traditional roles, men have often been more reluctant than women to discuss their health concerns or to visit a medical professional regarding a health problem. It is no surprise to learn that life expectancy for men is generally lower than life expectancy for women across Member States.

What strategies does the Commission have in place to raise awareness, encourage discussion, and reduce the taboos that surround men's health issues?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the importance of the gender dimension in all its policies.

The Commission has published a men's health report in 2011. The report showed that there is a high level of preventable premature morbidity and mortality in men which suggests a need for preventive activities. Prevention, treatment and rehabilitation need to take into account the gender dimension and cover both sexes in an adequate way. As an example, the Commission has prepared a pilot project to tackle gender specificities in coronary artery disease that could serve as model for other activities.

The EU health strategy takes into account the gender dimension of health policy in health prevention, diagnosis and treatment and stresses the need to tackle health inequalities.

The Commission is not considering the development of a specific strategy on men's health.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012804/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Improving access to beneficial ownership information

Last week the UK Prime Minister announced that the UK planned to create a central public register of those who own and control companies, so-called 'beneficial owners'. This increased transparency ought to make it more difficult for criminals to launder money through UK companies and for corrupt owners to steal billions from developing countries.

While the balance between transparency and respecting data privacy is a delicate one, what plans does the Commission have in place to improve access to beneficial ownership information, and thus improve accountability in the business sector?

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

The Commission's proposal for a Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive published in February 2013 set out new provisions for increasing transparency of beneficial ownership information. These provisions went further than the Financial Action Task Force ('FATF') Recommendations, by requiring that beneficial ownership information be made available to obliged entities as well as competent authorities (the FATF Recommendations concern only the latter).

Since February 2013, the international community, especially the G8 under the UK presidency, has made the availability of beneficial ownership information a key priority. The Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive is currently being negotiated in the Council and the European Parliament, and the Commission are supportive of measures to further enhance both the availability and quality of beneficial ownership information which, in the Commission's view, will place Europe at the forefront of international efforts in this regard.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012805/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Post-traumatic stress disorder and conflict

My constituency has the highest recorded rate of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) of any region or Member State in the European Union. Indeed, Northern Ireland has the world's highest recorded rate of PTSD. The legacy of conflict and violence has clearly taken its toll on the local population, with research showing that nearly 40% of adults have had one or more traumatic experiences linked to 'The Troubles'.

Given the Commission's previous commitments to tackling mental health issues, has it undertaken any research into PTSD in post-conflict societies, and are there any strategies in place to address the needs of people who suffer from PTSD in post-conflict areas in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission has supported the project 'The European Network for Traumatic Stress-Training & Practices (TENTS-TP)' 2009-2011 through the EU Health Programme ([1]). Its aim was to disseminate and implement evidence-based practice for those affected by traumatic events. No partners from Northern Ireland in the UK were involved in this project.

The Commission has no information available on whether there are strategies in place to address the needs of people who suffer from Posttraumatic Stress Disorders in post-conflict areas in Europe.

([1]) http://www.tentsproject.eu/index.jsp?ACTION=GOHOME&MID=1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012806/13
alla Commissione
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Prossime elezioni generali in Afghanistan

Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, uno dei candidati alle prossime elezioni presidenziali che si terranno in Afghanistan nell'aprile 2014, è un ex signore della guerra sospettato di avere stretti legami con organizzazioni terroristiche.

La sua candidatura potrebbe compromettere la stabilità politica del paese e qualsiasi miglioramento conseguito nell'ultimo decennio.

La Norvegia ha già provveduto a tagliare alcuni dei suoi programmi di aiuti, dato che l'Afghanistan non ha affrontato la corruzione o migliorato significativamente i diritti delle donne.

1. L'UE sta valutando la possibilità di inviare nel paese una missione di osservazione elettorale per garantire che le elezioni siano libere e democratiche?

2. Intende l'UE seguire l'esempio della Norvegia e tagliare gli aiuti destinati all'Afghanistan qualora le politiche relative alla tutela delle minoranze e delle donne non venissero attuate?

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

L'Unione europea continuerà ad adoperarsi attivamente per sostenere lo sviluppo a lungo termine dell'Afghanistan e si è impegnata a mantenere, dopo la transizione, livelli di aiuto perlomeno equivalenti a quelli attuali. L'UE ha sottoscritto, e appoggia pienamente, il Quadro di Tokyo sulla responsabilità reciproca, che subordina l'erogazione di parte della futura assistenza dei donatori all'ottenimento di risultati specifici, anche per quanto riguarda la situazione delle donne, da parte del governo afghano. L'UE continua a lavorare con il governo afghano e con il resto della comunità internazionale per garantire il rispetto di questi impegni.

Le elezioni del 2014 saranno una svolta fondamentale per la democrazia in Afghanistan. L'UE fornisce, attraverso l'ONU e altri organismi, un sostegno finanziario e tecnico per potenziare il processo elettorale, affinché le elezioni si svolgano in modo inclusivo e trasparente e producano un risultato legittimo. L'UE sta valutando la possibilità di fornire ulteriore sostegno, anche in termini di monitoraggio elettorale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012806/13
to the Commission
Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Next general elections in Afghanistan

One of the presidential candidates in the upcoming elections in Afghanistan in April 2014 is Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a former warlord who has been suspected of having close ties with terrorist organisations.

His candidacy could jeopardise political stability in the country and any improvements the country has made during the last decade.

Norway has already cut some of its aid programme because of Afghanistan's failure to deal with corruption or significantly improve the rights of women.

1. Is the EU considering sending an election observation mission to the country to ensure that elections are free and democratic?

2. Will the EU follow Norway's example and cut its aid to Afghanistan if the policies regarding the protection of minorities and women are not implemented?

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

The European Union remains firmly committed to supporting the long-term development of Afghanistan and has undertaken to at least maintain current levels of aid after the transition. The EU is a signatory and strong supporter of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework that agreed that a proportion of future donor assistance would be dependent on specific achievements, including in relation to the situation of women, by the Government of Afghanistan. The EU continues to work with Afghan Government and the rest of the international community to ensure that these commitments are fulfilled.

The elections in 2014 will be an important milestone for democracy in Afghanistan. The EU is providing financial and technical support through the UN and other bodies to strengthen the electoral process with the aim that elections are inclusive and transparent, leading to a legitimate outcome. The EU is examining the possibilities of providing further support, including for observing the elections.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-013054/13
an die Kommission
Renate Sommer (PPE)
(15. November 2013)

Betrifft: Äußerung von Premierminister Erdogan zum EU-Mitglied Zypern

Während einer Konferenz in Polen hat der türkische Premierminister Erdogan geäußert: „There is no country called Cyprus". Mit dieser Äußerung negiert der türkische Regierungschef zum wiederholten Male die Existenz des EU-Mitgliedstaates Republik Zypern. Angesichts der bevorstehenden Wiederaufnahme der Verhandlungen zur Lösung des Zypernkonflikts kommt die Äußerung von Premierminister Erdogan zu einem kritischen Moment und ist ganz offenbar darauf ausgerichtet, die Verhandlungen von Beginn an zu torpedieren.

1. Welche Position nimmt die Kommission zur der oben angeführten Äußerung Erdogans ein?

2. Plant die Kommission, auf die Äußerungen von Premierminister Erdogan zu reagieren und — wenn ja — in welcher Form?

3. Wie will die Kommission zu den neuen Verhandlungen zur Lösung des Zypernkonfliktes beitragen?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(13. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission verweist auf den bekannten Standpunkt der EU, der bereits bei verschiedenen Gelegenheiten zum Ausdruck gebracht wurde, u. a. in der Erklärung vom 21. September 2005, in der festgehalten wird, dass „die Republik Zypern […] am 1. Mai 2004 Mitgliedstaat der Europäischen Union geworden [ist]", und darauf hingewiesen wird, dass die EU-Mitgliedstaaten auf der Insel „nur die Republik Zypern als Völkerrechtssubjekt anerkennen".

Im Hinblick auf eine umfassende Lösung der Zypern-Frage appelliert die Kommission nachdrücklich an beide Parteien, unter der Schirmherrschaft der Vereinten Nationen rasch wieder offizielle Verhandlungen über eine solche umfassende Lösung aufzunehmen. Wie die Kommission bei verschiedenen Anlässen betont hat, ist sie fest überzeugt, dass es gelingen kann, die Zypern-Frage im Interesse aller Bürger Zyperns und der Europäischen Union endgültig zu lösen. Sie wird nach wie vor hinter diesen Bemühungen stehen und zusammen mit allen Beteiligten diese Unterstützung noch verstärken, sobald konkrete Fortschritte zu verzeichnen sind.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012808/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προκλητικές δηλώσεις του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού έναντι κράτους μέλους ενόψει νέας προσπάθειας επίλυσης του Κυπριακού

Σε χθεσινές δηλώσεις του σε συνέδριο στην Πολωνία, ο Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός, κ. Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, υποστήριξε ότι «δεν υπάρχει χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος». Μάλιστα, σύμφωνα με ειδησεογραφικά μέσα, οι δηλώσεις αυτές προκάλεσαν αντιδράσεις ακόμα και στο εσωτερικό της Τουρκίας.

Δεδομένου ότι

— με τις δηλώσεις αυτές, που γίνονται σε ανώτατο κυβερνητικό επίπεδο, επιβεβαιώνεται με τρόπο απροκάλυπτο ότι μία υποψήφια προς ένταξη στην ΕΕ χώρα δεν αναγνωρίζει την ύπαρξη ενός κυρίαρχου κράτους μέλους της ΕΕ

— οι δηλώσεις αυτές πραγματοποιήθηκαν σε μια εξαιρετικά κρίσιμη στιγμή, καθώς αναμένεται η εκκίνηση νέας προσπάθειας επίλυσης του Κυπριακού

— λόγω της συμμετοχής της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας στην ΕΕ ως πλήρους μέλους, κάθε προσπάθεια επίλυσης του Κυπριακού αλλά και η λύση του δεν μπορούν παρά να έχουν καθοριστική ευρωπαϊκή νομική και πολιτική διάσταση, και βέβαια

— η Τουρκία συνεχίζει επί σαράντα σχεδόν χρόνια να κατέχει παράνομα το βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η θέση της αναφορικά με τις δηλώσεις αυτές του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού;

2. Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί προς την τουρκική κυβέρνηση σε συνέχεια των συγκεκριμένων δηλώσεων;

3. Πώς προτίθεται να συμβάλει με ενεργό παρουσία στην επικείμενη νέα προσπάθεια επίλυσης του Κυπριακού;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012809/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προκλητικές δηλώσεις του Πρωθυπουργού Ερντογάν

Σύμφωνα με σημερινό δημοσίευμα της εφημερίδας «Καθημερινή», ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, μιλώντας σε συνέδριο στην Πολωνία, δήλωσε ότι «Δεν υπάρχει χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος. Υπάρχει η τοπική διοίκηση της Νότιας Κύπρου». Ακόμα, ισχυρίστηκε, σύμφωνα με το Κυπριακό Πρακτορείο Ειδήσεων, ότι η «ελληνοκυπριακή διοίκηση» έγινε δεκτή στην ΕΕ για πολιτικούς λόγους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για αυτές τις δηλώσεις και ποια είναι η θέση της επ' αυτών;

2. Δεδομένου ότι ο Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός προβαίνει σε ευθεία αμφισβήτηση της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας, ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να κάνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και δη η Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης αναφορικά με αυτό;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012847/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(12 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δηλώσεις του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού

Χθες, 11 Νοεμβρίου 2013, ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ρετσέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, δήλωσε σε συνέδριο στην Πολωνία ότι δεν υπάρχει καμία χώρα που να ονομάζεται Κύπρος. Πρόσθεσε, μάλιστα, ότι η απόφαση της ΕΕ να κάνει δεκτή στους κόλπους της την «ελληνοκυπριακή διοίκηση», όπως είπε, δεν πάρθηκε επειδή είχε εναρμονιστεί με τους ευρωπαϊκούς νόμους, αλλά ήταν μια πολιτική επιλογή. Τέτοιου είδους δηλώσεις δεν είναι η πρώτη φορά που γίνονται από ανώτατα στελέχη της τουρκικής κυβέρνησης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Πώς θα απαντήσετε στις δηλώσεις της Τουρκίας;

Σε ποιες ενέργειες θα προβείτε προκειμένου η Τουρκία να σταματήσει να δυναμιτίζει την ατμόσφαιρα υποσκάπτοντας τις προσπάθειες για επανέναρξη των συνομιλιών για επίλυση του Κυπριακού;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012858/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εμπρηστικές δηλώσεις του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού κατά της Κύπρου

Χθες, στις 11.11.2013, ο Πρωθυπουργός της Τουρκίας, κ. Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, παρευρισκόμενος σε συνέδριο στην Πολωνία, προέβη στις εξής απαράδεκτες δηλώσεις «δεν υπάρχει κράτος που να ονομάζεται Κύπρος», προκαλώντας σωρεία αντιδράσεων τόσο εντός όσο και εκτός Τουρκίας.

Η Τουρκία, εδώ και πολλά χρόνια, αρνείται συστηματικά να αναγνωρίσει την Κύπρο, με αποκορύφωμα το πάγωμα των διαπραγματεύσεων με την ΕΕ, κατά τη διάρκεια της Κυπριακής Προεδρίας.

Είναι δε ανεπίτρεπτο για την Τουρκία, να βρίσκεται σε διαδικασία διαπραγμάτευσης με την ΕΕ για την είσοδό της σε αυτήν και να αναγνωρίζει μόνο 27 από τα 28 μέλη της.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό και υπό το φως των διαπραγματεύσεων αυτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Καταδικάζει με απόλυτο τρόπο τέτοιες δηλώσεις;

2. Πώς κρίνει τις δηλώσεις Ερντογάν και σε τι ενέργειες σκοπεύει να προβεί προκειμένου να ξεπεραστούν τέτοια αντιπαραγωγικά περιστατικά, με δεδομένη την έναρξη της νέας φάσης διαπραγμάτευσης για την επίλυση του Κυπριακού ζητήματος, η οποία βρίσκεται στην πιο κρίσιμη καμπή της;

3. Θεωρεί ότι οι ενέργειες αυτές από την πλευρά της Τουρκικής ηγεσίας δείχνουν αρνητική προδιάθεση για την επίλυση του Κυπριακού αλλά και για τις ενταξιακές διαπραγματεύσεις και, αν ναι, πώς σκοπεύει να αναπροσαρμόσει την στρατηγική της για τις σχέσεις με την Τουρκία;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012861/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προκλητικές δηλώσεις του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού έναντι κράτους μέλους, ενόψει νέας προσπάθειας επίλυσης του Κυπριακού

Σε χθεσινές δηλώσεις του σε συνέδριο στην Πολωνία, ο Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός κ. Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, υποστήριξε ότι «δεν υπάρχει χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος.»

Δεδομένου ότι με τις απαράδεκτες αυτές δηλώσεις που γίνονται σε ανώτατο κυβερνητικό επίπεδο και σε μια εξαιρετικά κρίσιμη στιγμή, λίγο πριν την επανεκκίνηση των διαπραγματεύσεων για την επίλυση του Κυπριακού, επιβεβαιώνεται ότι μια υποψήφια προς ένταξη στην ΕΕ χώρα δεν αναγνωρίζει την ύπαρξη ενός κυρίαρχου κράτους μέλους της ΕΕ.

Δεδομένου ότι η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία είναι πλήρες μέλος της ΕΕ, η Τουρκία συνεχίζει επί σαράντα σχεδόν χρόνια να έχει παράνομα στρατεύματα κατοχής στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας και, επομένως, κάθε προσπάθεια επίλυσης του Κυπριακού δεν μπορεί σήμερα παρά να έχει και ευρωπαϊκή νομική και πολιτική διάσταση,

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η θέση της αναφορικά με τις δηλώσεις αυτές του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού;

2. Σε ποιες ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί ως απάντηση στις συγκεκριμένες δηλώσεις;

3. Πώς προτίθεται να συμβάλει στην επικείμενη νέα προσπάθεια επίλυσης του Κυπριακού;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012878/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός: «δεν υπάρχει χώρα με το όνομα Κύπρος»

Στις 10 Νοεμβρίου 2013, ο Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Έρντογαν ισχυρίσθηκε ότι «δεν υπάρχει χώρα με το όνομα Κύπρος». Απαντώντας σε ερωτήσεις μετά από μια διάσκεψη στην Πολωνία για τις σχέσεις Τουρκίας-ΕΕ, ο Έρντογάν υποστήριξε ότι «η ελληνική διοίκηση της Νοτίου Κύπρου», όπως αυτός περιέγραψε την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, έγινε δεκτή στην ΕΕ για πολιτικούς λόγους κι όχι επειδή ήταν σε αρμονία με τους ευρωπαϊκούς νόμους.

Προσπαθώντας να εξηγήσει τις απόψεις του για τους λόγους που η Τουρκία δεν γίνεται δεκτή στην ΕΕ, ο Έρντογάν υπενθύμισε ότι κατά την πρώτη του θητεία ως Πρωθυπουργού υπήρχαν 15 κράτη μέλη, επισημαίνοντας ότι στη συνέχεια άλλες 12 χώρες έγιναν δεκτές ως μέλη. Συνέχισε ισχυριζόμενος το εξής:

«Όμως, τις έκαναν δεκτές όχι επειδή ήταν σε αρμονία με τους νόμους της ΕΕ. Τις έκαναν δεκτές με μια πολιτική απόφαση. Θα σας δώσω ένα παράδειγμα γι' αυτό. Μια από αυτές είναι η νότια Κύπρος. Προσέξτε! Δεν την έκαναν δεκτή ως νότια Κύπρο. Τη δέχθηκαν ως Κύπρο. Δεν υπάρχει χώρα με το όνομα Κύπρος. Υπάρχει η τοπική διοίκηση της νοτίου Κύπρου. Διότι υπάρχει βόρειος Κύπρος και ανάμεσά τους υπάρχει μια Πράσινη Γραμμή. Ποιός είναι εκεί στην Πράσινη Γραμμή; Τάγματα ασφαλείας συγκροτηθέντα από τον ΟΗΕ. Καμία απολύτως χώρα βάσει των νόμων της ΕΕ δεν θα έπρεπε να αντιμετωπίζει προβλήματα ασφαλείας. Εκείνο το μέρος έχει τέτοιο εσωτερικό πρόβλημα. Πώς μπορέσατε να την κάνετε δεκτή; Η απόφαση είναι εξ ολοκλήρου πολιτική απόφαση».

1. Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής για τον πρόσφατο δημόσιο ισχυρισμό του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού ότι η Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία «μπόρεσε να ενταχθεί στην ΕΕ για πολιτικούς λόγους»;

2. Ποια είναι η απάντηση της Επιτροπής στα επιχειρήματα ότι το Κυπριακό πρόβλημα είναι «εσωτερικό πρόβλημα», με δεδομένη την ύπαρξη πλήθους αποφάσεων του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας του ΟΗΕ που δείχνουν το αντίθετο;

3. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή παραδεκτό να αμφισβητεί μια υποψήφια προς ένταξη στην ΕΕ χώρα την ύπαρξη ενός διεθνώς ανεγνωρισμένου, πλήρως λειτουργούντος κράτους μέλους;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012894/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Eleni Theocharous (PPE)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τοποθετήσεις Ταγίπ Ερντογάν για την Κύπρο

Ο Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός Ταγίπ Ερντογάν για άλλη μια φορά προσέβαλε την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία και την ΕΕ όταν δήλωσε από την Πολωνία ότι «δεν υπάρχει κανένα κράτος Κύπρος»! Δεν είναι η πρώτη φορά που εκδηλώνεται αυτή η τουρκική προκλητική στάση, παρόλο που η κυπριακή κυβέρνηση έχει πολλάκις επιδείξει καλή θέληση δίδοντας το πράσινο φώς για το άνοιγμα του κεφαλαίου 22 καίτοι η Τουρκία συνεχίζει να κατέχει εδάφη της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας και της ίδιας της ΕΕ. Η δήλωση Ερντογάν συνιστά παραβίαση του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου και της διεθνούς εννόμου τάξεως (βλέπε δήλωση ΕΕ 21ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2005 και ψηφίσματα Σ. Ασφαλείας 541-550). Ταυτοχρόνως θέτει σε κίνδυνο τις προσπάθειες επίλυσης του Κυπριακού.

Πώς η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να υπερασπιστεί την παραβίαση του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου, της διεθνούς εννόμου τάξεως και την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, ως κράτος μέλος της ΕΕ, από τις τουρκικές παραβιάσεις, που έχουν πολιτικό, νομικό και ηθικό χαρακτήρα; Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να προχωρήσει στη λήψη μέτρων και ποιων σε βάρος της Τουρκίας;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012897/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προσβλητική και απαράδεκτη δήλωση του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού

Ο Τούρκος πρωθυπουργός Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, σε δημόσια δήλωση μετά από συνέδριο στην Πολωνία, ανέφερε ότι «δεν υπάρχει χώρα που ονομάζεται Κύπρος. Υπάρχει η τοπική διοίκηση της νότιας Κύπρου. Επειδή υπάρχει βόρεια Κύπρος και μια πράσινη γραμμή υπάρχει μεταξύ τους».

Η αμφισβήτηση της ύπαρξης ενός κράτους μέλους από τον Τούρκο πρωθυπουργό αποτελεί μνημείο πρόκλησης, θρασύτητας και λαϊκισμού και δεν προσβάλλει μόνον την Κύπρο αλλά και την ίδια την ΕΕ και τους θεσμούς της. Θα πρέπει επιτέλους να πάρει μια άμεση και αποφασιστική απάντηση από την ΕΕ.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Καταδικάζει τις ανωτέρω δηλώσεις;

2. Σκοπεύει να προβεί στα απαραίτητα διαβήματα προς την τουρκική κυβέρνηση;

3. Θεωρεί ότι η συμπεριφορά του Τούρκου πρωθυπουργού αρμόζει σε αρχηγό κράτους και μάλιστα υποψήφιας χώρας προς ένταξη;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012986/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(15 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δηλώσεις Ερντογάν για Κύπρο

Ο Τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός, Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, δήλωσε προσφάτως στην Πολωνία ότι «δεν υπάρχει καμιά χώρα Κύπρος». Η δήλωση του Τούρκου Πρωθυπουργού είναι αντίθετη με την δήλωση της ΕΕ που εξεδόθη την 21η Σεπτεμβρίου του 2005 και με τα ψηφίσματα 541 και 550 του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας.

Προτίθεται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να λάβει μέτρα κατά της Τουρκίας, η οποία, παρότι υπό ένταξη χώρα, συνεχίζει την κατοχή ευρωπαϊκού εδάφους και παραβιάζει το κοινοτικό κεκτημένο και τη διεθνή έννομη τάξη;

Πώς είναι δυνατό να ζητά η Τουρκία να ανοίξουν νέα κεφάλαια όταν δεν αναγνωρίζει την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία και πώς η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή υπερασπίζεται τα κράτη μέλη από τέτοιες επιθέσεις;

Συνιστά αυτό καλή υπηρεσία στις προσπάθειες λύσης του Κυπριακού;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει τη γνωστή θέση της ΕΕ, όπως έχει εκφραστεί σε διάφορες περιπτώσεις, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δήλωσης της 21ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2005, σύμφωνα με την οποία «η Δημοκρατία της Κύπρου κατέστη κράτος μέλος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης την 1η Μαΐου 2004» και τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ «αναγνωρίζουν μόνο τη Δημοκρατία της Κύπρου ως υποκείμενο του διεθνούς δικαίου» στο νησί.

Σχετικά με το θέμα της συνολικής διευθέτησης του κυπριακού προβλήματος, η Επιτροπή παροτρύνει με ζήλο τα μέρη να επαναλάβουν ταχέως συνολικές διαπραγματεύσεις για μια συνολική ρύθμιση υπό την αιγίδα των Ηνωμένων Εθνών. Η Επιτροπή, όπως επισημαίνεται σε διάφορες περιπτώσεις, πιστεύει ακράδαντα ότι παρουσιάζεται μια πραγματική ευκαιρία για την οριστική επίλυση του κυπριακού ζητήματος προς όφελος όλων των πολιτών της Κύπρου και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να υποστηρίζει και, με τη συνεργασία όλων των εμπλεκομένων μερών, είναι διατεθειμένη να ενισχύσει περαιτέρω, το ταχύτερο, την τυχόν συγκεκριμένη πρόοδο.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012808/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Provocative statements by the Turkish Prime Minister vis-à-vis a Member State in view of a new initiative to solve the Cyprus problem

In the statements he made yesterday at a conference in Poland, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that there was no such country as Cyprus. According to news reports, these statements have caused reactions even within Turkey.

Given that:

— These statements made at the highest level of government have openly confirmed that a candidate for accession to the EU does not recognise the existence of a sovereign Member State of the EU;

— These statements were made at an extremely critical juncture since a new initiative to solve the Cyprus problem is expected shortly;

— Because the Republic of Cyprus is a full member of the EU, any initiative to solve the Cyprus problem and whatever solution is found cannot but have a decisive European legal and political dimension; and

— Turkey has, of course, been illegally occupying the northern part of Cyprus for almost forty years and continues to do so to this day;

Will the Commission say:

1. What is its position with regard to these statements by the Turkish Prime Minister?

2. What action will it take vis-à-vis the Turkish government in response to the above statements?

3. How will it contribute actively in the forthcoming new initiative to solve the Cyprus problem?

Question for written answer P-012809/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Provocative statements by Prime Minister Erdoğan

According to a report in today's '*Kathimerini*' newspaper, the Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan, speaking at a conference in Poland, stated: ' There is no country called Cyprus. There is the local administration of Southern Cyprus.' According to the Cyprus News Agency, he also stated that 'the Greek Cypriot administration' had been admitted to the EU for political reasons.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of these statements and what is its position on them?

2. Given that the Turkish Prime Minister is directly calling into question the existence of the Republic of Cyprus, what actions will the Commission, and in particular the European External Action Service, take in this connection?

Question for written answer P-012847/13
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Statements by the Turkish Prime Minister

On 11 November 2013, the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, stated at a conference in Poland that there was no such country as Cyprus. He went on to say that the EU's decision to admit the 'Greek Cypriot administration', as he put it, had not been made because it had aligned itself with EC laws; rather it had been a political choice. It is not the first time that leading Turkish government officials have made statements of this kind.

In view of the above, will the Commission state:

How will it respond to these statements by Turkey?

What actions will it take to prevail upon Turkey to stop wrecking the political climate, thereby undermining efforts to restart talks to solve the Cyprus problem?

Question for written answer P-012858/13
to the Commission
Maria Eleni Koppa (S&D)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Inflammatory statements by the Turkish Prime Minister on Cyprus

Addressing a conference in Poland on 11.11.2013, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan declared that there was no such country as Cyprus, triggering widespread reactions both within and outside Turkey.

For many years Turkey has systematically refused to recognise Cyprus, an attitude which culminated in the suspension of negotiations with the EU during the Presidency of Cyprus.

It is unacceptable that Turkey should be engaged in a process of accession negotiations with the EU, while recognising only 27 of its 28 Member States.

In this context and in the light of these negotiations, will the Commission state:

1. Will it absolutely condemn such statements?

2. How does it judge Erdoğan's statements and what action does it intend to take to prevent such counterproductive incidents taking place in future, given the start of the new phase in negotiations to resolve the Cyprus issue, which have reached their most critical point?

3. Does it consider that these actions on the part of the Turkish leadership show a negative predisposition as regards the search for a solution to the Cyprus problem and also as regards accession negotiations and, if so, how does it intend to adjust its strategy for relations with Turkey accordingly?

Question for written answer E-012861/13
to the Commission
Theodoros Skylakakis (ALDE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Provocative statements by the Turkish Prime Minister against a Member State, relating to the new effort to address the Cyprus problem

In statements yesterday at a conference in Poland, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan asserted that 'there is no country called Cyprus'.

Given that these unacceptable statements were made at the highest government level and at an extremely critical time, just before the resumption of negotiations to address the Cyprus problem, it is clear that a candidate country for accession to the EU does not recognise the existence of a sovereign EU Member State.

Given that the Republic of Cyprus is a full EU member, and Turkey has continued the illegal occupation by its troops of the northern part of the Republic of Cyprus for almost 40 years, and any effort to address the Cyprus problem must have a European legal and political dimension,

Will the Commission say:

1. What is its position with regard to these statements by the Turkish Prime Minister?

2. What action does it intend to take in response to these specific statements?

3. How does it intend to contribute to the forthcoming new effort to address the Cyprus problem?

Question for written answer P-012878/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Turkish Prime Minister: 'there is no country named Cyprus'

On 10 November 2013 Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan alleged that 'there is no country named Cyprus'. Replying to questions after a conference in Poland on Turkey-EU relations, Erdoğan claimed that the 'south Cyprus Greek administration', as he described the Republic of Cyprus, had been accepted into the EU for political reasons and not because it was in harmony with European laws.

Trying to explain his views on why Turkey has not been accepted into the EU, Erdoğan recalled that during his first term as Prime Minister there were 15 EU Member States, noting that since then a further 12 countries have been accepted as members. He went on to make the following allegation:

'However, they did not admit them because they were in harmony with the EC laws. They admitted them in a political decision. I will give you an example of this. One of them is south Cyprus. Pay attention! They did not admit it as south Cyprus. They admitted it as Cyprus. There is no country named Cyprus. There is the local administration of south Cyprus. Because there is north Cyprus and a Green Line exists between them. Who is there at the Green Line? Security battalions established by the UN. Absolutely no country within the EC laws should experience security problems. That place has such an internal problem. How could you admit it? The decision is totally a political decision'.

1. What is the Commission's position on the Turkish Prime Minister's recent public allegation that the Republic of Cyprus' was able to accede to the EU for political reasons?

2. What is the Commission's response to claims that the Cyprus problem is an 'internal problem', given the presence of numerous UN Security Council Resolutions which suggests the contrary?

3. Does the Commission consider it acceptable that a candidate country for EU accession casts doubt on the existence of an internationally recognised, fully functioning Member State ?

Question for written answer P-012894/13
to the Commission
Eleni Theocharous (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Utterances by Tayyip Erdogan regarding Cyprus

Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish Prime Minister, once more denigrated both the Republic of Cyprus and the EU when he announced in Poland that there was 'no country named Cyprus'! This is not the first time that he has adopted this provocative stance while speaking on behalf of Turkey, notwithstanding repeated manifestations of good will on the part of the Cypriot Government in giving the go-ahead for the opening of the Chapter 22 negotiations despite the continued occupation by Turkey of territory in the Republic of Cyprus and hence the EU. Mr Erdogan's utterances run counter to basic EU tenets and the principles of international law (see EU statement of 21 September 2005 and Security Council resolutions 541-550). At the same time, he is jeopardising efforts to resolve the Cyprus question.

What action will the Commission take to defend basic EU values, the principles of international law and the Republic of Cyprus as an EU Member State against political, legal and moral aggression by Turkey? Will the Commission take action against Turkey and, if so, what action will it take?

Question for written answer E-012897/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: An offensive and unacceptable statement by the Turkish Prime Minister

In a public statement following a conference in Poland, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that 'there is no country called Cyprus. There is the local government of southern Cyprus, and there is northern Cyprus, with the green line between them'.

The Turkish Prime Minister's doubts over the existence of a Member State amount to a monumental challenge, insult and populist act, affecting not only Cyprus but also the EU itself and its institutions. An immediate and decisive response is ultimately required from the EU.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it condemn these statements?

2. Does it intend to take the necessary steps vis-à-vis the Turkish government?

3. Does it believe that the behaviour of the Turkish Prime Minister befits the leader of a candidate country for EU membership?

Question for written answer P-012986/13
to the Commission
Andreas Pitsillides (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Statements by Erdoğan on Cyprus

The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, said recently in Poland that 'there is no such country as Cyprus'. This statement by the Turkish Prime Minister is contrary to the EU declaration of 21 September 2005 and UN Security Council Resolutions 541 and 550.

Will the Commission take action against Turkey, which, although a candidate country for accession, is continuing to occupy EU territory and is violating the Community *acquis* and international law?

How can Turkey ask for new chapters to be opened when it refuses to recognise the Republic of Cyprus and how will the Commission defend Member States from such attacks?

Is this a constructive contribution to efforts to solve the Cyprus problem?

Question for written answer P-013054/13
to the Commission
Renate Sommer (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Remark by Prime Minister Erdoğan about the EU Member State Cyprus

At a conference in Poland, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan has remarked that 'there is no country called Cyprus'. In doing so, he has yet again denied the existence of the Republic of Cyprus. Prime Minister Erdoğan's remark comes at a critical juncture, given the imminent resumption of negotiations on resolving the Cyprus conflict, and is quite obviously intended to torpedo those negotiations from the outset.

1. What is the Commission's position on Mr Erdoğan's remark?

2. Is the Commission planning to respond to Prime Minister Erdoğan's remark and, if so, in what form?

3. What contribution does the Commission propose to make to the fresh negotiations on resolving the Cyprus conflict?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

The Commission recalls the well-known position of the EU, as expressed at various occasions, including in the Declaration of 21 September 2005, which says that 'the Republic of Cyprus became a Member State of the European Union on 1 May 2004' and that the EU Member States 'recognise only the Republic of Cyprus as a subject of international law' on the island.

On the issue concerning the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem,, the Commission strongly encourages the Parties to quickly resume fully-fledged negotiations on a comprehensive settlement under the auspices of the United Nations. The Commission, as indicated in different occasions, strongly believes that there is a genuine opportunity to solve the Cyprus issue once for all for the benefits of all the citizens of Cyprus and of the European Union. The Commission will continue to show its support and, with all the parties involved, stands ready to further strengthen it as soon as concrete progress will be seen.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012819/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(12 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Băuturile răcoritoare de tip ceai

Băuturile răcoritoare de tip ceai sunt promovate ca fiind o alternativă mai sănătoasă a sucurilor carbogazoase obișnuite. Un studiu realizat recent de reprezentanții Asociației Naționale pentru Protecția Consumatorilor și Promovarea Programelor și Strategiilor din România demonstrează că aceste băuturi nu au nicio legătură cu ceaiurile din fructe la care face trimitere denumirea lor. Astfel, cele 14 sortimente studiate au în componență cantități foarte mari de zahăr și îndulcitori, în timp ce conținutul de fruct din concentrat variază între 0 și 0,3 %. Mărcile supuse analizei sunt disponibile în toate țările membre ale Uniunii Europene.

Având în vedere că termenul generic „ceai" nu ar trebui să inducă în eroare consumatorii:

1. Consideră Comisia oportună reglementarea comercializării acestor băuturi răcoritoare sub denumirea de „ceai"?

2. Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru a asigura o informare mai clară a consumatorilor în legătură cu aceste produse?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(20 decembrie 2013)

1. În conformitate cu Directiva 2000/13/CE, etichetarea produselor alimentare, inclusiv numele lor, trebuie să nu inducă în eroare consumatorul în ceea ce privește, printre altele, caracteristicile, natura, identitatea și compoziția produselor. În absența unei legislații la nivelul Uniunii, denumirea sub care este vândut un produs alimentar trebuie să respecte legislația aplicabilă în statul membru în care produsul este vândut. În cazul în care nu există reglementări naționale, denumirea trebuie să fie o descriere a produsului alimentar, care este suficient de clară pentru a-i permite cumpărătorului să stabilească natura efectivă a acestuia și să-l deosebească de alte produse cu care ar putea fi confundat. Evaluarea măsurii în care descrierea utilizată de către un operator din sectorul alimentar îndeplinește sau nu criteriile menționate mai sus este efectuată de către autoritățile competente ale statelor membre de la caz la caz, luând în considerare toate informațiile furnizate pe etichetă, inclusiv lista de ingrediente.

Începând cu 14 decembrie 2014, Directiva 2000/13/CE va fi abrogată și înlocuită prin Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare ([1]), care menține și consolidează interzicerea etichetării înșelătoare a produselor.

2. Prevederile Directivei 2000/13/CE și cele ale Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1169/2011 sunt suficiente pentru a împiedica inducerea în eroare a consumatorilor în privința adevăratei naturi și compoziții a produselor alimentare.

([1]) JO L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012819/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Tea-like soft drinks

Tea-like soft drinks are promoted as a healthier alternative to the normal fizzy juices. A study recently carried out by representatives of the National Association for Consumer Protection and Promoting Programmes and Strategies from Romania highlights that these drinks have no connection with the fruit teas referred to in their name. In fact, the composition of the 14 types which were analysed contains very high quantities of sugar and sweeteners, while the fruit content of the concentrate varies between 0 and 0.3%. The brands which were analysed are available in all EU Member States.

Given that the generic term 'tea' should not be used to mislead consumers:

1. Does the Commission think that it is appropriate to regulate the sale of these soft drinks going by the name of 'tea'?

2. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that consumers are provided with clearer information regarding these products?

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

1. In accordance with Directive 2000/13/EC the labelling of foods, including their name, must not mislead the consumer as to, *inter alia*, the characteristics, the nature, identity and composition of the food. In the absence of Union legislation, the name under which a food is sold shall be that provided for in the legislation applicable in the Member State in which the product is sold. If no national rule exists, the name shall be a description of the food, which is clear enough to let the purchaser know its true nature and distinguish it from other products with which it might be confused. The assessment whether or not the description used by a food business operator fulfils the abovementioned criteria is carried out by the competent authorities of the Member State on a case by case basis, taking into account all information provided on the label, including the list of ingredients.

As of 14 December 2014, Directive 2000/13/EC will be repealed and replaced by Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on food information to consumers ([1]), which maintains and reinforces the prohibition of unfair labelling practices.

2. The current rules of Directive 2000/13/EC and the rules of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 are sufficient to prevent the consumer being misled as to the true nature and composition of foodstuffs.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012820/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(12 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Proprietățile românilor din regiunea Voivodina

Comunitatea Românilor din Serbia, organizația reprezentativă a etnicilor români din Voivodina, încearcă de foarte mult timp să obțină, fără succes, retrocedarea proprietăților care au aparținut românilor din acea regiune până în anul 1946. Potrivit legislației sârbe privind restituirea proprietăților confiscate abuziv în timpul regimului comunist, bunurile nerevendicate până în martie 2014 nu mai pot fi retrocedate.

Principala problemă cu care se confruntă comunitatea românească în demersurile de revendicare este imposibilitatea dovedirii calității de succesor al asociațiilor care au deținut acele proprietăți. În perioada comunistă, organizațiile românești au fost dizolvate, iar averea lor naționalizată. Singura soluție ar fi ca Serbia să promoveze un act normativ care să faciliteze retrocedarea bunurilor colective, așa cum a procedat în anul 1999 și statul român, a cărui legislație a permis comunității sârbilor din România să revendice cu succes proprietățile confiscate de regimul comunist.

Toate proprietățile colective care au aparținut minorității românești din Serbia sunt estimate la câteva milioane de euro.

În acest context, doresc să întreb Comisia în ce măsură ar putea fi inclusă această problemă pe agenda negocierilor dintre Uniunea Europeană și Serbia, programate să înceapă în ianuarie 2014?

Răspuns dat de dl Füle în numele Comisiei
(8 ianuarie 2014)

Legea privind retrocedarea proprietăților sârbe prevede numai retrocedarea bunurilor confiscate de la persoanele fizice. Nu există niciun temei juridic pentru restituirea de proprietăți către asociații sau organisme colective. Comisia nu este la curent cu o eventuală intenție a guvernului sârb de a modifica legislația existentă în acest sens. Cu toate acestea, Agenția sârbă pentru retrocedări a informat Comisia că părțile aflate în astfel de situații sunt invitate să își depună cererile, urmând ca în temeiul legislației existente să se găsească eventuale soluții.

Deși nu există un acquis UE în acest domeniu, Comisia va urmări problema restituirii proprietăților confiscate din Serbia, în contextul controlului prevăzut la capitolul 23 privind drepturile judiciare și fundamentale, pentru a evalua modul în care dreptul la proprietate este garantat în conformitate cu dreptul internațional în domeniul drepturilor omului și cu practicile în acest domeniu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012820/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Properties of Romanians living in the Vojvodina region

The Romanian Community from Serbia, the organisation representing ethnic Romanians in Vojvodina, has been trying, unsuccessfully, for a very long time to have the properties returned which belonged to Romanians in this region up to 1946. According to Serbian legislation on the restitution of properties confiscated illegally under the Communist regime, assets not claimed for by March 2014 may no longer be returned.

The main problem facing the Romanian community in the process of making their claim is that they are unable to prove who the successors are to the associations which owned these properties. In Communist times Romanian organisations were disbanded and their assets nationalised. The only solution would be for Serbia to present a piece of legislation to facilitate the restitution of collective assets, just as the Romanian State also did in 1999, whereby its legislation allowed Serb communities in Romania to claim back successfully the properties confiscated by the Communist regime.

All the communal properties which belonged to the Romanian minority in Serbia have an estimated value of several million euros.

In light of this, I would like to ask the Commission to what extent this issue could be included on the agenda of the negotiations between the European Union and Serbia, scheduled to commence in January 2014.

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

The Serbian Law on Restitution only foresees restitution of confiscated property to physical persons. There is no legal basis for the restitution of property to associations or collective bodies. The Commission is not aware of any intention, from the Serbian Government, to amend the existing legislation in that direction. Nonetheless, the Commission was informed by the Serbian Agency for Restitution that the parties concerned in this type of situation are invited to submit their claims in order to find possible solutions within the framework of the existing legislation.

Despite the fact that there is no specific EU *acquis* in this area, the Commission will follow the question of restitution of confiscated property in Serbia, in the context of the screening on Chapter 23 on judiciary and fundamental rights, in order to assess how the right to property is guaranteed in line with the relevant International Human Rights Law and Practice on this issue.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012821/13
till kommissionen
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(12 november 2013)

Angående: Sveriges efterlevnad av förordning (EG) nr 1371/2007 avseende funktionshindrade tågresenärer

Europaparlamentets och rådets förordning (EG) nr 1371/2007 av den 23 oktober 2007 om rättigheter och skyldigheter för tågresenärer gör gällande att personer med funktionshinder ska ha samma möjligheter att resa med tåg som andra medborgare.

Enligt artikel 22 och 23 ska personer med funktionshinder få kostnadsfri assistens vid på- och avstigning, ombord på tågen och vid byte. Det ska enligt artikel 24 a) vara tillräckligt med ett meddelande om behov av assistens för hela resan, oavsett hur många byten och operatörer resan innefattar.

Det har förekommit klagomål om hur ledsagningen fungerar i Sveriges avreglerade tågtrafik. Lanseringen av Ledsagarportalen var ett viktigt steg mot att förenkla beställningen av ledsagning, men många trafikbolag har fortfarande inte anslutit sig till tjänsten vilket medför att bestämmelsen om att endast ett samtal ska behövas vid bokning inte uppfylls i stora delar av Sverige.

1. Hur anser kommissionen att Sverige lever upp till förordning (EG) nr 1371/2007 när det gäller att erbjuda funktionshindrade samma möjligheter att resa med tåg, särskilt med avseende på artikel 24 a)?

2. Vad gör kommissionen för att se till att Sverige tillämpar bestämmelserna i förordning (EG) nr 1371/2007?

Svar från Siim Kallas på kommissionens vägnar
(19 december 2013)

Järnvägstransportföretag är enligt kraven i förordning nr 1371/2007 skyldiga att se till att personer med funktionshinder eller nedsatt rörlighet kan resa på samma villkor som andra passagerare.

Enligt artikel 30 i förordningen ska medlemsstaterna utse tillsynsorgan med ansvar för att förordningen efterlevs. Enligt kommissionens uppfattning bör den själv bara ingripa i fall där det finns systematiska brister i genomförandet av förordningen. I Sveriges fall har kommissionen inte underrättats om några sådana allvarliga brister, och denna bedömning stöds av slutsatserna från den undersökning av förordningens tillämpning som utfördes 2012 av Steer Davies Gleeve på kommissionens uppdrag ([1]).

I fråga om artikel 24 a fastställs det i förordningen att det ska räcka med ett enda meddelande till transportföretaget eller biljettutfärdaren även om en biljett avser flera resor, och att man måste ge relevant information om behoven av assistans. Initiativ som *Ledsagarportalen* i Sverige är välkomna, men förordningen kräver inte uttryckligen att en viss typ av informationsredskap ska användas. Om det uppstår problem ska passagerare därför i första hand vända sig till järnvägsföretaget och, om de inte får något tillfredsställande svar därifrån, till det ansvariga tillsynsorganet i medlemsstaten i fråga ([2]).

Ledamoten föreslås också ta del av svaret på fråga E-000008/2013 ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/studies/doc/2012-07-evaluation-regulation-1371-2007.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/rail/doc/2007_1371_national_enforcement_bodies.pdf
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-000008+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012821/13
to the Commission
Anna Hedh (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Sweden's compliance with Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 with regard to disabled rail passengers

Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations states that disabled persons should have the same opportunities for rail travel as other citizens.

Under Articles 22 and 23, disabled persons are to have assistance, free of charge, for boarding, disembarking and changing trains. In accordance with Article 24(a), one notification of the need for assistance is to be sufficient, irrespective of how many train changes and different operators the journey involves.

Complaints have been received concerning the accompanying of disabled people on Sweden's liberalised rail transport. The launch of the escort portal 'Ledsagarportalen' was an important step towards simplifying the booking of accompanying staff, but many transport operators have yet to sign up to the service, which means that the provision stating that only a single request should be needed when booking is not being complied with in large parts of Sweden.

1. What is the Commission's view of the extent to which Sweden is complying with Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 in terms of providing disabled persons with the same opportunities for rail travel, in particular with regard to Article 24(a)?

2. What is the Commission doing to ensure that Sweden is applying the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

Regulation No 1371/2007 imposes certain requirements on the rail transport industry to allow disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility to travel under equal conditions with other passengers.

In accordance with its Article 30, Member States must designate national authorities (NEBs) responsible for the enforcement of the regulation. The Commission takes the view that it should intervene only in cases where for example there was evidence of a systematic failure to enforce the regulation. With regard to Sweden, the Commission has not been made aware of significant difficulties, and indeed this has been confirmed in the study contracted by the Commission and carried out by Steer Davies Gleeve in 2012 on the application of the regulation ([1]).

As regards the provisions set out in its Article 24(a), the regulation stipulates that for multiple journeys, one notification to the carrier or ticket vendor shall be sufficient and the transmission of relevant information on assistance requirements must be ensured. In this sense, escort portals such as *Ledsagarportalen* in Sweden are useful initiatives, although the regulation does not prescribe adherence to a specific tool. In case of difficulties, passengers should therefore complain in the first instance to the railway undertaking and if they are not satisfied with its answer, to the competent NEB ([2]).

The Honourable Member might also want to consider the answer given to Question E-000008/2013 ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/studies/doc/2012-07-evaluation-regulation-1371-2007.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/rail/doc/2007_1371_national_enforcement_bodies.pdf
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-000008+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012823/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Die Währungskrise und ihre Auswirkungen in Südeuropa

Laut Medienberichten zeigen neue ökonomische Studien Folgendes: Währungsabwertung in krisenbelasteten Ländern stellt keinen adäquaten Rettungsversuch dar. Eine Währungsabwertung führt bekanntlich dazu, dass heimische Produkte für ausländische Käufer attraktiver werden, was jedoch nur ein Vorteil ist, wenn die hergestellten Produkte im internationalen Vergleich auch wettbewerbsfähig sind. Dies führt möglicherweise dazu, dass eine Währungsabwertung in einem Land wie Griechenland eine gänzlich falsche Reform darstellt. Demnach gäbe es also keinen Grund dafür, dass Länder wie Griechenland und Spanien zur eigenen Währung zurückkehren sollten.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission diesen neue Ergebnisse?

2. Wie könnten diese Erkenntnisse für mögliche Reformen genutzt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(7. Januar 2014)

Dass ein Mitgliedstaat den Euro-Raum verlässt, ist politisch nicht erwünscht. Auf sämtlichen Ebenen zielen die politischen Bemühungen auf eine Stärkung und nicht auf eine Schwächung der Funktionsfähigkeit der WWU ab. Ausgehend von einem klaren Bekenntnis zur Integrität des Euro-Raums arbeitet die Kommission entsprechend eng mit anderen Interessenvertretern zusammen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012823/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Currency crisis and its impact in southern Europe

According to media reports, new economic studies indicate the following:

Currency devaluation in crisis-hit countries is inadequate as a means of rescue. Currency devaluation is known to result in domestic products becoming more attractive to foreign buyers, but this is only beneficial if the manufactured products are also competitive in international terms. This potentially means that currency devaluation in a country like Greece is an entirely wrong reform. There would therefore be no reason for countries like Greece and Spain to return to their own currency.

1. What is the Commission's view of these new results?

2. How could these findings be used for possible reforms?

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

Exit of a Member State is not a policy option for the euro area. Policy efforts at all levels are focused on enhancing the functioning of EMU, rather than weakening it. The Commission works closely with other stakeholders to this effect, based on a full commitment to the integrity of the euro area.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012824/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Gesundheitsfolgen der im Zusammenhang mit Genmais eingesetzten Pestizide

Obwohl sich der Anbau von gentechnisch veränderten Pflanzen bisher nicht flächendeckend durchsetzen konnte, hat die Kommission am 6. November 2013 beschlossen, die Entscheidung über eine Anbauzulassung der superresistenten 1507-Maislinie des Chemiekonzerns Pioneer Hi-Bred an den Agrarministerrat weiterzuleiten.

Es ist jedoch bekannt, dass in Ländern wie Argentinien der Einsatz der Pestizide, die in Verbindung mit genmanipulierten Pflanzen benötigt werden, gravierende Folgen für die Bevölkerung hat. Lokale Ärzte sprechen bereits von dramatisch veränderten Krankheitsbildern mit steigenden Krebsraten und vermehrt angeborenen Fehlbildungen. Zudem muss die Stärke der Pestizide in Anpassung an resistent werdendes Unkraut und Ungeziefer stetig erhöht werden.

1. Wie gedenkt die Kommission, den Anbau von genmanipuliertem Mais nun im Detail zu kontrollieren?

2. Welche Vorgehensweisen und Regelungen bezüglich der notwendigen Pestizide und deren Anwendung wird die Kommission wählen, um die Bevölkerung vor gesundheitsschädlichen Auswirkungen zu schützen?

3. Inwieweit werden mögliche langfristige Auswirkungen und Schädigungen der Umwelt durch besagte Pestizide schon im Vorfeld untersucht?

4. Wie können nach Ansicht der Kommission schädliche Einflüsse auf die Umwelt und die Nahrungskette (Bienensterben) verhindert werden?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(10. Januar 2014)

1. Der am 8. November 2013 übermittelte Kommissionsvorschlag für einen Ratsbeschluss zum 1507-Mais enthält strenge Auflagen für die Umweltüberwachung des Anbaus dieser Maissorte. Bevor die Zustimmung erteilt werden kann, müssen die von Pioneer bisher vorgelegten Überwachungspläne noch an die Bestimmungen des Beschlusses angepasst werden. Der Kommission sind jährlich Berichte über die Überwachungsergebnisse vorzulegen, die von der EFSA ([1]) analysiert werden.

2. Gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 ([2]) werden Pflanzenschutzmittel nur genehmigt, wenn sie keine sofortigen oder verzögerten schädlichen Auswirkungen auf die Gesundheit von Menschen, einschließlich besonders gefährdeter Personengruppen, haben. Die Höchstgehalte an Pestizidrückständen in Lebensmitteln sind darüber hinaus durch die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 396/2005 ([3]) geregelt.

3. Gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 werden im Zuge der Bewertung von Pflanzenschutzmitteln u. a. folgende Aspekte untersucht: Verbleib und Ausbreitung in der Umwelt, Auswirkungen auf Arten, die nicht bekämpft werden sollen, sowie auf die biologische Vielfalt und das Ökosystem. Genehmigt werden nur Pflanzenschutzmittel, die keine unannehmbaren Auswirkungen auf die Umwelt haben.

4. Gemäß Artikel 55 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 müssen Pflanzenschutzmittel sachgemäß angewendet werden. Dies umfasst u. a. die Einhaltung der Bestimmungen der Richtlinie 2009/128/EG ([4]) über die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden und insbesondere die Befolgung der allgemeinen Grundsätze des integrierten Pflanzenschutzes durch alle beruflichen Verwender spätestens ab dem 1. Januar 2014. Was die Bienen anbelangt, darf ein Pflanzenschutzmittel gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1107/2009 nur genehmigt werden, wenn es zu einer vernachlässigbaren Exposition von Honigbienen führt oder wenn es keine unannehmbaren akuten oder chronischen Auswirkungen auf das Überleben und die Entwicklung des Bienenvolks hat. Seit dem 1. Januar 2014 gelten bezüglich der Bienen noch strengere Datenanforderungen für Pflanzenschutzmittel ([5]).

([1]) Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit.
([2]) ABl. L 309 vom 24.11.2009.
([3]) ABl. L 70 vom 16.3.2005.
([4]) ABl. L 309 vom 24.11.2009.
([5]) Verordnungen (EU) Nr. 283/2013 und (EU) Nr. 284/2013 der Kommission, ABl. L 93 vom 3.4.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012824/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Impact on health of pesticides used in conjunction with genetically modified maize

Although the cultivation of genetically modified plants has not as yet been generally accepted across the board, the Commission decided, on 6 November 2013, to refer the decision concerning an approval for the cultivation of the super-resistant 1507 maize variety of the chemical company Pioneer Hi-Bred to the Council of Agriculture Ministers.

It is well-known, however, that in countries like Argentina, use of the pesticides that are needed in conjunction with genetically modified plants has serious consequences for the population. Local doctors are already talking of dramatic changes in clinical pictures, with rising cancer rates and an increasing number of birth defects. The strength of the pesticides also needs to be continually increased as the weeds and pests develop resistance.

1. How does the Commission now intend to carry out the detailed monitoring of the cultivation of genetically modified maize?

2. What procedures and rules relating to the necessary pesticides and their use will the Commission choose in order to protect the public from adverse effects on their health?

3. To what extent will any potential long-term effects and harm to the environment caused by the said pesticides be investigated in advance?

4. In the Commission's opinion, how can harmful effects on the environment and the food chain (bee mortality) be avoided?

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

1. The proposal for a Council Decision on 1507 maize transmitted by the Commission to the Council on 8 November 2013 sets strict conditions for the post market environmental monitoring of the cultivation of that maize. Monitoring plans submitted by Pioneer in its application will have to be adapted to the conditions of the decision before any consent is given. A report of the monitoring will have to be annually submitted to the Commission and analysed by EFSA ([1]) .

2. According to Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([2]) a pesticide can only be approved if it has no immediate or delayed harmful effect on human health, in particular that of vulnerable groups. Furthermore, Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 ([3]) sets maximum levels for residues of pesticides in food.

3. The assessment of pesticides according to Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 includes their fate and behaviour in the environment as well as their impact on non-target species, biodiversity and the ecosystem. Only if a pesticide has no unacceptable effects on the environment, can it be approved.

4. In accordance with Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, plant protection products shall be used properly, including, i.a., the application of the provisions of Directive 2009/128/EC ([4]) on sustainable use of pesticides, and in particular the principles of Integrated Pest Management, which will have to be implemented by all professional users by 1 January 2014. Regarding bees, only if the use of a pesticide will result in a negligible exposure of honeybees or has no unacceptable acute or chronic effects on colony survival and development, can it be approved under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. The data requirements for pesticides have been further strengthened with respect to bees and apply from 1 January 2014 ([5]).

([1]) European Food Safety Authority.
([2]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.
([3]) OJ L 70, 16.3.2005.
([4]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009.
([5]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 283/2013, OJ L 93, 3.4.2013, and Commission Regulation (EU) No 284/2013, OJ L 93, 3.4.2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012825/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: Tauerngasleitung

Aus Bürgerkreisen erreichen uns beständig Anfragen hinsichtlich des vorrangigen Infrastrukturprojekts „PCI Tauerngasleitung (TGL)" aus der Liste von Kommissionsmitglied Oettinger. Daher wird die Kommission um eine ausführliche Stellungnahme hinsichtlich folgender Fragen gebeten

1. Welche konkreten Gründe rechtfertigen das „umfassende gemeinsame europäische Interesse" an der Tauerngasleitung?

Laut Medienberichten ist das Interesse am Gasmarkt selbst zunehmend rückläufig, für die Tauerngasleitung lassen sich nur noch schwer Investoren gewinnen, bei Kraftwerken in Österreich wird gar offen über Schließung diskutiert. Offenbar scheint das Projekt nicht im Interesse vieler Beteiligter bzw. Betroffener zu sein oder ihrem Interesse gar zuwiderzulaufen.

2. Muss das Projekt der Tauerngasleitung aufgrund fehlender Investoren künftig von der Europäischen Union gefördert werden?

2.1. Wenn ja, in welcher Höhe?

2.2. Aus welchen Mitteln gedenkt die Kommission diese Förderung gegebenenfalls zu finanzieren?

3. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission, dass diese Förderungen trotz Kritik europäischer Bürgerinnen und Bürger angedacht werden?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(6. Januar 2014)

Die Träger des Projekts Tauerngasleitung (TGL) haben beantragt, das Projekt als Vorhaben von gemeinsamem Interesse (PCI) im Rahmen der TEN-E-Leitlinien (Verordnung (EU) Nr. 347/2013) in Erwägung zu ziehen. Die für das östliche Mitteleuropa und Südosteuropa zuständige Regionalgruppe Gas hat daraufhin geprüft, welchen Beitrag das Vorhaben im Hinblick auf Marktintegration, Wettbewerb, Sicherheit der Gasversorgung und Nachhaltigkeit leisten kann. Aufgrund der positiven Ergebnisse dieser Bewertung wurde es vom Entscheidungsgremium, dem Vertreter der Mitgliedstaaten und der Kommission angehören, in die Liste der Vorhaben von gemeinsamem Interesse aufgenommen, und die Kommission hat am 14.10.2013 einen entsprechenden delegierten Rechtsakt erlassen.

Vorhaben von gemeinsamem Interesse kommen für eine finanzielle Förderung im Rahmen der Fazilität „Connecting Europe" (CEF) in Betracht, die in Form von Zuschüssen für Studien, Finanzinstrumenten und teilweise auch als Zuschuss für Bauleistungen erfolgen kann. Anhand einer Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse müssen Vorhaben von gemeinsamem Interesse positive externe sozioökonomische Effekte nachweisen, wie z. B. eine höhere Versorgungssicherheit oder den Einsatz innovativer technischer Lösungen. Zudem müssen sie zeigen, dass der Markt und die von dem Projekt profitierenden Verbraucher (die in die Tarife der profitierenden Länder integriert sind) nicht in der Lage sind, die Kosten dieser positiven externen Effekte zu tragen. Fördermittel im Rahmen der Fazilität „Connecting Europe" werden nur dann bereitgestellt, wenn diese Kriterien erfüllt sind.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012825/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Tauern gas pipeline

We are constantly receiving questions from the public concerning the priority infrastructure project 'PCI Tauerngasleitung (TGL)' on Commissioner Oettinger's list. Can the Commission therefore provide a detailed response to the following questions:

1. What specific grounds justify the 'broad common European interest' in the Tauern gas pipeline?

According to media reports, the interest of the gas market itself is increasingly waning, it is difficult to find investors for the Tauern gas pipeline, and the closure of power plants in Austria is even being openly discussed. Clearly, the project does not appear to be in the interests of many of those involved or affected, or even to run counter to their interests.

2. Will the Tauern gas pipeline project need financial support from the European Union in future on account of a lack of investors?

2.1. If so, how much?

2.2. Which financial resources does the Commission intend to use to provide this support, where necessary?

3. How will it justify the fact that this support is being considered despite criticism from European citizens?

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

The Tauerngasleitung (TGL) project has been submitted by its promoters for consideration as a potential Project of Common Interest (PCI) under the TEN-E Guidelines (Regulation No 347/2013). It has been evaluated by the Gas Regional Group of Central-Eastern and South Eastern Europe on the basis of its contribution to market integration, competition, security of gas supply and sustainability. Based on this positive assessment, it has been included in the list of Projects of Common Interest (PCI) by the decision-making body (consisting of Member States and the Commission) and adopted by the Commission on 14.10.2013 via a delegated act procedure.

Projects of Common Interest are eligible for financial support under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) in the form of grants for studies, financial instruments and, for some projects, in the form of grants for works. Using cost-benefit analysis, Projects of Common Interests (PCI) have to demonstrate positive socioeconomic externalities such as increased security of supply or the use of innovative technological solutions. They also need to show that the market and the beneficiaries (integrated into the tariffs of benefitting countries) are not able to pay for these positive externalities. Funding under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) will become available only if these criteria are met.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012831/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12. November 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Mittel für Nepal zur Unterstützung mutmaßlicher Straftäter

Die bevorstehenden Wahlen werden zum Teil 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.

In der Liste der Kandidaten findet man die Namen von Personen, die laut dem „Accountability Watch Committee" verdächtigt werden, schwere Menschenrechtsverletzungen begangen zu haben.

1. Sind der Kommission diese Vorgänge bekannt? Falls ja, wie rechtfertigt dies die Tatsache, dass EU-Gelder für eine Sache bewilligt wurden, die eindeutig mit Menschenrechtsverletzungen im Zusammenhang steht?

2. Wie hoch ist der genaue Betrag, den die EU dem „Nepal Peace Trust Fund" zur Verfügung gestellt hat?

3. Welcher Anteil dieser Gelder wird zur Finanzierung der bevorstehenden Wahlen verwendet?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(14. Januar 2014)

1. Der EU sind diese Vorgänge sehr wohl bekannt. Allerdings wird daran erinnert, dass Verdächtigungen oder Beschuldigungen noch keine Verurteilung bedeuten und dass einer der wichtigsten Menschenrechtsgrundsätze die Unschuldsvermutung ist, die gilt, solange keine Schuld nachgewiesen wurde.

Die EU-Wahlbeobachtungsmission 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 Bewerbern ordnungsgemäß angewandt hat. Ein Bewerber wurde aus Menschenrechtsgründen ausgeschlossen (Verurteilung wegen Mord); Hunderte wurden aus anderen Gründen nicht zugelassen. Für künftige Wahlen wird die Wahlbeobachtungsmission unter anderem empfehlen, dass nicht nur politische Parteien, sondern auch die Wähler Einspruch gegen die Registrierung von Kandidaten erheben können.

2. Im Jahr 2013 hat die EU 9 500 000 EUR an den „Nepal Peace Trust Fund" (NPTF) gezahlt.

3. Die variable Tranche, die direkt für die Wahlen bestimmt ist, beläuft sich auf 3 500 000 EUR.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012831/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: EU funds in Nepal to support alleged perpetrators

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

In the list of candidates one finds names of people who, according to the Accountability Watch Committee, are suspected of having committed serious human rights violations.

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts? If so, how does it justify the fact that grants of EU money have been made to a cause associated with obvious violations of human rights?

2. What is the exact sum of EU money given to the Nepal Peace Trust Fund?

3. What exact portion thereof is being used to finance the upcoming elections?

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

1. The EU is fully aware of this issue and would like to recall that suspicions or accusations do not amount to a conviction and one of the most fundamental principles of human rights is that one is innocent until proven guilty.

The EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) 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 Nepal (ECN). EOM confirmed that the ECN have properly applied the law regarding disqualifications of candidates. One candidate was disqualified on human rights grounds (conviction of murder); hundreds were disqualified for other reasons. Among the recommendations for future elections, EOM will suggest that ordinary voters, and not only political parties, can object to candidates' registration.

2. In 2013, the EU paid EUR 9 500 000 to the Nepalese Peace Trust Fund (NPTF).

3. The variable tranche directly linked to the elections amounts to EUR 3 500 000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012835/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Access to EU market for Canadian meat products under the Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement

As part of the recently concluded Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement negotiations with Canada, it has been reported that access to the EU market will be increased for Canadian meat and meat products, and that the parties are working on an 'equivalence determination' with respect to such products.

1. Which aspects or provisions of which EU regulations and directives are being considered as part of this equivalence determination?

2. Is the EU committed to continuing to require that Canadian meat and meat products meet the EU's strict requirements on residues of veterinary medicines, pesticides, and contaminants, or will it consider relaxing some of these requirements with respect to Canadian meat and meat products?

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

1. Since the establishment of an Agreement on sanitary matters between the European Community and Canada in 1998, both Parties are aiming at facilitating trade in live animal and animal products while safeguarding animal and public health. To that effect, equivalence exercises are conducted allowing the importing Party to recognise a sanitary measure of the exporting Party as equivalent if it can be objectively demonstrated that the importing Party's appropriate level of protection is met.

For meat and meat products good progress has been made over the past decade and equivalence on some sectors has been agreed. Requirements currently assessed are in the meat hygiene area.

2. The Commission does not intend to change the EU's high food safety standards and strict requirements on residues of veterinary medicines, pesticides and contaminants concerning meat and meat products imported from Canada or from any other third country.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-012837/13
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(12. marraskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Teurastus ilman tainnuttamista ja neuvoston asetuksen (EY) N:o 1099/2009 täytäntöönpano

Neuvoston asetuksen (EY) N:o 1099/2009 26 artiklassa sanotaan selvästi, että jäsenvaltioilla on oikeus varmistaa eläimille EU:n sääntöjä laajempi suojelu. Asetuksessa velvoitetaan jäsenvaltiot ilmoittamaan komissiolle tällaisista säännöistä ja velvoitetaan komissio tiedottamaan muille jäsenvaltioille asiasta:

”Jäsenvaltioiden on ennen 1 päivää tammikuuta 2013 ilmoitettava komissiolle kyseisistä kansallisista säännöistä. Komissio toimittaa ne muiden jäsenvaltioiden saataville.”

On kuitenkin selvästi ollut ongelmia saada tietoa siitä, missä maissa harjoitetaan teurastamista ilman tainnuttamista ja missä ei. Tätä osaa asetuksesta ei ole pantu kunnolla täytäntöön, sillä jäsenvaltiot eivät ole toimittaneet tietoja omista oikeudellisista säännöksistään.

Miten komissio on toiminut asetuksen tämän osan täytäntöön panemiseksi?

Aikooko komissio varmistaa, että jäsenvaltiot ilmoittavat teurastusta ilman tainnutusta koskevan poikkeuksen täytäntöönpanosta?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(8. tammikuuta 2014)

Tällä hetkellä 16 jäsenvaltiota on toimittanut tietoja tiukemmista kansallisista säännöistä eläinten suojelusta lopetuksen yhteydessä annetun asetuksen (EY) N:o 1099/2009 ([1]) 26 artiklan mukaisesti. Nämä säännöt eivät välttämättä liity ilman tainnutusta suoritettuun teurastukseen, koska tässä yhteydessä voidaan sallia muitakin kansallisia sääntöjä.

Komissio tarkastelee, mikä olisi paras tapa tiedottaa kaikille jäsenvaltioille näistä kansallisista säännöistä.

([1]) EUVL L 303, 18.11.2009, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012837/13
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Slaughter without stunning and enforcement of Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009

In Article 26 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 it is clearly stated that Member States are entitled to grant animals more extensive protection than that which is enshrined in EU rules. Furthermore, it obliges Member States to inform the Commission about such rules and obliges the Commission to inform other Member States about them:

'Before 1 January 2013, Member States shall inform the Commission about such national rules. The Commission shall bring them to the attention of the other Member States.'

It has become evident that there have been problems regarding the availability of information about which countries practise slaughter without stunning and which do not. This part of the regulation is not being properly implemented, as Member States have not provided data about their legislative provisions.

How has the Commission acted to enforce this part of the regulation?

Will the Commission make sure that Member States report on the enforcement of the derogation on slaughter without stunning?

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

There are at present, sixteen Member States which provided information regarding stricter national rules as foreseen by Article 26 of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing ([1]). These rules are not necessarily related to slaughter without stunning since other national rules may be permitted in this context.

The Commission is considering what would be the best way to inform all Member States of these national rules.

([1]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012838/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Consulenti in conflitto di interessi all'EFSA di Parma

Fonti di stampa rivelano che 6 esperti su 10 dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA) sono in conflitto di interessi, in quanto il 59 % dei membri dei gruppi di lavoro dell'EFSA avrebbe contatti con aziende e società del settore, così come 8 presidenti e 17 membri su 20 del gruppo che studia i prodotti dietetici e le allergie.

Recentemente, tre pareri dell'Autorità su argomenti delicati per la salute (pesticidi, aspartame e bisfenolo) sono stati contestati dall'agenzia pubblica francese sulla sicurezza alimentare.

Quanto al consiglio di amministrazione dell'EFSA, esso ha tra i suoi compiti il monitoraggio proprio delle attività e dei pareri dell'Autorità.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questa situazione e è intervenuta o ha intenzione di intervenire?

Come valuta i rapporti così stretti fra gli esperti europei con le industrie che, in teoria, dovrebbero essere controllate dai medesimi?

Ritiene che gli studi elaborati su pesticidi, aspartame e bisfenolo dagli esperti in conflitto di interessi debbano essere rivisti, come anche il funzionamento della stessa EFSA, a tutela del consumatore?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

Si rinvia l'Onorevole deputato alla risposta della Commissione all'interrogazione scritta P-008250/2013 ([1]) per quanto concerne gli obblighi dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare in tema di indipendenza e di conflitto di interessi e di responsabilità del consiglio di amministrazione di detta Autorità. La Commissione non concorda con gli articoli pubblicati sulla stampa citati nell'interrogazione e ribadisce la propria precedente dichiarazione in cui affermava di essere soddisfatta del modo in cui l'EFSA applicava le proprie regole in tema di indipendenza. Gli esperti sono selezionati in base alla loro competenza e sarebbe eccessivo escludere tutti i contatti con l'industria, indipendentemente dalla loro natura. La dichiarazione di un interesse non implica automaticamente un conflitto di interesse.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012838/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: EFSA experts' conflict of interest

Press reports reveal that 6 out of 10 experts at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have a conflict of interest: 59% of EFSA working-group members allegedly have ties with the sector's firms and companies, and likewise 8 chairs and 17 out of 20 members of the Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA).

Recently, three EFSA opinions on health-sensitive topics (pesticides, aspartame and bisphenol) have been disputed by the French public agency on food safety.

Concerning the EFSA Management Board, one of its tasks is to monitor the activities and opinions of the Authority.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? Has it taken action or does it plan to do so?

How does it view such close ties of European experts with the industries which they supposedly oversee?

Should the studies on pesticides, aspartame and bisphenol, undertaken by experts with a conflict of interest, be reviewed as well as the functioning of the EFSA, to protect consumers?

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

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the Commission's reply to Written Question P-008250/2013 ([1]) with regard to the obligations of the European Food Safety Authority with respect to independence and conflicts of interest and the responsibilities of the Authority's Management Board. The Commission disagrees with the press reports referred to in the question and reiterates its previous statement that it is satisfied with the way EFSA implements its rules on independence. Experts are selected on the basis of their expertise and it would be excessive to exclude all contacts with industry, irrespective of their nature. Declaring an interest does not automatically imply a conflict of interest.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012839/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Indebitamento della Croazia

Nel luglio 2012 il Ministro delle finanze del governo croato, Slavko Linic, affermava che «la situazione economica in Croazia è estremamente difficile e l'anno prossimo potrebbe essere peggio, al punto da non escludere anche un aiuto del Fondo monetario internazionale».

Recentemente lo stesso Ministro ha confermato tale ipotesi, sostenendo che a causa dei tassi di interesse che variano tra il 5 e il 7 % il livello di indebitamento croato si sta facendo enorme e molto rischioso e che la percentuale dei disoccupati salirà al 16 % e il deficit dovrebbe arrivare al 7,2 %, mentre l'anno prossimo dovrebbe scendere al 6,5 %.

Tutto questo fa presagire, come lo stesso Ministro sosteneva e ha ribadito, un intervento dell'FMI, intervento che è avvenuto poco dopo e che conferma che la Croazia è entrata nel quinto anno consecutivo di recessione, in un contesto di costante calo della spesa della popolazione e degli investimenti. Il paese ha anche sforato il limite del deficit del 3 per cento, che ora ammonta al 5,5 per cento, per cui è inevitabile una procedura per deficit eccessivo. L'Fmi stima che anche il debito pubblico nei prossimi mesi supererà la soglia del 60 per cento.

La Commissione sosteneva che l'ingresso nell'UE avrebbe dato alla Croazia «un'ancora di stabilità economica (…)», che «il Paese soddisfi integralmente i criteri economici e sia pronto per aderire all'UE (settembre 2012) e che le sfide attuali (gennaio 2013) della Croazia potranno essere affrontate meglio nel quadro dell'adesione all'UE».

È evidente che l'adesione all'UE non ha migliorato la situazione economico-finanziaria della Croazia ma rischia di far peggiorare anche quella dell'UE in generale, che non è sicuramente stabile e sicura.

La Commissione come ha intenzione di intervenire?

Ritiene che le affermazioni del Premier Milanovic si sarebbero dovute prendere in più seria considerazione più di un anno fa e che, oggi, siano un ulteriore e fortissimo campanello d'allarme per la già traballante economia europea?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(18 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione ritiene che le sfide cui deve far fronte la Croazia possano essere superate meglio nel quadro dell'UE. Conformemente al trattato, la Commissione monitora l'evolversi della situazione in Croazia e riferisce in merito al Consiglio.

Benché sia prematuro, visto il breve tempo intercorso, dare una valutazione approfondita dell'impatto dell'adesione all'UE sull'economia croata, l'effetto a breve termine è positivo: ne sono dimostrazioni tangibili la progressiva stabilizzazione dell'attività economica, dovuta in gran parte alla maggiore fiducia dei consumatori e delle imprese emersa in coincidenza con l'adesione all'UE, e il recente collocamento sul mercato statunitense di un'emissione di obbligazioni decennali che ha risvegliato un forte interesse tra degli investitori. A più lungo termine il paese trarrà beneficio dal pieno accesso al mercato unico e dalla possibilità di attingere ai fondi strutturali e di coesione dell'UE. La misura in cui la Croazia sarà in grado di sfruttare i vantaggi economici derivanti dall'adesione all'UE dipende principalmente dalla sua capacità di assorbire con efficienza i fondi dell'UE e di convogliarli su progetti che sostengano la competitività e favoriscano la creazione di posti di lavoro. A questo dovrebbe accompagnarsi l'attuazione di riforme strutturali che migliorino il contesto in cui operano le imprese e irrobustiscano le finanze pubbliche. Questo secondo obiettivo sarà conseguito anche grazie all'avvio di una procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi nei confronti della Croazia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012839/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Croatia's debt

In July 2012, the Croatian Finance Minister, Slavko Linić, stated that the economic situation in Croatia was extremely difficult and that it could worsen during the coming year, to the point where assistance from the International Monetary Fund may prove necessary.

Recently, the same Minister confirmed this possibility, asserting that, due to high interest rates of 5 to 7%, the level of debt in Croatia is reaching massive proportions and is very risky. The unemployment rate will grow to 16%, while the deficit is set to reach 7.2% and fall next year to 6.5%.

As suggested and reiterated by the Minister himself, this all indicated that there would be IMF intervention, something which occurred shortly afterwards, confirming that Croatia has entered its fifth consecutive year of recession, in a context of a steady reduction in public spending and investments. The country has also exceeded the 3% deficit limit, currently standing at 5.5%, thereby making an excessive deficit procedure inevitable. The IMF estimates that the public debt will also exceed the 60% threshold in the coming months.

In September 2012, the Commission stated that EU accession would give Croatia an anchor of economic stability and that the country fully satisfied the economic criteria and was ready to join the EU. In January 2013, it said that Croatia's challenges could be better faced in the framework of EU accession.

It is obvious that EU accession has not improved the economic and financial situation of Croatia, but is in fact threatening the situation of the EU in general, which is far from being stable and secure.

What action will the Commission take?

Does it believe that the statements of the Prime Minister, Mr Milanović, should have been taken more seriously over a year ago and that today they represent another loud alarm bell for an already shaky European economy?

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

The Commission believes that Croatia's challenges could be better faced in the EU framework. In accordance with the treaty, the Commission monitors the situation in Croatia and reports to the Council.

Despite the fact that Croatia's recent accession to the EU limits a thorough assessment of its economic impact on the country, the short-term effect was favourable. This is reflected in a gradually stabilising economic activity, largely the result of growing consumer and business confidence coinciding with the EU entry, as well as a recent placement of a 10-year bond on the US market amid strong investor interest. In the longer term, the country will benefit from its full access to the single market and the possibility to use EU structural and cohesion funds. The extent to which Croatia will reap the economic advantages of its EU membership depend mainly on the ability of the country to ensure efficient absorption of the EU funds and direct them into projects that would support competitiveness and boost job creation. This should be accompanied by the implementation of structural reforms that improve the business climate and strengthen public finances. The latter will be also ensured through a launch of an Excessive Deficit Procedure for Croatia.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012840/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(12 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Autorizzazione del mais transgenico TC1507

Da fonti di stampa si apprende che la Commissione ha riaperto il dossier per l'approvazione della coltivazione in Europa del mais transgenico OGM (TC1507) che produce una tossina pesticida Bt e è in grado di resistere a forti dosi di un erbicida, il glufosinato.

Così facendo, si avalla l'autorizzazione di una coltivazione che ha già avuto impatti negativi su molti insetti, tra cui farfalle e falene, di cui non si conoscono ancora gli effetti sull'impollinazione delle api e che incoraggerà l'uso di un particolare tipo di diserbante tanto tossico al punto da essere in fase di rimozione dal mercato europeo.

Visti i rischi per l'ambiente e la salute, l'assenza di benefici da parte delle colture OGM e la diffusa opposizione pubblica a queste colture, garantisce la Commissione che sta agendo in modo autonomo, al di sopra di qualsiasi interesse e senza pressioni da parte di multinazionali o lobbie?

Poiché inoltre, nonostante la tolleranza della pianta OGM all'erbicida, l'EFSA non ha effettuato test sulla sicurezza legati a un incremento dell'uso di glufosinato, è essa in grado di confermare questa ipotesi?

In generale, ritiene che la salute dei consumatori e la tutela dell'ambiente siano pienamente garantiti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 gennaio 2014)

1 e 3. La Commissione è del tutto indipendente ed è impegnata ad assicurare la corretta applicazione della legislazione unionale in tema di OGM ([1]), la quale stabilisce che gli OGM possono essere commercializzati a fini di coltivazione nell'UE soltanto se hanno superato un rigoroso esame ad opera degli Stati membri e dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare da cui risulti che essi non presentano rischi per la salute umana e animale e per l'ambiente.

2. La proposta di decisione del Consiglio relativa all'autorizzazione del mais 1507 ([2]) non si basa su una valutazioneparziale del rischio, bensì su diverse. Il primo parere dell'EFSA ([3]) nel 2005 teneva conto, tra l'altro, dei potenziali effetti nocivi per l'ambiente derivanti dall'uso dell'erbicida glufosinato durante la coltivazione del mais 1507. Nel 2007 il richiedente ha informato la Commissione che il mais 1507 non sarebbe stato commercializzato nell'UE per la tolleranza al glufosinato, bensì soltanto per la resistenza agli insetti, modificando così la portata della domanda. I successivi pareri dell'EFSA hanno esaminato correttamente questo cambiamento di portata e non hanno aggiornato la valutazione del rischio sui possibili impatti dell'uso del glufosinato. La proposta enuncia chiaramente il cambiamento della portata della notifica originale. Essa nota che le condizioni di approvazione del glufosinato sono state recentemente sottoposte a restrizioni ([4]) e pertanto le applicazioni estese sui campi di granoturco non possono più essere autorizzate.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1829/2003 e direttiva 2001/18/CE.
([2]) Denominazione completa: Proposta di decisione del Consiglio relativa all'immissione in commercio per la coltivazione del granoturco 1507 adottata dalla Commissione il 6 novembre 2013. Nel seguito «la proposta».
([3]) Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare.
([4]) Con il regolamento di esecuzione (UE) n. 365/2013 della Commissione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012840/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Authorisation of TC1507 transgenic maize

Press reports suggest that the Commission is reconsidering approval of the cultivation of transgenic maize (TC1507), which produces a pesticide, Bt-toxin, and is resistant to high doses of glufosinate, a herbicide.

The approval would allow a method of farming which harms many insects, including butterflies and moths, and whose effects on bee pollination are still unknown. Moreover, it will encourage the use of a particular type of weed-killer which is so toxic it is currently being removed from the European market.

Considering the environmental and health risks, the lack of benefits from GM crops and the widespread public opposition to these crops, can the Commission guarantee that it is acting independently of any interests and is not being pressured by multinationals or lobbies?

Can the Commission confirm that, despite the GM plant's tolerance to glufosinate, the EFSA has not carried out any safety tests on an increased use of this herbicide?

In general, does it believe that consumer health and environmental protection are fully safeguarded?

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

1 and 3. The Commission is fully independent and committed to ensure the proper implementation of the EU legislation on GMOs ([1]), which provides that GMOs can be marketed for cultivation in the EU only if having been through a thorough assessment by the Member States and the European Food Safety Authority demonstrating that they are not at risk for human and animal health and for the environment.

2. The proposal for a Council Decision for authorisation of the 1507 maize ([2]) is not only based on one partial risk assessment, but on several. The first EFSA ([3]) opinion in 2005 considered *inter alia* potential adverse effects on the environment of the use of the glufosinate herbicide during cultivation of 1507 maize. The applicant informed the Commission in 2007 that the 1507 maize would not be marketed in the EU for glufosinate tolerance, but only for insect resistance, thus modifying the application's scope. The later EFSA opinions considered correctly this change of scope and did not update the risk assessment on possible impacts of the use of glufosinate. The proposal sets out clearly the change in scope of the original notification. It notes that conditions of approval of glufosinate have been recently restricted ([4]) and therefore broadcast applications on maize fields cannot be authorised anymore.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and Directive 2001/18/EC.
([2]) Complete definition: The proposal for a Council Decision for authorisation of the 1507 maize adopted by the Commission on 6 November 2013. Thereafter 'the proposal'.
([3]) European Food Safety Authority.
([4]) By Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 365/2013.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012846/13
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(12 november 2013)

Angående: Fortsatta miljöproblem i Östersjön

Östersjöländernas miljöministrar möttes 3 oktober i Helsingforskommissionen (Helcom) för att diskutera utvecklingen mot en bättre miljöstatus i Östersjön. Utvecklingen i Östersjön är alltjämt djupt oroande med fortsatta problem som övergödning och algblomning samt höga halter miljögifter i fisk och sälar.

En bidragande orsak till den fortsatta övergödningen är de höga halter av fosfor och kväve läcker ut i Östersjöns vatten, inte minst från de kringliggande ländernas jordbruksnäringar. Ännu är det högst tvivelaktigt att man kommer att nå det i EU:s havsmiljödirektiv uppsatta målet om god miljöstatus 2020. Vid Helcom-mötet beslutades bland annat om nationella utsläppsmål för minskning av kväve och fosfor.

1. Anser kommissionen att de åtaganden som följde från Helcom-mötet är tillräckligt ambitiösa för att uppfylla målet om god miljöstatus i Östersjön 2020?

2. Vilka ytterligare åtgärder planerar kommissionen vidta för att säkerställa att god miljöstatus verkligen nås i Östersjön till 2020?

Svar från Janez Potočnik på kommissionens vägnar
(7 januari 2014)

1. Kommissionen välkomnar ministermötet rörande Helcom och Köpenhamnsdeklarationen som viktiga steg när det gäller att erkänna frågorna om föroreningar av näringsämnen som ska tas upp i handlingsplanen för Östersjön.

2. Vad gäller den marina politiken håller kommissionen för närvarande på att färdigställa sin bedömning i enlighet med artikel 12 i ramdirektivet om en marin strategi ([1]) (MSFD), som kommer att tillhandahålla en analys av god miljöstatus i Östersjöregionen samt ge vägledning för framtida bruk.

3. Ett stärkt genomförande av EU:s miljölagstiftning, inklusive nitratdirektivet, direktivet om rening av avloppsvatten från tätbebyggelse och luftpolitiken kommer att bidra till att uppnå god miljöstatus. Förbättrad återvinning av fosfor vid rening av avloppsvatten kommer också att bidra till att höja ambitionen och den förbättrade samordning som krävs för att uppfylla målet om en god miljöstatus 2020. Konkreta projekt som genomförs i Ryska federationen i enlighet med miljöpartnerskapet för den nordliga dimensionen ger också ett betydande bidrag till att minska tillförseln av näringsämnen till Östersjön.

4. EU:s politik för landsbygdsutveckling stöder miljöåtgärder inom jordbruket, vilka kommer att bidra till att minska de förluster som uppstår genom gödning och tillförsel av näringsämnen och ytterligare förbättra vattenkvaliteten. Kommissionen underlättar samarbetet runt Östersjön inom ramen för EU:s strategi för Östersjöregionen, inklusive prioritetsområde Agri och prioritetområde Nutri vid tillämpning av hållbara jordbruksmetoder och genom att minska övergödningen.

([1]) Direktiv 2008/56/EG (EUT L 164, 25.6.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012846/13
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Continuing environmental problems in the Baltic Sea

The environment ministers of the Baltic Sea states met on 3 October in the Helsinki Commission (Helcom) to discuss the progress towards a better environmental status in the Baltic Sea. Developments in the Baltic Sea remain deeply worrying, with continuing problems such as eutrophication, algal blooms and high levels of environmental contaminants in fish and seals.

One factor contributing to continued eutrophication is the high levels of phosphorus and nitrogen being discharged into the waters of the Baltic Sea, originating in particular from the agricultural industries of the adjacent countries. It remains highly unlikely that the objective of achieving 'good environmental status' by 2020 laid down in the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive will be met. One of the decisions taken at the Helcom meeting related to national nutrient reduction targets for nitrogen and phosphorus.

1. Does the Commission consider the commitments made at the Helcom meeting to be sufficiently ambitious to meet the objective of 'good environmental status' in the Baltic Sea by 2020?

2. What additional measures is the Commission planning to take to ensure that 'good environmental status' is indeed achieved in the Baltic Sea by 2020?

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

1. The Commission welcomes the Helcom Ministerial Meeting and Copenhagen Declaration as important steps in recognising the issues on nutrient pollution to be addressed via the Baltic Sea Action Plan.

2. As regards marine policy, the Commission is currently finalising its assessment under Article 12 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([1]) (MSFD), which will provide an analysis of the Member States' efforts in achieving GES in the Baltic Region and will produce guidance for future reference.

3. Strengthened implementation of the EU environmental *acquis*, including the Nitrates Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and Air Policy will contribute towards achieving good environmental status (GES). Improved recycling of phosphorous in waste water treatment will also contribute to the raising of ambition and the improved coordination required to meet the 2020 GES objective. Concrete projects implemented in the Russian Federation under the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership are also making a significant contribution to reducing nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea.

4. The EU Rural Development Policy supports agri-environmental measures , which will help to reduce fertilisation and nutrient losses, further improving water quality. The Commission is facilitating cooperation around the Baltic Sea in the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, including under Priority Area AGRI and Priority Area NUTRI in application of sustainable agricultural practices and reducing eutrophication.

([1]) Directive 2008/56/EC, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012848/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU position regarding the election of new member states to the UN Human Rights Council

On 12 November 2013 the UN General Assembly elected 14 new member states to the 47-member UN Human Rights Council.

Can the VP/HR clarify what the EU's position was on electing the new member states to the UN Human Rights Council, in particular in relation to the candidacies of Algeria, the People's Republic of China, Cuba, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam?

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

The EU has from the outset been a strong supporter of the UN Human Rights Council, and believes that the composition of the Council and the quality of its membership have an impact on its functioning.

Upon adoption of resolution UNGA 60/251 establishing the Human Rights Council, the EU stated that 'It is the responsibility of all States to elect those candidates that are best qualified to fulfil the mandate of promoting and protecting human rights. …' and that 'EU member states have committed themselves not to cast their vote for a candidate that is under sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council for human rights related reasons.'

The principle of working toward the best possible quality of the Human Rights Council membership is reflected in UNGA resolution 60/251, providing that 'when electing members of the Council, Member States shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto' (paragraph 8) and that 'members elected to the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, …' (paragraph 9).

It appeared during the Human Rights Council Review that there was no global consensus to strengthen the criteria for HRC membership. When casting a vote for a candidate to the Human Rights Council, EUMS are therefore guided by the criteria of the founding resolution as well as the commitment articulated by the EU at the time of the adoption of that resolution. While the EU as such does not cast a vote and EUMS do not coordinate their voting intentions, the EU engages with all members of the Human Rights Council, and whenever possible — for example in the context of dialogues — draws the attention to the pledges and commitments made in the context of HRC elections.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012855/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(12 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Financiamento da cooperação externa da UE — contrato-quadro múltiplo de 12 lotes

Em resposta às minhas perguntas escritas E-007736/13, E-007740/13, E-007741/13, E-007745/13, E-007742/13, E-007746/13, E-007743/13, E-007744/13, E-007738/13, E-007747/13, E-007739/13 e E-007737/13, a Comissão remeteu-me a lista dos contratos específicos concluídos para os 12 lotes do Contrato-Quadro BENEF 2009 desde o seu arranque em 16 de setembro de 2009 até 10 de julho de 2013.

No seguimento da sua receção, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Pode indicar a lista completa dos contratos específicos celebrados, incluindo as respetivas especificações técnicas e detalhes relevantes que permitam compreender o teor de cada contrato, tais como o país e local onde foram adjudicados?

2. Pode indicar por que razão essa informação detalhada relativa a estes contratos não se encontra disponível, visto serem os mesmos financiados por fundos europeus?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(8 de janeiro de 2014)

1. As informações sobre os beneficiários de fundos geridos centralmente pela Comissão são publicadas no sistema de transparência financeira (STF) no sítio Web Europa ([1]) e incluem:

— quem recebe os fundos (beneficiário);

— o objeto, ou seja, a finalidade da despesa;

— a localização do beneficiário (país, tratando-se de pessoas singulares a informação sobre a localização é limitada à região da classificação NUTS 2, e código postal);

— o montante e tipo de despesa (operacional ou administrativa);

— o serviço responsável pela atribuição do financiamento (Direção-Geral [DG] ou agência);

— a parte do orçamento da UE de onde provém (rubrica orçamental);

— o momento (ano) em que o montante foi contabilizado.

São igualmente fornecidas as seguintes informações, quando disponíveis:

— o tipo de ação, em geral o programa da UE em questão;

— o coordenador — o beneficiário responsável pela distribuição dos fundos nos projetos com vários beneficiários.

O público pode obter o contrato subjacente mediante um pedido de acesso aos documentos, que é tratado numa base casuística sob reserva dos princípios, condições e limites definidos no Regulamento n.° 1049/2001. Nomeadamente, as exceções são geridas em conformidade com o artigo 4.° do referido regulamento.

2. Como acima referido, esta informação está disponível no STF. O requisito básico para a Comissão publicar estas informações sobre os beneficiários de fundos da UE é estabelecido no artigo 35.° do Regulamento Financeiro aplicável ao orçamento geral da União e no artigo 21.° das normas de execução.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012855/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: EU external cooperation funding — 12-lot multiple framework contract

In response to my written questions E-007736/13, E-007740/13, E-007741/13, E-007745/13, E-007742/13, E-007746/13, E-007743/13, E-007744/13, E-007738/13, E-007747/13, E-007739/13 and E-007737/13, the Commission sent me a list of specific concluded contracts for the 12 lots of .BENEF 2009 framework contracts from its start on 16 September 2009 up to 10 July 2013.

Having received these, I ask the Commission:

1. Can it provide the full list of specific completed contracts, including the respective technical specifications and relevant details to allow the content of each contract to be understood, and the country and place where they were awarded?

2. Can it explain why the detailed information relating to these contracts is not readily available, given that they receive EU funds?

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

1. Information on recipients of funds centrally managed by the Commission is published on the Financial Transparency System (FTS) on Europa website ([1]) and includes:

— who receives the funds (beneficiary)

— subject, i.e. the purpose of the expenditure

— where the beneficiary is located (country, if they are natural persons the information on location is limited to region according to the NUTS2 classification, post code)

— amount and type of expenditure (operational vs. administrative)

— which responsible department (directorate-general (DG) or agency) awarded the funding

— which part of the EU budget (budget line) it comes from

— when (year) the amount was booked in the accounts

the following will also be given, if available:

— type of action, usually the relevant EU programme

— coordinator — the beneficiary responsible for redistributing funds in a multi-beneficiary project.

The public may obtain the underlying contract through a request for access to documents that will be handled on a case-by-case basis, subject to the principles, conditions and limits defined in Regulation 1049/2001. In particular, exceptions are handled in accordance with Article 4 of this regulation.

2. As mentioned above, this information is already available on the FTS. The basic requirement for the Commission to publish this information on beneficiaries of EU funds is established in Article 35 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the Union and Article 21 of the Rules of Application.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012856/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(12 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Venda comercial de produtos fora da validade

Tomei conhecimento de que existem locais e sítios web na União Europeia nos quais se vendem produtos alimentares que tenham ultrapassado o prazo definido nas suas embalagens como «consumir de preferência até». Estes sítios tendem a vender todo o tipo de produtos, com exceção dos que contenham e tenham ultrapassado a referência «consumir até».

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento da sua existência?

2. Não considera que a sua multiplicação poderia permitir o aproveitamento de produtos que, de outro modo, serão destruídos?

3. Face à atual legislação comunitária em vigor, os retalhistas são obrigados a deitar fora os produtos assinalados com «consumir de preferência até» assim que ultrapassem esse limite ou podem ainda vendê-los desde que seja assegurada a respetiva segurança alimentar?

4. Quem determina a validade dos produtos alimentares?

5. Existem regras uniformes acerca da atribuição validade aos produtos alimentares que contemplem a sua longevidade expectável e não estabeleçam limites demasiado amplos que, na prática, impliquem a destruição de muitas toneladas de comida ainda em perfeito estado?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(9 de janeiro de 2014)

1.-3. A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-009999/2013 ([1]).

4.-5. Não existe uma regra uniforme para a determinação da data da validade mínima dos alimentos. Incumbe ao operador da empresa do setor alimentar determinar a data que figura na advertência «consumir de preferência antes de», data até à qual as características organoléticas dos alimentos são preservadas, e, no caso de alimentos muito perecíveis do ponto de vista microbiológico, suscetíveis assim de, após um curto período, constituírem um perigo imediato para a saúde humana, a «data-limite» de consumo.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012856/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(12 November 2013)

Subject: Commercial sale of expired products

I have learned that there are locations and websites in the EU where food products are sold after the 'best before' date given on their packaging. These sites tend to sell products of all types, with the exception of those that give or have passed a 'use by' date.

1. Is the Commission aware of this practice?

2. Does it agree that the spread of these sites could enable products to be used that would otherwise be destroyed?

3. Under current EU legislation, are retailers obliged to throw away products marked as 'best before' once they have passed this date, or can they sell them provided food safety is assured?

4. Who determines the expiry dates of foodstuff?

5. Are there uniform rules for the allocation of expiry dates to foodstuff that consider their expected life and that do not set too strict limits that would, in practice, lead to the destruction of tonnes of food still in perfect condition?

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

1-3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-009999/2013 ([1]).

4-5. There is no uniform rule for the determination of the minimum durability date of foods. It is up to the food business operator to determine the 'best before date' until which food organoleptic properties are preserved, and, for foods which are highly perishable from a microbiological point of view and are therefore likely after a short period to constitute an immediate danger to human health, the 'use by' date.

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012863/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Γλωσσικοί περιορισμοί στο διαδίκτυο

Ο Άκραμ Ατάλα, υπεύθυνος για την ονοματοδοσία domains της παγκόσμιας διαχειριστικής αρχής για το διαδίκτυο (ICANN), ανακοίνωσε τις πρώτες τέσσερις νέες καταλήξεις για διαδικτυακά domains στα αραβικά, κινεζικά και ρωσικά ενώ αναμένονται να δημιουργηθούν 1 400 νέες καταλήξεις.

Οι νέες καταλήξεις αναμένεται να είναι διαθέσιμες για χρήση σε περίπου ένα μήνα, με απώτερο στόχο την δημιουργία ενός παγκοσμιοποιημένου διαδικτύου ανεξαρτήτως γλωσσικών και γεωγραφικών περιορισμών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εάν έχει λάβει παρόμοιες πρωτοβουλίες για την διάθεση νέων καταλήξεων σε περισσότερες ευρωπαϊκές γλώσσες και πόσο, η μη διάθεση τους έως τώρα, επηρεάζει τον ψηφιακό αναλφαβητισμό στην Ευρώπη;

2. Κατά πόσο αναμένεται να επηρεάσει η εξέλιξη αυτή την ψηφιακή βιομηχανία;

Απάντηση της κ. Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή υλοποιεί τον χώρο ανωτάτου επιπέδου «.eu» (κανονισμός 733/2002), μέσω του φορέα λειτουργίας του μητρώου EURid, ο οποίος ήδη εφαρμόζει διεθνοποιημένα ονόματα χώρου (IDN), ήτοι γραφές που διαφέρουν από τη λατινική γραφή, με στόχο τη διεύρυνση των περιθωρίων επιλογής και τη διαφοροποίηση όσον αφορά τα ονόματα χώρου. Για την Επιτροπή, τα IDN αποτελούν ουσιαστικό δομικό στοιχείο για τη δημιουργία ενός πραγματικά πολύγλωσσου Διαδικτύου και για τη βελτίωση της λειτουργικότητας και της ικανοποίησης των χρηστών. Η εισαγωγή των IDN σε επίπεδο χώρας ήταν θετική εξέλιξη ως προς την προώθηση της πολυγλωσσίας και την παροχή νέων ευκαιριών πρόσβασης σε πληροφορίες για τα πρόσωπα που δεν χρησιμοποιούν τη λατινική γραφή στη γλώσσα τους.

Τα IDN οδήγησαν σε βελτιώσεις όσον αφορά την ψηφιακή κατάρτιση και το νέο περιεχόμενο. Σας παραπέμπουμε στην έκθεση EURid-UNESCO σχετικά με τα θέματα αυτά (http://www.eurid.eu/el/i-etairia/periodikos-typos/ereynitikes-ektheseis-insights). Σήμερα προσφέρονται κωδικοί χώρας IDN σε όλες τις γλώσσες της ΕΕ. Η ΕΕ έχει επίσης υποβάλει αίτηση στον οργανισμό ICANN για την απόκτηση των εκδόσεων του.eu στην κυριλλική και την ελληνική σειρά χαρακτήρων.

Οι γραφές των 23 γλωσσών της ΕΕ υποστηρίζονται από τον «.eu» και, ως εκ τούτου, είναι ορατή η σχέση μεταξύ τοπικής γλώσσας και γεωγραφικής θέσης στην καταχώριση των IDN, η οποία προωθεί την παραγωγή περισσότερου τοπικού περιεχομένου. Είναι αξιοσημείωτο ότι, εντός δύο ετών αφότου κατέστησαν διαθέσιμα τα IDN, έχουν ήδη πραγματοποιηθεί τουλάχιστον 3,5 εκατομμύρια καταχωρίσεις. Επιπλέον, τα IDN αναμένεται να προκαλέσουν τεράστια επέκταση στο Διαδίκτυο, καθώς οι πολύγλωσσες κοινότητες θα μπορούν να βρίσκονται σε απευθείας σύνδεση.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012863/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Language restrictions on the Internet

Akram Atallah, who is responsible for domain names at the global Internet management authority, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), has announced the first four new endings for online domains in Arabic, Chinese and Russian whilst a further 1 400 new suffixes are to be created.

The new suffixes are expected to be available for use in about one month, with the aim of creating a globalised Internet, free of linguistic and geographical restrictions.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it taken similar steps regarding the availability of new suffixes in most European languages? How has the lack of availability of these affected digital literacy in Europe to date?

2. What impact does it expect this development to have on the digital industry?

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

The Commission implement the Top Level Domain '.eu' (Regulation 733/2002) through the Registry Operator EURid which already implements Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) which are scripts that are different from the Latin script to promote choice and diversity in the domain name space. For the Commission IDNs is an essential building block for creating a truly multilingual Internet and to boost functionality and user experience. The introduction of IDNs at country level was a positive development towards fostering multilingualism and providing new opportunities to access information for those who do not use the Latin script in their language.

IDNs have brought about several improvements in terms of digital literacy and new content. Please see EURid-Unesco report on the matters (http://www.eurid.eu/en/about-us/publications/insights-research-reports). Currently country code IDNs are offered in all languages of the EU. The EU has also applied to ICANN to obtain the Cyrillic and the Greek string versions of .eu.

The scripts of the 23 EU languages are supported under .eu and therefore, we see the relationship between local language and geographical location in the IDN registration patterns, boosting the production of more local content. It is notable that within two years of IDNs becoming available at least 3.5 million registrations have already been carried out. In addition, IDNs are expected to create a huge expansion on the Internet as multi-lingual communities will be able to be online.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012864/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Χρήση νέων τεχνολογιών για την βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής των ηλικιωμένων

Σύμφωνα με Βρετανούς επιστήμονες, η χρήση του διαδικτύου από τους ηλικιωμένους συμβάλλει στην βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής τους. Τους βοηθά να μη νιώθουν μοναξιά, να είναι περισσότερο ενεργητικοί, ενώ μέσω των νέων τεχνολογιών έχουν πρόσβαση σε εικόνες που ενισχύουν την μνήμη τους και καταπολεμούν την ανία. Σχετικά προγράμματα, για την χρήση των νέων τεχνολογιών και, μέσω αυτής, την βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής των ηλικιωμένων έχουν προωθηθεί από εθνικές και τοπικές αρχές σε κράτη μέλη όπως η Φινλανδία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Έχει λάβει πρωτοβουλίες για την προώθηση παρόμοιων προγραμμάτων με ευρωπαϊκή χρηματοδότηση; Ποια η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας;

Απάντηση της κ. Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Κατά τα τελευταία χρόνια υπήρξαν πολλές πρωτοβουλίες της Επιτροπής για την προώθηση και τη στήριξη της χρήσης των νέων τεχνολογιών με στόχο τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής των ηλικιωμένων. Το Ψηφιακό Θεματολόγιο για την Ευρώπη περιέχει πολλές χρηματοδοτούμενες από την ΕΕ δράσεις για να φέρει «κάθε Ευρωπαίο στην ψηφιακή εποχή», από επενδύσεις στην απαιτούμενη υποδομή έως την υποστήριξη και καθοδήγηση όσων επιθυμούν να κάνουν τα πρώτα τους βήματα στο Διαδίκτυο. Οι δράσεις του Θεματολογίου στο πλαίσιο του πυλώνα αριθ. 6 (Βελτίωση του ψηφιακού γραμματισμού, των δεξιοτήτων και της κοινωνικής ένταξης) και αριθ. 7 (Οφέλη για την ευρωπαϊκή κοινωνία χάρη στη χρήση ΤΠΕ) ασχολούνται ειδικά με την αντιμετώπιση των φραγμών στη χρήση του Διαδικτύου από τους ηλικιωμένους. Βλ. πίνακα αποτελεσμάτων του ψηφιακού θεματολογίου για λεπτομέρειες και αποτελέσματα, στη διεύθυνση:
http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

Στο πλαίσιο του πυλώνα αριθ. 6 χρηματοδοτούνται έργα όπως το RAPP ([1]), ένα συνοδευτικό ρομπότ για ηλικιωμένους, το οποίο θα μπορούσε επίσης να τους βοηθήσει να αποκτήσουν ψηφιακές δεξιότητες ή να συνδεθούν με το Διαδίκτυο. Πολλά έργα που συνδέονται με την ηλεκτρονική προσβασιμότητα (eAccessibility) και τις υποβοηθητικές τεχνολογίες είναι επίσης σημαντικά και από την άποψη αυτή (λαμβανομένων υπόψη της υψηλής συχνότητας προβλημάτων όρασης και ακοής και της μείωσης άλλων ικανοτήτων στους ηλικιωμένους). Το έργο WAI-AGE ([2]), που ολοκληρώθηκε το 2010, εστιαζόταν ειδικά στο ζήτημα αυτό. Η «Σύμπραξη καινοτομίας με θέμα την ενεργό και υγιή γήρανση» ([3]) και το κοινό πρόγραμμα με τίτλο «Αυτόνομη διαβίωση υποβοηθούμενη από το περιβάλλον» ([4]) αποτελούν πρωτοβουλίες που αποβλέπουν στη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής και της ανεξαρτησίας των ηλικιωμένων, με τη βοήθεια των ΤΠΕ και του Διαδικτύου.

Στην Ελλάδα, το 92% του πληθυσμού ηλικίας από 65 έως 74 ετών δεν έχει χρησιμοποιήσει ποτέ το Διαδίκτυο, ενώ ο μέσος όρος της ΕΕ είναι 61%. Φαίνεται να υπάρχει στενή σχέση με τη διαθεσιμότητα ευρυζωνικής σύνδεσης.

([1]) Βλ. http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/111123_en.html
([2]) Βλ. http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/80502_en.html
([3]) Βλ. https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eipaha/index/aboutus
([4]) Βλ. http://www.aal-europe.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012864/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Using new technologies to improve quality of life for the elderly

According to British scientists, Internet use by the elderly helps to improve quality of life. It helps them to avoid feeling lonely, to be more active, and new technologies help them to access images that fight memory loss and boredom. Related programmes on the use of new technologies to improve quality of life for the elderly have been promoted by national and local authorities in Member States such as Finland.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Has it taken steps to promote similar programmes with European funding? What is the situation in Greece?

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

Over the last years there have been many Commission initiatives to promote and support the use of new technologies to improve quality of life for the elderly. The Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) contains many EU funded actions to get 'every European digital', ranging from investments in the required infrastructure to supporting and guiding people to go online. DAE actions under pillar 6 (Enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion) and 7 (ICT-enabled benefits for EU society) specifically tackle barriers to Internet use by the elderly. See the Digital Agenda Scoreboard, for details and results at http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

Under pillar 6 projects are being funded like RAPP ([1]), a companion robot for elderly, which could also help them to acquire digital skills or get online. Many projects related to eAccessibility and assistive technologies are also relevant in this respect (considering the high frequency of vision and hearing impairment and other diminishing capabilities in elderly). The project WAI-AGE ([2]), finalised in 2010, targeted specifically this issue. The Innovation Partnership for Active and Healthy Ageing ([3]) and the Active Assisted Living Joint Programme ([4]) are initiatives targeting the improvement of quality of life and independence of elderly, with the aid of ICT and Internet.

In Greece 92% of the population from 65 till 74 years old has never used Internet, while the EU average is 61%. There appears to be a strong relationship with the availability of a broadband connection.

([1]) See http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/111123_en.html
([2]) See http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/80502_en.html
([3]) See https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eipaha/index/aboutus
([4]) See http://www.aal-europe.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012870/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Situazione politica in Libia: chiusura del gasdotto «Greenstream»

L'11 novembre è stato chiuso il gasdotto «Greenstream» che collega Libia e Sicilia a causa di assalti di gruppi di guerriglieri che hanno preso il controllo del porto di Mellitah a 60 km da Tripoli, mettendo a rischio la sicurezza del personale che opera nel complesso.

Può la Commissione dire:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti;

2. come valuta l'attuale situazione politica della Libia;

3. come intende intervenire per garantire la sicurezza di cittadini italiani ed europei che per motivi lavorativi e no si trovano nel paese?

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

L'UE è al corrente dei problemi connessi all'interruzione delle esportazioni di gas e di petrolio dalla Libia. L'UE segue con la massima attenzione gli sviluppi attraverso la sua delegazione a Tripoli e ha avuto consultazioni regolari in merito, in particolare con le ambasciate degli Stati membri che hanno una rappresentanza nel paese.

Ora come ora la situazione politica della Libia è fragile. Le autorità non sono le sole a usare la forza: numerosi attori non statali sono in possesso di armi e possono esercitare un controllo su alcune parti del paese. Questo significa che il governo libico non è sempre in grado di promuovere lo Stato di diritto o di rispettare i propri obblighi internazionali.

Numerosi programmi dell'UE sostengono il processo di transizione democratica, ivi compresa la riforma del settore della sicurezza. Le questioni inerenti alla sicurezza dei singoli cittadini dell'UE sono di competenza degli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012870/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Political situation in Libya: closure of the Greenstream pipeline

On 11 November, the Greenstream pipeline between Libya and Sicily was closed as a result of attacks by guerrilla groups who have seized the port of Mellitah, 60 kilometres from Tripoli, putting the safety of personnel working in the complex at risk.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the facts;

2. how it assesses the current political situation in Libya;

3. what action it will take to ensure the safety of Italian and European citizens who are in that country on business?

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

The EU is aware of the issues relating to the interruption of gas and oil exports from Libya. Through its Delegation in Tripoli, the EU is closely following these developments and has had regular consultations, notably with the embassies of Member States having a representation in Libya.

The current political situation in Libya is fragile. The authorities do not have a monopoly on the use of force and numerous non-state actors are in possession of weapons and can exercise control over some parts of the country. The Libyan Government is therefore not always able to uphold the rule of law or respect its international obligations.

The EU has numerous programmes to support the democratic transition process including support for security sector reform. Questions relating to the safety of individual EU citizens are of the competence of Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012873/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Missione AMISON e fondi europei

La Missione AMISON (African Union Mission to Somalia) è una missione di pace attiva promossa dall'Unione Africana con l'approvazione delle Nazioni Unite.

Può la Commissione:

1. indicare quanti fondi ha sinora stanziato a sostegno di tale missione;

2. precisare a quali scopi essi sono stati imputati;

3. fornire una valutazione dei risultati di tale missione soprattutto a fronte dei fondi stanziati dall'UE in suo favore?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

1. La Commissione ha impegnato un importo totale di 583,1 milioni di EUR provenienti dal Fondo per la pace in Africa (APF) per la missione dell'Unione africana in Somalia (AMISOM) tra il marzo 2007 e il dicembre 2013.

2. L'APF copre le indennità dei militari AMISOM e della componente di polizia della missione, le retribuzioni del personale civile e i costi degli uffici della missione a Nairobi. I finanziamenti sono destinati inoltre alla costruzione di una struttura per la formazione dell'AMISOM a Mogadiscio.

3. La Commissione e il SEAE ([1]) ritengono che l'AMISOM abbia avuto un ruolo fondamentale nel garantire un margine di sicurezza per creare le nuove istituzioni federali somale nel 2012 e che la conquista di Kismayo, nell'ottobre 2012, abbia modificato le dinamiche del conflitto. Fin dall'inizio del 2013, tuttavia, Al-Shabaab ha modificato la sua strategia e approfittato delle limitate forze dell'AMISOM. Di conseguenza, una missione congiunta ONU-Unione africana ([2]) conclusasi di recente e relativa all'AMISOM ha raccomandato di potenziare gli effettivi della forza dell'AMISOM, affinché quest'ultima, unitamente alle forze somale, possa contrastare al meglio la minaccia di Al-Shabaab. Tale potenziamento, approvato con la risoluzione 2124(2013) del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite ([3]), sarà sostenuto finanziariamente anche dall'UE. Dato che il dispiegamento di una missione di mantenimento della pace delle Nazioni Unite in Somalia non è previsto prima delle elezioni somale del 2016, è probabile che l'AMISOM continuerà ad avere un ruolo importante nell'accompagnare il processo politico in Somalia, nel formare le forze di sicurezza somale e nel sostenere la stabilità del contesto politico futuro.

Una valutazione dell'APF recentemente conclusa, che intendeva fornire una valutazione generale indipendente circa l'attuazione del Fondo e i suoi risultati ([4]), contiene anche uno studio specifico sull'AMISOM. I consulenti concludono, tra l'altro, che i finanziamenti dell'UE sono stati fondamentali per il lancio e la gestione della missione e che il sostegno finanziario all'AMISOM ha un buon rapporto costi/benefici.

([1]) Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna.
([2]) Unione africana.
([3]) Risoluzione del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite.
([4]) http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/newsroom/all-news/african-peace-facility-evaluation-review-overall-implementation-instrument-african

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012873/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Amisom mission and European funds

The African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom) is an active peacekeeping mission operated by the African Union with the approval of the United Nations.

Can the Commission:

1. indicate how much funding it has so far allocated in support of that mission;

2. specify for what purposes such funding has been provided;

3. provide an assessment of the mission's results, especially given the funds allocated to it by the EU?

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

1. The Commission has committed a total amount of EUR 583.1 million from the African Peace Facility (APF) to Amisom between March 2007 and December 2013.

2. APF covers allowances for Amisom troops and the police component of the mission; civilian staff salaries, and costs of the mission's offices in Nairobi. Funding is also being provided for the construction of an Amisom training facility in Mogadishu.

3. The Commission and EEAS ([1]) consider that Amisom played a critical role in providing the security space to establish the new Somali Federal Institutions in 2012 and that the take-over of Kismayo in October 2012 changed the dynamics of the conflict. Since early 2013, however, Al-Shabaab has changed its strategy and taken advantage of Amisom's limited strength. As a result, a recently concluded Joint UN-AU ([2]) Mission on Amisom recommended an increase in Amisom's force strength so that Amisom, with Somali forces, can better counter the Al-Shabaab threat. This was approved by the UN in the UNSCR ([3]) 2124(2013). This increase will also be financially supported by the EU. As the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission in Somalia is not foreseen before the Somali elections in 2016, Amisom is likely to continue to have an important role to play in accompanying the political process in Somalia, mentoring Somali security forces, and supporting the stability of the future political setting.

A recently concluded evaluation of the APF which aimed at providing an overall independent assessment of APF implementation and its results ([4]) also contains a dedicated Amisom case study. Amongst other findings, the consultants conclude that EU funding has been instrumental for the launch and running of the mission and that financial support to Amisom provides value for money.

([1]) European External Action Service.
([2]) African Union.
([3]) UN Security Council Resolution.
([4]) http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/newsroom/all-news/african-peace-facility-evaluation-review-overall-implementation-instrument-african

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012874/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Missione di addestramento dell'UE per le forze di sicurezza somale: costi sostenuti dall'Unione europea

Con la decisione 2013/44/PESC del Consiglio, del 22 gennaio 2013, si è prorogata la decisione 2010/96/PESC relativa alla missione militare dell'Unione europea volta a contribuire alla formazione delle forze di sicurezza somale.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quanti fondi sono stati stanziati dall'UE a sostegno di tale missione?

2. Può fornire un resoconto dei risultati sinora ottenuti nell'ambito di tale missione per la stabilizzazione della situazione politica somala?

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

1. La missione UE di addestramento (EUTM) in Somalia è finanziata dagli Stati membri attraverso il meccanismo ATHENA. Da quando la missione è stata avviata, il 10 aprile 2010, il finanziamento complessivo è ammontato a 28 843 709 euro.

2. Dal suo avvio, sono stati compiuti progressi significativi nello sviluppo e nell'addestramento delle forze armate nazionali somale (SNAF). Attualmente al suo terzo mandato da 10 mesi, l'EUTM ha finora addestrato e fornito formazione specializzata a 3 600 membri delle SNAF (comprese 29 reclute donne) nel campo di addestramento di Bihanga in Uganda, con un'attenzione particolare rivolta alla formazione di sottufficiali, giovani ufficiali, specialisti e formatori. A causa della situazione politica e della sicurezza in Somalia, gli interventi di formazione sono stati effettuati in Uganda in stretta collaborazione con le Forze popolari di difesa ugandesi. L'EUTM Somalia è ben conosciuta e molto apprezzata dalla comunità internazionale, ed è riuscita a stabilire una solida collaborazione con tutte le parti interessate e i principali protagonisti nella regione. In questi anni, i militari delle SNAF addestrati dall'EUTM, una volta rientrati in Somalia, hanno partecipato alla liberazione di alcune delle principali città, con la cooperazione dell'Unione africana per il mantenimento della pace, l'AMISOM. Essi hanno inoltre avuto un ruolo importante nell'assicurare il controllo di Mogadiscio, portando a completamento il processo politico e consentendo nel settembre 2012 il passaggio di poteri dalle istituzioni federali di transizione alle istituzioni recentemente elette. Il personale delle SNAF addestrato dall'EUTM rappresenta ora la struttura portante delle forze armate nazionali somale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012874/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: EU training mission for Somali security forces: costs incurred by the European Union

Council Decision 2013/44/CFSP of 22 January 2013 extended Decision 2010/96/CFSP on a European Union military mission to contribute to the training of Somali security forces.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How much funding has been allocated by the EU to support this mission?

2. Can it provide an account of the results obtained so far by this mission in terms of stabilising the Somali political situation?

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

1. The EU training mission (EUTM) Somalia is funded by EU Members States through the ATHENA mechanism. Funding has been a total of EUR 28 843 709 since the mission was launched on 10 April 2010.

2. Since its launch, significant progress has been made in the development and training of the Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF). Currently 10 months into its third mandate, EUTM has so far delivered induction and specialised training, in Bihanga Training Camp, Uganda, to 3,600 members of the SNAF (including 29 female trainees) with a focus on the training of Non-Commissioned Officers, Junior Officers, specialists and trainers. Training has been provided in Uganda due to the political and security situation in Somalia, in close collaboration with the Uganda People's Defence Forces. EUTM Somalia has become well known and highly respected by the International Community, and has established enduring cooperation with all the stakeholders and key players in the region. Over this period, upon return to Somalia, EUTM trained SNAF soldiers have been involved in the liberation of a number of key towns in partnership with the African Union Peacekeeping Force Amisom. They also played a major role in securing Mogadishu which led to the finalisation of the political process and enabled the handover of authority from the Transitional Federal Institutions to the newly elected institutions in September 2012. The SNAF personnel trained by EUTM now form the backbone of the Somali National Armed Forces.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012877/13
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Nissan

The Commission may be aware that Carlos Ghosn of Nissan, which produces cars in the UK, has spoken out strongly against the possibility of Britain leaving the EU, saying that it might threaten future Nissan investment in the UK (in 2002 he said that a UK decision not to join the euro would threaten future investment by Nissan — although that warning does not seem to have come true).

Mr Ghosn is speaking out at a time when other major auto companies are moving production out of the EU entirely, apparently confident that they can continue to supply EU markets from non-EU factories.

Is the Commission aware of any reason why Mr Ghosn has chosen to take a position which is out of line with others in the industry? Has Nissan received substantial funding or other benefits from the EU?

Does the Commission entertain the view that Mr Ghosn's stance may be influenced by Nissan's links to Renault, which I understand is largely owned by the French Government? Is the Commission comfortable with the CEO of a company strongly associated with a Member State government intervening on a political question in another Member State, or does it share my view that this is an affront to democracy?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2013)

The Commission is not aware of Mr Ghosn's motives behind his recent comments vis-à-vis the UK.

It is for economic operators (including original equipment manufacturers in the automotive sector) to decide where to locate their production facilities or to make new investments based on their business strategies, provided they follow applicable Union rules. The Commission would be in position, based on the provisions of the applicable aid policy to enterprises, to request the recovery of the EU contribution in case of unjustified cessation of economic activity (i.e. plant closure).

Trade (and FDI) liberalisation can permit economic operators not only to benefit from an increase of trade flows but equally to raise prospects related to third countries. Thus European consumers and workers can benefit from new investments by Korean, Japanese and US car manufacturers and suppliers in the EU. And vice-versa European car manufacturers can take profit from growing markets and internationalise their activities.

Nissan received an EIB financial support in 2009 and 2011 of EUR 640 million in total. Both the production plants in Sunderland and Barcelona each received long term loans to reduce carbon emissions and develop electric cars, in line with the applicable strategic orientations for the automotive industry (CARS 21 and CARS 2020 Action Plan). The UK production site also benefited from loans facilitating the construction of the first pilot plant in Europe for the production of batteries for electrical vehicles.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-012879/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αξιολόγηση της ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσα

Το 2007 η ΕΕ καθιέρωσε την 20ή Μαΐου ως επέτειο για τον εορτασμό της «ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσα», με σκοπό να αυξήσει την ευαισθητοποίηση σχετικά με τη ναυτιλιακή ιστορία και παράδοση και να προβάλει περισσότερο τη σημασία των θαλάσσιων δραστηριοτήτων και προκλήσεων.

Η καθιέρωση ιδιαίτερης επετείου, ώστε να τονιστεί η σημασία των ωκεανών και των θαλασσών, συνιστά πρωτοβουλία, η οποία έτυχε εξαρχής ευρείας υποστήριξης εντός της ΕΕ. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, από το οποίο μάλιστα ξεκίνησε η πρωτοβουλία για την καθιέρωση της ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσα, εκφράζει την ανησυχία του σχετικά με την αποτελεσματικότητα της συγκεκριμένης επετείου.

1. Ποιος είναι ο κυρίως αρμόδιος για τη διοργάνωση του εορτασμού της ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσας στα κράτη μέλη;

2. Στο πλαίσιο της προώθησης των επαφών με τους ενδιαφερόμενους φορείς του ναυτιλιακού κλάδου, καθώς και μεταξύ αυτών, με ποιον τρόπο ενθαρρύνονται οι πολίτες και οι ενδιαφερόμενοι φορείς να συμμετέχουν ενεργά και να συμβάλλουν στη διεξαγωγή γόνιμου διαλόγου σχετικά με τις προσκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζουν; Ποιος οργανισμός είναι υπεύθυνος για το συντονισμό των εν λόγω εκδηλώσεων;

3. Ο κύριος στόχος της ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσα, όπως περιγράφεται στην κοινή τριμερή δήλωση και στο μήνυμα που απευθύνεται στους λαούς της Ευρώπης, είναι ο ετήσιος εορτασμός της προόδου που συντελείται στον τομέα της θαλάσσιας πολιτικής. Ποια συμπεράσματα και αξιολογήσεις έχουν προκύψει όσον αφορά τους συνολικούς στόχους της ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσα, και με ποιον τρόπο μπορούν να αξιοποιηθούν;

4. Ποιοι είναι οι κύριοι στόχοι και τα προγράμματα σχετικά με την ευρωπαϊκή ημέρα για τη θάλασσα που θα διοργανωθεί το 2014 στη Βρέμη και το 2015 στον Πειραιά;

Απάντηση της κ. Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Σε κάθε κράτος μέλος, η πολιτική ευθύνη για την οργάνωση της ευρωπαϊκής ημέρας για τη θάλασσα (EMD) ανήκει στο υπουργείο που είναι αρμόδιο για τις θαλάσσιες υποθέσεις και στην περιφέρεια που φιλοξενεί την εκδήλωση.

Οι ενδιαφερόμενοι καλούνται να συμβάλουν στη διαμόρφωση του προγράμματος με τη διοργάνωση εργαστηρίων, παρουσιάσεων και εκδηλώσεων τόσο στη χώρα υποδοχής, όσο και στην Ευρώπη. Το Νοέμβριο, η Επιτροπή εγκαινιάζει διαδραστικές αιτήσεις για αυτά τα γεγονότα αυτά και διοργανώνει δύο ενημερωτικές συνεδρίες. Η Επιτροπή είναι υπεύθυνη για τον γενικό συντονισμό. Οι ενδιαφερόμενοι ενθαρρύνονται να δικτυωθούν μέσω κοινωνικών εκδηλώσεων οργανωμένων από τη χώρα υποδοχής κατά τη διάρκεια της συνδιάσκεψης. Πριν από την έναρξη της συνδιάσκεψης οι πολίτες καλούνται επίσης να συμμετάσχουν σε δημόσια ημερίδα οργανωμένη από τη χώρα υποδοχής.

Η EMD επέτρεψε έναν μακροπρόθεσμο διάλογο μεταξύ των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής και των ενδιαφερόμενων μερών. Τα συμπεράσματα της συνεδριών και των εργαστηρίων ζωοτροφών για τη χάραξη πολιτικής, καθώς και οι επαφές με τους ενδιαφερομένους διατηρούνται καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια του έτους. Η EMD ενισχύει τη συνεργασία μεταξύ των ενδιαφερομένων μερών. Το 2014, θα προσφερθεί πληρέστερα διαρθρωμένη δικτύωση, μέσω των υπηρεσιών του δικτύου «Enterprise Europe Network».

Η EMD 2014 θα πραγματοποιηθεί στη Βρέμη, Γερμανία και είναι αφιερωμένη στην καινοτομία και στις θαλάσσιες τεχνολογίες. Η Ευρώπη πρέπει να βρίσκεται στην πρώτη γραμμή της επανάστασης της γαλάζιας οικονομίας, για τη δημιουργία ανάπτυξης και θέσεων εργασίας για τα υποαπασχολούμενα μέλη της νεολαίας. Οι συζητήσεις θα περιστραφούν γύρω από τις τεχνολογίες, τις επιχειρηματικές πρακτικές, τις λειτουργικές απαιτήσεις και τους κανόνες που χρειάζεται η Ευρώπη ώστε να επιτύχει τους στόχους της γαλάζιας ανάπτυξης.

Η προετοιμασία της EMD 2015, η οποία θα φιλοξενηθεί από την πόλη του Πειραιά, είναι σε εξέλιξη. Οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής έχουν ήδη αρχίσει να συνεργάζεται με τις ελληνικές αρχές για την ανάπτυξη ενός κύριου θέματος για την EMD 2015 του Πειραιά.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012879/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Evaluation of the European Maritime Day

In 2007 the EU established a 'European Maritime Day' to be held on 20 May each year with the view to raising awareness of the EU's maritime history and culture, and to increase visibility of the importance of maritime activities and challenges.

Setting aside a special day each year to mark the importance of the oceans and seas constitutes an initiative that from the first received broad support within the EU. As Parliament is where the initiative for establishing the European Maritime Day started, it is concerned about the effectiveness of this annual event.

1. Who is mainly responsible for organising the European Maritime Day in different Member States?

2. In the framework of promoting contacts with and between maritime stakeholders, how are citizens and stakeholders encouraged actively to participate in and contribute to a fruitful dialogue about the challenges they face? Which body is responsible for the coordination of these events?

3. The main aim of the European Maritime Day, as described in the Joint Tripartite Declaration and the message addressed to the European people, is to celebrate annually the progress made in the sector of maritime policy. What conclusions and evaluations could be drawn with regard to the overall aims of the European Maritime Day and in which way are they utilised?

4. What are the main goals and programmes for the European Maritime Days in Bremen in 2014 and in Piraeus-Athens in 2015?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

In each Member State, the political responsibility for organising European Maritime Day (EMD) lies in the hands of the Ministry in charge of Maritime Affairs and the region hosting the event.

Maritime stakeholders are invited to contribute to the programme by organising workshops, exhibitions and events in the host country and in Europe. In November, the Commission launches online applications for these events and organises two information sessions. The Commission is responsible for the overall coordination. Stakeholders are encouraged to network via social events organised by the host country during the Conference. Citizens are also invited to participate in a Public Day organised by the host country prior to the Conference.

EMD has enabled a long term dialogue between the Commission services and stakeholders. Conclusions of sessions and workshops feed in the policy-making, and contacts with stakeholders are maintained throughout the year. EMD enhances the cooperation between stakeholders. In 2014, more structured networking will be offered via the services of the Enterprise Europe Network.

EMD2014 will be held in Bremen, Germany and devoted to innovation and maritime technologies. Europe needs to be at the forefront of the blue economy revolution, to deliver growth and jobs to its underemployed youth. The discussions will deal with technologies, business practices, operational requirements and rules that Europe needs to achieve its blue growth objectives.

The preparation of the EMD 2015 which will be hosted by the city of Piraeus is under way. The Commission services have already started working with the Greek authorities on developing a main theme for the EMD2015 in Piraeus.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-012880/13
komissiolle
Sampo Terho (EFD)
(13. marraskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Palvelusopimusasetuksen ((EY) N:o 1370/2007) tulkinta Suomessa

Suomen liikenne- ja viestintäministeriö sekä Liikennevirasto ovat lausunnossaan (21.8.2013) alueelliselle toimivaltaiselle viranomaiselle todenneet seuraavaa:

”Markkinaehtoinen liikenne tarkoittaa jo määritelmällisesti liikennettä, joka toimii markkinoiden ehdoilla ja johon ei myönnetä julkista tukea. Euroopan komissio on vahvistanut tulkinnan ja todennut, että julkista tukea voidaan ohjata vain palvelusopimusasetuksen mukaisesti kilpailutettuun liikenteeseen. Julkiseksi tueksi katsotaan myös esimerkiksi julkisesti tuettujen matkalippujen tulot.”

Saadun tiedon mukaan Suomen hallitus tulkitsee palvelusopimusasetusta (EY) N:o 1370/2007 toisin kuin muut jäsenvaltiot. Mikä on komission kanta siihen, voidaanko julkista tukea ohjata palvelusopimusasetuksen mukaisesti ilman tarjouskilpailua järjestettyyn liikenteeseen ja voidaanko sitä ohjata markkinaehtoisen liikenteen lipunhintoihin palvelusopimusasetuksen yleisen säännön perusteella tai muulla perusteella, kuten sopimuksella? Lisäksi kysyn komissiolta, voidaanko julkista tukea ohjata muuhun kuin palvelusopimusasetuksen mukaisesti kilpailutettuun liikenteeseen?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(17. joulukuuta 2013)

Asetusta (EY) N:o 1370/2007 ([1]) sovelletaan, kun julkisen liikennepalvelun tarjoaja saa joko korvauksen ja/tai yksinoikeuden vastineena julkisen palvelun velvoitteen hoitamisesta. Yleisenä periaatteena on, että asetuksen (EY) N:o 1370/2007 mukaan korvauksen ja/tai erityisoikeuden myöntäminen tapahtuu tarjouskilpailumenettelyn pohjalta. Asetuksessa säädetään myös poikkeuksista tähän sääntöön, jolloin sopimuksia voidaan tehdä ilman tarjouskilpailua. Jälkimmäisessä tapauksessa toimivaltaiset viranomaiset myöntävät korvauksen, jos kaikki kyseisen asetuksen ja erityisesti sen liitteen vaatimukset täyttyvät.

Jos julkisen liikenteen harjoittajan kaupalliselta pohjalta tarjoamien palvelujen eli palvelujen, joista ei myönnetä korvausta ja/tai yksinoikeutta, osalta on käytössä enimmäishinta, asetuksen (EY) N:o 1370/2007 säännöksiä enimmäishintojen tapauksessa sovellettavista yleisistä säännöistä (asetuksen 3 artiklan 2 kohta) sovelletaan korvausmaksuihin, joita liikenteenharjoittaja saa tällaisesta hinnasta aiheutuvista tulonmenetyksistä.

Jäsenvaltiot voivat jättää tällaiset yleiset säännöt asetuksen (EY) N:o 1370/2007 soveltamisalan ulkopuolelle. Tällaisessa tapauksessa yleisistä säännöistä aiheutuvista tulonmenetyksistä maksettava korvaus on ilmoitettava komissiolle Euroopan unionin toiminnasta tehdyn sopimuksen 108 artiklan 3 kohdan mukaisesti.

Kun viranomaiset ostavat linja-autoliikennepalveluja, joita ei pidetä asetuksen (EY) N:o 1370/2007 2 artiklan a alakohdassa tarkoitettuina henkilöliikennepalveluina, ne ovat velvollisia myöntämään kyseiset liikennepalvelut julkisia hankintoja koskevien direktiivien 2004/17/EY tai 2004/18/EY pohjalta. Muusta liikenteestä kuin julkisesta liikenteestä suoritettavat maksut eivät kuulu asetuksen (EY) N:o 1370/2007 soveltamisalaan.

([1]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus (EY) N:o 1370/2007, annettu 23 päivänä lokakuuta 2007, rautateiden ja maanteiden julkisista henkilöliikennepalveluista sekä neuvoston asetusten (ETY) N:o 1191/69 ja (ETY) N:o 1107/70 kumoamisesta, EUVL L 315, 3.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012880/13
to the Commission
Sampo Terho (EFD)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Interpretation in Finland of the regulation on public passenger transport services by rail and by road (Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007)

On 21 August 2013 the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Finnish Transport Agency issued the following statement to the relevant regional authorities:

'"Transport services subject to market conditions" means by definition transport services which operate under the conditions of the market and for which no public subsidy is granted. The European Commission has confirmed this interpretation and stated that public subsidies may be paid only to transport services which have been subject to a tendering procedure in accordance with the regulation on public passenger transport services. Public subsidies shall be deemed to include such things as income in respect of subsidised travel tickets.'

I am informed that the Finnish government interprets the regulation on public passenger transport services (EC No 1370/2007) in a different way from other Member States. What is the Commission's view: may public subsidies be paid to transport services organised without a tendering procedure in accordance with the regulation on public passenger transport services? And may ticket prices for transport services subject to market conditions be subsidised on the basis of the general rules of that regulation or on another basis, such as by contract? I would also like to ask the Commission whether public subsidies may be granted to transport services which have been put out to tender outside the framework of the regulation on public passenger transport services?

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

Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 ([1]) applies whenever the operator of a public transport service benefits either from a compensation and/or from an exclusive right in return for the discharge of public service obligations. The general principle is that, Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 subjects the award of the compensation and/or the special right to a competitive tendering procedure. The regulation provides also for exceptions to that rule, where it allows for a direct award procedure. In that latter case, a compensation payment is provided by the competent authorities if all provisions of that regulation and in particular its Annex are fulfilled.

If a public transport operator is subject to a maximum tariff in repect to services it provides on a commercial basis, i.e. services that do not benefit from compensation and/or an exclusive right, the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 on general rules in case of maximum tariffs (Article 3 (2) of that regulation) are applicable to any compensation payments that operator receives for the loss of revenue caused by such a tariff.

Member States may exempt such general rules from the scope of application of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007. In that case, compensation for the loss of revenue caused by the general rules have to be notified to the Commission in accordance with Art 108 (3) TFEU.

Where public authorities purchase bus transport services which do not constitute public passenger transport as defined in Article 2 (a) of Regulation 1370/2007, they are obliged to award those transport services on the basis of the public procurement Directives 2004/17/EC or 2004/18/EC. Such payments which are not made for public transport, but for other transport fall outside the scope of Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) Nos 1191/69 and 1107/70, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012887/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(13 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Σχέσεις ΔΝΤ και ΕΕ

Σε δηλώσεις της στο «Διάλογο των Πολιτών» στη Χαιδελβέργη της Γερμανίας, η Επίτροπος, υπεύθυνη για θέματα δικαιοσύνης, κα Ρέντινγκ, δήλωσε, μεταξύ άλλων, ότι «η ώρα της τρόικας έχει τελειώσει … Η είσοδος του ΔΝΤ τα προηγούμενα χρόνια, αποτελούσε μια επείγουσα λύση. Στο μέλλον, εμείς οι ευρωπαίοι, πρέπει να είμαστε έτοιμοι να λύνουμε τα δικά μας προβλήματα, με τα δικά μας μέσα».

Σε ερωτήσεις μου (H-0123/2010 ([1]) και E-001491/2010) προς το Συμβούλιο της ΕΕ και την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, αλλά και σε επιστολή μου προς τον τότε Πρόεδρο του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου (26.5.2010), υποστήριζα ότι η είσοδος του ΔΝΤ στα εσωτερικά πολιτικά και οικονομικά πράγματα της ΕΕ, όχι μόνο ήταν πολιτικά απαράδεκτη, αλλά παραβίαζε βάναυσα τις Συνθήκες της ΕΕ, όπως συνέβη στην περίπτωση της θεσμικής συνεργασίας μεταξύ ΕΕ και ΔΝΤ, η οποία απαιτούσε την ενεργοποίηση του άρθρου 218 της ΣΛΕΕ, περί Διεθνών Συμφωνίων, που προβλέπει αποφασιστικές εξουσίες για το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο.

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Εκφράζονται σήμερα απόψεις, στα πλαίσια της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, σύμφωνα με τις οποίες η συμμετοχή του ΔΝΤ στη λήψη αποφάσεων οργάνων της ΕΕ, είναι αρνητική για την πορεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και πρέπει πλέον να παύσει; Πώς τις σχολιάζει;

2. Θεωρεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ότι πρέπει να υπάρξει αναστροφή σε συγκεκριμένες ερμηνείες των Συνθηκών της ΕΕ, που, όπως στην περίπτωση της καταστρατήγησης του άρθρου 218 της ΣΛΕΕ, έχουν περιορίσει αισθητά το ρόλο του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και έχουν επιτρέψει στο ΔΝΤ να συνδιαχειρίζεται ευρωπαϊκές υποθέσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η χρηματοδοτική συνδρομή στα κράτη μέλη χρηματοδοτήθηκε από διαφορετικές πηγές χρηματοδότησης για κάθε πρόγραμμα. Συνεπώς, η διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων διέφερε ανάλογα με τον μηχανισμό χρηματοδότησης που χρησιμοποιήθηκε. Στην Λετονία, την Ουγγαρία και τη Ρουμανία δόθηκε στήριξη του ισοζυγίου πληρωμών (από τον προϋπολογισμό της ΕΕ), η οποία προβλέπει λήψη αποφάσεων από το Συμβούλιο βάσει πρότασης της Επιτροπής. Η Ελλάδα επωφελήθηκε από κονδύλια τα οποία διοχετεύθηκαν μέσω της Δανειακής Διευκόλυνσης για την Ελλάδα/του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Χρηματοοικονομικής Σταθερότητας και οι τελικές αποφάσεις χρηματοδότησης λήφθηκαν στην Ευρωομάδα, ενώ το πρόγραμμα για την Κύπρο χρηματοδοτείται από τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας και τελικές αποφάσεις λήφθηκαν από το Συμβούλιο των Διοικητών του Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Σταθερότητας. Αντίθετα, η Ιρλανδία και η Πορτογαλία έλαβαν οικονομική βοήθεια από τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Χρηματοοικονομικής Σταθεροποίησης, ο οποίος προϋποθέτει απόφαση του Συμβουλίου βάσει πρότασης της Επιτροπής. Το ΔΝΤ δεν διαθέτει κανέναν επίσημο ρόλο στη διαδικασία λήψεως αποφάσεων της ΕΕ ή της ζώνης του ευρώ και τόσο η ΕΕ όσο και το ΔΝΤ έχουν εξουσία χορήγησης χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας σε μία χώρα. Η συνεργασία στο πλαίσιο της τρόικας έχει διαπιστωθεί ότι αποτελεί τον αποτελεσματικότερο τρόπο για τον σκοπό αυτό. Οι ρυθμίσεις της τρόικας λειτουργούν ικανοποιητικά και πρέπει να παραμείνουν σε ισχύ για το άμεσο μέλλον.

2. Η Ένωση δεν έχει συνάψει καμία οριζόντια συμφωνία με το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο, η οποία θα μπορούσε να εμπίπτει στο πεδίο εφαρμογής του άρθρου 218. Ο ρόλος του ΔΝΤ σε ορισμένα πρόσφατα προγράμματα όσον αφορά ορισμένα από τα μέλη του που είναι και κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης είναι σύμφωνος με τα άρθρα της συμφωνίας για την ίδρυση του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου. Ο κανονισμός 472/2013, ο οποίος εκδόθηκε με τη συνήθη νομοθετική διαδικασία, εξετάζει το ζήτημα των σχέσεων μεταξύ της ΕΕ και του ΔΝΤ για τον σχεδιασμό, την εφαρμογή και την παρακολούθηση των μακροοικονομικών προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής.

([1]) Γραπτή απάντηση της 21.4.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012887/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Relations between the IMF and the EU

In her statements at a 'Citizens' Dialogue' in Heidelberg, Germany, the Commissioner for Justice, Mrs Reding, stated, among other things, that 'the time of the Troika is over … The involvement of the IMF in previous years was an emergency solution. In the future, we Europeans must be ready to solve our own problems using our own resources'.

In my questions (H-0123/2010 [1]) and E-001491/2010) to the Council and the European Commission, and in my letter to the then President of the European Parliament (26 May 2010), I argued that the IMF's involvement in the EU's internal political and economic affairs was not only politically unacceptable, but a gross infringement of the EU Treaties, as the institutional cooperation between the EU and IMF required the activation of Article 218 TFEU on international agreements, which provides decisive powers to the European Parliament.

Given the above, will the Commission answer the following:

1. Are opinions currently being expressed within the European Commission to the effect that IMF participation in decision-making bodies of the EU is negative for the development of the European Union and must now be terminated? What are its comments on this?

2. Does the European Commission believe that an amendment should be made to specific interpretations of the EU Treaties, which, as in the case of the circumvention of Article 218 TFEU, have considerably restricted the role of the European Parliament and allowed the IMF to co-manage European affairs?

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

1. Financial assistance to Member States was funded by varied financing sources across programmes. Thus, the decision-making process differed according to the financing mechanism used. Latvia, Hungary and Romania benefitted from balance of payments assistance (EU budget), which foresees decisions by the Council on the basis of a Commission's proposal. Greece benefited from funds channelled through the GLF/EFSF and final financing decisions were taken at the Eurogroup, while the programme for Cyprus is financed by the ESM and final decisions were taken by the Board of Governors of the ESM. By contrast, Ireland and Portugal also received financial assistance from the EFSM, a Union instrument, which implies a Council decision based on a Commission's proposal. The IMF has no formal role in the EU or euro area decision-making process and each institution (EU, IMF) is free to grant financial assistance to a country. The cooperation within the Troika has been found the most effective way to do it. Troika arrangements are functioning well and are to remain in place for the foreseeable future.

2. The Union has not concluded any horizontal agreement with the International Monetary Fund that could fall within the scope of Article 218. The role of the IMF in some recent programmes towards some of its members which are also Member States of the European Union is in line with the articles of Agreement establishing the International Monetary Fund. Regulation 472/2013, adopted by ordinary legislative procedure, addresses the issue of the inter-relation between the EU and the IMF for the design, implementation and monitoring of macroeconomic adjustment programmes.

[1] Written answer of 21 April 2010.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012888/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Negocierile privind acordul de liber schimb UE-India

India este un important partener comercial pentru UE. În 2012, exporturile UE către India au reprezentat 2,3% din totalul exporturilor UE, respectiv 38,5 miliarde EUR, iar exporturile de servicii 1,8% din totalul exporturilor de servicii, respectiv 12 miliarde EUR.

Cu toate acestea, India menține încă bariere tarifare și netarifare substanțiale care împiedică schimburile comerciale cu UE.

În 2007, au fost inițiate negocieri privind un acord de liber schimb între UE și India, aflate încă în curs. Acest acord de liber schimb între UE și India este unul dintre cele mai importante la nivel global, având incidență asupra 1,7 miliarde persoane.

1. Care este stadiul actual al negocierilor?

2. Intenționează Comisia să prezinte o propunere în acest sens până la sfârșitul actualului mandat, în 2014?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(3 ianuarie 2014)

1. Comisia invită distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul oferit de Comisie la întrebarea scrisă anterioară E-011270/2013 ([1]).

2. Comisia continuă să informeze Parlamentul cu privire la evoluțiile negocierilor pentru Acordul de liber schimb UE-India (ALS), *inter alia*, prin intermediul Comisiei pentru comerț internațional (INTA) și va informa Parlamentul, de asemenea, cu privire la orice evoluții importante în cadrul negocierilor. Dacă și în momentul în care se vor încheia negocierile, o propunere vizând încheierea ALS UE-India va trebui să urmeze procedurile aplicabile.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012888/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: EU-India Free Trade Agreement negotiations

India is an important trade partner for the EU. In 2012, EU exports of goods to India represented 2.3% of total EU exports, amounting to EUR 38.5 billion, and exports of services represented 1.8% of total EU exports, amounting to EUR 12 billion.

However, India still maintains significant tariff and non-tariff barriers that obstruct trade with the EU.

In June 2007, negotiations on a free trade agreement (FTA) between the EU and India were launched and are still underway. The EU-India FTA is one of the most important trade agreements globally, affecting 1.7 billion people.

1. What is the current state of play of the EU-India FTA negotiations?

2. Does the Commission intend to present a proposal before the end of the current legislature in 2014?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Written Question E-011270/2013 ([1]).

2. The Commission continues to keep Parliament informed of the developments regarding the negotiations of the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) *inter alia* through the International Trade (INTA) Committee, and will also inform about any important developments in the negotiations. If and when the negotiations are concluded, a proposal to conclude the EU-India FTA would need to follow the applicable procedures.

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012889/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Negocieri pentru un acord de cooperare economică UE-Taiwan

Pe 9 octombrie 2013 Parlamentul a adoptat o rezoluție referitoare la relațiile comerciale dintre UE și Taiwan (P7_TA(2013)0412), exprimându-și susținerea pentru intensificarea cooperării dintre UE și Taiwan.

Rezoluția îndemna Comisia să faciliteze negocierile pentru un acord de cooperare economică (ACE) UE-Taiwan, vizând protejarea investițiilor și accesul pe piață și intensificând, astfel, relațiile economice și comerciale bilaterale.

În răspunsul dat la întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001267/2013, la 22 martie 2013, Comisia a afirmat: „Relațiile cu Taiwanul trebuie privite, de asemenea, prin prisma situației sale politice unice. … Ar trebui notat că Taiwanul pare să manifeste o preferință pentru negocierea unor acorduri de liber schimb cu țări terțe cu care China a încheiat deja un acord similar”.

Cu toate acestea, în sprijinul rezoluției Parlamentului, ministrul de externe al Taiwanului a îndemnat UE într-o declarație de presă să înceapă convorbirile pe marginea ACE cât mai curând posibil și să continue consolidarea cooperării și schimburilor bilaterale.

În aceste condiții, care este intenția Comisiei în ceea ce privește inițierea unui dialog cu autoritățile taiwaneze pentru încheierea unui acord de cooperare economică UE-Taiwan?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(3 ianuarie 2014)

Comisia nu are în prezent intenția de a iniția negocieri în vederea încheierii unui acord de cooperare economică cu Taiwan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012889/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Negotiations for an EU-Taiwan Economic Cooperation Agreement

On 9 October 2013, Parliament adopted a resolution on EU-Taiwan trade relations (P7_TA(2013)0412), expressing its support for closer cooperation between the EU and Taiwan.

The resolution urged the Commission to facilitate negotiations on an EU-Taiwan Economic Cooperation Agreement (ECA), on investment protection and on market access, so as to strengthen bilateral economic and trade relations.

In its answer to Written Question E-001267/2013, given on 22 March 2013, the Commission stated: 'Relations with Taiwan also have to be seen in terms of its unique political situation. … It should be noted that Taiwan seems to show a preference for negotiating free trade agreements with third countries with which China already has concluded a similar agreement'.

However, in support of Parliament's resolution, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged the EU in a press release to begin talks on an ECA as soon as possible, and to continue to strengthen bilateral cooperation and exchanges.

Under the current conditions, what is the Commission's intention with regard to initiating a dialogue with the Taiwanese authorities for an EU-Taiwan economic cooperation agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

The Commission has currently no intention to start negotiations for an economic cooperation agreement with Taiwan.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012891/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Noi date privind munca forțată luate în considerare în Strategia europeană în vederea eradicării traficului de ființe umane

Potrivit indicelui global al sclaviei stabilit de Fundația Walk Free, 29,8 milioane de persoane din întreaga lume sunt victime ale muncii forțate, estimare care este în creștere față de cea a Organizației Mondiale a Muncii de anul trecut, de 20,9 milioane de persoane. Fundația Walk Free estimează, de asemenea, că 1,82% dintre sclavii epocii moderne se află în Europa.

Comisia a evidențiat 40 de noi măsuri de combatere a acestei probleme în cadrul Strategiei UE în vederea eradicării traficului de ființe umane (2012-2016). Noua strategie se axează pe o serie de măsuri tangibile și practice care urmează să fie puse în aplicare în următorii cinci ani.

1. Ce factori consideră Comisia că contribuie la creșterea ca amploare a muncii forțate?

2. Cum reflectă Comisia creșterea numărului de persoane victime ale muncii forțate în inițiativele sale legate de Strategia UE în vederea eradicării traficului de ființe umane (2012-2016)?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(6 ianuarie 2014)

Combaterea traficului de persoane reprezintă o prioritate pentru UE.

Traficul de persoane ia numeroase forme diferite și evoluează odată cu schimbarea circumstanțelor socioeconomice. Acesta este un fenomen transnațional complex, care are drept cauze profunde vulnerabilitatea în fața sărăciei, lipsa unor culturi democratice, inegalitatea de gen și violența împotriva femeilor, situațiile de conflict și post-conflict, neintegrarea socială, lipsa de perspective și de locuri de muncă, lipsa accesului la educație, munca copiilor și discriminarea.

Strategia UE în vederea eradicării traficului de persoane ([1]) include mai multe măsuri care vizează traficul de persoane în scopul muncii forțate. Strategia are drept obiectiv sprijinirea statelor membre în combaterea traficului de persoane.

A fost lansată o cerere de oferte privind 4 studii diferite menite să îmbunătățească informațiile privind vulnerabilitatea victimelor, perspectiva de gen, prevenirea și jurisprudența privind traficul de persoane în scopul muncii forțate.

În 2014, Comisia va înființa o coaliție europeană a întreprinderilor împotriva traficului de persoane și va colabora cu aceasta pentru a elabora modele și orientări privind reducerea cererii de servicii prestate de victimele traficului de persoane, în special în domeniile cu risc ridicat, inclusiv sectorul hotelier și al restaurantelor, agricultura, construcțiile și turismul.

În 2015, Comisia va colabora cu Fundația Europeană pentru Îmbunătățirea Condițiilor de Viață și de Muncă pentru a elabora un ghid de bune practici destinat autorităților publice privind monitorizarea și controlarea activității agențiilor care oferă locuri de muncă temporare și a agențiilor de intermediere, cum ar fi agențiile de recrutare a forței de muncă, în scopul prevenirii traficului de persoane.

([1]) Strategia UE pentru perioada 2012-2016 în vederea eradicării traficului de persoane, COM(2012) 286 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012891/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: New data on forced labour applied to the European strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings

According to the Walk Free Foundation's inaugural Global Slavery Index, 29.8 million people around the world are victims of forced labour, an estimate that is up from the International Labour Organisation's estimate of 20.9 million last year. The Walk Free Foundation also estimates that 1.82% of the world's modern-day slaves are in Europe.

The Commission has outlined 40 new measures to combat this issue in the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016). The new strategy focuses on a set of tangible and practical measures to be implemented over the next five years.

1. What factors does the Commission attribute to the rise in forced labour?

2. How is the Commission reflecting the increase in humans trapped in forced labour in its initiatives related to the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016)?

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

Addressing trafficking in human beings is a priority area for the EU.

Trafficking in human beings takes many different forms, and evolves with changing socioeconomic circumstances. It is a complex transnational phenomenon rooted in vulnerability to poverty, lack of democratic cultures, gender inequality and violence against women, conflict and post-conflict situations, lack of social integration, lack of opportunities and employment, lack of access to education, child labour and discrimination.

The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings ([1]) includes several actions that address human trafficking for forced labour. The purpose of it is to support the Member States in addressing trafficking in human beings.

A call for tender has been launched on 4 different studies to increase knowledge on vulnerability of victims, the gender perspective, prevention and case law on human trafficking for forced labour.

The Commission will launch a European Business Coalition in 2014 and work together with the Coalition to develop models and guidelines on reducing the demand for services provided by victims of trafficking in human beings, in particular in high-risk areas, including hospitality, agriculture, construction and tourism.

In 2015, the Commission will work with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions to develop a best-practice guide for public authorities on the monitoring of and enforcement regarding temporary work agencies and intermediary agencies such as job recruitment agencies to prevent trafficking in human beings.

([1]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012)286 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012892/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Implicații de fraudă în cursul alegerilor prezidențiale din Afganistan

La 23 octombrie 2013, 16 candidați la președinția Afganistanului au fost descalificați prin ceea ce observatorii externi au descris drept o metodă discutabilă lipsită de transparență. Există largi așteptări că alegerile parlamentare de la anul vor marca un pas democratic pozitiv pentru viitorul Afganistanului, însă preocupările legate de fraudă persistă, datorită fraudelor larg răspândite, descoperite în cadrul alegerilor din 2009.

Al doilea Program indicativ multianual (PIM II) a alocat 600 de milioane de euro pentru perioada 2011-2013. Sectorul prioritar II din PIM II a căutat să îmbunătățească administrarea și statul de drept în Afganistan. Totuși, aceste dovezi de posibile fraude demonstrează o fragilitate persistentă în sectorul public din Afganistan.

1. Cum va afecta această situație opiniile Comisiei referitoare la rezultatele PIM II?

2. Cum va reevalua Comisia programele de ajutoare destinate Afganistanului în lumina acestei situații? Ce modificări ale programului ar sugera Comisia pentru a avea cele mai bune șanse de a realiza obiectivele viitoare și a obține rezultatele așteptate?

Răspuns dat de dl Piebalgs în numele Comisiei
(8 ianuarie 2014)

1. Afganistan este o țară în curs de dezvoltare care suferă încă de pe urma mai multor decenii de conflicte. Până în prezent, alegerile, inclusiv numirea candidaților, s-au desfășurat în bune condiții, cu respectarea legislației și a procedurilor afgane relevante. În aceste condiții, este rezonabil să ne așteptăm ca viitoarele alegeri să fie favorabile incluziunii și transparente și să aibă un rezultat legitim.

Cadrul de la Tokyo privind responsabilitatea reciprocă (TMAF) ([1]) în temeiul căruia guvernul se angajează să organizeze alegeri pentru transformare, la care, „conform Constituției afgane, cetățenii afgani eligibili, bărbați sau femei, să aibă posibilitatea să participe liber, fără imixtiuni interne sau externe, potrivit legii". Principalele acte legislative au fost adoptate și, în general, s-au înregistrat progrese pe calea organizării de alegeri credibile, favorabile incluziunii și transparente. UE va continua să monitorizeze îndeaproape situația, pentru a se asigura că partenerii noștri afgani își respectă angajamentele.

UE sprijină ciclul electoral prin intermediul Instrumentului de stabilitate. Fondurile sunt, de asemenea, alocate în planul de acțiune anual pe 2013 din cadrul Instrumentului de cooperare pentru dezvoltare (ICD). Aceste fonduri contribuie la consolidarea capacității Comisiei electorale independente de supraveghere a alegerilor într-un mod profesionist, așa cum au demonstrat până în prezent. Persistă numeroase provocări, dar rezultatele MPI în acest context pot fi considerate un succes.

2. Dacă mediul din această țară este favorabil, obiectivul pentru anii următori va rămâne sprijinirea capacității afganilor de a consolida dezvoltarea socioeconomică favorabilă incluziunii, care acoperă toate principalele priorități economice, sociale, de securitate și politice.

([1]) http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/TMAF_SOM_Report_Final_English.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012892/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Implications of fraud in the Afghan presidential election

On 23 October 2013 sixteen candidates for the presidency of Afghanistan were disqualified by what outside monitors have called a questionable method lacking in transparency. It is widely hoped that next year's parliamentary elections will mark a positive democratic step in Afghanistan's future, but worries of fraud persist owing to the widespread cases revealed by the elections in 2009.

The second Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP II) allocated EUR 600 million over the 2011-2013 period. Focal Sector II of MIP II sought to improve governance and the rule of law within Afghanistan. However, this evidence of possible fraud shows a lingering weakness in the public sector in Afghanistan.

1. How will this situation affect the Commission's views on the outputs of MIP II?

2. How will the Commission reassess aid programmes to Afghanistan in light of this? What changes to the programme would the Commission suggest in order to best meet future goals and expected outputs?

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

1. Afghanistan is a developing country still suffering from the effects of decades of conflict. To date, the elections, including the nomination of candidates, have been conducted in an orderly way that has complied with relevant Afghan legislation and procedures. If this is maintained, it is reasonable to expect that future elections will be inclusive and transparent with a legitimate outcome.

Commitments are laid down in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) ([1]) in which the Government is committed to organising elections for transformation and to elections 'according to the Afghan Constitution, in which eligible Afghan citizens, men and women, have the opportunity to participate freely without internal or external interference in accordance with the law.' Key legislation has been passed and the progress towards credible, inclusive and transparent elections has been generally acknowledged. The EU will continue to closely monitor that our Afghan partners respect their commitments.

The EU is supporting the electoral cycle through the Instrument for Stability. Funds are also allocated in the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) Annual Action Plan 2013. The contributions are developing the capacity of the Independent Election Commission to oversee the elections in the professional manner witnessed to date. Many challenges remain, but the outputs of the MIP in this context can be considered a success.

2. If the country environment is conducive, the objective for the coming years will remain to contribute to Afghans' ability to achieve greater inclusive socioeconomic development covering key economic, social, security and political priorities in a comprehensive way.

([1]) http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/TMAF_SOM_Report_Final_English.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012911/13
an die Kommission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(13. November 2013)

Betrifft: Mindestverringerung der Geschwindigkeit durch Fahrassistenzsysteme bei LKW

In der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 661/2009/EG über die Typgenehmigung von Kraftfahrzeugen, Kraftfahrzeuganhängern und von Systemen, Bauteilen und selbstständigen technischen Einheiten für diese Fahrzeuge hinsichtlich ihrer allgemeinen Sicherheit ist unter anderem die Art der Fahrassistenzsysteme festgelegt, die in Kraftfahrzeuge eingebaut werden müssen. In der zugehörigen Durchführungsverordnung ((EU) Nr. 347/2012/EG) werden die Anforderungen für den Notbremsassistenten (AEBS) in LKW und Omnibussen definiert. Dabei muss die Verringerung der Geschwindigkeit bei einem drohenden Aufprall auf ein statisches Hindernis mindestens 10 km/h betragen (in der Genehmigungsstufe 2 dann 20 km/h).

Bereits vor Inkrafttreten der Verordnung haben Automobilverbände und Fahrzeughersteller darauf hingewiesen, dass es ohne größeren Aufwand technisch möglich sei, diese Geschwindigkeitsverringerung auf 40km/h festzusetzen. Dies würde viele schwere Unfälle verhindern helfen.

Aus welchem Grund wurde die Verringerung lediglich auf 10 km/h festgesetzt? Warum wurde nicht der technisch machbare Wert von 40 km/h festgesetzt? Plant die Kommission im Rahmen der nächsten Überprüfung der Durchführungsverordnung diesen Grenzwert anzuheben?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(23. Dezember 2013)

Die Anforderungen für die Mindestverringerung der Geschwindigkeit bei der Typgenehmigung von Kraftfahrzeugen mit Notbremsassistenzsystemen (AEBS) stützen sich auf Werte, die auf internationaler Ebene durch die Wirtschaftskommission der Vereinten Nationen für Europa (UNECE/WP.29) ([1]) vereinbart wurden.

Als diese Werte festgelegt wurden, musste ein Ausgleich zwischen mehreren Erwägungen hergestellt werden. Vor allem musste eine Lösung dafür gefunden werden, dass der Notbremsassistent nicht zu früh reagieren sollte, um unnötige Störungen des Fahrers zu vermeiden, und es sollte vermieden werden, dass der Fahrer sich zu sehr auf das System verlässt und damit nicht mehr zu jedem Zeitpunkt die Kontrolle über sein Fahrzeug hat, wie dies jedoch im Wiener Übereinkommen über den Straßenverkehr ([2]) gefordert wird.

Im Ergebnis werden nun vom Notbremsassistenten zuerst mehrere Warnsignale ausgelöst, wenn von ihm ein bevorstehender Zusammenstoß erkannt wird. Bleibt eine erkennbare Reaktion des Fahrers aus, folgt hierauf eine automatische Notbremsung. Da nur eine recht kurze Zeitspanne zur Verfügung steht, ist auch nur eine begrenzte Verringerung der Geschwindigkeit möglich. Jedoch ist die Weiterentwicklung der AEBS-Technologie in vollem Gange und mit künftigen Systemen könnten größere Verringerungen der Geschwindigkeit erzielt werden; aus diesem Grund wurde für die Genehmigungsstufe 2 der eingangs erwähnte Wert auf 20 km/h heraufgesetzt.

Die Kommission verfolgt aufmerksam den weiteren technischen Fortschritt in diesem Bereich und wird die Möglichkeit in Erwägung ziehen, eine weitere Anhebung der Leistungskriterien für Notbremsassistenten vorzuschlagen, wenn nachgewiesen werden kann, dass diese technisch machbar und sicher sind und ein positives Kosten-Nutzen-Verhältnis aufweisen.

([1]) http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/wp29/wp29regs/2013/R131e.pdf
([2]) http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/conventn/crt1968e.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012911/13
to the Commission
Ismail Ertug (S&D)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Minimum reduction in speed using advanced vehicle systems in HGVs

Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefor lays down, *inter alia*, the nature of the advanced vehicle systems that are to be installed in motor vehicles. The associated Implementing Regulation ((EU) No 347/2012) defines the requirements for the advanced emergency braking systems (AEBS) in HGVs and buses and coaches. The reduction in speed in the event of an impending impact with a stationary object must be at least 10 km/h (20 km/h for approval level 2).

Even before the entry into force of the regulation, automotive associations and vehicle manufacturers stated that it is technically possible, without a great deal of effort, to set this speed reduction at 40 km/h. This would help to prevent many serious accidents.

What was the reason for setting the reduction at just 10 km/h? Why was the technically feasible value of 40 km/h not set? Does the Commission plan to increase this limit value in the next review of the Implementing Regulation?

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

The minimum speed reduction requirements for the type-approval of motor vehicles equipped with advanced emergency braking systems (AEBS) are based on values agreed internationally by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE/WP.29) ([1]).

When defining these values, several considerations had to be balanced. In particular, one had to address the concern that an AEBS should not react too early so as to avoid unnecessary nuisance for the driver and also to avoid that the driver would rely too much on the system and would no longer keep control over his vehicle all the time, as required by the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic ([2]).

As a result, the AEBS has to issue first a cascade of warnings when it detects a pending collision situation and followed by an automatic emergency braking when there is no noticeable reaction by the driver. In view of the short time available, the speed reduction achievable in that period is limited. However, it is recognised that as AEBS technology is in full development, future systems may be able to achieve a greater speed reduction and therefore, the value has been increased to 20 km/h for approval level 2.

The Commission is closely monitoring further technological progress in this field and will consider the possibility of proposing further enhancements to the performance criteria for AEBS in the future, when it can be demonstrated that this would be technically feasible and safe, and would generate a positive cost/benefit ratio.

([1]) http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/wp29/wp29regs/2013/R131e.pdf
([2]) http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/conventn/crt1968e.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012913/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(13 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: L-esportazzjoni taċ-ċanga lejn l-Istati Uniti

Skont stqarrija għall-istampa tal-Kummissjoni tat-2 ta' Novembru 2013 (IP/13/2010), id-Dipartiment tal-Agrikoltura tal-Istati Uniti se jġib f'konformità l-leġiżlazzjoni tal-Istati Uniti mal-istandards internazzjonali għal BSE. Din il-mossa tfisser li ċ-ċanġa tal-UE u prodotti bovini oħra se jitħallew jiġu esportati lejn l-Istati Uniti għall-ewwel darba minn Jannar 1998. L-istqarrija għall-istampa ssemmi wkoll il-bqija tar-restrizzjoni fl-importazzjoni tal-prodotti tan-nagħaġ u l-mogħoż tal-UE.

Il-Kummissjoni għamlet evalwazzjoni tad-dħul annwali mill-esportazzjonijiet taċ-ċanga lejn l-Istati Uniti li jiġi ġġenerat jekk ir-restrizzjoni tal-Istati Uniti fuq l-importazzjonijiet taċ-ċanga titneħħa?

Fir-rigward tal-bqija tar-restrizzjoni fuq il-prodotti tan-nagħaġ u l-mogħoż tal-UE, il-Kummissjoni bdiet negozjati mal-Istati Uniti sabiex tħaffef it-tneħħija ta' din ir-restrizzjoni? Jekk le, meta se jibdew dawn in-negozjati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Cioloș f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Jannar 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni għadha ma għamlitx valutazzjoni dettaljata tal-kummerċ annwali li ser tiġġenera t-tneħħija mill-Istati Uniti tal-Amerika tar-restrizzjonijiet sanitarji għall-importazzjoni taċ-ċanga mill-UE li kellhom x'jaqsmu mal-mard tal-BSE. Is-sehem tas-suq l-aktar interessanti għall-esportazzjonijiet tal-UE jidher li huwa l-vitella. Fis-snin disgħin, l-UE kienet tesporta bejn 3,000 u 4,000 tunnellata kull sena ta' ċanga u vitella lejn l-Istati Uniti qabel il-kriżi tal-BSE. Madankollu, meta tiġi kkunsidrata l-evoluzzjoni tas-swieq mill-1998, kemm fl-UE kif ukoll fl-Istati Uniti, diffiċli ssir stima minn qabel tal-volumi li l-industrija tal-UE se tkun lesta tesporta lejn l-Istati Uniti ladarba jitneħħew ir-restrizzjonijiet tal-BSE.

Il-Kummissjoni tkompli tiddiskuti mal-amministrazzjoni tal-Istati Uniti rigward ir-restrizzjonijiet għall-importazzjonijiet tal-prodotti tan-ngħaġ u l-mogħoż mill-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012913/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Beef exports to the United States

According to a Commission press release of 2 November 2013 (IP/13/2010), the United States Department of Agriculture is to bring US legislation in line with international standards for BSE. This move means that EU beef and other bovine products will be allowed for export to the US for the first time since January 1998. The press release also mentions the remaining import restriction on EU sheep and goat products.

Has the Commission made any assessment of the annual revenue from beef exports to the US that would be generated if the US restriction on beef imports is lifted?

With regard to the remaining restriction on EU sheep and goat products, has the Commission started negotiations with the US to accelerate the lifting of this restriction? If not, when will such negotiations take place?

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

The Commission has not yet made a detailed assessment of the annual trade that will generate the removal by the USA of sanitary restrictions to beef imports from the EU that were related to the BSE disease. The more interesting market segment for EU exports appears to be veal. In the 90's the EU used to export 3,000 to 4,000 tons by year of beef and veal to US before the BSE crisis. However taking into account the evolution of the markets since 1998, both in the EU and in the US, it is difficult to estimate a priori the volumes that the EU industry will be ready to export to the US once the BSE restrictions are removed.

The Commission continues the discussion with the US administration as regards restrictions to imports of sheep and goats products from the EU.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-012914/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(13 ta' Novembru 2013)

Suġġett: Is-suq tal-enerġija kkummerċjalizzat

F'Ottubru 2011, l-UE adottat regoli ġodda stretti dwar il-kummerċ bl-ingrossa tal-enerġija (Regolament (UE) Nru 1227/2011). Ir-regolament dwar l-integrità u t-trasparenza tas-swieq tal-enerġija bl-ingrossa kien immirat biex jipprevjeni l-użu ta' informazzjoni privileġġata u forom oħra ta' abbuż tas-suq li jxekklu l-prezzijiet tal-enerġija bl-ingrossa. Dan fisser li l-kummerċ tal-enerġija jiġi eżaminat fil-livell tal-UE sabiex jiġu skoperti l-abbużi.

Il-Kummissjoni kemm-il każ ta' abbuż tas-suq skopriet s'issa? Xi proporzjon tal-kummerċ tal-enerġija kollu eżaminat fil-livell tal-UE jirrappreżentaw dawn il-każijiet? Taħt dan ir-regolament, x'inhuma l-aħjar miżuri li l-awtoritajiet nazzjonali tal-Istati Membri jistgħu jieħdu biex jgħinu jwaqqfu u jipprevjenu l-manipulazzjoni tas-suq?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Oettinger f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(8 ta' Jannar 2014)

Ir-Regolament 1227/2011 (REMIT) jipprevedi li fil-livell tal-UE l-Aġenzija għall-Kooperazzjoni tar-Regolaturi tal-Enerġija (ACER) tissorvelja s-swieq tal-elettriku u tal-gass bl-ingrossa biex jinkixfu l-abbużi potenzjali tas-suq filwaqt li fil-livell nazzjonali r-regolaturi tal-enerġija huma responsabbli għall-infurzar tar-regoli. L-Istati Membri kellhom l-obbligu li sa Ġunju ta' din is-sena jgħammru lir-regolaturi nazzjonali tal-enerġija tagħhom bis-setgħat investigattivi u ta' infurzar meħtieġa.

Sabiex l-ACER tiġi pprovduta b'dejta suffiċjenti ħalli tissorvelja s-swieq tal-enerġija, REMIT jeħtieġ li l-Kummissjoni tiddefinixxi d-dettalji ta' qafas tar-rappurtar tad-dejta. Ir-regoli ta' implimentazzjoni se jkunu fis-seħħ fl-2014 filwaqt li r-rappurtar tad-dejta mistenni li jibda sa tmiem l-2014 jew il-bidu tal— 2015. L-iskrinjar sistematiku tat-tranżazzjonijiet tas-suq tal-enerġija kollha rilevanti se jkun possibbli biss ladarba jibda r-rapportar tad-dejta lill-ACER.

Fir-rigward tal-każijiet investigati msejsa fuq notifikazzjonijiet ta' suspett ta' kondotta ħażina u informazzjoni minn sorsi pubbliċi, jekk jogħġbok ara r-rapport annwali tal-2012 dwar l-attivitajiet tal-ACER skont REMIT:
http://www.acer.europa.eu/Official_documents/Acts_of_the_Agency/Publication/REMIT%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf

Nistiednek ukoll tagħti titwila lir-referenza għal investigazzjoni konġunta li ġiet konkluża dan l-aħħar mill-awtoritajiet kompetenti tar-Renju Unit dwar l-allegata manipulazzjoni tas-suq tal-gass Brittaniku:
https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/press-releases/ofgem-statement-allegations-gas-market-manipulation

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012914/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: Traded energy market

In October 2011 the EU adopted stringent new rules on wholesale energy trading (Regulation (EU) No 1227/2011). The regulation on wholesale energy market integrity and transparency aimed to prevent the use of insider information and other forms of market abuse which distort wholesale energy prices. This meant that energy trading would be screened at EU level to uncover abuses.

By now, how many cases of market abuse has the Commission uncovered? What proportion of all energy trading screened at EU level do these cases represent? Under this regulation, what are the best measures national authorities in Member States could take to help stop and prevent market manipulation?

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

Regulation 1227/2011 (REMIT) provides that at EU level the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) monitors wholesale electricity and gas markets to uncover potential market abuses while at national level energy regulators are responsible for enforcing the rules. Member States have had the obligation to equip their national energy regulators with the necessary investigatory and enforcement powers by June this year.

In order to provide ACER with sufficient data to monitor energy markets, REMIT requires the Commission to define the details of the data reporting framework. The implementing rules will be in place in 2014 with data reporting expected to start by the end of 2014/beginning of 2015. A systematic screening of all relevant energy market transactions will only be possible once data reporting to ACER commences.

In relation to the cases investigated based on notifications of suspected misconduct and information from public sources, please see ACER's 2012 annual report on its activities under REMIT:
http://www.acer.europa.eu/Official_documents/Acts_of_the_Agency/Publication/REMIT%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf

Please also find here a reference to a recently concluded joint investigation of the competent UK authorities concerning the alleged manipulation of the Great British gas market:
https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/press-releases/ofgem-statement-allegations-gas-market-manipulation

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012919/13
à la Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 novembre 2013)

Objet: Mandat d'arrêt européen

Le mandat d'arrêt européen, depuis l'entrée en vigueur de la décision-cadre du Conseil du 13 juin 2002, est très apprécié — car il permet aux criminels de ne plus se soustraire aux systèmes judiciaires des États membres —, mais il fait aussi l'objet de nombreuses critiques quant à son application.

Dans les faits, certaines demandes d'extradition ne satisfont pas au principe de proportionnalité (article 2, paragraphe 1, de la décision-cadre du Conseil relative au mandat d'arrêt européen). Des citoyens européens se voient donc extradés pour des motifs dont la gravité ne requiert pas de sanction pénale.

La Commission estime-t-elle qu'il y a violation des droits fondamentaux des citoyens européens lorsque des procédures qui peuvent se régler de manière administrative, comme le règlement d'une pension alimentaire, recourent au mandat d'arrêt européen, rendant ainsi l'affaire passible d'une condamnation au pénal?

La Commission est-elle d'avis que l'article 49 de la Charte des droits fondamentaux est respecté dans le cadre de l'utilisation actuelle du mandat d'arrêt européen?

Dans son rapport au Parlement européen et au Conseil du 11 avril 2011 (COM(2011)0175), la Commission indique très justement qu'elle *«continuera à contrôler le fonctionnement de cet instrument (…) et étudiera toutes les options possibles notamment législatives (…)»*.

Quelles mesures la Commission prévoit-elle pour améliorer le mandat d'arrêt européen et surtout comment compte-t-elle accompagner les États membres dans l'application du principe de proportionnalité?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(6 janvier 2014)

C'est à la législation nationale des États membres de décider quelles infractions relèvent du droit pénal. Lorsque les critères d'émission du mandat d'arrêt européen sont réunis, dont la liste figure à l'article 2, paragraphe 1, de la décision-cadre relative au mandat européen ([1]), les États membres peuvent y recourir pour engager une procédure pénale. Comme l'indiquent les orientations fournies dans la version révisée du manuel européen concernant l'émission d'un mandat d'arrêt européen ([2]), tous les États membres ont admis la nécessité de vérifier la proportionnalité lors de l'émission d'un mandat d'arrêt européen. La Commission a toujours appelé à une large diffusion de ces orientations qui, combinées à des contacts bilatéraux constructifs entre les États membres les plus touchés, ont permis de réduire l'utilisation excessive du mandat d'arrêt européen pour des infractions mineures.

La Commission s'est engagée à faire en sorte que le respect des droits fondamentaux sous-tende toutes les procédures pénales menées dans l'Union européenne. Tandis que les éventuelles violations ponctuelles de ces droits seront constatées par les autorités judiciaires au cas par cas, le système tout entier a été renforcé par des mesures relatives aux droits procéduraux des suspects, avec des dispositions spécifiques concernant les mandats d'arrêt européens. Différentes directives ont été adoptées, sur l'interprétation et la traduction ([3]), le droit à l'information relative aux droits ([4]) et le droit d'accès à un avocat ([5]). Le 27 novembre 2013, la Commission a adopté des propositions de mesures relatives aux garanties procédurales en faveur des enfants et des personnes vulnérables, à l'aide juridictionnelle et à la présomption d'innocence ([6]). Ces garanties procédurales s'appliqueront à toutes les infractions qui relèvent du droit pénal en vertu du droit national de chaque État membre.

([1]) Décision-cadre 2002/584/JAI, JO L 190, du 18/7/2002.
([2]) Document 17195/10 COPEN 275 du Conseil.
([3]) Directive 2010/64/UE.
([4]) Directive 2012/13/UE.
([5]) Directive 2013/48/UE.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/news/131127_en.htm (en anglais).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012919/13
to the Commission
Philippe Boulland (PPE)
(13 November 2013)

Subject: European arrest warrant

Since the entry into force of the Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002, the European arrest warrant has been very welcome, as it means criminals can no longer escape Member States' legal systems; however, a number of criticisms have been levelled at its implementation.

Some extradition requests do not comply with the principle of proportionality (Article 2(1) of the Council Framework Decision on the European arrest warrant). EU citizens are thus being extradited on grounds that are not serious enough to warrant criminal sanctions.

Does the Commission think that EU citizens' fundamental rights are breached when matters that can be resolved administratively, such as maintenance settlements, lead to a European arrest warrant being issued, thus making them criminal cases?

Does the Commission think that the way in which the European arrest warrant is currently being used complies with Article 49 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

In its report to Parliament and the Council of 11 April 2011 (COM(2011) 0175), the Commission stated, quite rightly, that it 'will continue to monitor the operation of the instrument … and will consider all possible options, including legislation …'

What steps does the Commission plan to take to improve the European arrest warrant and, in particular, how does it plan to monitor Member States' application of the principle of proportionality?

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

The issue of which offences fall within the remit of criminal proceedings is a matter for the domestic law of Member States. Where the criteria for issuing a European arrest warrant (EAW) in Article 2(1) of the EAW Framework Decision ([1]) are met, Member States can use it to pursue a criminal case. As reflected in the guidelines set out in the amended EAW handbook ([2]) all Member States have accepted the need for a proportionality test to be applied when issuing an EAW. The Commission has consistently called for wide dissemination of these guidelines, which, together with constructive bi-lateral contacts between the Member States most affected, have led to an improvement in the overuse of the EAW for minor offences.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that respect for Fundamental Rights underpins all criminal proceedings in the EU. While the existence of breaches in particular cases will be decided by judicial authorities on a case by case basis, the whole system has been strengthened by measures on procedural rights of suspects, with specific provisions for EAW proceedings. Directives have been adopted on interpretation and translation ([3]), on the right to information on rights ([4]) and on the right of access to a lawyer ([5]). On 27 November 2013, the Commission adopted proposals for measures on safeguards for children and vulnerable persons, legal aid and the presumption of innocence ([6]). These safeguards will apply to all offences that, pursuant to Member State's domestic law, are dealt with in criminal proceedings.

([1]) Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA, OJ L 190 18.7.2002.
([2]) Council 17195/10 COPEN 275.
([3]) Directive 2010/64/EU.
([4]) Directive 2012/13/EU.
([5]) Directive 2013/48/EU.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/news/131127_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012925/13
alla Commissione
Francesca Barracciu (S&D)
(14 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Peste suina africana in Sardegna — Commercializzazione di prodotti stagionati

La direttiva 2002/99/CE del Consiglio del 16 dicembre 2002 stabilisce che, relativamente alla peste suina africana, un trattamento di fermentazione e di stagionatura naturali di almeno 190 giorni per i prosciutti sia sufficiente per eliminare qualsiasi rischio specifico derivante dalla malattia.

In virtù di ciò, la direttiva stabilisce che prosciutti così trattati possano essere prodotti, trasformati e distribuiti anche se provenienti da un territorio, come attualmente è quello della Sardegna, soggetto a restrizioni per motivi di polizia sanitaria.

Successivamente, la decisione 2005/363/CE del 2 maggio 2005 e le modifiche apportatevi dalla decisione 2011/852/UE del 15 dicembre 2011 hanno cambiato alcune delle prescrizioni di cui alla direttiva 2002/99/CE, esplicitando una diversificazione nella loro applicazione per il caso specifico della Regione Sardegna e della peste suina africana. In virtù di tali modifiche, in Sardegna non è attualmente possibile in nessun caso lavorare e esportare prosciutti di carne suina proveniente da allevamenti sardi, anche se sottoposti a un trattamento di fermentazione e di stagionatura naturali di almeno 190 giorni, il che causa ingenti danni economici ai singoli operatori e all'economia della Regione.

Ad oggi, tali limitazioni non risultano essere supportate da elementi di chiara evidenza scientifica e appare quindi inspiegabile che esse siano riferite alla sola peste suina africana.

Inoltre, la mancanza di informazioni sui presupposti di chiara evidenza scientifica a supporto dei divieti di cui sopra non aiuta gli operatori a comprendere le scelte politiche della Commissione e contribuisce, oltre che a rendere poco chiaro l'insieme delle problematiche, a rendere più difficile la comprensione della portata dei provvedimenti necessari per arrivare alla definitiva eradicazione della malattia dal territorio della Regione Sardegna.

Può la Commissione fornire e rendere accessibili a tutti gli operatori interessati i documenti e le motivazioni di carattere scientifico e sanitario che hanno indotto la Commissione ad adottare le decisioni che impediscono la lavorazione e l'esportazione di prosciutti stagionati di carne suina sarda?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(18 dicembre 2013)

La spedizione di prodotti a base di carne suina o contenenti carne suina provenienti dalla Sardegna è vietata. ([1]) In deroga a tale divieto, tuttavia, l'Italia può autorizzare la spedizione di tali prodotti fuori della Sardegna a condizione che siano sottoposti a un trattamento che elimini il rischio della peste suina africana e che rispettino le norme vigenti ([2]).

La direttiva 2002/99/CE contiene in effetti disposizioni comuni relative alle restrizioni applicabili alla commercializzazione di prodotti provenienti da aziende o zone colpite da malattie epizootiche quali la peste suina africana.

Tuttavia a partire dal novembre del 2011 l'Italia, previa consultazione della Commissione, ha sospeso ogni autorizzazione alla spedizione dalla Sardegna di prodotti sottoposti a 190 giorni di maturazione come il prosciutto stagionato, tenuto conto dell'aumento del rischio dovuto a una grave recrudescenza di focolai della malattia e a lacune molto gravi nell'applicazione a livello locale delle misure di controllo stabilite dalla legislazione dell'UE.

([1]) Decisione 2005/363/CE della Commissione, del 2 maggio 2005, relativa a talune misure di protezione della salute animale contro la peste suina africana in Sardegna. GU L 118 del 5.5.2005, pagg. 39-46.

([2]) Direttiva 2002/99/CE del Consiglio, del 16 dicembre 2002, che stabilisce norme di polizia sanitaria per la produzione, la trasformazione, la distribuzione e l'introduzione di prodotti di origine animale destinati al consumo umano. GU L 18 del 23.1.2003, pagg. 11-20.

L'Ufficio alimentare e veterinario della Commissione (UAV) ha effettuato una verifica nel marzo del 2013 per seguire l'evolversi della situazione. I risultati di tale verifica hanno confermato il persistere di lacune nell'attuazione delle misure di controllo ([3]), per cui le misure italiane sono apparse giustificate. L'UAV ha formulato diverse raccomandazioni e la Commissione si attende adesso che esse siano adeguatamente seguite.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm#modal-2013-6788.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012925/13
to the Commission
Francesca Barracciu (S&D)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: African swine fever in Sardinia: sale of matured ham

Council Directive 2002/99/EC of 16 December 2002 specifies, with regard to African swine fever, that a natural fermentation and maturation process for hams which lasts at least 190 days is sufficient to eliminate all health risks associated with the disease.

Under that directive, therefore, hams processed in this way were considered fit for distribution even if they were produced in an area subject to restrictions designed to combat risks to animal health, as is currently the case in Sardinia.

However, Commission Decision 2005/363/EC of 2 May 2005, as amended by Decision 2011/852/EU of 15 December 2011, has since changed the manner in which Directive 2002/99/EC applies to Sardinia. As a result, it is no longer possible to dispatch ham produced in Sardinia to areas outside the island, even if it has undergone natural fermentation and maturation for at least 190 days. This is causing significant financial harm to producers in Sardinia and to the local economy as a whole.

There is no clear scientific evidence supporting these restrictions, so it is baffling that they should be based solely on the presence of African swine fever.

What is more, the failure to put forward any scientific evidence means that people in the industry are finding it difficult to understand the Commission's approach. The lack of information on this issue is also making it difficult for people to understand exactly what needs to be done to eradicate the disease once and for all in Sardinia.

Accordingly, can the Commission provide all stakeholders with clear information on the scientific and health grounds for this decision, which prevents Sardinian matured ham from being dispatched to areas outside the island?

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

The dispatch of pig meat products and of products containing pig meat from Sardinia is prohibited ([1]). However, by way of derogation from this prohibition, Italy is allowed to authorise the dispatch of such products to areas outside Sardinia provided that these products have undergone a treatment that eliminates the African swine fever risk, and comply with legal provisions ([2]).

Indeed, Directive 2002/99/EC contains common provisions governing the restrictions applicable to the placing on the market of products coming from a holding or area infected by epizootic diseases, such as African swine fever.

However, following consultation with the Commission, since November 2011 Italy suspended any authorisation to dispatch from Sardinia products subjected to 190 days maturation such as cured ham, taking into account the increased risks due to a serious recrudescence of disease outbreaks and very serious shortcomings in the implementation of the control measures established in the EU legislation at local level.

The Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out an audit in March 2013 to follow up the situation. Results of that audit confirmed that shortcomings in the control measures still persisted ([3]), suggesting that Italian measures were justified. The FVO made a number of recommendations and the Commission now expects that an adequate follow up is given to them.

([1]) Commission Decision 2005/363/EC of 2 May 2005 concerning animal health protection measures against African swine fever in Sardinia, Italy. OJ L 118, 5.5.2005, pp. 39-46.

([2]) Council Directive 2002/99/EC of 16 December 2002 laying down the animal health rules governing the production, processing, distribution and introduction of products of animal origin for human consumption. OJ L 18, 23.1.2003, pp. 11-20.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm#modal-2013-6788

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012926/13
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(14 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Bando della Regione Calabria per il sistema di collegamento metropolitano tra Cosenza-Rende e l'Università della Calabria

La Regione Calabria tramite la S.U.A. (stazione unica appaltante) ha pubblicato una gara per la «Progettazione esecutiva, realizzazione del sistema di collegamento metropolitano tra Cosenza — Rende e l'Università della Calabria e fornitura e messa in esercizio del relativo materiale rotabile».

Dopo una sospensione dei termini sono state disposte modifiche/integrazioni al capitolato speciale di leasing e al disciplinare di gara recepite dalla SUA con decreto del 27.8.2013 (Avviso nella GUUE 2013/S 101-172650). Il nuovo termine per la presentazione delle offerte è scaduto lo scorso 29.10.2013 alle ore 12:00 (nota del Dipartimento LL.PP. del 28.8.2013, n. 273955).

Nel bando modificato si prevede all'allegato 2 che l'offerente debba indicare una divisione dei costi tra la programmazione 2007/2013 e quella successiva.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1. verificare il rispetto della decisione CE n. 1573 del 20 marzo 2013 che stabilisce di identificare in due fasi «chiaramente identificabili» gli obiettivi materiali e finanziari del progetto, fasi che invece non sembrano in alcuno modo individuate nel cronoprogramma che prevede la realizzazione dell'opera in 960 giorni;

2. verificare la congruità dei tempi previsti dal bando che indica il completamento dei lavori in soli 760 giorni, mentre il cronoprogramma ne prevede 960;

3. valutare la fattibilità tecnica e finanziaria in soli 960 giorni, ovvero 760 di un'opera di 160 milioni di euro da realizzare su terreni pubblici e privati dove non sono state neppure avviate le procedure espropriative;

4. verificare quali studi di fattibilità tecnici, economici e ambientali siano stati effettuati dall'autorità di gestione del POR-FESR Calabria 2007-2013 per destinare questa ingente somma per un intervento smisurato rispetto al bacino di utenza servito?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(16 dicembre 2013)

Il progetto cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare è un grande progetto ai sensi dei regolamenti sulla politica di coesione. È stato pertanto approvato con la decisione della Commissione C (2012) 6737, del 27 settembre 2012, dopo la valutazione degli elementi necessari, compresi gli studi di fattibilità, l'analisi costi-benefici e una valutazione dell'impatto ambientale.

Dopo l'approvazione della Commissione e in linea con il principio della gestione condivisa, la responsabilità per l'attuazione dei grandi progetti spetta alle autorità di gestione dei programmi pertinenti che devono attuarli nel rispetto della decisione di approvazione del grande progetto e delle pertinenti disposizioni UE.

Durante il periodo 2007-2013, il termine ultimo per l'ammissibilità delle spese è il 31 dicembre 2015. Per essere ammissibili, i progetti devono essere in funzione alla data di presentazione dei documenti di chiusura (31 marzo 2017). I progetti non in funzione a tale data devono essere completati dagli Stati membri mediante le loro proprie risorse entro il 31 marzo 2019; in caso contrario i fondi dell'UE saranno rimborsati all'UE. Al fine di limitare il rischio di mancato funzionamento dei grandi progetti, gli Stati membri possono decidere di scinderli in fasi conformemente alle condizioni menzionate nelle pertinenti disposizioni. L'elenco dei grandi progetti che sfruttano questa opzione dovrà essere inviato alla Commissione entro giugno 2015, mentre le singole richieste di decisione devono essere notificate dalle autorità nazionali o regionali entro il 30 settembre 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012926/13
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Calabria regional authorities invitation to tender for an overground light railway link between Cosenza-Rende and the University of Calabria

The Calabria regional authorities published an invitation to tender via the single contracting authority (SUA) for the design and construction of an overground light railway link between Cosenza-Rende and the University of Calabria and the supply and commissioning of the necessary rolling stock.

The original deadline for the submission of tenders was put back while changes were made to the leasing terms and procedural specifications. The SUA approved these changes on 27 August 2013 (Notice 101-172650, OJEU 2013/S). The new deadline was set at 12.00 on 29 October 2013 (Department of Public Works Note No 273955 of 28 August 2013).

In the revised invitation to tender, Annex 2 requires bidders to break down the costs between the 2007-2013 programming period and the following period.

1. Can the Commission say whether the above complies with Commission Decision C(2013)1573, which stipulates that projects must have two 'clearly identifiable' stages as regards their physical and financial objectives? These two stages are nowhere to be found in the project timetable, under which works are scheduled for completion in 960 days.

2. Would it look into the discrepancy between this 960-day timescale and the 760-day timescale specified in the invitation to tender?

3. Would it look into the technical and financial feasibility of carrying out an EUR 160 million project on public and private land in just 960 (or, as the case may be, 760) days, when the necessary expropriation procedures are not even under way yet?

4. Can it say what technical, financial and environmental feasibility studies the management authority running the 2007-2013 ERDF ROP for Calabria carried out before allocating such a huge sum of money to a project which affects a disproportionately small number of people?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

The project mentioned by the Honourable Member is a major project within the meaning of cohesion policy regulations. It was therefore approved by Commission Decision C(2012)6737 of 27 September 2012, after assessment of the necessary elements, including the feasibility studies, cost-benefit analysis and an environmental impact assessment.

Once approved by the Commission and in line with the shared management principle, the responsibility for the implementation of major projects lies with the managing authorities of the relevant programmes who need to implement them in compliance with the decision approving the major project and the relevant EU provisions.

During the 2007-2013 period, the final date for eligibility of expenditure is 31 December 2015. To be eligible, projects shall be functioning at the date of submission of the closure documents (31 March 2017). Projects not functioning at this date shall be completed by Member States with their own resources by 31 March 2019 or the EU funds will be reimbursed to the EU. In order to limit the risk of non-functioning major projects, Member States may decide to divide them into phases subject to the conditions mentioned in the relevant provisions. The list of major projects taking advantage of this option will have to be sent to the Commission by June 2015 while the relevant individual requests for decision should be notified by the national or regional authorities by 30 September 2015.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012933/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(14 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Τουρκία και ισλαμοποίηση

Η Τουρκία ρέπει ολοένα και περισσότερο προς συντηρητικές και ακραίες ισλαμικές πρακτικές, οι οποίες είναι απολύτως ξένες προς τις ευρωπαϊκές αρχές και τα ήθη. Ο πρωθυπουργός της Τ. Ερντογάν ανακοίνωσε ότι πλέον στις φοιτητικές εστίες δεν θα πρέπει να επιτρέπεται η συγκατοίκηση ανδρών και γυναικών επειδή έτσι επιτάσσει το Ισλάμ. Η Τουρκία συστηματικά απομακρύνεται από τις αρχές της ελευθερίας και τις αξίες που σχετίζονται με τα βασικά ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, διολισθαίνει σε πρακτικές που ταιριάζουν και προέρχονται από το ακραίο Ισλάμ και η ΕΕ την θεωρεί ακόμη υποψήφια προς ένταξη και δεν της επιβάλλει καμία κύρωση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Θα γίνει κάποια εισήγηση που θα προβλέπει συγκεκριμένες κυρώσεις και θα στοχεύει στην ευθυγράμμιση της Τουρκίας με τις δημοκρατικές αρχές και τις αξίες της σημερινής ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Ένα κρίσιμο στοιχείο της δέσμης μέτρων εκδημοκρατισμού που ανακοίνωσε νωρίτερα κατά τη διάρκεια του 2013 ο τούρκος Πρωθυπουργός αφορούσε την προστασία του τρόπου ζωής και των ιδιωτικών επιλογών κάθε πολίτη. Η Επιτροπή εξέφρασε την ικανοποίησή της για την εν λόγω εξέλιξη. Οι επιλογές που αφορούν τις φοιτητικές εστίες θα πρέπει να εναπόκεινται καταρχήν στους φοιτητές και τις οικογένειές τους. Πρόκειται για θέμα που πρέπει να επιλύσει η ίδια η τουρκική κοινωνία, με βάση μια χωρίς αποκλεισμούς διαδικασία διαβούλευσης που θα συνυπολογίζει τις απόψεις όλων των ενδιαφερόμενων φορέων.

Το πλήρες δυναμικό της σχέσης ΕΕ-Τουρκίας αξιοποιείται καλύτερα στο πλαίσιο μιας ενεργού και αξιόπιστης διαδικασίας προσχώρησης, όπου η ΕΕ εξακολουθεί να είναι το στήριγμα των οικονομικών και πολιτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων της Τουρκίας. Η Επιτροπή έχει επανειλημμένα τονίσει τη σημασία της δέσμευσης της ΕΕ καθώς και το γεγονός ότι η ΕΕ παραμένει βασικό σημείο αναφοράς για τις μεταρρυθμίσεις στην Τουρκία.

Για τον σκοπό αυτό, πρέπει να δοθεί νέα ώθηση στις διαπραγματεύσεις για την προσχώρηση, τηρουμένων των υποχρεώσεων έναντι της ΕΕ και των συμφωνηθεισών προϋποθέσεων. Από τη σκοπιά αυτή, το άνοιγμα του κεφαλαίου 22 για την περιφερειακή πολιτική αποτελεί σημαντικό βήμα. Η εν λόγω δυναμική πρέπει να διατηρηθεί.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012933/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Turkey and Islamisation

Turkey is increasingly veering towards conservative and extreme Islamic practices, which are completely foreign to European principles and customs. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has announced that student dormitories should no longer allow the cohabitation of men and women, because this was incompatible with the precepts of Islam. Turkey is systematically distancing itself from the principles of freedom and the values associated with basic human rights, edging towards practices reflecting and derived from an extreme form of Islam. Despite this, the EU still considers Turkey a candidate for accession and does not impose any sanctions on it.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Does it intend to make a proposal providing for specific sanctions aimed at bringing Turkey into line with the democratic principles and values of today's EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

A core element of the democratisation package announced earlier in 2013 by the Turkish Prime Minister was the protection of the lifestyle and private choices of every citizen. The Commission wholeheartedly welcomed this. Choices related to student dormitories should in principle be exercised by students and their families. It is an issue which Turkish society itself needs to solve, on the basis of an inclusive consultation process integrating the views of all stakeholders concerned.

The full potential of the EU-Turkey relationship is best fulfilled within the framework of an active and credible accession process, where the EU remains the anchor for Turkey's economic and political reforms. The Commission underlined on many occasions the importance of EU engagement and of the EU remaining the benchmark for reform in Turkey.

To this end, accession negotiations need to regain momentum, respecting the EU's commitments and established conditionality. In this regard, the opening of Chapter 22 on regional policy represents an important step. This momentum needs to be maintained.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012935/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(14 november 2013)

Angående: Kommissionens rekommendation om användning av OOXML

Den interinstitutionella kommittén för informationsteknik höll 2010 ett sammanträde om den rådande situationen och framtida strategier för EU-institutionernas plattformar för kontorsdatorisering. Detta utmynnade 2011 i en rapport ([1]) som klarlade att det bästa dokumentformatet för utbyten inom och mellan EU-institutionerna var OOXML, som är ett dokumentformat som utvecklats av Microsoft och som 2008 antogs som formell standard av Internationella standardiseringsorganisationen.

1. Kan kommissionen bekräfta att den arbetar med att genomföra kommitténs rekommendation?

2. Den interinstitutionella kommittén för informationsteknik höll sitt senaste sammanträde i december 2010. Har kommissionen övervägt att anordna ett nytt sammanträde för att göra en ny utvärdering av situationen i ljuset av den nyligen antagna strategin att undvika att bli beroende av en enda säljare ([2])?

3. Hur förenar kommissionen sin strategi att använda driftskompatibla format ([3]), med sin utsaga om att använda OOXML-formatet, som är känt för att endast kunna användas i Microsoft Office 2013 ([4])?

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-012989/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 november 2013)

Angående: Kommissionens strategi i fråga om öppna dokumentformat

Den interinstitutionella kommittén för informationsteknik höll 2010 ett sammanträde om den rådande situationen och framtida strategier för EU-institutionernas plattformar för kontorsdatorisering. Detta utmynnade i en rapport som offentliggjordes 2011 ([5]) och som klarlade att det bästa dokumentformatet för utbyten inom och mellan EU-institutionerna var OOXML, som är ett dokumentformat som utvecklats av Microsoft och som 2008 antogs som formell standard av Internationella standardiseringsorganisationen.

1. Hur gör kommissionen för att förena sin strävan att motverka att man blir beroende av en enda säljare, med sin uttalade preferens för en standard som endast tillämpas fullt ut i programvara som tillverkas av en dominerande programvaruleverantör ([6])?

2. Vilka strategier har kommissionen eller kommer kommissionen att införa för att se till att man uppnår verklig interoperabilitet i utbytet av redigerbara dokument med andra offentliga myndigheter som väljer någon annan standard än OOXML?

Samlat svar från Maroš Šefčovič på kommissionens vägnar
(7 januari 2014)

I den rapport från den interinstitutionella kommittén för informationsteknik (IICI) som parlamentsledamoten hänvisar till fastställs en gemensam strategi för dokumentformat som kretsar kring de två huvudlinjerna

1. interna (dvs. interinstitutionella) / externa utbyten, och

2. icke justerbara / justerbara dokument.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/informatics/oss_tech/pdf/2011-07-25_ares.pdf
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/against-lock-building-open-ict-systems-making-better-use-standards-public
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/isa/documents/isa_annex_ii_eif_en.pdf
([4]) http://www.osb-alliance.de/fileadmin/Working_Groups/OfficeInteroperability/Project1/2013-09-17_OSBA_Press_Release_OOXML_Project_Finished_EN.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/informatics/oss_tech/pdf/2011-07-25_ares.pdf
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/against-lock-building-open-ict-systems-making-better-use-standards-public

Den rekommendation som nämns i frågan är särskilt begränsad till interna utbyten av justerbara dokument. Den syftar till att kontrollera utgifterna genom att hitta den kostnadseffektivaste lösningen.

Såsom uttryckligen fastställs i rapporten är strategin tydligt öppen för utbyten med externa aktörer (inklusive medborgare och andra offentliga förvaltningar). Även om icke-justerbara format ([7]) bör föredras som allmän regel när justerbara dokument måste användas, rekommenderade IICI att EU-institutionerna stödjer

— som minimikrav, de två existerande ISO-standarderna (dvs. ODF ([8]) och OOXML ([9])), och

— på bästa möjliga sätt, andra allmänt använda format.

Kommissionen kan bekräfta att den har genomfört alla de rekommendationer som utfärdats av IICI. Således kan den redan stödja ODF, OOXML och andra allmänt använda dokumentformat i sina utbyten med medborgare och nationella förvaltningar. Det finns därför ingen som helst inlåsningseffekt och således ingen motsägelse med kommissionens strategi om driftskompatibilitet.

Vad gäller förslaget om att ompröva situationen vill vi uppmärksamma parlamentsledamoten på att Europaparlamentets representant för närvarande är ordförande för IICI. Kommissionen har uppmärksammat ordföranden om detta förslag.

([7]) Särskilt ISO/IEC 32000-1:2008 (PDF) och ISO 19005-X (PDF/A).
([8]) ISO/IEC 26300:2006.
([9]) ISO/IEC 29500:2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012935/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Commission recommendation to use OOXML

In 2010 the Inter-Institutional Committee for Informatics held a meeting about the current situation of, and future strategies for, the office automation platforms used by the EU institutions. This lead to a 2011 report ([1]) which clarified that the preferred document format for exchanges within and among the EU institutions was OOXML, a document format developed by Microsoft and adopted as a formal standard by the International Standards Organisation in 2008.

1. Can the Commission clarify that it is working to implement the recommendation of this committee?

2. The last meeting of the Inter-Institutional Committee for Informatics was in December 2010. Has the Commission considered organising a new meeting to reassess the situation in light of its recently adopted strategy to work against vendor lock-in ([2])?

3. How does the Commission reconcile its strategy to use interoperable formats ([3]) with its stated use of OOXML, which is known to be fully implemented only in Microsoft Office 2013 ([4])?

Question for written answer E-012989/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Commission approach to open document formats

In 2010 the Inter-Institutional Committee for Informatics held a meeting about the current situation of, and the future strategies for, the office automation platforms used by the institutions. This led to a report, published in 2011 ([5]), in which it was made clear that the preferred document exchange format among the European institutions was OOXML, a document format developed by Microsoft and adopted as a formal standard by the International Standards Organisation in 2008.

1. How does the Commission reconcile its endeavour to counteract vendor lock-in with its explicit preference for a standard which is only fully implemented in the software of one dominant software vendor ([6])?

2. What policies has or will the Commission put in place to ensure effective interoperability in the exchange of editable documents with other public administrations that choose to use a standard other than OOXML?

Joint answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The report of the Inter-Institutional Committee for Informatics (IICI) to which the Honourable Member refers sets out a common approach on document formats around two axes:

1. internal (i.e. interinstitutional) / external exchanges; and

2. non-revisable / revisable documents

The recommendation mentioned in the question is limited specifically to internal exchanges of revisable documents. It is aimed at controlling expenditure by identifying the most cost-effective solution.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/informatics/oss_tech/pdf/2011-07-25_ares.pdf
([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/against-lock-building-open-ict-systems-making-better-use-standards-public
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/isa/documents/isa_annex_ii_eif_en.pdf
([4]) http://www.osb-alliance.de/fileadmin/Working_Groups/OfficeInteroperability/Project1/2013-09-17_OSBA_Press_Release_OOXML_Project_Finished_EN.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/informatics/oss_tech/pdf/2011-07-25_ares.pdf
([6]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/against-lock-building-open-ict-systems-making-better-use-standards-public

However, as stated explicitly in the report, for exchanges with the external world (including citizens and other public administrations) the approach is clearly open. While non-revisable formats ([7]) should be preferred as a general rule, whenever revisable documents have to be used, the IICI recommended the EU institutions to support:

— as a minimum requirement, the two existing ISO standards (i.e. ODF ([8]) and OOXML ([9])); and

— on a best effort basis, other widely used formats.

The Commission can confirm that it has implemented all of the recommendations issued by the IICI. Hence, it can already support ODF, OOXML and other widely used document formats in its exchanges with citizens and national administrations. There is therefore no lock-in effect whatsoever, and indeed no contradiction with the Commission's strategy on interoperability.

Concerning the suggestion to reassess the situation, the Honourable Member may care to note that the IICI is currently chaired by the European Parliament's representative. The Commission's services have brought this suggestion to the attention of the Chairperson.

([7]) In particular ISO/IEC 32000-1:2008 (PDF) and ISO 19005-X (PDF/A).
([8]) ISO/IEC 26300:2006.
([9]) ISO/IEC 29500:2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012945/13
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Sewage contamination affecting Gibraltar's coastline

Sewage contamination from La Linea in Spain continues to cause serious pollution along part of Gibraltar's coastline, despite previous assurances from the Spanish Government that no sewage would be discharged from this site after the end of 2011. I am informed that this contamination is stemming from a storm drainpipe illegally discharging raw sewage towards Gibraltar's Western Beach.

According to data compiled by the Gibraltar Environmental Agency ([1]), the situation is worsening, with sewage contamination from La Linea reaching Western Beach. This is creating a serious risk to public health, and as a result the beach has had to be closed on a number of occasions.

What action is the Commission taking to bring an end to this persistent pollution of Gibraltar's waters?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-012287/2013 and E-012288/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.environmental-agency.gi/beachresult.php?beachid=6
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012947/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(14 novembre 2013)

Objet: Action de la Commission pour protéger les éleveurs ovins

La manifestation des «bonnets noirs» au début du mois de novembre en France a de nouveau montré la détresse des éleveurs face aux attaques répétées de loups sur leurs troupeaux. Elle a surtout rappelé l'urgence d'une révision de la Convention de Berne sur le statut de la protection du loup et de la directive dite «habitats». Les attaques de loups se multiplient, elles déciment régulièrement les élevages, mais les textes restent inadaptés.

Ces attaques sont préjudiciables non seulement pour la filière ovine européenne, mais également pour nos terroirs. Elles obligent en outre les éleveurs à prendre des mesures de vigilance coûteuses en zone de présence de ces prédateurs, des mesures qui s'ajoutent aux nombreuses pertes déjà subies.

Les États peinent aujourd'hui à prendre des décisions cohérentes. Ils se heurtent à une législation bien trop peu regardante des cas nationaux spécifiques. Cela fait plusieurs années que les éleveurs tirent la sonnette d'alarme.

J'avais déjà interrogé la Commission il y a plus d'un an à ce sujet. La marge de manœuvre des États qu'elle jugeait alors «suffisante» demeure pourtant trop restreinte et les dispositions bien trop imprécises, voire contradictoires. La profession pointe du doigt en particulier le manque de possibilités données aux États membres de déroger à certaines des règles européennes en cas d'atteinte aux activités d'élevage.

La mort d'une centaine de brebis dans les Hautes-Alpes la semaine dernière n'est qu'un exemple parmi d'autres, tous aussi tragiques pour les éleveurs qui les subissent, d'autant que le cas de la France est loin d'être isolé.

Face à une situation qui devient intenable pour les éleveurs, la Commission compte-t-elle enfin agir et donner une plus grande marge de manœuvre aux États membres pour qu'ils puissent protéger les éleveurs? Et comment?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(8 janvier 2014)

Le loup est une espèce strictement protégée en vertu de l'article 12 de la directive 92/43/CEE ([1]) (directive «Habitats»). La Commission estime que le statut légal actuel du loup offre aux États membres suffisamment de souplesse pour faire face aux situations particulières qui se présentent sur leur territoire. L'article 16 de la directive «Habitats» autorise les États membres à déroger au système de protection stricte et à prendre des mesures destinées à prévenir les dommages importants aux animaux d'élevage, notamment celles mentionnées dans les lignes directrices pour l'élaboration de plans de gestion des effectifs élaborées par la Commission ([2]). En 2012, la Commission a instauré un dialogue sur les espèces de grands carnivores entre les parties prenantes concernées, afin d'améliorer l'échange d'informations et de mieux comprendre les problèmes sous-jacents.

En outre, le cadre législatif actuel et futur de la politique de développement rural prévoit l'octroi d'un soutien en faveur des mesures préventives visant à atténuer le risque de dommages à l'élevage causés par les grands carnivores. Les mesures de développement rural ne prévoient cependant pas d'indemnisation pour les dommages déjà causés par les carnivores.

([1]) JO L 206 du 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/docs/guidelines_final2008.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012947/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Commission action to protect sheep farmers in Europe

In early November, sheep farmers in France once again held a demonstration to express their anger in response to repeated wolf attacks on their flocks. The demonstration highlighted the urgent need to rethink the protection status of wolves, as enshrined in the Berne Convention and the Habitats Directive. Wolf attacks, which are on the increase, regularly leave dozens of sheep dead, but the relevant international provisions have not been revised accordingly.

Our local communities, and the European sheep-farming sector, are suffering as a result. What is more, farmers in areas where wolves have been sighted are being left with no option but to implement costly surveillance measures, adding to their financial losses.

The Member States are hard pressed to come up with a coherent approach to this problem, hindered by legislative provisions which take little or no account of specific circumstances in individual countries.

Farmers have been sounding the alarm for several years now, and I myself tabled a question to the Commission on this subject more than 12 months ago. The Commission stated in its answer that the Member States had 'sufficient' room for manœuvre, but in fact the relevant provisions remain overly restrictive and are often far too vague, or even contradictory. Sheep farmers are particularly critical of the fact that Member States have no leeway to depart from certain European rules when livestock farming is under threat.

The killing of some 100 ewes in the Hautes-Alpes department last week is only the latest in a series of similar incidents, all equally devastating for the farmers affected. And France is not alone in facing this problem.

Does the Commission plan to take action at long last and relax the relevant European legislation so that Member States can protect their sheep farmers? If so, how?

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

The wolf is a strictly protected species under Article 12 of Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) ('Habitats Directive'). The Commission is of the opinion that the current legal status of the wolf gives enough flexibility to Member States to deal with specific circumstances on their territory. Under Article 16 of the Habitats Directive Member States may derogate from the strict protection regime and allow measures to prevent serious damage to livestock including those mentioned in the guidelines for population level management plans produced by the Commission ([2]). In 2012 the Commission initiated a dialogue among the relevant stakeholders on large carnivore species to improve the exchange of information and to understand better the underlying concerns.

In addition, the current and future legal framework for the Rural Development Policy provide support for preventive actions aimed at mitigating the risk of damages done by large carnivores to livestock farming. However, the Rural Development measures do not foresee payments to compensate damages already done by carnivores.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22/7/1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/docs/guidelines_final2008.pdf

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-012949/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. november 14.)

Tárgy: Napkollektorok elterjedésének támogatása

Az alternatív energiaforrások elterjedésének következtében a fosszilis tüzelőanyagok felhasználása rohamosan csökken, amely számos előnnyel jár, például a környezetszennyezés csökkenésével, a különböző egészségkárosító tényezők enyhülésével stb.

A napsugárzásból eredő napenergia mint aktív megújuló energiaforrás felhasználása és bevezetése a tagállamokban számos előnnyel jár a polgárok számára. Egyre több háztartás rendelkezik napkollektorokkal, amelyek kiépítésének támogatásában az egyes tagállamok eltérőképpen vesznek részt. Ezen napkollektorok jelentős energiát adhatnak egy családnak (fűtés, világítás stb.), és ezáltal jelentős környezettudatosságot közvetíthetnek a polgárok felé is. Sajnálatosan a napkollektorok a kelet-európai térségben egyelőre igen alacsony számban vannak jelen a háztartásokban.

Véleményem szerint segíteni kell a napkollektorok minél nagyobb számban való elterjedését a háztartásokban, illetve ki kell alakítani egy olyan támogatási rendszert, amely lehetővé tenné ezen alternatív energiaforrásoknak a háztartásokba való bevezetését.

Milyen cselekvési tervvel rendelkezik a Bizottság a napkollektorok EU-tagállamokban történő elterjedésének segítése érdekében?

Milyen felzárkóztatási tervei vannak a kelet-európai tagállamokkal kapcsolatosan (egységes jogszabály megalkotása, támogatási rendszerek és pályázatok kiépítése stb.)?

Günther Oettinger válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 9.)

A jelenlegi uniós éghajlat- és energiapolitikai keret a megújuló energiaforrásokra vonatkozó 2020-as uniós és tagállami célkitűzések megállapítása és konkrét jogszabályok ([1]) által ösztönzi a megújuló energiaforrások, így a napenergia fejlesztését. Ugyanakkor az egyes tagállamok feladata, hogy eldöntsék, a megújuló energia mely forrásait kívánják kiválasztani a 2020-ra kitűzött kötelező célok eléréséhez. Az Unió stratégiai energiatechnológiai terve ([2]) uniós és tagállami szinten egyaránt meghatározza a megújuló energiaforrásokon alapuló technológiákra vonatkozó kutatás tervezési stratégiáját. A megújuló energiaforrásokkal kapcsolatos kutatás és innováció terén uniós szinten a Horizont 2020 program nyújt pénzügyi támogatást. Az európai kohéziós politikai források olyan projektek számára nyújtanak támogatást, amelyek célja a megújuló energiaforrások alkalmazása a tagállamokban (a 2014–2020 közötti új pénzügyi időszakban a legfejlettebb régióknak juttatandó források 20%-át, valamint a legkevésbé fejlett régiókra fordítandó források 10%-át a megújuló energiaforrások, az energiahatékonyság és a fenntartható közlekedés területén megvalósítandó projektekre különítették el).

([1]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2009. április 23-i 2009/28/EK irányelve a megújuló energiaforrásból előállított energia támogatásáról, valamint a 2001/77/EK és a 2003/30/EK irányelv módosításáról és azt követő hatályon kívül helyezéséről.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/technology/set_plan/set_plan_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012949/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Supporting an increase in the use of solar collectors

The use of fossil fuels will decrease dramatically as a consequence of the increase in the use of alternative energy sources, which has numerous advantages, including, for example, a reduction in environmental pollution, the mitigation of various factors that are harmful to health, etc.

The use and introduction of solar energy originating from solar radiation as an active renewable energy source has numerous advantages for citizens in the Member States. An increasing number of households have solar collectors and the individual Member States support their installation in various ways. These solar collectors provide families with a significant amount of energy (heating, lighting, etc.), and thus may also make citizens significantly more environmentally aware. It is unfortunate that a very low number of households in the Eastern European region currently have solar collectors.

In my opinion, help must be provided to promote an increase in the use of solar collectors in as many households as possible and a support system must be established that would make it possible for these alternative energy sources to be introduced into households.

What action plan does the Commission have in place for promoting solar collectors in EU Member States?

What cohesion plans exist in connection with Eastern European Member States (uniform legislation, establishing support systems and programmes, etc.)?

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

The current EU climate and energy framework promotes the development of renewable energies (RES), including solar, through the establishment of EU and national RES targets for 2020 and specific legislation ([1]). It is however up to the individual Member States to decide on which sources of RES are chosen to meet the binding 2020 targets. The EU Strategic Energy Technologies Plan ([2]) sets a strategy to plan research on RES technologies at EU and national level. Research and innovation on RES is also financially supported at EU level through the Horizon 2020 Programme. The European Cohesion Policy funds support projects aiming at the deployment of RES in the Member States (in the new financial period 2014-2020 20% of allocations to the most developed regions and 10% of allocations to the least developed regions have been earmarked for projects in the field of Res, energy efficiency and sustainable transport).

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/technology/set_plan/set_plan_en.htm

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-012950/13
a Bizottság számára
Szegedi Csanád (NI)
(2013. november 14.)

Tárgy: A genetikai betegségek felismerése és kezelése, valamint a betegek nyomon követése

Európában számos gént érintő megbetegedés van jelen nagy számban, az ezekben szenvedő betegek ellátása nemzetközi összefogást igényel. Az Európai Unióban 2-3000 újszülöttből 1 érintett egy elsősorban a légzőszervet érintő súlyos betegségben, amely a *cyscticus fibrosis*. A másik leggyakoribb betegség a Duchenne-féle izombetegség, amely minden 3600. újszülöttet érinti és ugyancsak génmutáció által alakul ki. Ezen betegség igen súlyos, gyakran fatális kimenettel végződik, azonban a megfelelő és komplex kezelések hatására szinten tartható, illetve a betegek életminősége segíthető.

A genetikai betegségek komplex kezelést igényelnek, amihez igen magas szintű, tagállamokon átnyúló és nemzetközi összefogást igénylő egészségügyi együttműködés és támogatás szükséges, centrumokhoz kötötten. Természetesen a kezelés szerves részét képezi a kutatás-fejlesztés is, amely ugyancsak az intézetek közötti együttműködésen alapszik.

A Bizottságnak milyen terve van a genetikai betegségek felismerésével, kezelésével és a betegek nyomon követésével kapcsolatosan, illetve milyen uniós egyezmények segíthetik a betegek kezelését?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 10.)

A monogenikus genetikai betegségek többsége a ritka betegségek közé tartozik. A közegészségügyön belül a ritka betegségek területe a Bizottság egyik prioritását jelenti. Az e területen végzett munkához egyrészt a ritka betegségek vonatkozásában egységes fellépést célzó, „Ritka betegségek: kihívás Európa számára" című bizottsági közlemény ([1]), másrészt pedig a ritka betegségek területén megvalósítandó fellépésről szóló, 2009. évi tanácsi ajánlás ([2]) szolgál alapul.

A gyógyszerészet területén az EU elfogadta a ritka betegségek kezelésére használt gyógyszerekről szóló rendeletet, hogy a fejlesztést végző vállalatoknak biztosított ösztönzők segítségével támogatást nyújtson olyan gyógyszerfejlesztésekhez, amelyek a ritka betegségekkel összefüggő, még kielégítetlen gyógyászati szükségletekre kínálnak megoldást. A Bizottság mindeddig 1219 termék esetében adta meg a „ritka betegség kezelésére használt gyógyszer" jelölést, és 82 termék kapott uniós forgalombahozatali engedélyt.

Az EU a hetedik kutatási és technológiafejlesztési keretprogram révén a ritka betegségek területén több mint 100, kutatási együttműködésen alapuló projektnek nyújtott finanszírozást ([3]). A több mint 500 millió eurónyi összköltségvetésből gazdálkodó projektek számos betegségterületet felölelnek ([4]). A tagállami és nemzetközi partnerekkel együttműködésben a Bizottság élére állt a nemzetközi ritkabetegség-kutatási konzorcium (International Rare Diseases Research Consortium) létrehozásának ([5]). A konzorcium fő célja, hogy 2020-ra – a kutatás ösztönzésével, jobb koordinálásával, valamint a ritka betegségekkel kapcsolatos kutatási eredmények globális szintű maximális kiaknázásával – 200 új terápiát fejlesszen ki a ritka betegségek kezelésére, illetve diagnosztizálására.

Az EU ezen túlmenően 2003 óta az uniós egészségügyi programok keretében nyújt támogatást a ritka betegségekre vonatkozó projektek megvalósításához ([6]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/non_com/docs/rare_com_hu.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:151:0007:0010:HU:PDF
([3]) Ez a célszám a 2007–2013 közötti hetedik keretprogram együttműködési programjának égisze alatt finanszírozott egészségügyi kutatásokra vonatkozik.
([4]) A ritka betegségek kutatásának uniós finanszírozásával kapcsolatos új kiadvány a következő linken olvasható: http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/pdf/rare-diseases-how-europe-meeting-challenges_en.pdf
([5]) http://www.irdirc.org
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012950/13
to the Commission
Csanád Szegedi (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: The recognition and treatment of genetic diseases, as well as the monitoring of patients

There are a great number of diseases in Europe affecting numerous genes, and the treatment of patients suffering from them demands international efforts. One in every 2-3 000 new-born infants in the European Union is affected by a serious disease that primarily affects the respiratory organs; this is cystic fibrosis. The other most common disease is Duchenne muscular dystrophy, which affects one in 3 600 new-born infants and also develops as a result of a gene mutation. This disease is very serious, and frequently has a fatal outcome; however, it may be maintained at a certain level after suitable and comprehensive treatments and patients' quality of life can be improved.

Genetic diseases demand comprehensive treatment, for which very high-level healthcare collaboration and support is required that demands international efforts across the Member States, linked to centres. Naturally, research and development also forms an organic part of the treatment, which is also based on collaboration between institutions.

What plan does the Commission have in connection with the recognition and treatment of genetic diseases and with the monitoring of patients, and what Union conventions exist to help with the treatment of the patients?

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

The majority of monogenic genetic diseases fall into the category of rare diseases. Addressing rare diseases is one of the main priorities of the Commission in the area of public health. Work in this area is based upon the Commission Communication on Rare diseases: Europe's challenges creating an integrated approach for the EU action in the field of rare diseases ([1]) and the Council Recommendation (2009) on European action in the field of rare diseases ([2]).

In the area of pharmaceuticals, the EU adopted the regulation on Orphan Medicinal Products, with the aim to support the development of medicinal products to meet unmet medical needs in the area of rare diseases by offering incentives for companies developing such treatments. So far, the Commission has already designated 1 219 products as orphan medicines and 82 products authorised to be placed on the EU market.

The EU has funded more than 100 collaborative research projects relevant to rare diseases through its Seventh Framework Programme for Innovation and Technological Development (FP7) ([3]). With a total budget of over EUR 500 million, these projects span across several disease areas ([4]). In collaboration with its national and international partners, the Commission spearheaded the launch of the International Rare Diseases Research Consortium ([5]). Its key objective is to deliver, by 2020, 200 new therapies for rare diseases and the means to diagnose most of them by stimulating, better coordinating, and maximising output of rare disease research on a global level.

In addition, the EU has supported projects on rare diseases under the EU Health Programmes since 2003 ([6]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/non_com/docs/rare_com_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:151:0007:0010:EN:PDF
([3]) This figure refers to health research funded under the Cooperation Programme of FP7 (2007-2013).
([4]) A recent publication on EU funding for rare disease research can be found on: http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/pdf/rare-diseases-how-europe-meeting-challenges_en.pdf
([5]) http://www.irdirc.org
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-012951/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Prevenção de ferimentos provocados por objetos cortantes nos setores hospitalar e da saúde (transposição da Diretiva 2010/32/UE do Conselho)

Alguns profissionais de saúde têm vindo a fazer uma avaliação crítica à transposição para as legislações nacionais da Diretiva n.° 2010/32/UE do Conselho, de 10 de maio de 2010, que executa o Acordo-Quadro relativo à prevenção de ferimentos provocados por objetos cortantes nos setores hospitalar e da saúde celebrado pela Hospeem e pela EPSU. Nesta avaliação pesam, entre outros, os seguintes fatores:

— A diretiva tem como principal foco e prioridade a melhoria da saúde e da segurança dos trabalhadores do setor da saúde e não da segurança do doente;

— A diretiva refere-se à «infeção» enquanto risco profissional que poderá decorrer em resultado de um acidente de trabalho em que exista exposição do trabalhador a sangue ou outros fluidos corporais contaminados durante a atividade profissional;

— A diretiva tem como mais-valia introduzir disposições mais favoráveis à proteção dos trabalhadores contra feridas, ferimentos e infeções, ocasionados por dispositivos médicos corto-perfurantes que constituam equipamentos de trabalho, reforçando e harmonizando a resposta mais adequada para estas situações;

— A diretiva presta especial atenção aos fatores psicossociais e aos relacionados com a organização do trabalho, aspetos que estão na origem de muitos acidentes de trabalho com dispositivos médicos corto-perfurantes que constituam equipamentos de trabalho.

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

Que avaliação faz, até à data, da transposição da Diretiva 2010/32/UE do Conselho, de 10 de maio de 2010? Em particular, que avaliação faz do acolhimento e valorização, durante a transposição, dos fatores supramencionados?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(8 de janeiro de 2014)

A Diretiva 2010/32/UE executa o Acordo-Quadro relativo à prevenção de ferimentos provocados por objetos cortantes nos setores hospitalar e da saúde celebrado pela Hospeem e pela EPSU. O prazo para a transposição da diretiva para o direito nacional pelos Estados-Membros terminou em 11 de maio de 2013.

Estão atualmente ainda em curso procedimentos por infração contra cinco Estados-Membros, devido à não comunicação (de algumas ou da totalidade) das medidas nacionais de transposição da diretiva.

A Comissão está atualmente a avaliar a conformidade da diretiva com as medidas nacionais de transposição que lhe foram comunicadas por 23 Estados-Membros. Dado que este processo foi iniciado recentemente, não é possível, nesta fase, retirar quaisquer conclusões relativamente aos aspetos especialmente referidos pelos Senhores Deputados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012951/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Prevention of sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector (transposition of Council Directive 2010/32/EU)

A number of health professionals have been critical in their assessment of the transposition into national legislations of Council Directive 2010/32/EU of 10 May 2010 implementing the framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector concluded by HOSPEEM and EPSU. Their assessment includes the following points:

— The main focus and priority of the directive is to improve the health and safety of health sector workers and not patient safety;

— The directive refers to 'infection' as an occupational hazard that could arise as a result of an accident at work, as workers are exposed to blood or other contaminated body fluids in their work;

— The upside of the directive is that it introduces more favourable provisions to protect workers against wounds, injury and infection caused by sharp medical devices used as work equipment, strengthening and harmonising the most suitable response to such situations;

— The directive pays particular attention to psychosocial factors and those relating to the organisation of work, aspects that are the cause of many accidents at work involving sharp medical devices used as work equipment.

What is the Commission's assessment of how Council Directive 2010/32/EU of 10 May 2010 has been transposed to date? In particular, what is its assessment of how the factors referred to above have been received and promoted during transposition?

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

Directive 2010/32/EU implements the framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector concluded by HOSPEEM and EPSU. The deadline for the directive's transposition into national law by the Member States expired on 11 May 2013.

Infringement procedures are currently still in progress against five Member States for a failure to communicate any or all of their national measures transposing the directive.

The Commission is currently assessing the conformity with the directive of the national transposing measures that have been communicated by 23 Member States. As this process has just started, it is not possible at this stage to draw any conclusions regarding the points referred to in particular by the Honourable Members.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012956/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(14 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Încălcări ale drepturilor omului comise de poliția etiopiană

Un raport publicat de Human Rights Watch la 18 octombrie 2013 a adus la lumină grave încălcări ale drepturilor omului comise de unitatea de anchetă a poliției federale din Etiopia. Foști deținuți da la centrul de detenție Maekelawi au vorbit despre bătăile regulate, despre condițiile foarte proaste de viață și despre tortură ca mijloc de a forța prizonierii să mărturisească și să divulge informații. În tot acest timp, deținuții nu aveau acces la serviciile unui avocat. Mulți dintre cei deținuți de către poliție la centrul Maekelawi sunt opozanți politici, militanți și ziariști. Comitetul pentru protecția ziariștilor menționează faptul că Etiopia este pe cale să devină statul cu cei mai mulți ziariști arestați sau închiși din Africa.

1. Din 2011, Direcția Generală Ajutor Umanitar și Protecție Civilă a Comisiei (ECHO) a alocat peste 130 de milioane de euro pentru programe în Etiopia. Cum va evalua Comisia programele de ajutoare în Etiopia în cazul în care drepturile omului vor fi încălcate în continuare?

2. Ce acțiuni sugerează Comisia că ar trebui să întreprindă UE pentru a împiedica brutalitatea crescândă a forțelor de poliție și înăbușirea mass-mediei din Etiopia, precum și pentru a oferi căi de atac împotriva acestora?

Răspuns dat de Înaltul Reprezentant /doamna vicepreședinte Ashton în numele Comisiei
(8 ianuarie 2014)

UE este preocupată atât de faptul că în Etiopia se încălcă drepturile omului, în special prin reducerea spațiului politic, prin impunerea de restricții în ceea ce privește libertatea presei, cât și de situația din închisori. UE consideră că cea mai bună cale de a îmbunătăți situația este stabilirea unui dialog cu guvernul și buna direcționare a asistenței pentru dezvoltare.

UE a transmis în mod repetat aceste preocupări guvernului etiopian, inclusiv la cel mai înalt nivel, în special cu ocazia reuniunilor de dialog politic prevăzute la articolul 8. Se poartă discuții cu autoritățile cu privire la posibilitatea ca delegația UE să viziteze penitenciarele pentru a contribui la îmbunătățirea condițiilor de detenție. În noiembrie 2013, președinții Adunării Parlamentare Paritare UE-ACP ([1]) au vizitat închisoarea din Kaliti. Comitetul Internațional al Crucii Roșii (CICR) are acces la toate închisorile din Etiopia de la începutul anului 2013.

UE susține financiar instituții precum Comisia etiopiană a drepturilor omului, instituția Avocatul Poporului din Etiopia și Centrul de formare profesională a organelor judiciare și finanțează acțiuni ale organizațiilor societății civile care vizează aspecte precum violența sexuală și bazată pe gen și abuzurile asupra copiilor. Intervențiile sunt monitorizate în mod sistematic pentru a asigura cheltuirea corectă a fondurilor.

Asistența umanitară a UE se bazează pe principiile umanității, neutralității, imparțialității și independenței. Intervențiile sunt în funcție de necesități și vizează cele mai vulnerabile segmente ale populației. UE a alocat 130 de milioane EUR timp de trei ani pentru sprijinirea a peste 750 000 de persoane refugiate și strămutate în interiorul țării și a 3 milioane de persoane afectate de insecuritate alimentară în Etiopia. De asemenea, UE a furnizat sprijin financiar unui program CICR care viza protejarea persoanelor private de libertate și restabilirea legăturilor de familie în cazul persoanelor separate.

([1]) Grupul de țări din Africa, zona Caraibilor și Pacific.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012956/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Human rights violations by the Ethiopian police

A report released by Human Rights Watch on 18 October 2013 brought to light serious human rights violations committed by the federal police investigative unit in Ethiopia. Former detainees of the Maekelawi detention centre reported routine beatings, very poor living standards, and torture as a means of forcing prisoners to confess and disclose information. All the while detainees were actively kept from their legal counsel. Many of those detained by the police in the Maekelawi centre are political opponents, activists, and journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists notes that Ethiopia is well on its way to becoming the state with the most detained or imprisoned journalists in Africa.

1. Since 2011 the Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) has allocated over EUR 130 million to programmes in Ethiopia. How will the Commission evaluate aid programmes to Ethiopia if human rights continue to be violated?

2. What actions would the Commission suggest the EU take to prevent and redress the increasing police brutality and the stifling of the media in Ethiopia?

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

The EU is concerned by human rights violations in Ethiopia, notably the reduction of political space, restrictions on media freedom, and situation in prisons. The EU believes the best way to improve the situation is through dialogue with the Government and targeted development assistance.

The EU repeatedly shares these concerns with the Government of Ethiopia, including at the highest levels, notably during Article 8 political dialogue meetings. Discussions with the authorities are ongoing on the possibility for the EU Delegation to visit prisons to help improve living conditions. In November 2013, the Presidents of the EU-ACP ([1]) Joint Parliamentary Assembly visited Kaliti prison. The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) has access to all prisons in Ethiopia since early 2013.

The EU financially supports institutions such as the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, the Ethiopian Institution of Ombudsman, and the Justice Organs Professionals Training Centre and funds civil society organisation's actions addressing issues such as sexual and gender-based violence and child abuse. Interventions are systematically monitored to ensure correct spending of funds.

EU humanitarian assistance is based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence; interventions are need-based and target most vulnerable populations. The EU has allocated EUR 130 million over three years to provide support to over 750 000 refugees and internally displaced people and to 3 million food insecure people in Ethiopia. The EU also provided financial support to an ICRC programme on the protection of persons deprived of freedom and restoring family links for separated persons.

([1]) African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-012957/13
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(14. marraskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Jatkokysymys komissiolle esitettyyn kysymykseen E-006733/2013

Vastauksessaan kysymykseen E-006733/2013 ([1]) komissio totesi, että ”jäsenvaltioiden vastuulla on todentaa hakemusten paikkansapitävyys ennen niiden toimittamista EFSAlle”. Komissio on kuitenkin EU-lainsäädännön valvoja ja velvollinen huolehtimaan siitä, että säännökset pannaan asianmukaisesti täytäntöön. Tässä tapauksessa näyttää siltä, että hakemuksessa Q-2011-01241 ei noudateta asetuksen (EY) N:o 1924/2006 19 artiklan periaatteita. Pyydän siksi komissiota vastaamaan seuraavaan kysymykseen yleisellä tasolla ja erityisesti tähän tapaukseen liittyen:

1. Jos Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviraston (EFSA) arviointia varten toimitettu hakemus on puutteellinen, eikö komission tehtävänä ole korjata mahdolliset virheet heti, kun ne on havaittu?

Vastauksessaan kysymykseen, pitääkö komissio perusteltuna kasvisterolien ja kasvistanoliesterien ryhmittämistä yhteen arvioinnissa, komissio viittasi EFSAn aiempiin kasvisteroleita koskeviin lausuntoihin. Vuoden 2009 arvioinnin tulosten mukaan kasvisteroleilla ja kasvistanoliestereillä on niiden päiväsaannin ollessa enintään kaksi grammaa samanlainen teho kolesterolin vähentämisessä. Arvioidessaan uutta hakemusta (Q-2011-01241), joka sisälsi tietoja yhdistetyistä kasvisteroleista/kasvistanoliestereistä, EFSA oletti, että teho olisi sama päiväsaannin ollessa myös enintään 3 grammaa. Johtopäätös, että teho on sama kolmen gramman päiväannoksella on tieteellisesti paikkansapitämätön. Kasvisterolien osalta kolmen gramman päiväannoksen tehoa ei ole näytetty toteen, koska sitä ei ole arvioitu erikseen, yhdistämättä arviointiin kasvistanoliestereitä koskevaa tietoa. Asetuksen (EY) N:o 1924/2006 3 artiklan mukaan ”ravitsemus- ja terveysväitteet eivät saa a) olla totuudenvastaisia, moniselitteisiä tai harhaanjohtavia (…) sanotun kuitenkaan rajoittamatta direktiivien 2000/13/EY ja 84/450/ETY soveltamista”. Pyydän komissiota näin ollen vastaamaan seuraaviin kysymyksiin:

2. Aikooko komissio valtuuttaa EFSAn arvioimaan kasvisterolien tehon ainoastaan 2,6–3.0 gramman päiväsaannin pohjalta? Tätä asiaa koskeva sekaannus johtuu osaksi siitä, että EFSAlta ei ole kysytty oikeita kysymyksiä ja että EFSA ei ole vastuussa hakemusten oikeudellisen soveltamisalan tarkastamisesta.

3. Eikö komissio katso, että unionin kuluttajilla olisi oikeus saada luotettavaa tietoa kasvisteroli- ja kasvistanoliesterituotteiden tehoa koskevista eroista?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(10. tammikuuta 2014)

Ensimmäisen kysymyksen osalta komissio haluaa kiinnittää arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen huomion kysymykseen E-006733/2013 ([2]) annettuun vastaukseen. Lisäksi olisi täsmennettävä, että asetuksen (EY) N:o 1924/2006 ([3]) 19 artiklan 2 kohdan mukaisesti Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomainen (EFSA) voi omasta aloitteestaan taikka jäsenvaltion tai komission pyynnöstä antaa lausunnon siitä, onko kyseisen asetuksen 13 ja 14 artiklassa tarkoitettuihin luetteloihin sisältyvä terveysväite edelleen kyseisen asetuksen mukainen.

Mitä tulee kasvisterolien tehokkuuteen pelkästään niitä tarkasteltuna, EFSAn lausunnossa ([4]) esitetään yksityiskohtainen arviointi saatavilla olevasta näytöstä, joka perustuu ihmisillä tehtyihin interventiotutkimuksiin, joissa vertailtiin suoraan kasvisterolien ja kasvistanolien tehoa veren kolesterolitason vähentämisessä. Tässä yhteydessä tarkasteltiin 14:sta ihmisillä tehdystä, 531 tutkittavaa käsittäneestä interventiotutkimuksesta laadittua meta-analyysia, jossa ei havaittu tilastollisesti merkittäviä eroja siinä, miten tehokkaasti kasvistanolit ja kasvisterolit vähentävät kolesterolitasoa, kun päiväsaanti on 1,5–3,0 grammaa. Tätä taustaa vasten komissio ei suunnittele antavansa EFSAlle uutta toimeksiantoa kasvisterolien tehokkuudesta yksinään.

Edellä esitetyn perusteella komissio ei tällä hetkellä aio ryhtyä lisätoimenpiteisiin.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-006733+0+DOC+XML+V0//FI&language=FI
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-006733&language=FI
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2006R1924:20121129:FI:PDF
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2693.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012957/13
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question to Written Question E-006733/2013

In its answer to Written Question No E-006733/2013 ([1]), the Commission said that the 'Member States are responsible for verifying the validity of applications before making them available to EFSA'. However, the Commission is the guardian of EC law and responsible for supervising the correct implementation of regulations. In this case, it seems that application Q-2011-01241 does not meet the principles of Article 19 of the regulation (EC) No 1924/2006. Therefore, I would like the Commission to answer the following question, both in general and in relation to this specific case:

1. If an invalid application goes to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for assessment, is it not the Commission's responsibility to correct the mistake as soon as it is noted?

In its answer to the question as to whether the Commission thinks the grouping of plant sterols and plant stanol esters in the assessment is justified, the Commission referred to EFSA's former opinions on phytosterols. The assessment in 2009 concluded that the efficacy for lowering cholesterol is similar for plant sterols and plant stanol ester with daily intakes up to 2 g. Regarding the new application (Q-2011-01241), EFSA made an assumption that daily intakes up to 3 g would have the same level of efficacy and assessed the dossier containing combined plant sterol/plant stanol ester data accordingly. The conclusion that the efficacy is similar with 3 g/day is scientifically incorrect: the efficacy of plant sterols at daily intake of 3 g remains unsubstantiated, as it has not been assessed without the inclusion of plant stanol ester data. In light of Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, which states: 'without prejudice to Directives 2000/13/EC and 84/450/EEC, the use of nutrition and health claims shall not: (a) be false, ambiguous or misleading', I would like the Commission to answer the following questions:

2. Is the Commission planning to mandate EFSA to assess the efficacy of plant sterols with a daily intake of 2.6-3.0 g plant sterols alone? The confusion around the issue is partly due to the fact that the right questions have not been asked by EFSA and EFSA is not responsible for checking the legal scope of applications.

3. Does the Commission not think that European consumers are entitled to be correctly informed about the difference in efficacy between plant sterol and plant stanol ester products?

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

With regard to the first question the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer given to the Parliamentary Question E-006733/2013 ([2]). Furthermore, it should also be clarified that according to Article 19(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 ([3]), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on its own initiative or following a request from a Member State or from the Commission, may issue an opinion on whether a health claim included in the lists provided for in Articles 13 and 14 still meets the conditions laid down in this regulation.

With regard to the issue concerning the efficacy of plant sterols alone, the EFSA opinion ([4]) contains a detailed evaluation of the available evidence from human intervention studies which directly compared the efficacy of plant sterols and plant stanols in lowering blood cholesterol. This included the consideration of a meta-analysis of 14 human intervention studies including 531 subjects in which no statistically significant differences were found with respect to the cholesterol lowering effect between plant stanols and plant sterols at intakes ranging from 1.5 to 3.0 g per day. In this context, the Commission does not plan to mandate EFSA with any new request concerning the efficacy of plant sterols alone.

In light of the above, the Commission does currently not intend to take additional measures.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2013-006733+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2006R1924:20121129:EN:PDF
([4]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2693.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012958/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Cost of EU membership

Could the Commission advise me as to what will be the annual net cost of EU membership for each household in the United Kingdom in 2014?

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

The Commission informs the Honourable Member that it does not make calculations or publish estimates regarding Member States' operating net budgetary balances for the future, nor concerning exact quantified costs and benefits on a per capita or per household basis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012959/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: UK membership contributions

Could the Commission advise me of the UK's annual EU membership contributions from 2009 to 2014?

Also, what percentage of total EU income from membership contributions comes from the UK?

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

The table in Annex indicates the UK's annual EU contribution for the period 2009-2014 and the UK's share in the total membership contributions for the same period.

This share is calculated on the basis of the two following sets of data:

— yearly UK national contribution for the years 2009 to 2014. This contribution covers the VAT-based own resource, the GNI-based own resource, the correction granted to the UK for budgetary imbalances, the gross reduction granted to the Netherlands and Sweden and the adjustment for the impact of non-participation of certain Member States in the areas of freedom, security and justice policies.

— the total yearly amount of the national contributions for all EU Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012960/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Agricultural payments to France

In 2012, 32% of the EU's total expenditure went towards agriculture (market and direct support).

Could the Commission advise me as to how much of this was paid to the farming sector in France?

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

The total amount paid to France regarding intervention in agricultural markets and direct aids in Financial Year 2012 was EUR 8 643 million.

The financial reports of the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund are published and can be found using the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/financial-reports/eagf/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012963/13
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(14 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Negatywne oddziaływanie zmian czasu na zdrowie ludności Unii Europejskiej

Od wielu lat toczą się dyskusje na temat ekonomicznych i zdrowotnych skutków zmiany czasu z zimowego na letni. Obecnie obowiązująca dyrektywa 2000/84/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 19 stycznia 2001 r. w sprawie ustaleń dotyczących czasu letniego zakłada, że dwa razy do roku, w marcu i w październiku, dokonywana jest zmiana czasu.

W dzisiejszych czasach wydaje się, że z ekonomicznego punktu widzenia zmiana czasu nie przynosi korzyści ani strat (mówiąc dokładniej – korzyści i straty bilansują się). Istotny jest drugi rezultat – zdrowotny, o którym często się zapomina. Według badań naukowców ryzyko zawału wzrasta o 10 %, o 60 % rośnie ilość osób skarżących się na bóle serca, a o 160 % rośnie liczba pacjentów w gabinetach pediatrycznych. Ponadto rośnie liczba wypadków drogowych i wypadków w pracy. Wspomina się o depresji, która może być związana z przestawianiem wskazówek zegara. Jedną z niewielu korzyści dla zdrowia jest zwiększenie liczby czasu spędzonego na świeżym powietrzu przez dzieci, co w czasach Internetu i telewizji nie jest przekonywujące.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zwrócić się do Komisji z pytaniami:

Czy Komisja planuje w najbliższym czasie dokonać oceny skutków wprowadzania czasu letniego?

Czy Komisja bierze pod uwagę skutki dla obywateli Unii Europejskiej związane z ich zdrowiem?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(7 stycznia 2014 r.)

Zdaniem Komisji ustalenia dotyczące czasu letniego ustanowione dyrektywą 2000/84/WE ([1]) nadal odpowiadają potrzebom, jak już wyjaśniono w odpowiedziach na następujące pytania pisemne: E-012258/2013, E-004523/2013, E-9209-9802/2011 oraz H-103/2010 ([2]).

([1]) Dyrektywa 2000/84/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 19 stycznia 2001 r., Dz.U. L 31 z 2.2.2001.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012963/13
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Adverse effects of the changing of the clocks on the health in the EU

For many years now, a debate has been raging on the economic and health effects of changing the clocks from winter to summer time. The current Directive 2000/84/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 January 2001 on summer-time arrangements provides for two changes of the clocks per year — once in March and once in October.

Nowadays it seems that changing the clocks no longer brings any benefits or losses, i.e. the benefits and the losses cancel each other out. Another effect is also important, though, and that is the impact on health, which is often forgotten. According to scientific studies, the risk of heart attack is increased by 10%; the number of people complaining of heart pains grows by 60%; and the number of patients being treated by paediatricians grows by 160%. The number of road accidents and accidents in the workplace also increases. There are claims that some depression may be linked to the changing of the clocks. One of the few health benefits is an increase in the amount of time that children spend outside in the fresh air — a claim which falls somewhat short of being convincing in this age of television and the Internet.

Does the Commission plan to carry out an impact assessment on the introduction of summer time?

Is the Commission taking the health consequences for people in the EU into consideration?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission is of the opinion that the summer time arrangements as established by Directive 2000/84/EC ([1]) remain suitable, as explained in previous answers to written questions E-012258/2013, E-004523/2013, E-9209-9802/2011 and H-103/2010 ([2]).

([1]) Directive 2000/84/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 January 2001, OJ L 31, 2.2.2001.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-012964/13
till kommissionen
Kent Johansson (ALDE)
(14 november 2013)

Angående: EU-domstolens dom (Mål C-358/11) om harmoniserande verkan av Reachförordningen

EU-domstolen har i ett förhandsavgörande slagit fast att om användningen av farliga kemikalier är begränsat i Reachförordningen får medlemsstaterna inte förbjuda eller begränsa andra användningar av ämnen.

1. Hur förhåller sig kommissionen till avgörandet i fråga och anser kommissionen att en framtida tolkning av Reachförordningen ska förbjuda de medlemsstater som vill gå före i fråga om att begränsa farliga kemikalier?

2. Syftet med Reachförordningen är bland annat att säkerställa en hög skyddsnivå för människors hälsa och miljö och uppnå en hållbar utveckling. Kan kommissionen förklara hur ett hinder för enskilda medlemsstater att besluta om nationella, ambitiösa, förbud i fråga om dessa ämnen bidrar till en högre skyddsnivå för människors hälsa och miljö?

3. Anser inte kommissionen att det är kontraproduktivt att försvåra medlemsstaternas möjligheter att gå före med nationella förbud och visa att det finns alternativ till farliga kemikalier, när bekämpandet av dessa farliga ämnen utgör själva kärnan i Reachförordningens målsättning?

Svar från Antonio Tajani på kommissionens vägnar
(20 december 2013)

1. Kommissionen delar EU-domstolens tolkning i den aktuella domen, dvs. att Reachförordningen harmoniserar bestämmelserna om tillverkning, utsläppande på marknaden och användning av ett ämne som är föremål för en begränsning enligt bilaga XVII till den förordningen. Ett av målen med Reachförordningen är att garantera en hög skyddsnivå för människors hälsa och miljön, och Reachförordningen innehåller lämpliga förfaranden för att uppnå det målet för dessa ämnen. Medlemsstater får ställa mer omfattande krav på begränsningar för dessa kemikalier endast i de två fall som avses i den domen (för att hantera akuta situationer i avsikt att skydda människors hälsa och miljön, eller på grundval av nya vetenskapliga belägg avseende bland annat miljöskydd med anledning av ett problem som är specifikt för den medlemsstaten).

2. Begränsningarna enligt bilaga XVII garanterar en hög skyddsnivå för människors hälsa och miljön. Förfarandet för att ändra eller anta nya begränsningar garanterar att nyligen uppkomna EU-omfattande risker hanteras i hela unionen. Nationella förbud skulle däremot inte kunna ge ett EU-omfattande skydd och skulle undergräva de andra målen med Reach, dvs. fri rörlighet för ämnen på den inre marknaden och främjande av konkurrenskraft och innovation. Det finns skyddsåtgärder i Reach och i fördraget som tillåter nationella åtgärder, förutsatt att det gäller de två fall som avses ovan.

3. Medlemsstaterna är i enlighet med Reach skyldiga att ompröva begränsningar enligt bilaga XVII om de anser att riskerna i samband med tillverkning, utsläppande på marknaden eller användning av ett ämne inte kontrolleras på ett adekvat sätt.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012964/13
to the Commission
Kent Johansson (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: ECJ judgment (Case C-358/11) on the harmonising effect of the Reach Regulation

The ECJ has ruled in a preliminary ruling that while the use of hazardous chemicals is restricted in the REACH Regulation, Member States may not prohibit or restrict other uses of substances.

1. What is the Commission's position on the ruling in question and does the Commission consider that a future interpretation of the REACH Regulation will prohibit action by Member States seeking to go further in terms of restricting hazardous chemicals?

2. One of the aims of the REACH Regulation is to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment and to achieve sustainable development. Can the Commission explain how an obstacle to individual Member States deciding on ambitious, national bans on these substances contributes to a higher level of protection for human health and the environment?

3. Does the Commission not consider it counterproductive to obstruct Member States' opportunities to go ahead with national bans and show that there are alternatives to hazardous chemicals, when combating these dangerous substances constitutes the very essence of the objectives pursued by the REACH Regulation?

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

1. The Commission shares the interpretation, as expressed by the ECJ in the referred judgment, that the REACH Regulation harmonises the requirements relating to the manufacture, placing on the market or use of a substance which is the subject of a restriction under Annex XVII to that regulation. One of the aims of the REACH Regulation is to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment, and the REACH Regulation contains the adequate procedures to achieve that aim for those substances. Member States are only allowed to go further in terms of restricting those chemicals in the two cases referred to in that judgment (in order to respond to an urgent situation to protect human health or the environment, or on the basis of new scientific evidence relating *inter alia* to the protection of the environment on grounds of a problem specific to that Member State).

2. The restrictions under Annex XVII achieve a high level of protection for human health and the environment. The procedure for amending or adopting new restrictions ensures that any newly emerged, EU-wide risk is addressed throughout the Union. National bans, on the contrary, would fail to provide EU-wide protection, and would undermine the other objectives of REACH, namely the free circulation of substances on the internal market and enhancing competitiveness and innovation. There are safeguards in REACH and in the Treaty allowing for national measures, provided that the two cases referred to above are at hand.

3. Member States have the obligation under REACH to initiate a re-examination of any restriction under its Annex XVII if they consider that the risks related to the manufacture, placing on the market or use of a substance are not adequately controlled.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012967/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(14. November 2013)

Betrifft: Aktuelle Statistiken und Kosten im Zusammenhang mit Multipler Sklerose in der EU

In der Zone um den Äquator ist die Zahl der Menschen, die an Multipler Sklerose erkranken/erkrankt sind geringer als in den nördlichen und südlichen Breiten.

Ebenso ist bekannt, dass Menschen, die im frühen Lebensalter aus MS-reichen Zonen in MS-arme Zonen übersiedeln, zum Beispiel von Europa nach Südafrika, das Erkrankungsrisiko des neuen Landes übernehmen. Daraus resultiert, so die gängige Meinung, dass Umweltfaktoren im früheren Lebensalter an der Entstehung von MS im späteren Lebensalter beteiligt sind.

1. Sind der Kommission aktuelle (2010-2012) Details bezüglich folgender Faktoren bekannt:

1.1. Anzahl der MS-Erkrankungen in der Europäischen Union,

1.2. Anzahl der MS-Erkrankungen in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten unterteilt nach:

1.2.1. Anzahl der MS-Erkrankungen von Frauen,

1.2.2. Anzahl der MS-Erkrankungen von Männern,

1.3. Anzahl der MS-Erkrankungen in Altersgruppen (und nach Frauen/Männer) unterteilt:

1.3.1. bis 20 Jahre,

1.3.2. bis 40 Jahre,

1.3.3. bis 60 Jahre,

1.3.4. über 60 Jahre.

2. Laut einem Bericht gibt es in Deutschland circa 120 000 an MS erkrankte Personen, und jährlich gibt es 5 000-6 000 Neuerkrankte wobei der Anteil der erwachsenen Frauen überwiegt. Ist der Kommission dieses Detail bekannt? Wenn ja, wie sieht die Empfehlung zur Unterstützung am Arbeitsplatz als auch in der Pflege europaweit aus?

2.a. Was sind die durchschnittlichen Kosten pro Patient mit MS in Europa? Welche Empfehlungen gedenkt die Kommission hier auszusprechen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(10. Januar 2014)

2007 wurden im Rahmen des Projekts „Multiple Sclerosis — the information Dividend“ ([1]) für einen von der EU finanzierten Bericht über schwere und chronische Krankheiten ([2]) Nachforschungen zur Multiplen Sklerose (MS) angestellt. Der Bericht enthält Schätzungen zur MS-Prävalenz und -Inzidenz in Europa, aufgeschlüsselt nach Geschlecht und Altersgruppe, sowie die Feststellung, dass sich die geschätzte wirtschaftliche Belastung — direkte medizinische und nicht-medizinische Kosten sowie indirekte Kosten — durch MS im Jahr 2005 in Europa auf 27 EUR pro Einwohner belief. Weitere Daten zu MS liefern aktuellere, ebenfalls von der EU finanzierte Projekte, etwa das Europäische Register für Multiple Sklerose (EUReMS) ([3]) oder die Europäische Multiple-Sklerose-Plattform (EMSP) ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2006104
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_threats/non_com/docs/mcd_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101213
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20123302

Gemäß der Richtlinie 89/391/EWG des Rates über die Durchführung von Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Sicherheit und des Gesundheitsschutzes der Arbeitnehmer bei der Arbeit sind Arbeitgeber verpflichtet, für die Sicherheit und den Gesundheitsschutz der Arbeitnehmer in Bezug auf alle Aspekte, die die Arbeit betreffen, zu sorgen. Dies gilt natürlich auch für Arbeitnehmer, die unter Krankheiten wie MS leiden. Die Arbeitgeber sollten die erforderlichen Maßnahmen auf der Grundlage mehrerer allgemeiner Grundsätze der Gefahrenverhütung ergreifen. Einer dieser Grundsätze betrifft die „individuelle Anpassung der Arbeit, insbesondere bei der Arbeitsplatzgestaltung, der Wahl der Arbeitsmittel und der Wahl der Arbeits- und Produktionsverfahren".

Im Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der EU ist Folgendes festgelegt: „Bei der Tätigkeit der Union wird die Verantwortung der Mitgliedstaaten für die Festlegung ihrer Gesundheitspolitik sowie für die Organisation des Gesundheitswesens und die medizinische Versorgung gewahrt". Die Kommission gedenkt folglich nicht, Empfehlungen zu MS auszusprechen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012967/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Up-to-date statistics and costs in connection with multiple sclerosis in the EU

In the zone around the equator, the number of people who develop/have developed multiple sclerosis (MS) is lower than in northern and southern latitudes.

It is also well known that people who relocate at an early age from a zone with a high prevalence of MS to a zone with a low prevalence of MS, for example from Europe to South Africa, assume the disease risk of the new country. The conclusion from this, according to current opinion, is that environmental factors in early life are involved in the development of MS later in life.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the current detailed data (2010-2012) relating to the following factors:

1.1. The number of people with MS in the European Union;

1.2. The number of people with MS in the individual Member States, broken down by:

1.2.1. The number of women with MS;

1.2.2. The number of men with MS;

1.3. The number of people with MS broken down by age group (and gender):

1.3.1. Up to the age of 20;

1.3.2. Up to the age of 40;

1.3.3. Up to the age of 60;

1.3.4. Over 60?

2. According to one report, there are around 120 000 people with MS in Germany, and there are 5000-6000 new cases a year, the majority of which are adult women. Is the Commission familiar with these details? If so, what support is being recommended in the workplace and also in healthcare throughout Europe?

2.a. What are the average costs per patient with MS in Europe? What recommendations is the Commission considering issuing in this regard?

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

In 2007, the project 'Multiple Sclerosis — the information Dividend' ([1]) analysed Multiple Sclerosis for the EU-funded report on Major and Chronic Diseases ([2]). In addition to estimates on prevalence and incidence of Multiple Sclerosis by gender and age group in Europe, the report stated that the estimated economic burden of Multiple Sclerosis in 2005, with regards to direct medical and non-medical costs, and indirect costs, was EUR 27 per European inhabitant. Additional information on Multiple Sclerosis is available from more recent EU-funded projects such as the European Register for Multiple Sclerosis (EUReMS) ([3]) or the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2006104
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_threats/non_com/docs/mcd_report_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101213
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20123302

Council Directive 89/391/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, foresees that the employer shall have a duty to ensure the safety and health of workers in every aspect related to the work. This is of course to be applied to workers suffering from conditions like Multiple Sclerosis. The employer should implement necessary measures on the basis of several general principles of prevention. One of these principles, regards 'adapting the work to the individual, especially as regards the design of work places, the choice of work equipment and the choice of working and production methods'.

According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, 'Union action shall 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'. Consequently, the Commission is not considering to issue recommendations on the treatment of Multiple Sclerosis.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012969/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(14 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άναρχη λατόμευση στην οροσειρά του Πενταδακτύλου

Ο πρόεδρος της οργάνωσης για την καταπολέμηση της διάβρωσης του εδάφους, αναδάσωσης και φυσικής προστασίας, Ορχάν Αϊντενίζ, επανέφερε στην δημοσιότητα το ζήτημα της ανεπανόρθωτης περιβαλλοντικής ζημιάς στην οροσειρά του Πενταδακτύλου.

Όπως αναφέρει ο κ. Αϊντενίζ, το ζήτημα είναι επείγον και θα πρέπει να γίνουν άμεσες ενέργειες ώστε να αποφευχθεί περαιτέρω φυσική καταστροφή.

Παρόλο που το ευρωπαϊκό κεκτημένο παραμένει υπό αναστολή στο κατεχόμενο τμήμα της Κύπρου, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έχει την δυνατότητα και οφείλει να ασκήσει πίεση προς το ψευδοκράτος ώστε να προστατευθεί η περιοχή. Σκοπεύει να το πράξει;

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή προτίθεται να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλία με στόχο την γενική προστασία του περιβάλλοντος στα κατεχόμενα μέχρι να διευθετηθεί το κυπριακό πρόβλημα;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013415/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ακρωτηριάζεται ο Πενταδάκτυλος από την άναρχη λατόμευση

Πρόσφατο δημοσίευμα της τουρκοκυπριακής εφημερίδας Cyprus Today αναφέρει ότι ο Πενταδάκτυλος κινδυνεύει λόγω της συνεχιζόμενης άναρχης λατόμευσης στην περιοχή. Ελληνοκύπριοι και Τουρκοκύπριοι κρούομε και πάλι τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου.

Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι ακόμη και ο τουρκοκύπριος πρόεδρος της οργάνωσης για την καταπολέμηση της διάβρωσης του εδάφους, την αναδάσωση και τη φυσική προστασία στο ψευδοκράτος Ορχάν Αϊντενίζ, δήλωσε ότι η κατάσταση είναι πολύ κρίσιμη και ότι πρέπει να ληφθούν άμεσα μέτρα. Με την άναρχη λατόμευση, η οροσειρά του Πενταδακτύλου όχι μόνο αλλάζει σχήμα, αλλά καταστρέφεται το περιβάλλον, η πανίδα και η χλωρίδα που χρειάστηκαν αιώνες για να διαμορφωθούν.

Ερωτάται λοιπόν, η Επιτροπή:

— Είναι ενήμερη γι' αυτή τη συνεχιζόμενη καταστροφή στην οροσειρά του Πενταδάκτυλου;

— Έχει την πολιτική βούληση, την τόλμη και τη δυνατότητα να παρέμβει άμεσα, πιέζοντας την Άγκυρα και το ψευδοκράτος να τερματίσουν πάραυτα όλη αυτή την καταστροφή;

— Γιατί αφέθηκε η κατεχόμενη Κύπρος και το περιβάλλον της να γίνεται βορά στον τούρκο κατακτητή, κάτω από τα απαθή βλέμματα διεθνών οργανισμών και της ΕΕ;

— Γιατί η Επιτροπή ανέχεται αυτή τη συνεχιζόμενη βαρβαρότητα ενάντια σε ευρωπαϊκά εδάφη χωρίς να παρεμβαίνει;

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

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην απάντησή της στην προηγούμενη γραπτή ερώτηση E-008001/2012 ([1]).

Η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει να παρακολουθεί το θέμα και επισημαίνει τακτικά στην τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα την ανάγκη να εφαρμοστούν τα ενδεδειγμένα μέτρα διατήρησης και να προστατευτεί αυτή η περιβαλλοντικά ευαίσθητη περιοχή.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012969/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Uncontrolled quarrying on Mount Pentadaktylos

Orhan Aydeniz, chairman of the 'Cyprus Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats', has again brought to public attention the irreparable environmental damage being done to the Pentadaktylos mountain range.

As Dr Aydeniz says, this is an urgent issue and immediate action is needed to prevent further destruction.

Despite the fact that the Community *acquis* remains suspended in the occupied part of Cyprus, the Commission is able and has a duty to exert pressure on the pseudo-state to protect the area. Does it intend to do so?

Does the Commission intend to launch an initiative aimed at generally protecting the environment in the occupied territories until such time as a solution is found to the Cyprus problem?

Question for written answer E-013415/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Mutilation of Pentadaktylos mountain range as a result of unregulated quarrying

The Turkish Cypriot newspaper *Cyprus Today* has recently reported acute concerns expressed by both Greek and Turkish Cypriots at the damage to the Pentadaktylos mountain range likely to result from continued unregulated quarrying activities.

The Turkish Cypriot head of the organisation responsible for measures to combat soil erosion restore forests and protect the natural environment, Orhan Aideniz, has himself described the situation as alarming and called for immediate action. This unregulated quarrying is not only mutilating the Pentadaktylos mountain range but also destroying the environment, together with flora and fauna established there over centuries.

In view of this:

— Is the Commission aware of the continuing mutilation of the Pentadakytlos mountain range ?

— Does it have the political will, courage and resources to take immediate action and bring pressure to bear on Ankara and on the pseudo-state to end this environmental destruction without further ado?

— Why is occupied Cyprus and its environment being allowed to fall victim to the Turkish occupiers under the unresponsive eye of international organisations such as the EU?

— Why is the Commission continuing to allow such outrages to occur on European soil without intervening?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous written question E-008001/2012 ([1]).

The Commission continues to monitor the issue and regularly raises with the Turkish Cypriot community the need to apply appropriate conservation measures and protect the environmentally sensitive area.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/redirect-plenary-archive.html?rewrite=parliamentary-questions

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012970/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Agricultural payments to the UK

In 2012, 32% of the EU's total expenditure went towards agriculture (market and direct support).

Could the Commission advise me as to how much of this was paid to the farming sector in the UK?

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

The total amount paid to the United Kingdom regarding intervention in agricultural markets and direct aids in Financial Year 2012 was EUR 3 345 million.

The financial reports of the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund are published and can be found using the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/financial-reports/eagf/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012971/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: EU VAT revenue

Of the 10% of the EU's income that came from VAT collection in Member States in 2012, could the Commission advise me of what proportion of this came from the UK?

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

The UK's share in the total amount of the VAT own resource for the year 2012 was determined at 18,79%:

— VAT own resources made available by the UK: 2 794,3 million EUR

— VAT own resources made available by EU -27: 14 871,2 million EUR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012972/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Payments towards rural development, the environment, fisheries and health

In 2012, 11% of the EU's total expenditure (EUR 138.6 billion) went towards rural development, the environment, fisheries and health.

Could the Commission tell me how much of this was paid to the UK?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

The data required by the Honourable Member is regularly published by the European Commission on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm

Here it is possible to find the detailed breakdown of payments per Member State and per year.

However it is relevant to underline that for the environment component, under the LIFE+ regulation (Regulation EC 614/2007) there are no direct payments made to Member States. Rather, the envelope is used for grant agreements (partnership agreements, financial mechanisms and funds, co-funding of operating or action grants for projects — which have to account for at least 78% of the total resources) or public procurement contracts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012973/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Payments: employment and social affairs

In 2012, 8% of the EU's total expenditure (EUR 138.6 billion) went towards employment and social affairs.

Could the Commission tell me how much of this was paid to the UK?

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

Payments made to the United Kingdom from the European Social Fund (ESF) in 2012 amounted to EUR 731.4 million.

More generally, expenditure and revenue data for the EU Budget is regularly published by the European Commission on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm

Here it is possible to find the detailed breakdown of payments per Member State and per year.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012975/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(14 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εξωτερική πολιτική

Ζητείται από την Επιτροπή να παράσχει τη γνώμη της σχετικά με το κατά πόσον θα ήταν σκόπιμο και/ή ωφέλιμο για την ΕΕ να επικαιροποιήσει και να ενισχύσει την εξωτερική πολιτική της, ούτως ώστε να απαγορεύσει την εισαγωγή αγαθών και υπηρεσιών από τρίτες χώρες οι οποίες δεν σέβονται τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα ή την ασφάλεια των εργαζομένων.

Απάντηση του κ. De Gucht εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή διεξάγει διάλογο για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα στον τομέα της απασχόλησης και της κοινωνικής πολιτικής, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των θεμάτων της υγείας και της ασφάλειας στον χώρο εργασίας καθώς και άλλων θεμάτων σχετικών με τα εργασιακά πρότυπα, με διάφορες χώρες και περιοχές εταίρους. Οι δραστηριότητες αυτές συνήθως συνοδεύονται από προγράμματα βοήθειας που αποβλέπουν στην ανάπτυξη διοικητικής ικανότητας, πολιτικής και νομοθετικού πλαισίου για τη βελτίωση του σεβασμού των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, των εργασιακών προτύπων και των συνθηκών εργασίας στην αντίστοιχη χώρα. Η ΕΕ αναλαμβάνει επίσης τη διεξαγωγή διαλόγου με κάποιες τρίτες χώρες αναφορικά με τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα και ζητήματα συνδεόμενα με την εργασία στο πλαίσιο της εμπορικής της πολιτικής.

Γενικά, η ΕΕ προτιμά μια προσέγγιση βασισμένη στην παροχή κινήτρων και στον διάλογο κατά τον από μέρους της χειρισμό θεμάτων ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και ασφάλειας των εργαζομένων σε τρίτες χώρες. Στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας αυτής, βοηθάμε επίσης τις χώρες εταίρους στην υλοποίηση των υποχρεώσεών τους όσον αφορά τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα. Αυτός είναι ο καλύτερος τρόπος για να συμβάλουμε στην αντιμετώπιση των αιτίων στα οποία οφείλονται οι παραβιάσεις των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων. Αντίθετα, η επιβολή κυρώσεων και απαγορεύσεων εισαγωγών — αν και ενδεχομένως να αποτελούν περισσότερο ορατές προσεγγίσεις — τείνουν να έχουν παράπλευρες κοινωνικοοικονομικές επιπτώσεις στον πληθυσμό γενικότερα. Η ΕΕ αξιολογεί προσεκτικά, κατά περίπτωση, την επιλογή λήψης αναγκαστικών μέτρων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012975/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: External policy

The Commission is asked to give its opinion on whether it would be advisable and/or beneficial for the EU to update and strengthen its external policy, so as to forbid the import of goods and services from third countries that do not respect human rights or worker safety.

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

The EU conducts human rights and policy dialogues in the area of employment and social policy, including on health and safety at work and other labour standards with a number of partner countries and regions. They are often accompanied by assistance projects aiming at development of administrative capacity, policy and legislative framework to improve respect for human rights, labour standards and working conditions in the country of question. The EU also engages in dialogues with relevant third countries on human rights and labour-related issues relevant in the context of its trade policy.

In general, the EU prefers an incentive- and dialogue-based approach to dealing with human rights and workers' safety issues in third countries. In the process, we also assist partner countries in implementing their human rights obligations. This is the better way to help address the root causes of human rights violations. Conversely, sanctions and import bans — though possibly more visible approaches — tend to have collateral socioeconomic effects on the population at large. The EU carefully assesses the option of coercive action on a case-by-case basis.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012979/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(14. November 2013)

Betrifft: Lage der Neugeborenen/Frühgeborenen in Europa

10 % aller Geburten weltweit sind Frühgeburten.

1a. Wie viele Frühgeburten gibt es im Durchschnitt in Europa?

1b. Kann die Kommission einen Prozentsatz pro Mitgliedstaat angeben?

1c. Kann die Kommission Angaben über die Durchschnittskosten (Sozialleistungen/Kosten im Gesundheitswesen) einer Frühgeburt in der Europäischen Union vorlegen?

Viele Arzneimittel, die Neugeborenen und Frühgeburten verabreicht werden, wurden nicht für diese Zwecke getestet. 90 % der verwendeten Arzneimittel werden nämlich für Erwachsene entwickelt, wobei die Ärzte bei Kleinkindern niedrigere Dosen verabreichen, obwohl über die Auswirkungen dieser Arzneimittel auf Kleinkinder keinerlei Untersuchungen durchgeführt wurden.

2a. Kann die Kommission Auskunft über den aktuellen Stand der Forschung in Bezug auf sichere Arzneimittel für Kinder erteilen?

2b. Kann die Kommission eine Übersicht über die Kosten im Zusammenhang mit den Arzneimitteln, die Kindern verabreicht werden, geben?

Berichten zufolge starben 2012 in Deutschland 16 Neugeborene infolge schlechter Hygienestandards auf Geburts- und Neugeborenenstationen.

3a. Kann die Kommission europäische Durchschnittszahlen darüber vorlegen, wie viele Todesfälle bei Neugeborenen und Frühgeburten auf schlechte Hygienestandards zurückzuführen sind?

3b. Beabsichtigt die Kommission, europäische Leitlinien für die Mitgliedstaaten festzulegen, damit die Hygienestandards auf den Geburts- und Neugeborenenstationen verbessert werden?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(7. Januar 2014)

Die Europäische Kommission hat das Projekt Euro-Peristat ([1]) finanziert, das im Jahr 2013 den Bericht zur Perinatalgesundheit in Europa „Health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010“ ([2]) veröffentlicht hat. Laut dem Bericht liegt der Anteil der Frühgeburten bei den lebend geborenen Kindern in Europa zwischen 5 % und 10 %; der Bericht umfasst Daten aus allen Mitgliedstaaten und Regionen.

Der Kommission liegen keine Zahlen zu den mit einer Frühgeburt verbundenen Kosten, den negativen Auswirkungen von Arzneimitteln bei Säuglingen oder dem Zusammenhang zwischen Todesfällen bei Neugeborenen und schlechten Hygienestandards vor. Allerdings liefern die Gesundheitsindikatoren der Europäischen Gemeinschaft ([3]) zur Altersstruktur bei Müttern Daten zu deren Bildungsstand, und Eurostat verfügt über Daten zu Mütter- und Kindergesundheit ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301
([2]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([4]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_sha1m&lang=en

Um die Anzahl der zugelassenen und speziell für die Anwendung bei Kindern erprobten Arzneimittel zu erhöhen, hat die EU im Jahr 2006 eine Verordnung über Kinderarzneimittel ([5]) erlassen, mit der ein System von Verpflichtungen, Anreizen und Bonussen eingerichtet wird. Ein im Juni 2013 veröffentlichter Fortschrittsbericht der Kommission ([6]) zeigt erste Verbesserungen. Die Zahl der Probanden in pädiatrischen Studien ist allerdings deutlich angestiegen, insbesondere in der Altersgruppe 0 bis 23 Monate, die vor 2008 normalerweise nicht in Arzneimittelprüfungen einbezogen wurde.

Die Empfehlung des Rates zur Sicherheit der Patienten unter Einschluss der Prävention und Eindämmung von therapieassoziierten Infektionen ([7]) umfasst einige Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Patientensicherheit, wie die Durchführung regelmäßiger Schulungen zu den Grundprinzipien der Hygiene und der Infektionsprävention und -kontrolle für das gesamte Personal im Gesundheitswesen. Die Empfehlung gilt für das gesamte Gesundheitswesen.

([5]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1901/2006, ABl. L 378 vom 27.12.2006, S. 1.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/paediatrics/2013_com443/paediatric_report-com(2013)443_de.pdf
([7]) Empfehlung des Rates (2009/C-151/01).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012979/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(14 November 2013)

Subject: Situation of newborn and premature babies in Europe

Worldwide, 10% of all births are preterm.

1a. Does the Commission know what the European average is for preterm births?

1b. Can the Commission give a percentage for each EU Member State?

1c. Can the Commission provide figures for the average cost (social services/health costs) of a preterm birth in the European Union?

A high proportion of the medication given to newborn and preterm babies has not been tested for this purpose. In fact, 90% of the medication used is designed for adults, with doctors using lower doses when administering it to infants, despite the fact that no research has been carried out into the effects of these drugs on small children.

2a. Can the Commission provide an update on the state of research into safe medication for children?

2b. Can the Commission give an outline of the costs linked to the adverse effects of medication given to infants?

It is reported that 16 newborns died in Germany in 2012 because of poor hygiene standards in obstetrical and neonatal wards.

3a. Can the Commission provide European average figures for newborn and preterm baby deaths linked to poor standards of hygiene?

3b. Does the Commission intend to set European guidelines for the Member States, in order to increase hygiene standards in obstetrical and neonatal wards?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The European Commission has funded the Euro-Peristat project ([1]) which released in 2013 the European Perinatal Health Report 'Health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010' ([2]). The report states that the preterm birth rate for live births varied from about 5% to 10% in Europe and provides data by Member States or regions.

The Commission does not have figures regarding the costs linked to preterm birth, the adverse effects of medication given to infants or regarding new born baby deaths linked to poor standards of hygiene. However, the European Core Health Indicators ([3]) on mothers' age distribution provides data on their educational level and Eurostat on maternal and child health ([4]).

In order to increase the number of authorised products that have been specifically tested for their use in children, the EU adopted in 2006 the Paediatric Regulation ([5]), setting up a system of obligations, incentives and rewards. A Commission progress report published in June 2013 ([6]) points to first improvements. There has been for example an evident increase in the number of paediatric study participants in the age group from 0 to 23 months, who were normally not included in medicinal product trials prior to 2008.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301
([2]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([4]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_sha1m&lang=en
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006, OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 1.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/paediatrics/2013_com443/paediatric_report-com(2013)443_en.pdf

The 2009 Council Recommendation on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections ([7]) envisages a number of measures aiming at increasing patient safety. The measures include providing regular training for all healthcare personnel on basic principles of hygiene and infection prevention and control. The recommendation applies to all healthcare settings.

([7]) Council Recommendation 2009/C 151/01.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-012988/13
do Komisji
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(15 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Budowa sieci TEN-T w Polsce

W związku z przyjęciem budżetu Unii na lata 2014-2020 realne jest stworzenie Transeuropejskiej Sieci Transportowej (TEN-T), jednego z najważniejszych przedsięwzięć pogłębiających integrację w Europie.

Zgodnie z obowiązującymi zasadami, wszystkie ostateczne decyzje o inwestycjach przekraczających swoją wartością kwotę 50 mln EUR wymagają akceptacji Komisji Europejskiej, co oznacza, że powinna ona dysponować szczegółowymi informacjami o tych inwestycjach. Proszę w związku z tym o odpowiedź na dwa pytania:

1. Jakie przedsięwzięcia w ramach programu TEN-T zgłosiła Polska na lata 2014-2020?

2. Jakie są planowane szczegółowe trasy budowy sieci kolejowej i drogowej w ramach projektu TEN-T w Polsce, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem ich przebiegu w województwie kujawsko-pomorskim?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(6 grudnia 2013 r.)

W chwili obecnej Komisja nie jest w stanie szczegółowo odpowiedzieć na to pytanie, ponieważ przygotowania do kolejnego okresu programowania są nadal w toku.

Zasadniczo, finansowanie za pomocą instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" ([1]) (CEF, z ang. *Connecting Europe Facility*) odbywa się w drodze pojedynczych zaproszeń do składania wniosków. Pierwsze takie zaproszenie ma być ogłoszone wiosną 2014 r. Dwa korytarze sieci bazowej przecinają terytorium Polski. Są to: korytarz bałtycko-adriatycki (prowadzący z portów polskiego Bałtyku do adriatyckich portów w Rawennie, Wenecji, w słoweńskim Koprze i w Trieście) oraz korytarz Morze Północne–Bałtyk (łączący z portami Rotterdam-Helsinki). Projekty mające na celu poprawę połączeń linii kolejowych, portów, jak również transgranicznych odcinków dróg należących do tych dwóch korytarzy mogą ubiegać się o finansowanie z chwilą opublikowania stosownych zaproszeń.

Przez terytorium województwa kujawsko-pomorskiego przebiega natomiast odgałęzienie korytarza bałtycko-adriatyckiego ([2]).

([1]) COM(2011) 0665.
([2]) Pozwalam sobie zwrócić uwagę Szanownego Pana Posła na dokument: „Część I: WYKAZ WSTĘPNIE USTALONYCH PROJEKTÓW ZWIĄZANYCH Z SIECIĄ BAZOWĄ W DZIEDZINIE TRANSPORTU", wchodzący w skład rozporządzenia ustanawiającego instrument „Łącząc Europę" w celu uzyskania szczegółowych informacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012988/13
to the Commission
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Building of the TEN-T network in Poland

Following the adoption of the EU budget for 2014-2020, the creation of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), one of the most important projects for deepening integration in Europe, is to become a reality.

Under the rules in force, all final decisions on investments in excess of EUR 50 million require the approval of the Commission, which should therefore have detailed information about these investments at its disposal. In this regard, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What projects has Poland registered under the TEN-T programme for the period 2014-2020?

2. What are the proposed detailed routes of the rail and road network to be constructed under the TEN-T programme in Poland, particularly those running through the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Province?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 December 2013)

At the present time the Commission is not in a position to answer this question in detail because the preparations for the next programming period are still ongoing.

The funding from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([1]) is based on individual calls. The first call is expected to be published in spring 2014. Two core network corridors cross Poland: the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor (linking the Baltic ports in Poland to the Adriatic ports of Ravenna, Venice, Koper and Trieste) and the North-Sea Baltic Corridor (Rotterdam-Helsinki). Projects to improve rail lines, port connections, as well as cross-border road sections in the two corridors can be submitted for funding when such calls are published.

The Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship is crossed by a branch of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor ([2]).

([1]) COM(2011) 665.
([2]) The Honourable Member is invited to consult 'PART I: LIST OF PRE-IDENTIFIED PROJECTS ON THE CORE NETWORK IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT' of the CEF Regulation for details. .

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012990/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Objet: Entrée des hôpitaux dans l'ère numérique

Plusieurs rapports tendent à démontrer qu'à l'horizon 2030, la façon de se soigner diffèrera totalement des méthodes utilisées aujourd'hui. En effet, il apparaît que la médecine pourrait être capable de personnaliser son diagnostic en fonction des caractéristiques propres de chaque individu et notamment de son génome c'est-à-dire de l'ensemble du matériel génétique.

Cette médecine de précision prévoit une collecte et une exploitation des données des patients.

Le but de cette révolution technologique est de constituer les profilages génétiques et de faire évoluer les registres traditionnels, afin de rechercher systématiquement des corrélations entre le patrimoine génétique et l'expression de certaines maladies.

La nouvelle approche en question, au croisement de la médecine et de l'informatique, est déjà mise à l'essai aux États-Unis, au Canada et en Australie. Ces États ont su accompagner ces changements en proposant de nombreuses formations à destination des personnels hospitaliers.

Dans quelle mesure la Commission entend-elle accompagner ce nouveau processus à l'échelle européenne, étant pris en considération les enjeux tant de santé que de formation informatique?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(8 janvier 2014)

L'approche médicale mentionnée par la parlementaire dans sa question est souvent appelée «médecine personnalisée». Elle peut être décrite comme étant un modèle qui utilise le profilage moléculaire pour déterminer la bonne stratégie thérapeutique au bon moment pour le bon patient ainsi que la prédisposition aux maladies et/ou pour agir de façon préventive, en temps voulu et de façon ciblée ([1]). La Commission entend assurer la mise en place des conditions propices à l'utilisation de la médecine personnalisée dans les systèmes de soins de santé européens au moyen du financement de la recherche, de la législation et de la coordination des politiques. Pour que l'introduction de la médecine personnalisée s'opère avec succès dans les systèmes de soins de santé, il faudra également que des efforts considérables soient déployés aux niveaux national et régional dans l'ensemble de l'Union européenne.

Depuis 2007, l'UE a consacré à la médecine personnalisée plus d'un milliard d'euros sur les fonds alloués à la recherche dans le domaine de la santé ([2]). Par la suite, le financement au titre « d'Horizon 2020», le nouveau programme-cadre de l'UE qui sera lancé à la fin de cette année, continuera à soutenir ce domaine en pleine évolution.

En parallèle, la révision dont font actuellement l'objet d'importants volets de la législation relative aux diagnostics in-vitro et aux essais cliniques, complétée par la coopération entre les États membres au sujet de la place de la médecine personnalisée dans les systèmes de soins de santé, remédiera aux problèmes recensés dans le développement de cette médecine.

L'investissement dans la recherche dont il est question plus haut sera assorti d'orientations sur «des méthodes concrètes permettant d'utiliser les données médicales», comme le prévoit l'article 14 de la directive sur les droits des patients en matière de soins transfrontaliers. En outre, le plan d'action sur la santé en ligne 2012-2020 définit des actions spécifiques pour promouvoir les compétences numériques des professionnels de la santé.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/latest_news/2013-10_personalised_medicine_en.pdf
([2]) Ce chiffre correspond aux fonds alloués à la recherche en matière de santé dans le cadre du thème «Santé» du septième programme-cadre de recherche et de développement technologique (7e PC).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012990/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Hospitals entering the digital age

Several reports appear to indicate that by 2030, healthcare methods will be entirely different from those used today. It seems that medicine could be capable of tailoring diagnoses according to the characteristics of each individual and in particular their genome, which is to say the entirety of their genetic material.

This precise form of medicine will require the collection and use of patient data.

The aim of this technological revolution is to obtain genetic profiles and develop traditional records, in order to systematically research correlations between genetic inheritance and the expression of certain diseases.

The new approach in question, at the crossroads of medicine and computer science, has already been put to the test in the United States, Canada and Australia. These countries have be able to support the changes by offering a range training courses targeted at hospital staff.

To what extent does the Commission intend to support this new process at European level, taking into consideration the challenges both in terms of healthcare and IT training?

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

The medical approach outlined in the parliamentarian's question is often referred to as personalised medicine. Personalised medicine can be described as a model that uses molecular profiling for tailoring the right therapeutic strategy for the right person at the right time, and/or to determine the predisposition to disease and/or to deliver timely and targeted prevention ([1]). Through research funding, legislation, and policy coordination, the Commission aims to develop the right conditions for the uptake of personalised healthcare in European healthcare systems. Successful uptake of personalised medicine in healthcare systems will also require considerable efforts on national and regional levels throughout the EU

Since 2007, the EU has committed over EUR 1 billion of health research funding underpinning the development of personalised medicine ([2]) Going forward, funding under Horizon 2020, the EU's new framework program to be launched at the end of this year, will continue to support this evolving field.

In parallel, ongoing revisions of important pieces of legislation related to in-vitro diagnostics and clinical trials, complemented by cooperation between the Member States on the value of personalised medicine in the health systems, will address identified development challenges.

The abovementioned investment in research will be accompanied with guidelines on 'effective methods for enabling the use of medical information' as required by Article 14 of the directive on patients' rights in cross border care. Moreover, the eHealth Action Plan 2012 — 2020 sets out specific activities to promote the digital skills of healthcare professionals.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/files/latest_news/2013-10_personalised_medicine_en.pdf
([2]) This figure refers to health research funding through the Health Theme of the Seventh Framework Program for Research and Technological Development (FP 7).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012994/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Objet: Utilisation des tablettes électroniques dans les avions

L'Agence américaine de l'aviation civile (FAA) a annoncé cette semaine que les tablettes et les consoles de jeux vidéo pourraient, d'ici la fin de l'année, rester allumées pendant le décollage et l'atterrissage dans les avions américains. En effet, l'interdiction portant sur l'utilisation des appareils électroniques imposée il y a cinquante ans n'est plus nécessaire pour des appareils numériques modernes à faible rayonnement. De plus, davantage de compagnies aériennes offriront un accès Wi-Fi à leurs passagers. Les téléphones portables, en revanche, continueront d'être interdits pendant les vols.

Cette extension de l'autorisation de l'utilisation d'appareils électroniques durant toutes les phases de vol n'aura aucun impact négatif sur la sécurité des passagers. Toutefois, dans de rares cas où la visibilité est faible à cause du mauvais temps, il pourrait être demandé aux passagers d'éteindre ces appareils.

Pour leur part, les autorités européennes de l'aviation ont affirmé qu'elles envisageaient, elles aussi, d'autoriser l'usage de ces appareils électroniques durant toutes les phases de vol.

Aussi, la Commission compte-t-elle encourager l'Agence européenne de sécurité aérienne (AESA) à suivre les recommandations de la FAA et à également autoriser ces appareils dans les avions européens de manière à assurer l'imposition de règles de sécurité similaires au niveau mondial et des conditions de voyage confortables pour les passagers?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(18 décembre 2013)

Le 13 novembre 2013, l'Agence européenne de la sécurité aérienne (AESA), qui travaille en étroite coopération avec la Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) américaine sur l'utilisation en vol des appareils électroniques portatifs (AEP), y compris des tablettes, a décidé d'autoriser une utilisation accrue des AEP à bord des avions exploités par des compagnies aériennes de l'UE:
http://easa.europa.eu/communications/press-releases/EASA-press-release.php?id=125

L'Agence a déjà mis à jour les documents d'orientation nécessaires pour permettre aux compagnies aériennes d'évaluer les risques des AEP pour le fonctionnement des équipements des avions afin qu'elles s'assurent de l'innocuité de l'emploi de ces dispositifs à bord de leurs appareils. Des lignes directrices supplémentaires ont été élaborées pour aider les constructeurs aériens à concevoir des avions insensibles à l'énergie électromagnétique dégagée par les AEP.

D'autres informations pertinentes ont été fournies par la Commission dans sa réponse à la question écrite E-011188/2013 ([1]).

([1]) Celle-ci peut être consultée à l'adresse http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012994/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Use of electronic tablets on planes

The American civil aviation agency, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), announced this week that tablets and video game consoles could, by the end of the year, remain switched on during take-off and landing on American planes. This is because the ban on the use of electronic equipment imposed 50 years ago is no longer necessary for modern digital devices with low radiation. Furthermore, more and more airlines will be offering Wi-Fi access to their passengers. The use of mobile phones, on the other hand, continues to be prohibited during flights.

Extending the authorised use of electronic devices throughout the flight will not have any negative impact on passenger safety. However, in rare circumstances when visibility is poor due to bad weather, passengers could be requested to turn them off.

The European aviation authorities, for their part, have stated that they also envisage authorising the use of such electronic devices throughout flights.

Does the Commission intend to encourage the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to follow the recommendations of the FAA by also authorising these devices on European planes to ensure safety rules are imposed in a similar manner worldwide and comfortable travel conditions for passengers?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2013)

Working very closely with the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on the use of Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs) in flight, including tablets, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) decided on 13 November 2013 to allow the expanded use of PEDs on board aircraft operated by European airlines:
http://easa.europa.eu/communications/press-releases/EASA-press-release.php?id=125

The Agency has already updated the necessary guidance material to allow airlines to assess the PED risks against aircraft equipment performance in order to prove whether the devices are safe to use on their aircraft. Further guidance has been developed to enable aircraft manufacturers to design aircraft that are tolerant to PED electromagnetic energy.

Other relevant information has been provided by the Commission in its answer to Written Question E-011188/2013 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013007/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(15 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προσωρινή ευρωέξοδος

Την έξοδο της Ελλάδας, της Πορτογαλίας και, πιθανόν, της Ισπανίας από το ευρώ προτείνει ο επικεφαλής του ευρωπαϊκού Ινστιτούτου Ifo, Hans-Werner Sinn, ως λύση για την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας αυτών των οικονομιών. Μιλώντας πρόσφατα στο πλαίσιο ενός επενδυτικού συνεδρίου στην πόλη Mainz της Γερμανίας, με τον νομπελίστα οικονομολόγο Joseph Stiglitz, διετύπωσε την άποψη πως οι χώρες αυτές θα πρέπει να καθίσουν στο ίδιο τραπέζι σε ένα ευρωπαϊκό συνέδριο, να αναδιαρθρώσουν τα χρέη τους, να γίνουν πιο ανταγωνιστικές, προχωρώντας ακόμη και σε μερικό «κούρεμα» εις βάρος πιστωτών, ώστε να έχουν το δικαίωμα επανεισόδου αργότερα στην ευρωζώνη.

Επειδή τέτοιες απόψεις ακούγονται ολοένα και περισσότερο ορμώμενες κυρίως από γερμανικούς κύκλους και με δεδομένη τη βαρύτητα που διαδραματίζει η Γερμανία στην σημερινή κατάσταση της ΕΕ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Συμμερίζεται αυτές τις απόψεις και σε περίπτωση συμφωνίας, κατά πόσον προτίθεται να τις εφαρμόσει στη βάση ενός ολοκληρωμένου σχεδίου;

2. Αν όχι, τι αντιπροτείνει, ώστε οι πιο πάνω αναφερθείσες χώρες που βιώνουν την οικονομική κρίση και την εξαθλίωση να καταφέρουν να εξέλθουν από αυτή το συντομότερο δυνατό;

3. Πώς σχολιάζει την άποψη για μερικό «κούρεμα» χρέους εἰς βάρος των πιστωτών των πιο πάνω χωρών;

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

Δεν υπάρχει καμία πρόθεση ή σχέδιο έξωσης κράτους μέλους από τη ζώνη του ευρώ. Οι προσπάθειες όσον αφορά τις πολιτικές επικεντρώνονται σε όλα τα επίπεδα στη βελτίωση της λειτουργίας της ΟΝΕ. Η Επιτροπή συνεργάζεται στενά με τους άλλους εμπλεκόμενους για το σκοπό αυτό, βασιζόμενη σε μια πλήρη δέσμευσή τους στην ακεραιότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013007/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Temporary euro exit

The President of the European Ifo Institute, Hans-Werner Sinn, is proposing the exit of Greece, Portugal and possibly Spain from the euro as a solution for strengthening the competitiveness of these economies. Speaking recently at an investment conference in Mainz, Germany, with Nobel laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz, he expressed the view that these countries would have to sit at the same table at a European conference, restructure their debts and become more competitive, even by going ahead with a partial 'haircut' at the expense of creditors, in order to have the right of re-entry to the eurozone later.

Since such views are increasingly being heard, promoted mainly by German circles, and given the importance of Germany's position in the current situation in the EU, will the Commission say:

1. Does it share these views, and if so, to what extent does it intend to implement them on the basis of an integrated plan?

2. If not, what alternative does it propose so that the abovementioned countries undergoing economic crisis and misery can emerge from it as soon as possible?

3. What does it have to say about the view concerning a partial 'haircut' at the expense of creditors of the above countries?

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

There is no intention or plan to have a Member State exiting the euro area. Policy efforts at all levels are focused on enhancing the functioning of EMU. The Commission works closely with other stakeholders to this effect, based on a full commitment to the integrity of the euro area.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-013017/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(15 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Sistema Integrado Multimunicipal de Águas Residuais da Península de Setúbal — ETAR Barreiro/Moita (IV)

Em resposta à pergunta E-006003-13, de 29 de maio de 2013, sobre o Sistema Integrado Multimunicipal de Águas Residuais da Península de Setúbal — ETAR Barreiro/Moita, a Comissão confirmou a receção do ofício de 18 de junho de 2012, enviado pelas autoridades portuguesas sobre o projeto mencionado, relativo à obrigação assumida pelas autoridades nacionais de garantirem o pré-tratamento de águas poluídas provenientes de explorações de suinicultura, antes de serem submetidas a tratamento no sistema Simarsul. Nessa resposta, a Comissão garantiu que se encontrava a analisar este ofício e que daria uma resposta final sobre a posição adotada em tempo útil — o que, até à data, 17 meses decorridos desde a receção do ofício enviado pelas autoridades portuguesas, ainda não aconteceu.

Face à manifesta urgência de uma resposta, e tendo em conta os óbvios prejuízos e riscos que decorrem do protelar desta situação, solicito à Comissão que me comunique se está finalmente em condições de considerar que os elementos remetidos pelas autoridades portuguesas são suficientes para modificar e ultrapassar a Decisão de 9 de dezembro de 2005, relativa ao projeto 2005 PT 16 C PE 002 (ETAR Barreiro/Moita) (secção 3.1), libertando o saldo, de modo a não penalizar a Região de Setúbal e o beneficiário da ajuda, a Simarsul, por ações pelas quais não pode ser responsabilizado.

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(20 de dezembro de 2013)

A Comissão confirma ter analisado o ofício de 18 de junho de 2012 enviado, pelas autoridades portuguesas sobre o projeto mencionado pelo Senhor Deputado relativo à obrigação assumida pelas autoridades nacionais de garantirem o pré-tratamento de águas poluídas provenientes de explorações agrícolas.

A este respeito, é de notar que, de acordo com as informações apresentadas pelas autoridades portuguesas, as explorações de suinicultura foram obrigadas a obter uma autorização até março de 2013 e a apresentar projetos destinados a melhorar a gestão das suas águas residuais até setembro de 2013. O resultado da avaliação final das informações fornecidas pelas autoridades portuguesas depende do cumprimento das medidas acima mencionadas.

A este respeito, a Comissão irá brevemente solicitar esclarecimentos adicionais das autoridades portuguesas.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013017/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Integrated combined municipal waste water system in the Setubal peninsula — ETAR Barreiro/Moita (IV)

In its answer to Question E-006003/2013 of 29 May 2013 on the integrated combined municipal waste water system in the Setubal peninsula — ETAR Barreiro/Moita, the Commission confirmed receipt of the letter of 18 June 2012 from the Portuguese authorities about the project in question, in relation to the obligation taken on by the national authorities to pre-treat polluted water from pig farms prior to further treatment in the Simarsul system. In that answer, the Commission stated that it was currently analysing this letter and would give a final reply on the position taken in due time. Seventeen months have now passed since the letter from the Portuguese authorities was received, and the Commission has still not given its final reply.

Given the urgent need for an answer, and bearing in mind the evident harm and risks arising while this situation is dragging on, can the Commission say whether it is finally in a position to state that the information provided by the Portuguese authorities is sufficient to amend the decision of 9 December 2005 relating to project 2005 PT 16 C PE 002 (ETAR Barreiro/Moita) (Section 3.1) and release the remaining amount, so that the Setubal region and the beneficiary of the aid (Simarsul) are not penalised for actions in respect of which they cannot be held responsible?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

The Commission confirms to have analysed the letter of 18 June 2012, sent by the Portuguese authorities about the project mentioned by the Honourable Member related to the obligation taken on by the national authorities of pre-treatment polluted water farms.

In this regard it should be noted that according to the information provided by the Portuguese authorities, the pig-farms were required to obtain a permit until March 2013 and to provide plans aimed at improving the management of their waste-waters until September 2013. The outcome of the final assessment on the information provided by the Portuguese authorities depends on the compliance with the abovementioned measures.

In this respect, the Commission will seek further clarification from the Portuguese authorities shortly.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013023/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: EU subsidies to Pescanova

The Spanish company Pescanova is based in Vigo and is said to own some 120 fishing vessels.

A report by KPMG has alleged that the company has a negative net worth of EUR 927 million and has, over the years, used various methods to conceal the extent of its debts, said to amount to EUR 3.28 billion. Bankruptcy proceedings have now commenced.

Will the Commission provide details on the subsidies paid from the EU budget to Pescanova or its subsidiaries over the past 20 years?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

The European Fisheries Fund is implemented in the frame of shared management, meaning that national and regional authorities are primarily responsible for the selection of operations and for the implementation of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). For this reason the Commission does not have a list of beneficiaries. However, Member States are under the obligation to publish the list of legal entities benefiting from EFF support.

The Commission would therefore refer the Honourable Member to the list of beneficiaries of the European Fisheries Fund and of the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) drawn up by the Spanish authorities ([1]).

([1]) http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/pesca/temas/fondo-europeo-de-la-pesca/iniciativa-comunitaria-de-transparencia/

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013024/13
do Komisji
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(15 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Domniemane przełowienie w Morzu Bałtyckim przez statki szwedzkie

Polscy rybacy są zaniepokojeni faktem niedostatecznej ilości dorsza atlantyckiego w Morzu Bałtyckim oraz tym, że ryby, które łowią, są długie, ale szczupłe, przez co nie ważą tyle, ile powinny. Zdaniem rybaków główną przyczyną takiej sytuacji jest niedobór szprota i śledzia atlantyckiego, które to gatunki stanowią główne źródło pożywienia dla dorsza. Pewne źródła winę za domniemane przełowienie szprota i śledzia (z przeznaczeniem na paszę dla zwierząt) przypisują szwedzkim rybakom. Mając na uwadze, jak ważne dla Polski jest posiadanie zrównoważonego przemysłu rybnego, pragnę zadać następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja jest świadoma tego zagadnienia?

2. Czy Komisja przyjęła jakieś stanowisko w sprawie tego konfliktu interesów między Polską a Szwecją w odniesieniu do wykorzystania zasobów Morza Bałtyckiego? Jeżeli tak – czym się to stanowisko wyraża?

3. Jaki jest obecny stan populacji dorsza atlantyckiego w Morzu Bałtyckim i czy istnieje zagrożenie dla polskich połowów dorsza?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Marię Damanaki w imieniu Komisji
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

W ostatnich latach naukowcy stwierdzili w swoich sprawozdaniach dotyczących oceny stad ryb Bałtyku, że średnia masa dorsza ulega zmniejszeniu. Może to być spowodowane czynnikami środowiskowymi i jest spójne z niską dostępnością szprota i śledzia atlantyckiego, które stanowią główne źródło pożywienia dla dorsza. Komisja jest świadoma tej sytuacji i w związku z tym przygotowuje nowy, długoterminowy plan zarządzania, który zastąpiłby obecny plan zarządzania zasobami dorsza bałtyckiego ([1]) i który powinien opierać się na opinii naukowej dostarczającej informacje na temat współzależności gatunków.

Każdego roku Rada ustanawia limity połowowe spójne z opinią naukową. W oparciu o dane dostarczone Komisji limity połowowe dla szprota i śledzia atlantyckiego nigdy nie zostały przekroczone przez państwa członkowskie.

W chwili obecnej stada dorsza w Morzu Bałtyckim są zarządzane zgodnie z przepisami ustanowionymi w ramach planu zarządzania zasobami dorsza. Ponadto stada dorsza we wschodnim Bałtyku są zarządzane na poziomie maksymalnego podtrzymywalnego połowu zapewniającego wystarczający poziom ochrony populacji dorsza.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1098/2007 z dnia 18 września 2007 r. ustanawiające wieloletni plan w zakresie zasobów dorsza w Morzu Bałtyckim oraz połowów tych zasobów, zmieniające rozporządzenie (EWG) nr 2847/93 i uchylające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 779/97.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013024/13
to the Commission
Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Alleged overfishing in the Baltic Sea by Swedish vessels

Polish fishermen are concerned that there is not enough cod in the Baltic Sea and that the fish they catch are long, but thin, and so do not weigh as much as they should. According to the fishermen, the main reason for this situation is a shortage of sprat and herring, which are the cod's main food. Sources blame Swedish fishermen for allegedly overfishing sprat and herring for animal feed. Considering how important it is for Poland to have a sustainable fishing industry, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of this issue?

2. Does the Commission have any position on this conflict between the respective interests of Poland and Sweden with regard to the exploitation of the Baltic Sea's maritime resources? If so, what is the Commission's position?

3. What is the current state of the cod population in the Baltic Sea and is there is any threat to Polish cod fishing?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

In recent years, scientists have indicated in their reports on assessment of the Baltic fish stocks that the mean weight of cod is declining. This can be caused by environmental factors and is consistent with the low availability of sprat and herring which are the main food sources for cod. The Commission is aware of this situation and therefore is preparing a new long term management plan, which would replace the current Baltic cod management plan ([1]), to be based on scientific advice providing information on the species interactions.

Each year, the Council establishes catch limits coherent with scientific advice. Based on data provided to the Commission, the catch limits for sprat and herring have never been exceeded by the Member States.

At the moment the cod stocks in the Baltic Sea are managed according to the provisions laid down in the cod management plan. In addition, the cod stocks in the Eastern Baltic are managed at the level of maximum sustainable yield ensuring sufficient level of conservation for cod population.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing a multiannual plan for the cod stocks in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 779/97.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013026/13
to the Commission
Michael Cashman (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: EU concerns about Citrus Black Spot

The trade in citrus fruit with South Africa — representing 70% of EU citrus imports, EUR 1 billion in revenue and 200 000 jobs in South Africa — is at risk because of EU concerns about Citrus Black Spot, a quarantine pathogen under Directive 2000/29/EC. The Commission intends to propose a ban on South African exports to the EU until the end of 2013, excepting only produce originating in pest-free areas. This will disrupt trade during the 2014 season, as the supply chain responds to the great uncertainty that this measure will cause.

Can the Commission:

1. provide assurances that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will be equipped with the expertise necessary to examine and take into due consideration the prevailing international scientific opinion on Citrus Black Spot, considering that scientists from third countries have many years of field experience with the pathogen that is lacking in Europe?

2. explain why, to date, it has not considered applying Article 2(1)(h), second indent, of Directive 2000/29/EC, as being, when it comes to Citrus Black Spot, a less trade-restrictive measure with regard to Southern Hemisphere citrus imports, in view, *inter alia*, of EFSA's advice on the matter?

3. indicate how it intends to address the need for effective yet proportionate phytosanitary measures that do not unduly restrict trade with third countries, particularly in cases where the potential risk is limited to clearly demarcated geo-climatic parts of the Union?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

1. The Commission is satisfied that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has the necessary means to discharge its responsibility in the area of plant health. EFSA has a dedicated Scientific Panel on Plant Health composed of 21 highly qualified scientists with expertise in the relevant fields relating to plant health. In addition, the Panel may consult external experts in any particular area that it considers necessary. EFSA may also organise public consultations in order to allow interested parties to submit comments on its scientific opinions: the Authority launched such a consultation on its opinion on citrus black spot in September 2013.

2. Due to the internal market principle of the free movement of goods, no different phytosanitary requirements between the North and South territories of the EU have been introduced for a harmful organism that is absent from the whole EU territory.

3. An EFSA pest risk analysis on citrus black spot is expected for the end of 2013/beginning of 2014. Therefore, it is necessary to wait for the outcome of this evaluation that will be analysed and discussed with Member States in order to determine whether revision of the current phytosanitary import conditions is required.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013027/13
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Continuing pollution from the CEPSA oil refinery

In early 2011 I raised my concerns with the Commission regarding pollution from the CEPSA oil refinery in Spain and its effect on local Spanish and Gibraltarian residents (Written Question E-000834/2011).

In its reply, the Commission stated that it had launched an investigation regarding the implementation of EU Directive 2008/1/EC and had found certain shortcomings with regard to the CEPSA oil refinery, but that action was being taken to rectify this situation.

Nearly three years later, air and water pollution from the CEPSA oil refinery continues to degrade the Bay of Gibraltar.

Will the Commission consider sending a team of inspectors to the CEPSA oil refinery to examine the petrochemical installations, in order to provide an independent, thorough assessment of pollution levels stemming from their activities?

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

In the performance of its duties under the Treaties, the Commission has no competence to send a team of inspectors to the CEPSA oil refinery.

For further details concerning this refinery the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-012286/2013.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-013031/13
upućeno Komisiji
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(15. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Utjecaj genetski modificiranoga kukuruza na autohtone vrste (Croatia)

Eventualno odobrenje Europske komisije za slobodno korištenje sjemena genetski modificiranoga kukuruza u svim zemljama članicama EU-a imat će negativan utjecaj na proizvodnju i uporabu autohtonih vrsta sjemena kukuruza proizvedenih i desetljećima rabljenih u Hrvatskoj i Europi.

1. Tko će preuzeti odgovornost za moguće negativne posljedice dugoročnog korištenja genetski modificiranog sjemena na štetu autohtonih sorti kukuruza kao i mnogih drugih biljnih vrsta na području gdje se uzgaja genetski modificirani kukuruz?

2. Kakav je stav Komisije o mogućim dugoročnim negativnim posljedicama na okoliš, ljude, biljke i životinje?

Odgovor g. Borga u ime Komisije
(8. siječnja 2014.)

Europska unija ima strogi zakonodavni okvir o GMO-ima ([1]). Uredbom (EZ) br. 1829/2003 i Direktivom 2001/18/EZ predviđeno je da se GMO-i mogu odobriti za uzgoj te uporabu u hrani i hrani za životinje u EU-u samo nakon temeljite znanstvene procjene kojom se dokazuje da ne predstavljaju rizik za zdravlje ljudi i životinja te okoliš. Procjena se posebice odnosi na vjerojatnost postojanosti i invazivnosti GMO-a u okolišu te je njome obuhvaćeno preispitivanje kvalitativnih i kvantitativnih podataka o mogućnosti prijenosa gena ([2]). Direktivom se predviđa i da države članice koje utvrde nove znanstvene podatke povezane s uvođenjem odobrenog GMO-a, koji nisu bili dostupni u vrijeme izdavanja odobrenja, moraju te nove podatke poslati Komisiji na daljnju analizu.

Zakonodavstvom je propisano da nositelji suglasnosti Komisiji podnose godišnja izvješća o praćenju učinka na okoliš nakon stavljanja na tržište odobrenih GMO-a radi analize koju provodi EFSA ([3]). Države članice dužne su provoditi kontrole odredaba o odobrenju za stavljanje na tržište koje primjenjuju nositelji suglasnosti i uzgajivači GMO-a.

U skladu s člankom 26.a Direktive 2001/18/EZ države članice mogu donijeti odgovarajuće mjere kako bi se izbjegla nenamjerna prisutnost odobrenih GMO-a u drugim proizvodima, sprečavajući time moguće ekonomske gubitke za uzgajivače konvencionalnih i organskih usjeva. Europski ured za supostojanje ([4]) izradio je dokumente o primjerima najbolje prakse za supostojanje genetski modificiranog kukuruza i kukuruza iz organskog i konvencionalnog uzgoja. U Preporuci Komisije o smjernicama za razvoj nacionalnih mjera za supostojanje navedeno je da su pitanja povezana s novčanom naknadom ili odgovornošću za gospodarsku štetu isključivo u nadležnosti država članica ([5]).

([1]) genetski modificirani organizmi.
([2]) Direktiva 2001/18/EZ, Prilog II. Odjeljak o smjernicama 4.2.1.
([3]) Europska agencija za sigurnost hrane.
([4]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.
([5]) Točka 2.5. Priloga Preporuci Komisije od 13. srpnja 2010. o smjernicama za razvoj nacionalnih mjera za supostojanje radi izbjegavanja nenamjerne prisutnosti genetski modificiranih organizama u konvencionalnim i organskim usjevima (2010/C 200/01).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013031/13
to the Commission
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Impact of genetically modified corn on native varieties in Croatia

If the Commission gives its approval for the unrestricted use of genetically modified corn seed in all EU Member States, this will have an adverse effect on the production and consumption of native varieties of corn seed that have been produced and consumed for decades in Croatia and Europe.

1. Who will assume responsibilty for the possible harmful consequences of the long-term use of genetically modified seeds on native varieties of corn and on many other plants in areas where genetically modified corn is being cultivated?

2. What is the Commission's view on the possible long-term adverse impact on the environment as a whole and on people, plants and animals?

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

The European Union has a strict legislative framework on GMOs ([1]). Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and Directive 2001/18/EC provide that GMOs can be authorised for cultivation and food and feed use in the EU only after a thorough scientific assessment demonstrating that they are not a risk for human and animal health or the environment. In particular the assessment considers the likelihood for persistence and invasiveness of the GMO into the environment and includes the examination of qualitative and quantitative information on the potential for gene transfer ([2]). The directive also makes provision for Member States who identify new scientific information related to the release of an authorised GMO that was not available at the time of authorisation, to send it to the Commission for further analysis.

The legislation requires consent holders to submit annual reports on the Post Market Environmental Monitoring of authorised GMOs to the Commission for analysis by EFSA ([3]). Member States are responsible for performing controls on the marketing authorisation provisions to be implemented by consent holders and growers of the GMOs.

Under Article 26a of Directive 2001/18/EC Member States may adopt appropriate measures to avoid unintended presence of authorised GMOs in other products, preventing potential economic losses for conventional and organic crop growers. The European Coexistence Bureau ([4]) has developed best practice documents for the co-existence of GM maize with organic and conventional maize. The Commission's recommendation on guidelines for the development of national co-existence measures indicates that matters concerning financial compensation or liability for economic damage are the exclusive competence of Member States ([5]).

([1]) Genetically Modified Organisms.
([2]) Directive 2001/18/EC Annex II Guidance Section 4.2.1.
([3]) European Food Safety Authority.
([4]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/
([5]) Point 2.5 of the annex of the Commission Recommendation of 13 July 2010 on guidelines for the development of national co-existence measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in conventional and organic crops (2010/C 200/01).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013041/13
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(15 novembre 2013)

Objet: Consultation de l'industrie pour la rédaction des dispositions d'application du Code des douanes de l'Union (CDU)

La Commission européenne, par la voix du Commissaire M. Algirdas Semeta, a déclaré, le 10 septembre 2013, que les experts de l'industrie seront pleinement impliqués dans l'adoption des actes délégués et d'exécution relatifs au CDU (règlement (UE) nº 952/2013) via une «procédure de consultation transparente».

En tant que rapporteure du Parlement sur ce dossier, et prenant note de cette déclaration avec beaucoup de satisfaction, j'estime qu'il serait souhaitable que la Commission puisse expliciter davantage ce en quoi consisterait ladite procédure.

Ainsi, celle-ci sera-t-elle comparable à celle décrite dans l'engagement pris par la Commission vis-à-vis de la commission du marché intérieur et de la protection des consommateurs (IMCO) en 2005 sur la consultation de l'industrie pour le règlement (CE) nº 648/2005?

Dans le cas contraire, de quelle manière la Commission entend-elle concrètement impliquer les fédérations d'industrie, s'agissant notamment de la publication des projets d'actes délégués et d'exécution et de l'implication du Groupe de contact Industrie dans les travaux des groupes d'expert et ceux du comité du CDU, conformément aux considérants 3 et 4 du règlement, afin de s'assurer que les opérateurs économiques aient la possibilité réelle de faire valoir leur point de vue avant toute prise de décision?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(7 janvier 2014)

Le groupe de contact avec les opérateurs économiques, composé notamment d'associations professionnelles européennes et internationales ([1]), a été informé en détail, lors de sa réunion du 27 novembre 2013, de la manière dont la Commission envisageait de faire participer le monde des entreprises au processus de préparation de ses actes liés au code des douanes de l'Union.

Ce processus donnera aux États membres et aux experts en matière commerciale l'occasion de formuler des observations sur les projets de textes de la Commission et de recevoir des réponses.

L'instance de consultation en matière douanière pour les opérateurs sera toujours le groupe de contact avec les opérateurs économiques, dont la configuration pourra éventuellement varier en fonction des différents sujets à traiter, sachant que la participation de représentants d'opérateurs non membres du groupe pourrait être envisagée sur certains thèmes.

Les représentants des opérateurs économiques peuvent également être invités aux réunions du groupe d'experts et du comité du code des douanes concernant les projets d'actes de la Commission liés au code des douanes de l'Union, conformément aux règles de procédure respectives de ces organismes.

Le programme Douane 2020 pourra également couvrir, le cas échéant, l'organisation de groupes de travail ou d'ateliers réunissant la Commission, les États membres et les représentants des opérateurs économiques.

([1]) Voir http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2134&Lang=FR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013041/13
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Industry consultation on the drafting of the implementing provisions for the Union Customs Code (UCC)

On 10 September 2013 Commissioner Algirdas Semeta made a statement on behalf of the Commission to the effect that industry experts would be fully involved in the adoption of delegated and implementing acts for the UCC (Regulation (EU) No 952/2013) through a 'transparent consultation procedure'.

As Parliament's rapporteur on this matter, I was very pleased to hear this news and I believe the Commission should now provide further details.

Will this consultation procedure be similar to that outlined in the undertaking the Commission gave to the Committee on the internal market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) in 2005 concerning industry consultation in connection with Regulation (EC) No 648/2005?

If not, how exactly does the Commission intend to involve industry federations — for example by consulting them on the drafting of delegated and implementing acts or by giving the Industry Contact Group a role in the proceedings of the groups of experts and the UCC Committee — in accordance with recitals 3 and 4 of the regulation, in order to ensure that economic operators are given a genuine opportunity to state their views before any decisions are taken?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Trade Contact Group composed notably by European and International business associations ([1]) (TCG) was informed in detail, at its meeting of 27 November 2013, on the way the Commission intended involving the business community in the process of preparations of the Union Customs Code — related Commission acts.

That process will offer the possibility, for Member States and trade experts, to comment on Commissions draft texts and receive responses.

The natural body for consultation of trade on customs matters shall remain the Trade Contact Group, with possible variable configurations to deal with different subjects, assuming that the involvement on certain topics of trade representatives not being members of TCG could be envisaged.

Trade representatives may also be invited to meetings of the Expert Group and of the Customs Code Committee dealing with draft UCC-related Commission acts, in accordance with the respective rules of procedure of those bodies.

The Customs 2020 programme may also support, where appropriate, the organisation of working groups or workshops between the Commission, Member States and trade representatives.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2134

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013050/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(15 listopada 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W związku z zaproponowanymi zmianami w projektach sieci kolejowej TEN-T

Komisarz ds. Transportu opublikował założenia, według których zmodyfikowana zostanie transeuropejska sieć kolejowa TEN-T. Z projektu zniknąć ma m.in. newralgiczna inwestycja na linii Kraków – Nowy Sącz i dalej do granicy słowackiej. Tymczasem budowa tej trasy została ujęta już choćby w strategii rozwoju województwa (gdzie określono ją, jako „jedną z najważniejszych i najbardziej oczekiwanych inwestycji kolejowych w Małopolsce") oraz w kontraktach regionalnych. Nie bez znaczenia pozostaje realizacja projektu dla mieszkańców praktycznie całej południowo-wschodniej Polski, a dla rozwoju Sądecczyzny stanowi jeden z nadrzędnych celów. O budowę magistrali kolejowej przez Muszynę zabiegają również Słowacy.

W oparciu o powyższe, niepokojące informacje, proszę zatem o odpowiedź:

1. Na podstawie jakich kryteriów podjęto decyzję o wykreśleniu ww. linii kolejowej z opracowanego przez Komisję zestawu głównych połączeń?

2. Czy prawdą jest, że decyzje w przedmiotowej sprawie zapadły już w marcu br., a ogłoszono je dopiero w ostatnim czasie? Jeśli tak, jaki był powód tej zwłoki?

3. Jakie są szanse na przywrócenie inwestycji kolejowej Kraków – Nowy Sącz – Muszyna, bądź zrealizowania jej w ramach innych programów Unii Europejskiej i czy Komisja dołoży starań w tym zakresie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(9 stycznia 2014 r.)

Komisja pragnie poinformować Szanownego Pana Posła, że linia Kraków – Nowy Sącz – Muszyna znalazła się w propozycji Komisji już w październiku 2011 r. i będzie częścią sieci kompleksowej TEN-T. Linia ta będzie się kwalifikowała do finansowania z europejskich funduszy strukturalnych i inwestycyjnych lub z instrumentu „Łącząc Europę".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013050/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: Proposed changes in plans for the TEN-T rail network

The Commissioner for Transport has published plans for modification of the TEN-T trans-European rail network. Such things as the critical investment in the line which runs from Kraków to Nowy Sącz and continues to the Slovak border are to disappear from the plan. However, construction of this route has already been included in the regional development plan for the Voivodeship of Małopolska (in which it was said to be 'one of the most important and most highly anticipated railway investments in Małopolska') and in several contracts agreed in the region. It is still important to carry out this project for the inhabitants of practically all of south-eastern Poland and as one of the main goals in the development of the Sądecki region. Modernisation of the line, which runs through Muszyna, is also being sought by the Slovaks.

In the light of this worrying information, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. What criteria were used as the basis for the decision to remove this railway line from the list of main connections prepared by the Commission?

2. Is it true that decisions about this were made as early as March of this year but were only announced recently? If so, what was the reason for this delay?

3. What are the chances of reinstating the Kraków — Nowy Sącz — Muszyna railway investment or of carrying it out under other European Union programmes, and will the Commission make efforts to this end?

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

The Commission can inform the Honourable Member that the section Kraków — Nowy Sącz — Muszyna was proposed by Commission already in October 2011 and will be part of the TEN-T Comprehensive Network. The section will be eligible for funding from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) or from Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013058/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(15 November 2013)

Subject: EU compliance standards for vessels transporting nuclear materials and waste

A recent article in the UK magazine *Private Eye* referred to protests on both sides of the Atlantic over plans to ship five nuclear fuel assemblies from Dounreay, Scotland, to Aiken, South Carolina. The assemblies in question were stored at Dounreay for safekeeping by the US military, after being removed from Tbilisi during the Georgian civil war. The article notes that protestors have long argued with regard to the UK Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) that its 'elderly, single-hulled Atlantic Osprey is unsustainable for the work it does transporting waste between Scotland and Belgium', as well as disclosing that the cargo ferry Atlantic Carrier caught fire in the German port of Hamburg in May. The port authorities were told that the ship was carrying nine tonnes of uranium hexafluoride, a highly volatile and radioactive compound used in the production of nuclear fuel.

The containers were immediately moved to safety and the fire put out before the remaining cargo of flammable ethanol and other hazardous items could explode. It is reported that the Atlantic Carrier is not registered as a carrier of nuclear materials and has 'an awful safety record', with numerous International Safety Management deficiencies recorded in inspection reports, including that of the Liverpool port authorities. According to information provided to the UK-based organisation Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) by pollution consultant Tim Deere-Jones, 'Hamburg Port control inspectors visiting the Atlantic Carrier after the fire found around 33 deficiencies in safety and operating standards, including emergency fire pumps, fire detection equipment, as well as general issues with communications, compass operation, propulsion/auxiliary machinery and hull damage impairing seaworthiness'. The article further discloses that Liverpool was the last port of call before Hamburg, although it does not specify whether the Atlantic Carrier is a single or double-hulled vessel.

1. Does the Commission believe it is appropriate for single-hulled vessels to carry nuclear materials or waste? What EU regulations are relevant to cargo of this nature?

2. Has the Commission obtained a full report from both the Hamburg and the Liverpool port authorities regarding the seaworthiness of the vessel? What safety inspections is it incumbent on port authorities to carry out on vessels carrying nuclear or highly flammable cargoes?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

1. The rules for the transport of radioactive materials are set by international regulatory instruments. The International Atomic Energy Agency regulations include rules on package design in order to ensure safety in extreme accident conditions. The ships used, as well as the organisation of the transport, should also meet the latest safety requirements of the International Maritime Organisation conventions. With regard to these, the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea Chapter VII (carriage of cargoes) contains a number of codes. One of these codes is the Irradiated Nuclear Fuel code which covers *inter alia* how vessels have to be constructed before they can be allowed to carry irradiated nuclear fuel. The International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code also regulates the transport of dangerous goods.

It is the responsibility of the national authorities to ensure compliance with the above international standards. This is done by the flag state (in the case of the Atlantic Osprey the United Kingdom) and by means of Port State control (PSC) for foreign flagged vessels calling at their ports.

2. As is the case for all PSC inspections, the Commission (through the European Maritime Safety Agency) has received the inspection reports referred to by the Honourable Member.

The type and content of the inspections are provided for by Directive 2009/16/EC and depend on the individual circumstances of the ship (age and type of ship, time elapsed since last inspection and any particular factors), they will typically include the conventions and codes referred to above according to the professional judgment of the PSC inspector.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013067/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(18 noiembrie 2013)

Subiect: Sectorul horticol

Sectorul fructelor și legumelor reprezintă 18 % din valoarea totală a producției agricole în UE și acoperă 3 % din suprafața cultivată a UE și valorează peste 50 de miliarde EUR. Sectorul horticol — producerea primară și industria de procesare — are un rol multiplicator în economia la nivel european, generând cerere și stimulând crearea valorii adăugate în alte ramuri ale economiei, precum comerțul, construcțiile și serviciile financiare.

Este foarte importantă utilizarea eficientă a potențialului științific calificat în scopul accelerării procesului de implementare a rezultatelor cercetării-inovării prin transferul tehnologiilor inovaționale în producerea agricolă din sectorul horticol, precum și integrarea cercetării-inovării, educației și extensiunii din domeniul agriculturii cu politicile economice care vor satisface cererile sectorului de producere horticolă și vor spori eficiența dezvoltării sistemului horticol.

În acest context, are în vedere Comisia facilitarea accesului la resurse financiare pe termen lung pentru finanțarea investițiilor în tehnologiile moderne de producere din sectorul horticol în vederea sporirii competitivității produselor și serviciilor horticole?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Regimul UE aplicat în sectorul fructelor și al legumelor ([1]) sprijină programele operaționale ale organizațiilor de producători (OP) recunoscute. În cadrul acestor programe, OP pot desfășura acțiuni de cercetare și de producție experimentală, pot presta servicii de instruire și de consiliere și pot utiliza practici de producție inovatoare, precum și tehnologii și procese inovatoare pentru conservarea și pregătirea produselor în vederea comercializării. Aceasta din urmă include achiziționarea de active fixe inovatoare utile pentru planificarea producției, îmbunătățirea comercializării, menținerea și îmbunătățirea calității produselor, pentru cercetare și producție experimentală, urmărindu-se îndeplinirea unor obiective de mediu (de exemplu, economie de apă și de energie, reducerea utilizării produselor de protecție a plantelor).

Parteneriatul european pentru inovare (PEI) în sectorul agricol are drept obiectiv promovarea unei agriculturi și a unui sector forestier competitive și sustenabile, care „să producă mai mult cu resurse mai puține". PEI se axează pe formarea de parteneriate între agricultori, consilieri, cercetători, întreprinderi și alți actori, în cadrul unor grupuri operaționale. Această metodă generează noi idei și modelează cunoștințele actuale în soluții specifice care se pun în aplicare mai rapid. Grupurile operaționale pot beneficia de finanțare, de exemplu din FEADR, FEDER, Orizont 2020, etc., în funcție de tipul de operațiune, finanțarea putând fi utilizată pentru pregătirea operațiunii și pentru costurile operaționale și investițiile aferente acesteia.

Pe lângă sprijinirea inovării prin PEI, politica de dezvoltare rurală a UE oferă o serie de măsuri legate de investiții și de activitățile de instruire care ar putea fi relevante pentru acest sector.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1234/2007 al Consiliului din 22 octombrie 2007 de instituire a unei organizări comune a piețelor agricole și privind dispoziții specifice referitoare la anumite produse agricole (Regulamentul unic OCP), JO L 299, 16.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013067/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Horticultural sector

The fruit and vegetable sector accounts for 18% of the total value of EU agricultural production and covers 3% of the EU's cultivated area, as well as having a value of more than EUR 50 billion. The horticultural sector — primary production and processing industry — has a multiplier role to play in the European economy, generating demand and boosting the creation of value added in other economic sectors, such as trade, construction and financial services.

It is extremely important to use the high-level scientific potential effectively to speed up the implementation of the results from research and innovation through the transfer of innovative technologies to agricultural production in the horticultural sector, as well as by integrating research and innovation, education and the extension of the agricultural sector with the economic policies which will meet the demands of the horticultural production sector and make the development of the horticultural system more efficient.

In light of this, does the Commission intend to facilitate access to long-term financial resources for funding investment in state-of-the-art production technologies in the horticultural sector, with the aim of enhancing the competitiveness of horticultural products and services?

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

The EU regime in the fruit and vegetables (F&V) sector ([1]) provides support to the operational programmes of recognised producer organisations (POs). Under those programmes, POs may implement actions relating to research and experimental production, training and advisory services, and use of innovative production practices and innovative technologies and processes for the conservation and preparation of the products for marketing. The latter includes the acquisition of innovative fixed assets useful for planning of the production, improving marketing, maintaining and improving product quality, research and experimental production, pursuing environmental objectives (e.g. water and energy saving, reduced use of plant protection products).

The agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP) aims to foster a competitive and sustainable agriculture and forestry sector that 'achieves more from less'. The EIP focuses on forming partnerships among farmers, advisors, researchers, businesses, and others in Operational Groups. This approach generates new ideas and moulds existing tacit knowledge into focused solutions that are quicker put into practice. Operational groups may receive funding e.g. from EAFRD, ERDF, Horizon 2020, etc. depending on the type of operation, and it can be used e.g. for setting up, for operational costs and for investments related to the operation.

In addition to supporting innovation through the EIP, the EU's rural development policy offers a range of measures related to investment and training which could be relevant to the sector.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 of 22 October 2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (Single CMO Regulation) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-013069/13
an die Kommission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: Richtlinie über die Herstellung, die Aufmachung und den Verkauf von Tabakerzeugnissen (2001/37/EG) und Vorschlag zur Revision dieser Richtlinie (2012/0336(COD))

Im Mai 2005 hat die Kommission einen Katalog von 42 Bildwarnhinweisen zum Aufbringen auf Tabakerzeugnissen erstellt ([1]). In zehn Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union müssen die von der Kommission entwickelten Bildwarnhinweise auf Verpackungen von Tabakerzeugnissen gedruckt werden. Mit der Überarbeitung der Tabakproduktrichtlinie sollen Bildwarnhinweise für Zigaretten und Tabak zum Selbstdrehen nun verbindlich für alle Mitgliedstaaten vorgeschrieben werden, um die Funktionsweise des Binnenmarktes zu verbessern. Der Bilderkatalog soll im Zuge dessen aktualisiert werden. Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Bis wann soll die Überarbeitung des neuen Bilderkatalogs fertiggestellt werden?

2. Nach welchen Kriterien wurden bzw. werden die Bildwarnhinweise erstellt und ausgewählt?

3. Wer ist an der Erstellung und Auswahl der Bilder beteiligt?

4. Wie viele Bildwarnhinweise soll es künftig geben?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(7. Januar 2014)

Die neuen bildlichen Gesundheitswarnhinweise sind derzeit in Vorbereitung und sollen anschließend getestet werden. Nach Auffassung der Kommission sollten die Bildwarnhinweise im Rahmen der überarbeiteten Richtlinie über Tabakerzeugnisse angenommen werden. Nach der für die erste Jahreshälfte 2014 erwarteten Annahme der überarbeiteten Richtlinie könnten die Bildwarnhinweise in der zweiten Jahreshälfte 2014 angenommen werden.

Die Abbildungen werden die neuen, bereits in der Richtlinie 2012/9 der Kommission ([2]) festgelegten textlichen Warnhinweise veranschaulichen. Sie sollten daher den Texten der Warnhinweise entsprechen, klar, leicht verständlich sowie glaubwürdig sein und verschiedene Altersgruppen, beide Geschlechter und verschiedene kulturelle Gruppen ansprechen. Für die Erstellung und Auswahl von Bildern wird die Kommission die Unterstützung geeigneter externer Sachverständiger einholen.

Für jeden der 14 neuen zusätzlichen Textwarnhinweise werden drei Bilder ausgewählt. Somit werden insgesamt 42 kombinierte Warnhinweise bereitstehen; dies entspricht der Zahl der gegenwärtig in der EU-Bibliothek enthaltenen bildlichen Warnhinweise (siehe Anhang I der Entscheidung K(2005)1452 endg. der Kommission ([3])).

([1]) Siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/law/pictorial/index_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012L0009:DE:NOT
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/tobacco/documents/com_1452_a_de.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013069/13
to the Commission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Directive on the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products (2001/37/EC) and proposal for a revision of this directive (2012/0336(COD))

In May 2005, the Commission issued a catalogue of 42 pictorial warnings to be placed on tobacco products ([1]). The pictorial warnings developed by the Commission must be displayed on the packaging of tobacco products in ten EU Member States. As a result of the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive, it is intended that pictorial warnings on cigarettes and rolling tobacco should now be made compulsory in all Member States in order to improve the functioning of the internal market. The catalogue of images used is to be updated as part of the revision.

1. When can one expect the newly revised image catalogue to be published?

2. What criteria are/were used in the creation and selection of images for warning labels?

3. Who participates in the creation and selection of the images?

4. How many pictorial warnings will be available in future?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The new pictorial health warnings are currently in preparation and will subsequently be tested. The Commission considers it preferable to adopt the pictorial warnings under the revised Tobacco Products Directive. Pending adoption of the revised Directive in the first half of 2014, the pictorial health warnings could be adopted in the second half of 2014.

The pictures will illustrate the new text warnings already specified in Commission Directive 2012/9 ([2]). The images should thus correspond to the text of the warnings, be clear and easily understood, be credible, take into account age, gender and cultural diversity. The creation and selection of images is carried out by the Commission with the assistance of the appropriate external expertise.

For each of the 14 new additional text warnings three pictures will be selected. Hence a total of 42 combined health warnings will be made available, which corresponds to the number of warnings in the current EU-library of pictorial health warnings specified in Annex I of Commission Decision C(2005) 1452 final ([3]).

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/law/pictorial/index_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32012L0009:EN:NOT
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/tobacco/documents/com_1452_a_en.pdf

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-013071/13
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(18. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Ukidanje viza za SAD i Kanadu

SAD trenutno zahtijeva vize za državljane EU-a iz Bugarske, s Cipra, iz Rumunjske, Poljske i Hrvatske, dok Kanada posjedovanje vize prilikom ulaska traži za državljane Češke, Bugarske i Rumunjske, te državljane Poljske i Litve u slučaju da ne posjeduju biometrijsku putovnicu.

Važno je naglasiti kako broj izdanih viza za građane svih 5 članica kojima je viza potrebna za ulazak u SAD na godišnjoj razini u zadnjih 10 godina stagnira, ili je u slučaju Poljske u opadanju, dok postotak odbijenih viza kategorije B također stagnira ili značajno opada. Na primjer u Hrvatskoj je postotak odbijenih viza B kategorije u 2012. godini iznosio 4,4 %, što je za 1,9 % manje nego u prethodnoj godini. Usporedbe radi, u nekim od članica EU-a čijim državljanima više nije potrebna viza za ulazak u SAD, poput Latvije i Litve, postotak odbijenih viza kategorije B određenih je godina prelazio i 20 % od broja ukupnih prijava.

Uz nizak postotak odbijenih zahtjeva za vizu Hrvatska je poduzela još nekoliko konkretnih mjera kao što je uvođenje biometrijskih putovnica i ispunjenje kriterija za punopravno članstvo u NATO-u i Europskoj uniji.

Nije zanemariv ni financijski aspekt reciprociteta prema kojem državljani 23 zemlje članica Unije moraju platiti samo 14 američkih dolara da bi se registrirali u američki sustav za autorizaciju putovanja, dok državljani ostalih pet prethodno spomenutih država članica moraju prosječno platiti 160 dolara za zahtjev za vizu.

Na vizni reciprocitet država članica Unije prema trećim zemljama poziva se i u Izvješću o prijedlogu Uredbe Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća kojim se izmjenjuje Uredba Vijeća (EZ) br. 539/2001 u kojoj se navode treće zemlje čiji državljani moraju posjedovati vize pri prelasku vanjskih granica i zemlje čiji su državljani izuzeti iz tog zahtjeva. To izvješće usvojeno je na plenarnoj sjednici Europskog parlamenta u rujnu ove godine.

Uzimajući u obzir prethodno iznesene argumente, koje mjere Komisija planira poduzeti kako bi se vizni reciprocitet država članica EU-a s trećim zemljama, s posebnim naglaskom na reciprocitet sa Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama i Kanadom, zaista uspostavio?

Odgovor gđe Malmström u ime Komisije
(9. siječnja 2014.)

Komisiji je drago da se u kontekstu provedbe trenutačnog mehanizma uzajamnosti viznog režima ostvarila puna vizna uzajamnost gotovo sa svim trećim zemljama čiji su građani izuzeti od obveze posjedovanja vize. Krajnji je cilj Komisije postizanje pune vizne uzajamnosti za sve države članice s preostale dvije treće zemlje koje nastavljaju nametati obvezu posjedovanja vize za jednu ili više država članica: SAD-om i Kanadom.

Komisija koristi svaku priliku kako bi ponovno izrazila zabrinutost zbog preostalih slučajeva neuzajamnosti s američkim i kanadskim vlastima. U tom kontekstu, kao pozitivan razvoj u odnosima između EU-a i Kanade, Komisija pozdravlja odluku kanadskih vlasti da se ukine obveza posjedovanja vize za češke građane od 14. studenog 2013. godine koja je uslijedila nakon niza sastanaka koji su omogućili značajnu razmjenu informacija između Komisije, ESVD-a i kanadskih vlasti o situaciji neuzajamnosti.

Komisija pozdravlja donošenje učinkovitijeg mehanizma uzajamnosti u Europskom parlamentu i Vijeću u sklopu izmjena i dopuna Uredbe 539/2001 ([1]) koji će povećati vjerodostojnost zajedničke vizne politike i osigurati veću solidarnost među državama članicama.

Ne dovodeći u pitanje svoju izjavu upućenu Parlamentu 10. rujna 2013. ([2]), Komisija će ispitati sve nove i postojeće slučajeve neuzajamnosti, uključujući i neuzajamnost sa SAD-om i Kanadom, u skladu s revidiranim mehanizmom uzajamnosti nakon što stupi na snagu.

([1]) Uredba Vijeća (EZ) br. 539/2001 od 15. ožujka 2001. o popisu trećih zemalja čiji državljani moraju imati vizu pri prelasku vanjskih granica i zemalja čiji su državljani izuzeti od tog zahtjeva; SL L 81, 21.3.2001.

([2]) Vidi http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20130910+ITEM-011+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013071/13
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Dropping of visa requirements for the USA and Canada

The USA currently requires EU citizens from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Romania, Poland and Croatia to hold visas. Canada, meanwhile, requires Czech, Bulgarian and Romanian citizens — as well as Polish and Lithuanian citizens without biometric passports — to have visas when entering.

It is noteworthy that the annual number of US visas issued to the citizens of these five Member States has changed little over the past 10 years — and even fallen in the case of Poland — while the number of refused 'category B' visas is either stagnant or falling dramatically. In Croatia in 2012, for example, the percentage of refused 'category B' visas amounted to 4.4%, which is 1.9% less than in the previous year. By way of a comparison, in some EU Member States whose citizens no longer need visas to enter the USA — such as Latvia and Lithuania — the percentage of refused 'category B' visas has, in some years, exceeded 20% of the total number of applications.

In addition to having a low refusal rate for visa applications, Croatia has taken a number of specific steps, such as introducing biometric passports and fulfilling the criteria for membership of NATO and the EU.

The financial dimension of reciprocity is also far from negligible: the citizens of 23 EU Member States have to pay USD 14 to register in the American system for travel authorisation, while the citizens of the remaining five Member States have to pay, on average, USD 160 for a visa application.

The report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement also calls for visa reciprocity between EU Member States and third countries. This report was adopted at the September 2013 plenary session of Parliament.

In this connection, what steps does the Commission plan to take in order to establish genuine visa reciprocity between EU Member States and third countries, with particular emphasis on the United States of America and Canada?

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

The Commission is pleased that in the context of the implementation of the current visa reciprocity mechanism, full visa reciprocity has been achieved with nearly all visa-exempted third countries. The Commission's ultimate goal is to achieve full visa reciprocity for all Member States with the remaining two third countries who continue to impose visa requirements for one or more MS: the US and Canada.

The Commission uses every opportunity to reiterate its concerns about the remaining cases of non-reciprocity with the US and the Canadian authorities. In this context, the Commission welcomes the decision by the Canadian authorities — which comes in the wake of a series of meetings that allowed a substantial exchange of information between the Commission, the EEAS and the Canadian authorities on the non-reciprocity situation — to lift the visa requirement for Czech citizens as from 14 November 2013, as a positive development in EU-Canada relations.

The Commission welcomes the adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of a more efficient reciprocity mechanism as part of the amendment of Regulation 539/2001 ([1]), which will enhance the credibility of the common visa policy and ensure more solidarity amongst Member States.

Without prejudice to its statement made to Parliament on 10 September 2013 ([2]), the Commission will examine any new and the existing cases of non-reciprocity, including with the US and Canada, under the revised reciprocity mechanism once it enters into force.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement; OJ L 81, 21.3.2001.

([2]) See http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20130910+ITEM-011+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013097/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Λαθρεμπορία

Πρόσφατα αποκαλύφθηκε ότι στο Μεξικό βρέθηκαν ομαδικοί τάφοι με πτώματα από τα οποία έχουν αφαιρεθεί τα όργανα. Πιστεύεται πως ανήκουν σε μετανάστες χωρίς χαρτιά, που εισέρχονται παράνομα στο Μεξικό για να προσπαθήσουν να φθάσουν στις ΗΠΑ. Μάλιστα, το 40% των παράνομων μεταναστών είναι μητέρες με τα παιδιά τους, όπως δήλωσε ο ιερέας Αλεχάντρο Σολαλίντε, που πέρυσι τιμήθηκε με το Εθνικό Βραβείο Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων του Μεξικού.

Με δεδομένο πως η λαθρομετανάστευση βρίσκεται σε έξαρση στις μέρες μας παντού, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία ότι σε χώρες της ΕΕ γίνεται λαθρεμπόριο οργάνων και παιδιών;

2. Ποια μέτρα λαμβάνει ώστε να αποκλείσει προληπτικά το ενδεχόμενο λαθρεμπορίου οργάνων και παιδιών στις χώρες της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η οδηγία 2010/53/ΕΕ ([1]) θεσπίζει το πλαίσιο ποιότητας και ασφάλειας για τα ανθρώπινα όργανα που προορίζονται για μεταμόσχευση. Το άρθρο 13 υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να εξασφαλίζουν ότι οι δωρεές ανθρώπινων οργάνων γίνονται εθελοντικά και χωρίς αμοιβή και, επιπλέον, να απαγορεύουν τη γνωστοποίηση της ανάγκης ή της διαθεσιμότητας ανθρώπινων οργάνων όταν αυτή η γνωστοποίηση γίνεται με σκοπό την προσφορά ή την επιδίωξη οικονομικού οφέλους ή συγκριτικού πλεονεκτήματος.

Επιπλέον, το σχέδιο δράσης σχετικά με τα όργανα ([2]) καλεί τα κράτη μέλη να συνάψουν συμφωνίες σε επίπεδο ΕΕ με σκοπό την παρακολούθηση του εμπορίου οργάνων. Σε εξέλιξη βρίσκεται επίσης ένα χρηματοδοτούμενο από την ΕΕ πρόγραμμα ([3]), το οποίο θα υποστηρίξει την εκπλήρωση αυτών των στόχων μέσα από τη βελτίωση των γνώσεων σχετικά με το εμπόριο οργάνων και την ανάπτυξη μιας σειράς από δείκτες για τον εντοπισμό και τη μέτρηση των εν λόγω παράνομων δραστηριοτήτων.

Η οδηγία 2011/36/ΕΕ ([4]) ποινικοποιεί την πράξη της εμπορίας ανθρώπων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της εμπορίας παιδιών και της εμπορίας με σκοπό την αφαίρεση οργάνων. Ως συνοδευτική αυτής της νομοθεσίας και στο πλαίσιο της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της εμπορίας ανθρώπων, η Επιτροπή δημοσίευσε την πρώτη της έκθεση για την εμπορία ανθρώπων σε επίπεδο ΕΕ τον Απρίλιο του 2013. Η έκθεση αυτή περιλαμβάνει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τον συνολικό αριθμό των ταυτοποιημένων και των εικαζόμενων θυμάτων ανά φύλο, ηλικία και μορφή εκμετάλλευσης ([5]).

Αυτή τη στιγμή η Επιτροπή επαληθεύει τον βαθμό μεταφοράς των παραπάνω οδηγιών στο εθνικό δίκαιο και προβλέπεται να υποβάλει έκθεση στο Κοινοβούλιο σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της οδηγίας 2010/53/ΕΕ μέσα στο 2014. Από κοινού, οι πρωτοβουλίες αυτές θα προσφέρουν μια γενική εικόνα σχετικά με την πρόοδο που έχει σημειωθεί, καθώς και το τι απομένει να γίνει για την περαιτέρω καταπολέμηση του εμπορίου οργάνων και της εμπορίας παιδιών.

([1]) Οδηγία 2010/53/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 7ης Ιουλίου 2010, σχετικά με τα πρότυπα ποιότητας και ασφάλειας των ανθρώπινων οργάνων που προορίζονται για μεταμόσχευση, ΕΕ L 207 της 6.8.2010, σ. 14-29.

([2]) Σχέδιο δράσης σχετικά με τη δωρεά και τη μεταμόσχευση οργάνων 2009-15: ενισχυμένη συνεργασία μεταξύ των κρατών μελών, COM(2008)819/3.

([3]) Δράση κατά του εμπορίου ανθρώπινων οργάνων για μεταμόσχευση (πρόγραμμα HOTT).

([4]) Οδηγία 2011/36/ΕΕ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 5ης Απριλίου 2011, για την πρόληψη και την καταπολέμηση της εμπορίας ανθρώπων και για την προστασία των θυμάτων της, καθώς και για την αντικατάσταση της απόφασης-πλαισίου 2002/629/ΔΕΥ του Συμβουλίου, ΕΕ L 101 της 15.4.2011, σ. 1-11.

([5]) Διατίθεται στον δικτυακό τόπο: http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Report_DGHome_Eurostat

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013097/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Trafficking

The discovery of mass graves containing corpses from which organs have been removed has recently been revealed in Mexico. It is believed that they belong to immigrants who entered Mexico illegally with no documents, in an attempt to reach the US. In addition, according to the priest Alejandro Solalinte, who was awarded Mexico's National Prize for Human Rights last year, 40% of illegal immigrants are mothers with children.

Given that migrant trafficking is sharply increasing everywhere today, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have information on the trafficking of organs and children in EU countries?

2. What measures is it taking to prevent the trafficking of organs and children in the countries of the EU?

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

Directive 2010/53/EU ([1]) lays down the quality and safety framework for human organs intended for transplantation. Article 13 obliges Member States to ensure that donations of organs are voluntary and unpaid and to prohibit advertising the need for, or availability of, organs where such advertising is with a view to offering or seeking financial gain or comparable advantage.

Furthermore, the Organs Action Plan ([2]) calls on Member States to establish EU-wide agreements to monitor organ trafficking. An EU-funded project ([3]) is also in progress and will support these aims by increasing knowledge of organ trafficking and by developing a set of indicators to identify and measure such illegal activities.

Directive 2011/36/EU ([4]) criminalises the act of trafficking in human beings including in children and for the purposes of organ removal. Accompanying this legislation and as part of the EU's strategy to combat human trafficking, the Commission published its first report on trafficking in human beings at the EU level in April 2013. This report includes statistics on the total number of identified and presumed victims disaggregated by gender, age and form of exploitation ([5]).

The Commission is currently verifying the degree of transposition of the abovementioned Directives and a report to Parliament on the implementation of Directive 2010/53/EU is foreseen during the course of 2014. Together these initiatives will provide an overview of progress made and of what still needs to be done in order to further combat organ trafficking and trafficking in children.

([1]) Directive 2010/53/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on standards of quality and safety of human organs intended for transplantation, OJ L 207, 6.8.2010, p. 14-29.
([2]) Action Plan on Organ donation and Transplantation 2009-15: Strengthened cooperation between Member States, COM(2008) 819/3.
([3]) Action against Human Organ Trafficking for Transplantation (HOTT Project).
([4]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1-11.
([5]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Report_DGHome_Eurostat

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013098/13
an die Kommission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) und Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE)
(18. November 2013)

Betrifft: Transatlantische Handels- und Investitionspartnerschaft: handelsbezogene Nachhaltigkeitsprüfung

Wie sieht der Zeitplan für die handelsbezogene Nachhaltigkeitsprüfung der Kommission aus?

Beabsichtigt die Kommission, den Auftrag zu veröffentlichen?

Wird die Kommission die Transparenz des Ausschreibungsverfahrens (Bieter, Auswahlverfahren für die Auftragsvergabe) gewährleisten?

Wird es Raum für eine öffentliche Konsultation über die handelsbezogene Nachhaltigkeitsprüfung geben, so dass Interessenträger Vorschläge für das Verfahren einbringen können? Wenn ja, wann und wie wird dies geschehen, und inwiefern sollen die Ergebnisse der Konsultation in dem Verfahren berücksichtigt werden?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(6. Januar 2014)

Die Studie beginnt im Januar 2014 und soll Ende 2014 abgeschlossen sein.

Der Auftrag wurde am 24. Juli 2013 auf der Website der Kommission veröffentlicht ([1]).

Am 6. August 2013 wurde eine Bekanntmachung im Amtsblatt veröffentlicht, um alle interessierten Wirtschaftsteilnehmer von der Durchführung eines Vergabeverfahrens in Kenntnis zu setzen.

Der Auftrag wurde zwar breit veröffentlicht, doch es ging nur ein Angebot ein. Der Bewertungsausschuss trat am 4. November 2013 zur Beurteilung des Angebots zusammen und beschloss, dem Bieter den Zuschlag zu geben.

Der Auftragnehmer für die handelsbezogene Nachhaltigkeitsprüfung ist verpflichtet, wesentliche Interessenträger in der EU (Unternehmen, nationale Verwaltungen, Zivilgesellschaft, Sozialpartner, Verbraucherorganisationen usw.) im Rahmen von Gesprächen und Sitzungen sowie mittels Fragebogen zu konsultieren.

Er richtet zudem eigens für die Nachhaltigkeitsprüfung eine Website ein, auf der die Studie und ihre Ergebnisse veröffentlicht werden.

Für den Dialog mit der Zivilgesellschaft sind zwei Sitzungen vorgesehen, in denen der Auftragnehmer die Arbeitsergebnisse vorstellen und den Interessenträgern die Möglichkeit geben wird, weitere Vorschläge einzubringen. Diese Sitzungen sollen in der Phase der Erstellung des Anfangsberichts (Frühjahr 2014) und des Abschlussberichts (Ende 2014) stattfinden.

Zusätzlich zu diesen Foren werden nach jeder Verhandlungsrunde Informationssitzungen mit den Interessenträgern in Brüssel veranstaltet.

Die für die Nachhaltigkeitsprüfung zuständigen Berater haben die Aufgabe, die Beiträge der Interessenträger in dem Verfahren zu berücksichtigen.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/august/tradoc_151696.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013098/13
à la Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) et Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE)
(18 novembre 2013)

Objet: Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement: évaluation de l'incidence du commerce sur le développement durable

Dans quel délai la Commission prévoit-elle l'évaluation de l'incidence du commerce sur le développement durable?

La Commission a-t-elle l'intention de publier le cahier des charges?

La Commission garantira-t-elle la transparence de la procédure d'adjudication (concernant les organisations participantes et la procédure de sélection de l'attributaire)?

L'évaluation fera-t-elle l'objet d'une consultation publique, de manière à ce que les intéressés puissent donner leur avis sur la question? Dans l'affirmative, quand cette consultation aura-t-elle lieu et selon quelles modalités, et comment ses résultats seront-ils pris en compte?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(6 janvier 2014)

L'étude commencera en janvier 2014 et devrait être achevée avant la fin de la même année.

Le cahier des charges a été publié sur le site web de la Commission le 24 juillet 2013 ([1]).

Un avis de marché a été publié au *Journal officiel* le 6 août 2013 pour informer tous les opérateurs intéressés du lancement d'une procédure de passation de marché.

Le cahier des charges a été largement diffusé, mais une seule offre a été reçue. Le comité d'évaluation s'est réuni le 4 novembre 2013 pour évaluer cette offre et a décidé d'attribuer le marché au soumissionnaire.

Le contractant chargé de réaliser l'évaluation de l'impact sur le développement durable (EIDD) doit consulter les principales parties intéressées de l'Union (entreprises, administrations nationales, société civile, partenaires sociaux, organisations de consommateurs, etc.) par voie d'entretiens, de réunions et de questionnaires.

En outre, il mettra au point un site web consacré à l'EIDD, afin de publier l'étude y afférente et d'en diffuser les résultats.

Il est prévu d'organiser deux réunions de dialogue avec la société civile, au cours desquelles le contractant présentera le travail accompli et permettra aux parties intéressées d'apporter des contributions supplémentaires. Ces réunions devraient avoir lieu lors de l'élaboration du rapport initial (printemps 2014) et du rapport final (fin 2014).

De plus, des séances d'information des parties intéressées seront organisées à Bruxelles après chaque cycle de négociation.

Les consultants qui réalisent l'EIDD sont chargés d'intégrer les contributions des parties intéressées.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/august/tradoc_151696.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013098/13
to the Commission
Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE) and Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership: Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment

What is the planned timeline for the Commission's Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA)?

Does the Commission intend to publish the terms of reference?

Will the Commission guarantee the transparency of the tendering process (tendering organisations, selection procedure for awarding the tender)?

Will there be space for public consultation in relation to the Trade SIA, so that stakeholders can provide input to the process? If so, when and how will this take place, and how will the results of the consultation be incorporated into the process?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

The study will start in January 2014 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

The terms of reference (ToRs) were published on the Commission website on 24 July 2013 ([1]).

A contract notice was published in the Official Journal on 6 August 2013 to inform all interested operators that a procurement procedure was launched.

The ToRs were widely advertised but only one offer was received. The evaluation committee met on 4 November 2013 to assess the offer and decided to award the contract to the bidder.

The Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) contractor is required to consult key EU stakeholders (business, national administrations, civil society, social partners, consumer organisations…), by means of interviews, meetings and questionnaires.

In addition, the contractor will develop a website dedicated to the SIA in order to publicise the study and disseminate its results.

Two Civil Society Dialogue meetings are foreseen to take place, where the contractor will present the work done and enable stakeholders to provide additional input. Such meetings are foreseen to take place at the stage of the inception report (spring 2014) and final report (end of 2014).

In addition to these fora, stakeholders' briefings will be organised in Brussels after each negotiation round.

The SIA consultants have the responsibility to integrate contributions received from stakeholders.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/august/tradoc_151696.pdf

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-013113/13
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(18. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Poteškoće s ostvarivanjem prava iz sustava socijalne sigurnosti radnih dnevnih migranata i umirovljenika u Sloveniji

Slovenija je jedna od 13 zemalja članica EU-a koje su nakon pristupanja Republike Hrvatske Europskoj uniji zadržale pravo da u prijelaznom razdoblju od dvije godine ograniče slobodno kretanje hrvatskih radnika. Posljedično, Slovenija nije u potpunosti otvorila svoje tržište rada već će za zapošljavanje biti potrebno ispuniti uvjete propisane nacionalnim zakonodavstvom Slovenije. Takav zakonodavni okvir posebno pogađa oko 8000 dnevnih migranata koji svakodnevno iz Hrvatske putuju na posao u Sloveniju. Trenutačni položaj dnevnih migranata je takav da državljani Republike Hrvatske kojima je prestao radni odnos u Republici Sloveniji ne mogu ostvariti pravo na novčanu naknadu ni u jednoj od dvije države. Inicijative hrvatskih institucija da se problem dnevnih migranata regulira na bilateralnoj razini između dviju zemalja pokrenute su još u devedesetim godinama prošlog stoljeća, no bez konkretnog rješenja. Sporazumom o stabilizaciji i pridruživanju između Slovenije i Hrvatske pitanje prava dnevnih migranata i dalje nije uređeno. Umirovljenici su spomenutim sporazumom dobili određena prava, iako nije riješen konkretan problem nemogućnosti umirovljenja radnika tvrtke Steklarska Nova, jer država Slovenija kao vlasnica tvrtke nije plaćala davanja za mirovinsko osiguranje i nije plaćala beneficirani radni staž. Također, neriješenim je ostao problem dnevnih migranata-invalida koji ne mogu u mirovinu jer slovenske institucije ne priznaju hrvatske dokumente, dok im se kao hrvatskim državljanima u Sloveniji ne mogu izdati nikakvi dokumenti vezani uz invalidske mirovine.

Pristupanjem Hrvatske Europskoj uniji na problematiku dnevnih migranata započinje se primjenjivati Uredba (EZ) broj 883/2004 o koordinaciji sustava socijalne sigurnosti, kako bi se izbjegla situacija da radnici koji su radili u jednoj državi članici ostanu bez prava iz sustava socijalne sigurnosti u slučaju kada prebivalište imaju u drugoj državi članici. Uzimajući u obzir spomenutu Uredbu, je li moguće da se njenom primjenom nakon hrvatskog pristupanja ista prava omoguće i radnicima i umirovljenicima koji ih nisu ostvarili do sada?

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

U skladu s prijelaznim mjerama u Aktu o pristupanju Hrvatske, Slovenija može privremeno ograničiti pristup hrvatskih radnika svom tržištu rada i primjenjivati svoje nacionalno zakonodavstvo o pristupu radnim mjestima umjesto načela EU-a o slobodnom pristupu zapošljavanju.

Međutim, pravila EU-a o koordinaciji sustava socijalne sigurnosti ([1]) primjenjuju se u potpunosti od prvog dana pristupanja. Prema tim pravilima, kada pogranični radnici ([2]) postaju nezaposleni, moraju tražiti naknadu za nezaposlenost u državi članici u kojoj žive. Što se tiče prava na mirovinu, ako privatni poslodavac nije uplatio doprinose radnika u slovenski sustav mirovinskog osiguranja za njihov rad u Sloveniji prije srpnja 2013., pitanje se treba rješavati na nacionalnoj razini.

Što se tiče invalidskih mirovina, pravila EU-a omogućuju da potrebne administrativne provjere i medicinske preglede obično provodi institucija mjesta prebivališta ili boravka podnositelja zahtjeva. Međutim, od podnositelja zahtjeva se može tražiti da prođe provjeru koju će obaviti profesionalac kojeg je izabrala institucija države koja isplaćuje mirovine ili čak da se radi takvog pregleda vrati u državu koja isplaćuje mirovinu, ako zdravstveno stanje osobe to dopušta. Institucija države koja isplaćuje mirovinu mora uzeti u obzir dokumente i medicinska izvješća koje ustupi institucija države prebivališta, no ne mora ih se držati.

([1]) Uredba (EZ) br. 883/2004 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 29. travnja 2004. o koordinaciji sustava socijalne sigurnosti, SL L 166, 30.4.2004., str. 1.) i Uredba (EZ) br. 987/2009 Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 16. rujna 2009. o utvrđivanju postupka provedbe Uredbe (EZ) br. 883/2004 o koordinaciji sustava socijalne sigurnosti, SL L 284, 30.10.2009.

([2]) Osobe koje su zaposlene u jednoj, a imaju prebivalište u drugoj državi članici u koju se vraćaju u pravilu svakodnevno ili barem jednom tjedno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013113/13
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(18 November 2013)

Subject: Problems implementing the social security rights of working commuters and pensioners in Slovenia

Slovenia is one of 13 EU Member States that have reserved the right to a two-year transition period of restricted free movement for Croatian workers after the Republic of Croatia joined the European Union. Consequently, Slovenia has not fully opened its labour market. In fact, it will be necessary to fulfil the requirements set out under Slovenia's national legislation to find employment. Such a legislative framework specifically affects about 8 000 commuters who travel daily from Croatia to work in Slovenia. The current situation for commuters is that nationals of the Republic of Croatia whose employment in the Republic of Slovenia has ended cannot exercise the right to benefits in either of the two countries. Initiatives were already taken by Croatian institutions to regulate the issue of commuters on a bilateral basis between the two countries in the 1990s, but without any concrete solution. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement between Slovenia and Croatia has still not settled the matter of commuters' rights. Under the above agreement, pensioners were granted certain rights, but the specific problem of the inability of the workers from the Steklarska Nova factory to retire has not been resolved, because Slovenia, as the owner of the company, did not make contributions to the pension insurance and did not pay a benefits plan. Furthermore, the problem of disabled commuters who cannot retire because Slovenian institutions do not recognise Croatian documents and who cannot be issued with any documents related to a disability pension in Slovenia because they are Croatian nationals has remained unresolved.

Following Croatia's accession to the European Union, Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, which is designed to avoid a situation where employees who worked in one Member State are left without any social security rights if their residence is in another Member State, now applies to the commuter problem. Will application of the above Regulation make it possible for workers and pensioners who have not been able to benefit from the same rights in the past to do so now?

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

In accordance with the transitional measures in the Act of Accession of Croatia, Slovenia can temporarily restrict Croatian workers' access to its labour market and apply its national legislation on access to work, instead of the EU principles of free access to employment.

However, the EU rules on the coordination of social security schemes ([1]) apply fully from the first day of accession. Under those rules, where frontier workers ([2]) become unemployed, they must claim unemployment benefit in their Member State of residence. As regards pension rights, if the private employer did not pay the workers' contributions into the Slovenian pension insurance scheme when they were working in Slovenia before July 2013, the matter should be addressed at national level.

As regards invalidity pensions, the EU rules provide that the administrative checks and medical examinations needed are normally carried out by the institution of the claimant's place of residence or stay. However, the claimant may be required to undergo an examination by a professional chosen by the institution of the State paying the pension or even to return for such an examination to the State paying the pension, if the person's health allows. The institution of the State paying the pension has to take documents and medical reports provided by the institution of the State of residence into consideration, but is not bound by them.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, p. 1 and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 284, 30.10.2009.

([2]) Persons employed in one Member State, residing in another Member State to which they return, as a rule, daily or at least once a week.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-013118/13
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(19. November 2013)

Betrifft: Definition von „Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten" in der neuen De-minimis-Verordnung

Im zweiten Entwurf der Kommission für die sogenannte De-minimis-Verordnung ist vorgesehen, dass sich die Definition von „Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten" am Verschuldungsgrad und am EBIT-Zinsdeckungsgrad orientieren soll (siehe Artikel 2 Buchstabe e). Laut einer Studie der Ratingagentur Creditreform Rating AG, die auf der Auswertung von 80 000 Jahresabschlüssen der Bilanzjahre 2011 und 2010 basiert, würden bei Anwendung dieser Kriterien 35 % der deutschen KMU als Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten gelten und könnten damit nicht mehr durch staatliche Beihilfen gefördert werden.

Der Studie zufolge würden bei einer alternativen Orientierung am Verhältnis des Unternehmensergebnisses vor Zinsen und Steuern (EBIT) zu den Zinsaufwendungen des Unternehmens der vergangenen beiden Jahre immer noch 9,6 % der Unternehmen im KMU-Segment als nicht förderfähig gelten, wenn das Verhältnis nicht unter 1,0 liegen dürfte. Selbst dies hätte gravierende und unverhältnismäßige Einschränkungen der Förderung von KMU zur Folge.

Zudem hätte eine pauschalisierte Beurteilung anhand eines Schwellenwertes ohne konjunkturelle Sensitivität unseres Erachtens zur Folge, dass eine Vielzahl grundsätzlich solider Unternehmen aufgrund kurzfristiger Schwankungen nicht gefördert werden würde.

Schließlich blieben durch den Kennzahlenschwellenwert die jeweiligen Strukturmerkmale des Unternehmens (Rechtsform, Sektor) unberücksichtigt, die für die Beurteilung der Risikotragfähigkeit von großer Bedeutung sind.

1. Nimmt die Kommission diese Erkenntnisse zum Anlass, die genannten Kriterien zu überarbeiten bzw. zurückzuziehen?

2. Wie bewertet die Kommission die in der Studie aufgezeigte Alternative, den EBIT-Zinsdeckungsgrad im Zusammenhang mit anderen Kennzahlen wie z. B. dem Verhältnis „total net debt" zu EBITDA zu beurteilen?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(17. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission ist sich der Bedenken einiger Interessenträger hinsichtlich der Definition des Begriffs „Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten" im zweiten Entwurf der De-minimis-Verordnung bewusst, die befürchten, dass demnach ein erheblicher Anteil der KMU nicht für De-minimis-Beihilfen in Betracht käme. Die Dienststellen der Kommission haben sich mit den Mitgliedstaaten und Interessenträgern ausgetauscht, um die Ursachen dieser Bedenken näher zu beleuchten.

Zudem hat die Kommission kürzlich eine öffentliche Konsultation zum Entwurf der neuen Leitlinien für Beihilfen zur Rettung und Umstrukturierung von Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten ([1]) gestartet. In diesem Zusammenhang hat sie auch mögliche Änderungen der Definition dargelegt und die Beteiligten aufgefordert, dazu Stellung zu nehmen, ob die vorgeschlagenen Kriterien ein geeignetes Mittel zur Definition von Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten sind. Die Kommission wird alle eingehenden Stellungnahmen einschließlich der von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannten nach Abschluss der Konsultationsverfahren prüfen.

Was die Behandlung von Unternehmen in Schwierigkeiten in der De-minimis-Verordnung betrifft, so wird die entsprechende Überarbeitung in offener und transparenter Weise durchgeführt, wobei alle Stellungnahmen sorgfältig berücksichtigt werden und den obengenannten Bedenken Rechnung getragen wird. Diesbezüglich wurde noch keine endgültige Entscheidung getroffen. Die Kommission ist selbstverständlich darauf bedacht, mit der Überarbeitung der De-minimis-Verordnung ein einfaches und flexibles Instrument zu schaffen, das insbesondere der Förderung von KMU dient.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_state_aid_rescue_restructuring/index_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013118/13
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Definition of 'undertaking in difficulty' in the new '*de minimis*' regulation

In the Commission's second draft '*de minimis*' regulation, the definition of an 'undertaking in difficulty' is partly based on its debt-to-equity ratio and its earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) to interest coverage ratio. According to a study by the rating agency Creditreform Rating AG, based on an analysis of 80 000 annual financial statements for the 2011 and 2010 financial years, 35% of German SMEs would be classified as 'undertakings in difficulty', and therefore no longer in a position to be given state aid, if those criteria were applied.

If, alternatively, according to the study, reference were made only to EBIT to interest coverage ratio for the previous two years, and that ratio could not be less than 1.0, 9.6% of firms in the SME segment would still be considered ineligible for aid; and even that would result in serious and disproportionate constraints on support for SMEs.

In my view, furthermore, as a result of a 'one size fits all' assessment based on a threshold value insensitive to cyclical developments, short-term fluctuations would bar support for a host of fundamentally sound firms.

Lastly, that ratio threshold value ignores firms' structural characteristics (e.g. legal form and segment), which are very important for an assessment of risk-bearing capacity.

1. Will the Commission be prompted by these findings to rework or rescind the criteria referred to?

2. What is the Commission's appraisal of the alternative assessment method, given in the study, involving EBIT to interest coverage ratio in conjunction with other ratios, e.g. the ratio of total net debt to EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation)?

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

The Commission is aware of the concerns raised by some stakeholders that the definition of 'undertaking in difficulty' set out in the second draft de minimis regulation would exclude a significant proportion of SMEs from *de minimis* aid. The Commission services have been in contact with Member States and stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the basis of these concerns.

In addition, the Commission recently launched a public consultation on draft guidelines for rescue and restructuring aid to undertakings in difficulty ([1]), in the context of which it has set out possible changes to the definition and invited stakeholders to comment on whether the proposed criteria are an appropriate means to identify undertakings in difficulty. The Commission will assess all proposals that it receives, including those set out by the Honourable Member, on completion of the consultation process.

As regards the treatment of undertakings in difficulty in the *de minimis* regulation, the review is being carried out in an open and transparent way in which all comments are carefully considered and the concerns mentioned above are taken into account. No final decisions have yet been taken. It is certainly the Commission's intention that the review of the *de minimis* Regulation will provide a simple and flexible instrument to support SMEs in particular.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_state_aid_rescue_restructuring/index_en.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013119/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(19 novembre 2013)

Objet: Précarité énergétique dans l'Union européenne

Le projet européen EPEE *(European Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency)* financé par le programme Énergie Intelligente Europe entre 2006 et 2009 a permis d'identifier et d'évaluer le phénomène de la précarité énergétique dans chaque pays partenaire (Angleterre, Belgique, Espagne, France et Italie), d'identifier les bonnes pratiques pour le combattre et de faire des recommandations aux décideurs en ce sens. Le projet a conclu qu'au niveau européen entre 50 et 125 millions de personnes seraient confrontées à la précarité énergétique sur 500 millions de citoyens. Plus récemment, dans un avis d'initiative du 18 septembre 2013, le Comité économique et social européen a plaidé pour un engagement européen en faveur de la sécurité et de la solidarité énergétiques, dans un contexte économique et social difficile, couplé à une hausse des prix de l'énergie. Les prix de l'énergie ont en effet augmenté d'une manière continue entre 2011 et 2012 dans l'Union européenne, avec une moyenne pour l'électricité de 6,6 % et de 10,3 % pour le prix du gaz.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle intégrer dans le rapport demandé par le Conseil européen (d'ici fin 2013) une analyse de la pauvreté énergétique dans l'Union incluant les facteurs de vulnérabilité et proposer une stratégie européenne ainsi qu'une feuille de route pour la prévenir et l'éradiquer?

2. Travaille-t-elle sur des indicateurs européens de pauvreté énergétique visant à harmoniser les statistiques pour mieux cerner, prévenir et traiter le problème au niveau européen?

3. Envisage-t-elle de lancer un observatoire européen de la pauvreté énergétique sur le modèle de l'observatoire national français lancé par le Président Sarkozy le 1er mars 2011?

4. Compte-elle s'attaquer aux conséquences de la précarité énergétique sur la santé publique à la lumière de la récente étude menée par la Fondation Abbé Pierre en France?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(17 décembre 2013)

1-2. Il est ressorti des discussions approfondies entre les parties intéressées qui se sont déroulées au sein d'un groupe d'experts créé dans le cadre du forum des citoyens pour l'énergie et présidé par la Commission que les parties intéressées ne jugeaient pas approprié d'harmoniser les définitions en raison des importantes disparités économiques ainsi que les politiques visant à lutter contre la pauvreté dans les différents États membres. Les travaux ont plutôt porté sur le recensement et l'analyse des facteurs de vulnérabilité des consommateurs d'énergie et sur la mise en évidence des bonnes pratiques en matière de lutte contre la précarité énergétique. À la mi-décembre 2013, un rapport au forum sera élaboré sur la base de ces travaux. Le rapport établi à partir des travaux du groupe d'experts sera présenté et débattu lors de la réunion plénière du forum et servira de base aux prochaines initiatives de la Commission prévues pour 2014, y compris des rapports de la Commission sur les prix de l'énergie et sur le marché intérieur de l'énergie.

3. Actuellement, la Commission n'envisage pas une initiative de ce type.

4. L'incidence de la précarité énergétique sur la santé publique sera examinée dans le rapport précité. Les études réalisées au niveau national sont bienvenues en vue de trouver des solutions.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013119/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Fuel poverty in the European Union

The European Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency (EPEE) project funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe programme between 2006 and 2009 identified and assessed the phenomenon of fuel poverty in each of the partner countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom), identified good practices in combating this and made recommendations to decision-makers. The project came to the conclusion that of the 500 million citizens living in Europe, 50 to 125 million would be faced with the problem of fuel poverty. More recently, on 18 September 2013 the European Economic and Social Commission issued an opinion on its own initiative in which it called for a European commitment to energy security and solidarity in a difficult social and economic context that is coupled with rising energy prices. Energy prices in the European Union rose constantly between 2011 and 2013 by an average of 6.6% for electricity and 10.3% for gas.

1. Will the Commission incorporate an analysis of fuel poverty in the EU, including vulnerability factors, into the report it is preparing for the European Council (delivery: end of 2013) and will the Commission propose an EU strategy and a road map to prevent and eradicate fuel poverty?

2. Is the Commission working on European fuel poverty indicators for harmonised statistics in order to better define, prevent and tackle this problem at EU level?

3. Does it plan to set up a European fuel poverty monitoring centre along the lines of the French national monitoring centre inaugurated by the French President Mr Sarkozy on 1 March 2011?

4. Is it planning to tackle the repercussions fuel poverty has on public health, drawing on the recent study by the Fondation Abbé Pierre in France?

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

1-2. One of the conclusions from the extensive stakeholder discussions carried out in an expert group set up under the Citizen's Energy Forum and chaired by the Commission was that stakeholders generally do not consider it appropriate to harmonise definitions due to large economic disparities and policies addressing poverty in the different Member States. Instead, work has been made to identify and analyse drivers of vulnerability for energy consumers and to highlight good practices in addressing energy poverty. In mid-December 2013 stock will be taken of the work in a report to the forum. The report issued from the work of the expert group will be presented and discussed at the plenary meeting of the Forum and will feed into upcoming Commission initiatives planned for 2014, including Commission reports on energy prices and on the internal energy market.

3. The Commission is currently not considering such action.

4. The impact of fuel poverty on public health will be addressed in the report mentioned above. Studies at national level are a welcome contribution to seeking solutions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013125/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Reform of EU telecoms rules

A joint study by the European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association and the Boston Consulting Group, published in July 2013, suggests that Europe is lagging behind Asia and North America in terms of technological progress and the digital economy. The authors of the report argue that the draft regulation on telecoms rules, part of the Single Market package, runs the risk of adding additional layers of regulation rather than simplifying the rules.

Given the EU's Digital Agenda targets and the upcoming EU telecoms regulatory framework, what additional measures will the Commission introduce to ensure that the EU achieves its full potential in terms of telecommunications and to reduce the burden of regulation in order to make this possible?

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

One of the main objectives of the Commission's 'Connected Continent' proposal is to create opportunities for European companies to operate on a bigger scale with less regulatory burden. The proposed EU-level coordination mechanisms, in particular as regards spectrum, are aimed at reducing administrative and regulatory burden for operators and simplifying investment planning. Other elements, like the common virtual access products should make the delivery of pan-European services easier. Europe-wide rules on net neutrality and consumer protection would eliminate the need to comply with different regulations in each Member State.

The Commission has also put forward a proposal for a regulation to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks with the goal of better coordination of civil works and improved access to networks.

Finally, the Commission is currently reviewing its relevant markets recommendation. The recommendation sets out a list of markets which would normally warrant *ex ante* regulatory intervention. The new list will contain only those markets where regulation is still needed in order to maximise consumer benefit and safeguard competition.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013139/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(19 novembre 2013)

Objet: Fonds japonais

Une fois encore, les actions japonaises se hissent, en compagnie des valeurs biotech, au sommet du hit-parade des fonds publié par MoneyStore. La politique du premier ministre japonais, Monsieur Abe, semble porter ses fruits. Pour rappel, cette politique est construite sur trois axes que l'on appelle aussi «les trois flèches». La première est une politique monétaire basée sur un doublement de la masse monétaire. La deuxième consiste en une relance budgétaire qui se fonde sur des incitations fiscales aux entreprises et des grands travaux d'infrastructures. La troisième flèche consiste en des réformes structurelles. L'ensemble de ces mesures, appelées «abenomics», a produit des effets positifs: les indicateurs économiques sont bons, les cours boursiers grimpent et la faiblesse du yen dope les exportations.

Mais les observateurs notent que cette politique n'est pas exempte de risques. Il existe des risques tant intérieurs qu'extérieurs. Le gouvernement doit maintenir un juste équilibre entre la croissance, les réformes structurelles et la consolidation fiscale. Il doit aussi bien calibrer les mesures au niveau microéconomique dans les entreprises. En abaissant l'impôt des sociétés à des taux comparables aux standards internationaux, il permettra une hausse des investissements intérieurs.

1. Dans quelle mesure la Commission pourrait-elle s'inspirer de l'exemple japonais?

2. Quels en sont, selon elle, les points forts et les points faibles?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(3 janvier 2014)

Eu égard à la nature des problèmes structurels qui affectent le Japon de longue date, le succès des Abenomics dépendra de l'effet coordonné des trois «flèches» de la réforme oeuvrant de concert. L'expansion monétaire ne sera efficace que si les anticipations d'inflation sont ranimées sans pour autant créer une volatilité excessive ou une hausse des primes de risque. Quant à l'assainissement fiscal, il sera important de le doter d'un calendrier et d'un rythme appropriés s'inscrivant dans le cadre d'une stratégie à moyen terme crédible. Les réformes structurelles devront, pour leur part, s'attaquer aux rigidités qui affectent actuellement les marchés des produits et du travail.

Sur la question de savoir si l'exemple japonais peut inspirer les politiques européennes, on soulignera que les problèmes économiques sous-jacents et le contexte institutionnel et économique du pays sont très différents (le Japon a par exemple connu près de vingt ans de déflation, un phénomène inconnu en zone euro), et qu'il est donc évident que les mesures et politiques appropriées devront être modulées en fonction des besoins spécifiques de l'économie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013139/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Japanese investments

Japanese shares, along with biotech shares, have once again worked their way back to the top of MoneyStore's investment charts. The policies of Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Abe, seem to be bearing fruit. His is a three-pronged policy based on the 'three arrows'. The first is a monetary policy based on doubling Japan's monetary base. The second consists of a fiscal stimulus centred on tax incentives for business and major infrastructure projects. The third arrow consists of structural reforms. These measures are together known as 'abenomics' and they have had positive effects: the economic indicators are good, stock prices are rising and the weakness of the yen is boosting exports.

However, observers note that the policy is not without risk. The risks are internal as well as external. The government must strike a balance between growth, structural reforms and fiscal consolidation. It also needs to carefully target its measures at the micro-economic level in the business sector. Lowering company taxes to internationally comparable levels will allow growth in internal investment.

1. How much inspiration could the Commission take from the Japanese example?

2. In the Commission's opinion, what are its strengths and weaknesses?

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

Given the nature of Japan's long-standing structural problems, the success of Abenomics will depend on the coordinated effect of all three of the 'arrows' of reform operating together. For the monetary expansion to be effective, inflation expectations will have to be shifted without creating excessive volatility or raising risk premiums. Adequate timing and pacing of fiscal consolidation within a credible medium-term strategy will be important, while structural reforms will have to address existing rigidities in product and labour markets.

As to whether the Japanese example can provide inspiration for European policy, the nature of the underlying economic problems as well as the institutional and economic context are very different (for instance Japan was in deflation for almost 20 years, while there has been no deflation in the euro area), and therefore the appropriate policy responses clearly have to be modulated on the specific needs of the economy.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013142/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Преимущества на дуалната образователна система

Примери за успешно развита дуална образователна система, комбинираща професионално обучение в рамките на образователна институция и професионална практика/чиракуване в предприятие, съществуват в Германия, Австрия, Дания и Холандия. В тези държави именно се наблюдават и най-ниските стойности на младежка безработица в ЕС.

Тези ниски нива на младежка безработица, особено в Германия и Австрия, често биват обяснявани със заслугите на дуалната образователна система, която гарантира високо качество на квалификациите и съответствие с нуждите на пазара. Така прилагането на добри практики, свързани с дуалната система, би могло да допринесе за структурни промени на пазара на труда и да доведе до по-високи нива на младежка заетост.

В този контекст:

1. Вижда ли Комисията връзка между преимуществата на дуалната система и значително по-ниските нива на младежка безработица в гореспоменатите държави? Ако да, какви мерки са предприети или предстои да бъдат предприети от страна на Комисията за идентифициране на добри практики по отношение на дуалната система и стимулиране на обмена им между държавите членки?

2. Експертите, неодобряващи дуалната система на образование, твърдят, че придобиването на специализирани и практически умения посредством нея спомага в краткосрочен план за висока заетост. Същевременно, обаче, в дългосрочен план, поради динамиката на пазара, виждат опасност за по-високи нива на безработица сред същите хора поради „остаряване“ на уменията им. Какви са наблюденията на Комисията в това отношение?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Василиу от името на Комисията
(7 януари 2014 г.)

Комисията е съгласна, че в действителност данните сочат, че държавите със стабилни и привлекателни системите за професионално образование и обучение — особено тези, които имат добре установена двойна система — регистрират по-добри резултати по отношение на младежката заетост. Двойната система улеснява плавния преход от училищната скамейка на пазара на труда, осигурява на учащите се умения, които съответстват на търсенето на пазара на труда, и повишава конкурентоспособността им.

В рамките на Европейския алианс за професионална подготовка Комисията започна редица дейности за установяване и обмен на най-добри практики. Например тя организира семинар за участието на МСП в професионалната подготовка/ученето в процеса на работа и публикува насоки на политиката относно ученето в процеса на работа в Европа в сферата на първоначалното професионално образование и обучение ([1]). Скоро Комисията ще публикува ограничена процедура, предназначена за националните органи, отговарящи за професионалната подготовка, която ще окаже подкрепа за дейности като участието в двустранни или многостранни задълбочени партньорства.

Комисията е наясно с притесненията, че твърде много се акцентира върху пригодността за заетост в краткосрочен план чрез придобиването на специализирани умения, което може да доведе до нарастване на безработицата на по-късен етап. Тъй като младите хора се нуждаят от гъвкавост, интердисциплинарни и по-общи умения, за да могат да отговорят на изискванията на пазара на труда, където преобладават технологичните промени и международната конкуренция, Комисията работи заедно с държавите членки за разработване и прилагане на концепцията за учене през целия живот и „ключовите компетентности“ ([2]) — набор от познания, умения и нагласи, които помагат на хората за личностната реализация, увеличават възможностите им за намиране на работа и ги предразполагат да участват пълноценно в обществото.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/competences_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013142/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: The advantages of a dual education system

Germany, Austria, Denmark and the Netherlands offer examples of successfully developed dual education systems, which combine vocational training within an education institution and an apprenticeship in a company. These same countries have the lowest levels of youth unemployment in the EU.

These low levels of youth unemployment, particularly in Germany and Austria, are often explained by the merits of the dual education system, which ensures high quality qualifications in accordance with the needs of the market. As such, implementing best practices related to the dual system could contribute to structural changes in the labour market and lead to higher levels of youth employment.

1. Does the Commission see a link between the advantages of the dual system and the considerably lower levels of youth unemployment in the abovementioned countries? If so, what measures have been taken or will be taken by the Commission to identify best practices related to the dual system and promote the exchange of said practices among Member States?

2. Experts who do not approve of the dual education system claim that acquiring specialised and practical skills through this system contributes to higher employment in the short term. However, in the long term, due to market dynamics, they see a risk of higher unemployment levels among the same people due to the 'ageing' of their skills. What are the Commission's observations in this regard?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission agrees that evidence does indeed show that countries with strong, attractive VET systems — especially those with a well-established dual system — tend to perform better in terms of youth employment. The dual system facilitates a smooth transition from school to the world of work, equips students with skills relevant for the labour market, and contributes to competitiveness.

Within the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, the Commission has initiated a range of activities to identify and exchange best practices. For example, it organised a workshop on SME involvement in apprenticeships/work-based learning, and published policy guidance on work-based learning in Europe in initial VET. ([1]) Shortly, the Commission will issue a restricted call addressed to national authorities in charge of apprenticeships, which will support activities such as engaging in bilateral or multilateral in-depth partnerships.

The Commission is aware of the concern that too much focus on short-term employability through the provision of specialised skills may lead to higher unemployment at later stages. As young people need adaptability, transversal and more generic skills to succeed in a labour market dominated by technological change and international competition, the Commission works with Member States to develop and implement the concept of lifelong learning and 'key competences' ([2]) — the set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that help people to gain personal fulfilment, increase their employability, and participate fully in society.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/competences_en.htm

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013144/13
до Комисията
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 ноември 2013 г.)

Относно: Активност по инициативата „Европейски алианс за професионална практика“

Като част от усилията за справяне с младежката безработица през юли 2013 г. стартира Европейският алианс за професионална практика, чиято цел е да повиши наличието, качеството и положителния имидж на професионалната практика и чиракуването. Това е инициатива, чийто успех зависи предимно от активността на заинтересованите страни.

Имайки предвид различните нива на развитие на професионалната практика и чиракуване в отделните държави членки, както и разликите в националните традиции, съществува риск от активност предимно от заинтересовани страни от държави, в които професионалната практика и чиракуването са вече адекватно застъпени.

В това отношение:

1. Какво е нивото на наблюдаваната активност по инициативата до този момент (по държави членки, ако е възможно)? Задоволително ли е то за Комисията?

2. Предвидени ли са мерки за стимулиране на активността от страна на потенциални заинтересовани страни в държави членки, в които до този момент липсва силен интерес?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Василиу от името на Комисията
(7 януари 2014 г.)

Комисията е напълно съгласна с уважаемия член на Парламента, че Европейският алианс за професионална подготовка се нуждае от подкрепа и ангажираност от страна на редица заинтересовани страни, а именно държавите членки, социалните партньори, предприятията и други действащи лица в Европа.

На 15 октомври 2013 г. ([1]) Съветът постигна съгласие по декларация относно Алианса за необходимостта от възможно най-широкообхватни последващи действия. Комисията подготвя писмо до държавите членки, като ги призовава да се ангажират с конкретни действия на национално равнище в подкрепа на целите на Алианса.

В рамките на действие „Подкрепа за реформиране на политиката“ по програма „Еразъм+“ за 2014 г. Комисията подготвя ограничена процедура за покана за представяне на предложения, отправена до националните органи, отговарящи за професионалната подготовка. Чрез тази процедура ще се окаже подкрепа на държавите членки, които са в процес на осъществяване на реформи, посредством различни инициативи, специално пригодени към националните особености. Инициативите включват: участие в двустранни или многостранни партньорства за реформа; подготовка на проучване на осъществимостта на разширяването или създаването на система за професионална подготовка; разработване на стратегии за създаване на съвместни центрове за обучение за МСП; подкрепа за политическия диалог, чиято цел е осъществяването на партньорства между националните заинтересовани страни; кампании за популяризиране; разработване на учебни програми; и изпитване на пилотни схеми за професионална подготовка.

Комисията очаква по-специално, че държавите членки, към които има конкретно отправени препоръки ([2]), свързани с професионалното обучение, ще подадат заявления за участие в сътрудничество със съответните заинтересовани страни.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_bg.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013144/13
to the Commission
Monika Panayotova (PPE)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Activity in the European Alliance for Apprenticeships initiative

As part of efforts to tackle youth unemployment, the European Alliance for Apprenticeships was launched in July 2013. The Alliance aims to improve the availability, quality and positive image of apprenticeships. The success of this initiative depends mainly on the active work of stakeholders.

Taking into account the varying levels of development of apprenticeships in individual Member States, as well as differences in national traditions, there is a risk that the active stakeholders will be mainly those from Member States where apprenticeships are already adequately covered.

1. What level of activity has been observed in relation to this initiative to date (by Member States, if possible?) Is the Commission satisfied?

2. Are any measures provided to promote activity by potential stakeholders in Member States where there has been a lack of strong interest to date?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission fully agrees with the Honourable Member that the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) needs support and commitment from a range of stakeholders, namely Member States, social partners, businesses and other actors in Europe.

The Council agreed on a Declaration on the Alliance on 15 October 2013 ([1]) regarding the need for the fullest possible follow-up, The Commission is preparing a letter to Member States, calling on them to make a pledge of specified actions at national level in support of the aims of the Alliance.

Under the Erasmus+ action 'Support for policy reform', the Commission is preparing a 2014 restricted call for proposals addressed to national authorities in charge of apprenticeships. This call will support Member States undergoing a reform process through various strands of action, tailored to their national circumstances and including: engaging in bilateral or multilateral partnerships for reform; preparing a feasibility study for extension or establishment of an apprenticeship system; developing strategies for setting up joint training centres for SMEs; supporting policy dialogue leading to partnerships between national stakeholders; attractiveness campaigns; designing curricula; and testing pilot apprenticeship schemes.

The Commission expects that, in particular, Member States with county-specific recommendations ([2]) related to vocational training will submit applications in cooperation with relevant stakeholders.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013153/13
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(19 novembre 2013)

Objet: Respect des règles établies par la directive 96/71/CE concernant le détachement des travailleurs

En attendant la prochaine directive d'exécution concernant le détachement des travailleurs, la Commission ne devrait-elle pas renforcer sa surveillance et vérifier l'effectivité des périodes pendant lesquelles sont utilisés les travailleurs détachés dans certains États membres, travailleurs qui par définition ne devraient travailler que d'une façon temporaire?

En effet, le fait d'utiliser de manière permanente des travailleurs détachés dans certains États membres fausse les principes même du marché intérieur et occasionne un dumping social inadmissible.

Pourquoi la Commission ne mène-t-elle pas des contrôles stricts et efficaces contre certains États membres afin de mettre un terme définitif à cet esclavage des temps modernes?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(20 décembre 2013)

Aux fins de l'application de la directive 96/71/CE concernant le détachement de travailleurs effectué dans le cadre d'une prestation de services, un travailleur détaché est tout travailleur qui, pendant une période limitée, exécute son travail sur le territoire d'un État membre autre que l'État sur le territoire duquel il travaille habituellement. Selon la jurisprudence de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne, le caractère temporaire de l'activité de la personne qui fournit le service dans l'État membre d'accueil doit être apprécié, *entre autres*, au regard de la durée de la prestation. Pour cette raison, concernant la durée limite, la prestation du service doit être temporaire et le travailleur doit donc aussi être détaché pour une période limitée.

La Commission rappelle qu'il relève de la compétence des États membres de contrôler, d'appliquer et de faire respecter dans la pratique les conditions de travail et d'emploi établies dans la directive 96/71/CE.

Pour éviter tout contournement des règles et lutter contre les abus dans l'application de cette directive, la proposition de la Commission ([1]) d'une directive relative à l'exécution de la directive 96/71/CE contient une liste indicative et non exhaustive de critères qualitatifs qualifiant à la fois le caractère temporaire inhérent à la notion de détachement pour la prestation de services et l'existence d'un lien réel entre l'employeur et l'État membre depuis lequel le détachement est effectué. En outre, la proposition clarifie le rôle de cet État membre ainsi que l'obligation d'aider l'État membre destinataire à s'assurer du respect des conditions applicables en vertu de la directive 96/71/CE et de la directive relative à son exécution.

Au vu de l'approche générale convenue par le Conseil le 9 décembre, la Commission se réjouit à la perspective d'un accord rapide entre le Parlement européen et le Conseil sur cette proposition cruciale.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final du 21 mars 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013153/13
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(19 November 2013)

Subject: Compliance with rules laid down by Directive 96/71/EC on the posting of workers

Pending the entry into force of the enforcement directive on the posting of workers, should the Commission not be stepping up its monitoring and looking into whether the time limits for the use of posted workers — workers who by definition should only be working on a temporary basis — are being complied with in certain EU Member States?

The fact that posted workers are being used on a permanent basis in certain Member States undermines the principles of the internal market and gives rise to unacceptable social dumping.

Why is the Commission not carrying out strict and effective monitoring of certain Member States with a view to putting an end to this modern-day form of slavery?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

For the purposes of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, a posted worker means a worker who, for a limited period, carries out his work in the territory of a Member State other than the State in which he/she normally works. In accordance with the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union the temporary nature of the activity of the person providing the service in the host Member States has to be determined, *inter alia*, in the light of the duration of the provision. Therefore, concerning the time-limit, the service provision has to be temporary and it follows that also the worker should be posted for a limited period to provide the service.

The Commission reiterates that the monitoring, application and enforcement in practice of the working and employment conditions laid down in Directive 96/71/EC fall within the competence of the Member States.

To avoid circumvention of the rules and combat abuse of the application of Directive 96/71/EC, the Commission's proposal ([1]) for an enforcement Directive contains an indicative, non-exhaustive list of qualitative criteria characterising both the temporary nature inherent to the notion of posting for the provision of services as well as the existence of a genuine link between the employer and the sending Member State. In addition, the role of the sending Member State is further clarified, including the obligation to assist the receiving Member State to ensure compliance with the conditions applicable under Directive 96/71/EC and the enforcement Directive.

After the general approach reached by Council on 9 December, the Commission is looking forward to a prompt agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on this crucial proposal.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-013171/13
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(20 november 2013)

Betreft: Stemming in het Europees Parlement op 9 oktober 2013 over vliegtijdbeperkingen

Op 9 oktober 2013 verwierp het Parlement een voorstel tot verwerping van de ontwerpverordening van de Commissie tot vaststelling van technische eisen en administratieve procedures voor vluchtuitvoering. Tijdens het debat dat aan de stemming voorafging legde Siim Kallas, vicevoorzitter van de Commissie, een verklaring af waarin hij specifieke openstaande kwesties toelichtte.

Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat de interpretatie van de verordening en de maatregelen die zij voornemens is te nemen in overeenstemming zijn met de verklaring van vicevoorzitter Siim Kallas, die het resultaat van de stemming van de leden van het Europees Parlement heeft beïnvloed?

1. Ten aanzien van overweging 5 geldt dat lidstaten aan exploitanten strengere bepalingen kunnen opleggen dan in de verordening is voorzien, mits het verzoek van de lidstaat overeenkomstig de voorgeschreven procedures is verlopen en een vergelijkbaar of beter niveau van veiligheid wordt gewaarborgd. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat deze interpretatie correct is?

2. Ten aanzien van „paraatheidsdiensten buiten de luchthaven": kan de Commissie bevestigen dat de combinatie van vluchtdienst met andere paraatheidsdiensten, zoals paraatheidsdienst thuis, zal worden gecontroleerd door paraatheidsdiensten tot maximaal 6 uren te beperken indien zij gevolgd worden door een vluchtdienst? De EU-voorschriften zijn aldus opgesteld dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat zij het EASA de opdracht zal geven zijn certificeringsspecificaties aldus vast te stellen dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na meer dan 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest?

3. Ten aanzien van nachtvluchten: kan de Commissie bevestigen dat zij het EASA de opdracht zal geven in zijn certificeringsspecificaties vast te stellen dat luchtvaartmaatschappijen passende maatregelen inzake vermoeidheidsrisicobeheer moeten nemen voor nachtvluchten waarbij de vluchtdienst langer is dan 10 uur?

4. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat belanghebbenden, met inbegrip van vertegenwoordigers van het vliegend personeel, alsook het Europees Parlement zullen worden betrokken bij alle toekomstige ontwikkelingen in het vliegtijdbeperkingsdossier? De ontwerpverordening verplicht het EASA om een nieuw programma voor toezicht op en onderzoek naar vermoeidheid en prestatieniveau van bemanningsleden op te zetten. Dit programma houdt in dat bij de lidstaten en belanghebbenden gegevens zullen worden ingezameld over belangrijke punten die samen met de belanghebbenden zullen worden vastgesteld. De Commissie en het EASA zullen tijdens de volledige procedure waar mogelijk met de belanghebbenden overleggen.

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(16 december 2013)

1. Lidstaten kunnen exploitanten strengere bepalingen opleggen dan die welke in de verordening zijn vastgelegd, mits het verzoek van de lidstaat overeenkomstig de voorgeschreven procedures is behandeld en een vergelijkbaar of beter niveau van veiligheid wordt gegarandeerd.

2. De Commissie vindt dat de combinatie van vluchtdienst met andere paraatheidsdiensten, zoals paraatheidsdienst thuis, onder controle wordt gehouden door paraatheidsdiensten tot maximaal 6 uur te beperken wanneer hierop een vluchtdienst volgt. De EU-voorschriften betreffende paraatheidsdiensten thuis zijn zodanig opgesteld dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest. De Commissie zal het EASA vragen zijn certificeringsspecificaties zodanig vast te stellen dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na meer dan 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest.

3. De Commissie zal het EASA verzoeken in zijn certificeringsspecificaties vast te stellen dat luchtvaartmaatschappijen passende maatregelen inzake vermoeidheidsrisicobeheer moeten nemen voor nachtvluchtdiensten van meer dan 10 uur.

4. Belanghebbenden met inbegrip van vertegenwoordigers van het vliegend personeel evenals het Europees Parlement zullen betrokken blijven bij alle toekomstige ontwikkelingen in het vliegtijdbeperkingsdossier. De ontwerp-verordening van de Commissie verplicht het EASA met name om een nieuw programma voor toezicht op en onderzoek naar vermoeidheid en prestatieniveau van bemanningsleden op te zetten. Dit programma houdt in dat bij de lidstaten en belanghebbenden gegevens zullen worden ingezameld over belangrijke punten die samen met de belanghebbenden zullen worden bepaald, met name de paraatheidsdienst en nachtdienst, het toezicht op het effect van de nieuwe regels, de beoordeling van de doeltreffendheid van het vermoeidheidsrisicobeheer binnen de sector en de uitvoering van de nodige studies. De Commissie en het EASA zullen de verschillende stappen te gepasten tijde met de belanghebbenden bespreken.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013171/13
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: European Parliament vote on 9 October 2013 on flight time limitations

On 9 October 2013 Parliament rejected a motion for rejection of the draft Commission regulation on technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations, following a debate during which Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas made a statement to clarify specific outstanding issues.

Can the Commission confirm that the interpretation of the regulation and the actions it intends to undertake are consistent with the statement made by Vice-President Siim Kallas, which influenced the result of the vote of the Members of the European Parliament?

1. As regards Recital 5, Member States may apply and enforce on their operators provisions of a more protective nature than those in the regulation, providing that the Member State's request has been processed in accordance with the required procedures and that an equivalent level of safety is met or exceeded. Can the Commission confirm that this understanding is correct?

2. Regarding 'standby other than airport standby': Can the Commission confirm that the combination of other standby, such as home standby, with flight duty will be controlled by limiting standby as a rule to 6 hours when followed by a flight duty? The EU rules have been developed in such a way that no crew member will be on a flight duty after being 18 hours awake. Can the Commission confirm that it will request EASA to adopt its certification specifications in such a way that no crew member will be on a flight duty after being more than 18 hours awake?

3. Regarding night flights, can the Commission confirm that it will request EASA to prescribe in its certification specifications that airlines will be required to apply appropriate fatigue risk management measures for flight duty periods longer than 10 hours at night?

4. Can the Commission confirm that stakeholders, including aircrew representatives, will remain involved in all future developments on the FTL file, as will the European Parliament? The draft regulation obliges EASA to launch a new monitoring and research programme on aircrew fatigue and performance. This will include collecting data from Member States and stakeholders with respect to the key issues identified together with stakeholders. The Commission and EASA will discuss the different steps with stakeholders at each and every suitable opportunity.

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

1. Member States may apply and enforce on their operators provisions of a more protective nature than those in the regulation providing that the Member State's request has been processed in accordance with the required procedures and that an equivalent level of safety is met or exceeded.

2. The Commission considers that the combination of other standby such as home standby with flight duty will be controlled by limiting standby as a rule to 6 hours when it is followed by a flight duty. The EU rules on home standby have been developed in such a way that no crew member should be on flight duty after more than 18 hours awake. The Commission will request EASA to adopt its certification specifications in such a way that no crew member shall be on flight duty after more than 18 hours awake.

3. The Commission will request EASA to prescribe in its certification specifications that the airlines will be required to apply appropriate fatigue risk management for flight duty periods longer than 10 hours at night.

4. Stakeholders, including the aircrew representatives, will remain involved in all future developments on the FTL file. And so will the European Parliament. The draft Commission regulation specifically obliges EASA to launch a new monitoring and research programme on aircrew fatigue and performance. This will include collection of the data from Member States and stakeholders with respect to the key issues identified together with stakeholders including standby and night duty, monitoring the impact of the new rules, assessing the effectiveness of fatigue management within the industry and launching the necessary studies. The Commission and EASA will discuss the different steps with stakeholders at each and every suitable opportunity.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013183/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Taylor (ALDE), Catherine Bearder (ALDE), Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE), Phil Bennion (ALDE), Fiona Hall (ALDE), Sir Graham Watson (ALDE) and Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: EU migration

Can the Commission provide an estimate of the number of UK citizens resident in another EU Member State?

How many of these are currently claiming unemployment benefit?

How many UK citizens living in other EU Member States are estimated to benefit from public services provided by the host Member State?

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

According to the EU-Labour force survey, around 804,000 UK citizens were residing in another EU Member State in 2012. However this is likely to be an underestimation of the actual number ([1]) as free movement inside the EU makes difficult the counting of EU citizens residing in another Member State than their own.

As for the labour market status of UK citizens residing in another Member State, the EU-Labour force survey indicates that, in 2012, around 314 thousand were employed and 40 thousand were unemployed. It is however difficult to estimate the number of those claiming unemployment benefits ([2]), at least on the basis of EU-wide data.

While there is no specific data on public service users by nationality, it can be assumed that all UK citizens residing in another Member State benefit from public services in the wide sense, including heathcare services.

([1]) For instance, in a report published in 2006 (entitled 'Brits Abroad: Mapping the scale and nature of British emigration') the Institute of Public Policy Research estimated the number of UK citizens abroad for a year or longer to be around 1.66 million.

([2]) The variable on receipt of benefits in the EU-LFS does not provide statistically reliable estimate at EU level due to small sample size and the fact that is not available for Ireland, the second largest recipient country of UK citizens being unemployed.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013186/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(20 November 2013)

Subject: Minimum stocking density rate

Can the Commission clarify whether under the new CAP rules — which will come into force in 2015 — the Scottish Government will be able to use a minimum stocking density rate as a trigger for the receipt of entitlements to farmers?

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

With the exception of coupled support, the EU direct payments under the CAP reform have been designed as a support decoupled from production, meaning that they are compliant with the Green Box criteria in paragraph 6 of Annex 2 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. Therefore, any production obligations or links to type and volume of production (including livestock units) or production factors may not be imposed as eligibility criteria for receiving decoupled direct payments.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013223/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(21 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Declarações de Lisa Monaco, assessora de Obama para o combate ao terrorismo

Segundo informações vindas a público, os EUA terão ao seu serviço um exército de 90 mil espiões ciberespaciais, aos quais acrescem pelo menos 100 mil agentes secretos. Em 2012, o orçamento das agências secretas cresceu mais de 52 milhões de dólares. A assessora de Obama para o combate ao terrorismo, Lisa Monaco, reiterou que os EUA vão continuar a recolher informações, atendendo ao «equilíbrio entre as necessidades de segurança e as preocupações de privacidade».

Assim perguntamos à Alta Representante:

Que avaliação faz destes dados e das declarações da assessora de Obama para o combate ao terrorismo?

Tendo em conta que os programas de espionagem dos EUA encerram claras violações de direitos, liberdades e garantias dos cidadãos, que implicações retira a UE deste reiterar da espionagem massiva por parte dos EUA no plano das relações UE-EUA?

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

A União Europeia e os Estados Unidos são parceiros estratégicos e esta parceria é fundamental para a promoção dos nossos valores, da nossa segurança e da nossa liderança comum nas questões de âmbito mundial. Contudo, a confiança na parceria foi negativamente afetada e precisa de ser restabelecida.

A este respeito, a Comissão manifestou a sua preocupação e solicitou esclarecimentos ao governo dos Estados Unidos sobre os programas de vigilância referidos nos meios de comunicação social e o seu impacto potencial nos direitos fundamentais dos cidadãos europeus. A Comissão convida os Senhores Deputados a consultar o relatório dos co-presidentes da UE sobre as conclusões do Grupo de trabalho *ad hoc* UE-EUA sobre a proteção dos dados, publicado em 27 de novembro último, e a Comunicação da Comissão «Restabelecer a confiança nos fluxos de dados entre a UE e os EUA» ([1]).

Por último, a administração dos EUA informou a Comissão de que a revisão em curso das atividades de vigilância ordenada pelo Presidente Obama incluirá elementos sobre a atitude dos EUA relativamente aos países aliados e parceiros.

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente vai continuar a seguir de perto esta questão.

([1]) COM(2013) 846 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013223/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Statements made by Lisa Monaco, President Obama's counter-terrorism advisor

Information has come to light that the United States employs an army of 90 000 cyberspace spies, supplemented by at least 100 000 secret agents. In 2012, the intelligence agencies' budget rose by more than USD 52 million. President Obama's counter-terrorism advisor, Lisa Monaco, reiterated that the United States will continue to gather information, 'balancing our security needs with the privacy concerns all people share'.

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's view of these figures and of the statements made by President Obama's counter-terrorism advisor?

Given that the espionage programmes carried out by the United States involve clear violations of citizens' rights, freedoms and guarantees, how will that country's renewed commitment to large-scale spying affect EU-US relations?

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

The European Union and the United States are strategic partners, and this partnership is critical for the promotion of our shared values, our security and our common leadership in world affairs. However, trust in the partnership has been negatively affected and needs to be restored.

In this regard, the Commission has expressed concerns and requested clarifications from the US Government regarding the surveillance programmes reported in the media and their potential impact on the fundamental rights of Europeans. The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to the report by the EU Co-chairs on the findings of the EU-US ad hoc Working Group on Data Protection published on 27 November, and to its communication on rebuilding trust in EU-US data flows ([1]).

Finally, the US Administration has informed the Commission that the ongoing review of surveillance activities ordered by President Obama will include elements on the US posture towards allied countries and partners.

The HR/VP will continue to closely follow this matter.

([1]) COM(2013) 846 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013252/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: EPSO selection procedure for candidates wishing to work in the EU institutions

At the beginning of the decade EPSO introduced a new selection procedure for candidates wishing to work in the EU institutions. The first round of this procedure introduced computer-based tests comprising verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning, and a trial of situational judgment tests.

A year later, the situational judgment tests were included again and now given half the weighting (40 points out of 80) in the final result. It was explained that this was to correct perceived gender imbalances in success rates.

I have now learned that EPSO has changed the system yet again. The score for the numerical reasoning part of AD-level tests will now no longer be taken into account and will simply be pass/fail, with the pass mark set at 4/10.

1. Why does EPSO see fit to constantly rejig its tests to engineer the results it wants to see, rather than set objective criteria and tests and then take the most capable candidates who pass?

2. Why is numeracy given so little importance when recruiting for staff for institutions dealing with a trillion-euro budget?

3. How can staff who fail 60% of basic numeracy questions still be deemed competent to gain managerial responsibility and manage very large amounts of public money?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

All tests mentioned have been used for several years and have proven their efficiency and predictive value of future job performance. In order to meet the highest professional standards of testing, EPSO monitors the performance of its assessment tools in light of fair and equal treatment of candidates and gender balance. Thus, further fine-tuning of the delivery of the tests can sometimes be required.

EPSO's high-stake selection procedures regularly attract several thousand candidates for comparatively few posts. As a result, the very high selectivity rates of computer-based tests in large-scale competitions may occasionally show slightly uneven success rates in terms of gender across the testing population. In light of this, EPSO's Management Board, representing all Institutions, approved in April 2013 a proposal to deliver the numerical reasoning test on a 'pass/fail' basis only. This facilitates the continued assessment of numeracy skills of future staff and will improve gender balance in large competitions. It was also decided that this modified delivery mode will only be applied depending on the profile sought, thereby acknowledging the importance of the numerical reasoning test, especially for profiles where numeracy remains a core requirement. The pass mark of 40% in numerical reasoning tests has so far only been applied in open competitions for linguists, given the lower importance of numeracy for such profiles. Most often the pass mark for numerical reasoning is set at the same level as for the other tests (usually 50%). Moreover, and given the selectivity rates of EU open competitions, candidates who achieve only the minimum pass mark in one or several tests are very unlikely to be amongst the top performers in computer-based tests.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-013255/13
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2013. november 21.)

Tárgy: Rejtett allergének az élelmiszerekben

Folyamatosan nő az allergiában szenvedők aránya az EU-ban, így az élelmiszer-allergiában szenvedőké is. Ugyanígy egyre több a tisztázatlan eredetű bélbetegségekben érintettek száma, melyeket az orvosok jobb híján IBS-nek, Crown-kórnak stb. neveztek el. Gyógyítani ezeket nem tudják, sőt a tüneteket csökkenteni sem.

Ugyanakkor az EU-ban betiltották a sertések élelmiszer-hulladékkal való etetését.

Ezért a hulladék száraz kenyérből ipari technológiák révén dextrózt, glükóz-fruktóz szirupot, keményítőszörpöt és hasonlókat állítanak elő. Ezeket a termékeket a dzsemektől a fagylaltokon át a virslikbe, párizsikba, pástétomokba és szinte mindenbe belerakják.

Tehát számos élelmiszer-allergén glutént tartalmaz, de ez a csomagolásán mégsem jelenik meg. A két folyamat időben korrelációt mutat.

Ugyanakkor a dextróz, glükóz, fruktóz stb. kukoricából, burgonyából, szőlőből is előállítható, és ez esetben nem allergizál.

Nem látja úgy a Bizottság, hogy az európai polgárok egészségének védelme érdekében sürgősen módosítani kellene a címkézési szabályokon?

Nem volna időszerű a közvetett allergén tartalmat is jelezni például a glükóz búzából fordulattal?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. január 10.)

Az allergiát vagy ételérzékenységet okozó termékek jelölését a 2000/13/EK irányelv ([1]) szabályozza. A glutén tekintetében a glutént tartalmazó gabonafélék és az abból készült termékek esetében a csomagoláson a gluténtartalmat az említett irányelv IIIa. mellékletében előírt feltételek szerint fel kell tüntetni. E követelmény alól mentesülnek többek között a búzából készült glükózszirupok (beleértve a dextrózt is) és a búzából készült maltodextrinek. A mentesség alapját az Európai Élelmiszerbiztonsági Hatóság (EFSA) tudományos véleményei ([2]) képezik.

Az élelmiszer-ipari vállalkozók felelőssége annak biztosítása, hogy az általuk forgalomba hozott élelmiszerek biztonságosak legyenek és megfeleljenek a vonatkozó hatályos szabályoknak, az említett szabályok alkalmazásának ellenőrzése pedig elsősorban a tagállamok feladata.

([1]) HL L 109., 2000.5.6., 29. o.
([2]) EFSA Journal 2007; 488:1–8 és EFSA Journal 2007; 487:1–7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013255/13
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Hidden allergens in foodstuffs

The proportion of allergy sufferers in the EU, and therefore the number of people suffering from food allergies is continuously increasing. Similarly, the number of people affected by intestinal diseases of unknown origin, which doctors, for want of a better name, have called IBS, Crohn's disease, etc., is also increasing. These conditions cannot be cured, and the symptoms cannot be alleviated, either.

At the same time, feeding pigs with foodstuff waste has been prohibited in the EU.

Therefore, industrial technologies are used to convert waste bread into dextrose, glucose-fructose syrup, starch syrup and similar products. These products are then used in a range of products from jams and ice cream to sausages, processed meat products, pâtés and almost everything.

Consequently, numerous foodstuff allergens contain gluten, but this fact is not indicated on the packaging. The two processes indicate a correlation in time.

However, dextrose, glucose, fructose, etc. can also be produced from maize, potatoes and grapes, in which case they do not cause allergies.

Does the Commission not see that an urgent amendment of labelling regulations is needed to protect the health of European citizens?

Would it not be timely to indicate indirect allergen content as well, for example, using the 'glucose from wheat' phrase?

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

The labelling of substances or products causing allergies or intolerances is already regulated by Directive 2000/13/EC ([1]). Concerning gluten, it is required to label the cereals containing it and the products thereof, except, among others, wheat based glucose syrups including dextrose and wheat-based maltodextrins under the conditions stipulated in Annex IIIa of that directive. This exemption is based on the scientific opinions ([2]) of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

It is the responsibility of food business operators to ensure that the food they place on the market is safe and in compliance with the relevant rules in force, and it is primarily the responsibility of Member States to control the application of the abovementioned provisions.

([1]) OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p.29.
([2]) EFSA Journal (2007) 488, 1-8, EFSA Journal (2007) 487, 1-7.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013264/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child — paragraph 98

What action has the Commission taken, or what action is it considering taking, on foot of Parliament's resolution of 12 December 2012 on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2010-2011) ([1]), most notably paragraph 98 thereof, which called on the Commission (and the World Health Organisation) to withdraw gender identity disorders from the list of mental and behavioural disorders and to ensure a non-pathologising reclassification in the negotiations on the 11th version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11)?

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

The Commission supports a non-pathologising reclassification for gender identity in the negotiations of the 11th version of the World Health Organisation International Classification of Diseases (ICD).

In this context, the Commission has had regular contacts with WHO officials in charge of the process for the revision of ICD, in particular the chapters on mental health and gender identity and with representatives of Transgender Europe and ILGA (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, trans and Inter sex association) Europe.

In June 2013, the Commission has further organised a meeting in Geneva with WHO, ILGA Europe and the EU Member States on the state of the discussions within the WHO on the ICD revision in relation to transgender persons. The Commission will ensure the appropriate coordination between EU Member States through the established procedures.

The most recent information available indicates that the revision process is unlikely to be finalised before the World Health Assembly in 2016.

The Commission remains fully committed to a non-pathologising reclassification for gender identity in the ICD and will maintain appropriate contacts with the different actors.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0500.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013287/13
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(21 November 2013)

Subject: Support for the bullfighting industry

Are monies being used to support the bullfighting industry or farmers involved in the breeding of bulls for the industry through payments under Pillar I or Pillar II of the common agricultural policy? If any such monies are being paid to support the industry as a whole, can the Commission clarify:

1. precisely under what programmes this money is paid?

2. the amounts paid for the years 2007 to date on a yearly basis?

Furthermore can the Commission clarify the consideration given at EU level to the animal rights and animal welfare issues involved in this industry?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the joint answer to written questions E-010205/2012 by Mr Dan Jørgensen and E-010589/2012 by Mr Raül Romeva i Rueda.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-013306/13
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(25. marraskuuta 2013)

Aihe: Horisontti 2020 -ohjelma ja julkisen ja yksityisen sektorin kumppanuus

Monivuotisesta rahoituskehyksestä, Horisontti 2020 -ohjelmasta sekä yritysten kilpailukykyä ja pk-yrityksiä koskevasta ohjelmasta (COSME) käydyt neuvottelut on nyt saatettu päätökseen, joten on tärkeää, että nämä uudet ohjelmat pannaan täytäntöön mahdollisimman nopeasti, jotta Euroopan yhtiöihin alettaisiin investoida. Julkista ja yksityistä pääomaa kerryttävän eurooppalaisen rahasto-osuusrahaston perustaminen saattaisi edistää merkittävästi uusien omistusosuusperusteisten investointien tekemistä innovoiviin Euroopan yhtiöihin.

Mitä toimenpiteitä komissio toteuttaa perustaakseen tällaisen julkista ja yksityistä pääomaa kerryttävän rahasto-osuusrahaston ja milloin sen toiminnan on tarkoitus käynnistyä?

Máire Geoghegan-Quinnin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(19. joulukuuta 2013)

Komission tavoitteena on parantaa Euroopan riskipääoma-alan omavaraisuutta ja maailmanlaajuista kilpailukykyä vähentämällä sen riippuvuutta julkisesta sektorista ja edistämällä investointeja yksityisistä lähteistä. Julkista ja yksityistä pääomaa kerryttävät rahasto-osuusrahastot voivat edistää yksityisiä investointeja ja toimia välittäjinä yksityisten investoijien, riskipääoma-alan ja muiden innovatiivisiin yrityksiin investoivien riskipääomarahastojen välillä.

Koska valittavana on useita vaihtoehtoja tehtäessä päätöstä tällaisten rahasto-osuusrahastojen rakenteista, riskinjakomekanismeista ja hallinnointitavoista, tarvitaan lisätoimia eri vaihtoehtojen ja niiden hyvien ja huonojen puolien arvioimiseksi. Tätä varten komissio käynnistää vuonna 2014 toteutettavuustutkimuksen, jossa pyritään löytämään ratkaisu näihin kysymyksiin. Analysoituihin skenaarioihin sisältyy mahdollisuus, että EU investoi nykyisiin alueellisiin, kansallisiin tai kansainvälisiin julkista ja yksityistä pääomaa kerryttäviin rahasto-osuusrahastoihin. Tutkimuksessa hyödynnetään Euroopassa ja sen ulkopuolella toteutettuja arviointeja ja akateemisia tutkimuksia, joiden aiheena ovat julkisen ja yksityisen sektorin riskipääomarahastot. Lähtökohtana käytetään riskipääoma-alan ja muiden toimijoiden esittämiä ehdotuksia, jotka liittyvät rahasto-osuusrahastoihin. Mahdollisten järjestelmien on oltava houkuttelevia yksityisten ja institutionaalisten investoijien kannalta ja edistettävä poliittisen kokonaistavoitteen saavuttamista. Lisäksi niiden on kyettävä toimimaan varainhoitoasetuksen mukaisesti. Jos tutkimuksessa päädytään myönteiseen suositukseen, yleiseurooppalaisen rahasto-osuusrahaston pilottihankkeen suunnittelu ja sen toteutuksesta käytävät keskustelut aloitetaan vuonna 2015. Hanke käynnistetään mahdollisesti vuonna 2016, jos budjettivallan käyttäjät osoittavat siihen riittävästi rahoitusta.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013306/13
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(25 November 2013)

Subject: Horizon 2020 and public-private partnership

With the conclusion of the negotiations on the multiannual financial framework and the Horizon 2020 and COSME programmes, it is essential that these new programmes are implemented quickly so that investment can start flowing into European companies. The creation of a European 'fund of funds', as a vehicle to bring together public and private capital, has significant potential to deliver new equity investment into innovative European companies.

What steps is the Commission taking to establish such a public-private 'fund of funds', and when does it envisage it will be in place?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

The Commission aims to make the European venture capital (VC) industry more self-sustainable and globally competitive by reducing its dependence on the public sector and encouraging more investment from private sources. Public-private funds-of-funds (FoFs) have the potential to stimulate private investors and act as intermediaries between such investors and VC and other risk-capital funds investing in innovative firms.

As the range of possible structures, risk-sharing mechanisms and management modes for such FoFs is wide, additional work is needed to evaluate the options and assess the trade-offs between them. To this end, the Commission will launch a feasibility study in 2014 to examine the issues. Scenarios analysed will include the possibility of the EU investing in existing regional, national or transnational public-private FoFs. The study will draw on evaluations of and academic research into public-private VC funds in Europe and elsewhere, and build on FoF proposals by the VC industry and other players. Potential schemes must be attractive for private and institutional investors, help meet the overall policy objective, and be capable of operation under the Financial Regulation. Assuming a positive recommendation from the study, work on the design of a pilot pan-European FoF, together with negotiations on how to implement it, would proceed in 2015 with a view to a possible launch in 2016, subject to the availability of sufficient funding being allocated by the Budgetary Authorities.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-013307/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 de novembro de 2013)

Assunto: Declarações do VP Olli Rehn: União Europeia — consolidação e crescimento

A comunicação social deu ampla nota das declarações proferidas pelo senhor Vice-Presidente Olli Rehn no dia 21 de novembro de 2013 no Parlamento Europeu, em Estrasburgo, nomeadamente que «reduzimos para metade os nossos défices nos últimos dois, três anos, e podemos agora permitir-nos abrandar o ritmo de consolidação» e que a Europa deve focar-se «na qualidade das medidas amigas do crescimento».

Neste momento, diversos Estados-Membros, nomeadamente os que se encontram sob planos de ajustamento, propõem-se apresentar e cumprir orçamentos extremamente duros que são determinados, em boa medida, pelas imposições de rigor orçamental emanadas das instituições europeias. As tentativas da flexibilização das metas do défice e de abrandamento do ritmo de consolidação orçamental propostas pelos respetivos governos de modo a possibilitar a adoção de medidas efetivamente promotoras do crescimento têm conhecido a oposição e a irredutibilidade das equipas técnicas da Comissão Europeia, do Banco Central Europeu e do Fundo Monetário Internacional.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como julga a oportunidade das declarações do senhor Vice-Presidente Olli Rehn, tendo em conta a circunstância de os processos de apresentação, negociação e aprovação orçamental de diversos Estados-Membros estarem em curso?

2. Não crê existir uma efetiva falta de sintonia e um franco contraste entre as declarações políticas dos principais responsáveis da Comissão Europeia e do Fundo Monetário Internacional e as posições rígidas assumidas pelas equipas técnicas das respetivas entidades no tocante às decisões orçamentais e económicas que devem ser tomadas pelos Estados-Membros sob programa de ajustamento?

3. Não julga que esta disparidade e a demora na adoção das orientações políticas por parte dessas mesmas equipas têm prejudicado desrazoavelmente os Estados-Membros, em particular aqueles que têm procurado cumprir adequadamente os programas de ajustamento a que se encontram sujeitos? E que esse mesmo cumprimento deveria merecer a contrapartida de uma maior latitude no tocante ao ritmo da consolidação orçamental de modo a permitir a efetivação de «medidas amigas do crescimento»? Não seria razoável determinar um sistema permanente de incentivos para quem cumpre?

4. Como analisa os últimos dados conhecidos da economia europeia? Em que medida as declarações do senhor Vice-Presidente Olli Rehn são compagináveis com esses dados?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(19 de dezembro de 2013)

Os Estados-Membros da área do euro obtiveram resultados notáveis em termos de consolidação orçamental nos últimos anos. Em média, o défice orçamental na área do euro foi reduzido de mais de metade, prevendo-se que ultrapasse apenas ligeiramente os 3 % este ano e seja inferior a este nível no próximo ano. Foi assim possível estabilizar os níveis da dívida, criar situações orçamentais mais sustentáveis e contribuir para melhorar a perceção do mercado, o que permitiu reduzir o ritmo da consolidação na área do euro no seu conjunto e privilegiar uma política orçamental favorável ao crescimento, em apoio da retoma incipiente. Consequentemente, muitos Estados-Membros beneficiaram de prorrogações dos prazos previstos nos procedimentos relativos aos défices excessivos (PDE), o que demonstra a flexibilidade do Pacto de Estabilidade e Crescimento. Não obstante, os níveis elevados ou mesmo muito elevados da dívida em diversos Estados-Membros não deixam margem para complacências, especialmente nos casos em que os países não tenham ainda alcançado o seu OMP.

Além disso, existem grandes diferenças entre os países da área do euro. Em particular, os Estados-Membros com um programa de ajustamento económico devem ainda envidar esforços para restabelecer a solidez das finanças públicas. No entanto, os importantes esforços de consolidação de alguns desses Estados-Membros já produziram resultados positivos, tendo permitido a saída dos programas de ajustamento e a redução dos esforços de consolidação no futuro.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013307/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(25 November 2013)

Subject: Statements by Vice-President Olli Rehn on EU consolidation and growth

The media have given ample coverage to remarks made on 21 November 2013 by Commission Vice-President Olli Rehn at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, particularly his assertion that Europe has reduced its deficits by half in the last two to three years and can now allow itself to slow down the pace of consolidation, and that Europe should focus on the quality of growth-friendly measures.

At the moment a number of Member States, specifically those subject to adjustment plans, are preparing to present and implement extremely austere budgets largely determined by strict budgetary control measures imposed by the European institutions. Attempts by the governments concerned to put forward measures which would make the deficit goals more flexible and slow down the pace of budgetary consolidation to allow adoption of effective measures to encourage growth have been categorically rejected by technical experts from the Commission, European Central Bank (ECB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

1. How does the Commission view Vice-President Olli Rehn's comments, bearing in mind that the budgets of several Member States are currently in the process of being presented, negotiated and approved?

2. Does the Commission not consider the political declarations made by the leaders of the Commission and the IMF to be clearly at odds with the rigid positions adopted by the same institutions' technical teams when addressing the budgetary and economic decisions required to be taken by Member States subject to adjustment programmes?

3. Does it not feel that this discrepancy and the delay on the part of the technical teams in adopting these political guidelines have unfairly prejudiced Member States, particularly those which have tried to properly comply with adjustment programmes and are bound by them? Does it not feel that such compliance merits, in return, greater flexibility in the rate of budgetary consolidation so that growth friendly measures can be put into effect? Would it not be reasonable to establish a permanent system of incentives to reward compliance?

4. What is the Commission's assessment of the latest data concerning the European economy? To what extent are Vice-President Olli Rehn's comments compatible with said data?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

The euro area Member States have achieved impressive results in terms of fiscal consolidation in the last several years. On average, budget deficit in the euro area has been more than halved and is forecast to be only slightly above 3% this year and fall below this level next year. This has allowed debt levels to stabilise, created more sustainable budgetary positions and contributed to improved market sentiment. This allows reducing the pace of consolidation in the euro area as a whole and focus on growth-friendliness of fiscal policy, supporting the nascent recovery. Consequently, many Member States have benefitted from extensions in EDP deadlines, which is evidence of the flexibility of the SGP. At the same time high and very high debt levels in several Member States leave no room for complacency, especially when the countries have not yet achieved their MTOs.

Also, large differences among countries exist within the euro area. In particular, the Member States with an economic adjustment programme still need to make a lot of efforts in order to regain sound public finances. However, even among these Member States there are countries where large consolidation efforts undertaken thus far have borne fruit, which is marked by successful exits from the adjustment programmes and a reduction in consolidation efforts going forward.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013308/13
to the Commission
Sir Robert Atkins (ECR)
(25 November 2013)

Subject: Copenhagen criteria

Is the existence of media plurality inherent in the Copenhagen criteria?

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

According to the Copenhagen criteria, EU membership 'requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of the institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities' ([1]). The requirement to guarantee human rights brings with it requirements for freedom of expression and freedom of the media, including media plurality in candidate, and potential candidates, countries.

Freedom of expression and freedom of the media is assessed in the Commission's annual Progress Reports ([2]) under Chapter 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and Chapter 10 (information society and media), and form part of accession negotiations.

The EU Enlargement Strategy paper for 2013-2014 issued by the Commission in October 2013 prioritises freedom of expression in particular among fundamental rights ([3]). To help overcome challenges on the ground, the Commission will ensure that freedom of expression and freedom of the media is consistently prioritised in accession negotiations, in political dialogues with the enlargement countries. Through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II funding mechanism, the Commission will put in place a long term vision for EU assistance of freedom of expression.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_DOC-93-3_en.htm?locale=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-013309/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Centri Europe Direct 2013-2017: irregolarità nella procedura di assegnazione delle sovvenzioni per il 2013 e annullamento del bando

Con l'interrogazione P-000175/2013 si era già evidenziato il ruolo fondamentale svolto dalla rete d'informazione Europe Direct Italia (48 centri), lanciata attraverso un invito pubblico a presentare proposte per il periodo 2013-2017. In particolare, si poneva l'accento sull'inadeguatezza degli attuali di criteri di assegnazione delle sovvenzioni per il 2013 nella regione Piemonte e sulle irregolarità nella fase di valutazione e nelle motivazioni circa l'esclusione dalla candidatura della provincia di Alessandria, nonostante tale centro fosse stato inserito nel catalogo delle 25 «best practices» del 2012 dalla stessa Commissione. La risposta della Commissione del 5 febbraio 2013 (a margine della pubblicazione della graduatoria definitiva dei centri assegnatari delle sovvenzioni per il 2013) sulla presunta regolarità nello svolgimento della fase di valutazione da parte di un comitato indipendente viene tuttavia smentita, a distanza di soli pochi mesi, dalla comunicazione del 28 ottobre 2013 inviata ai centri ED, con la quale si dà avviso che «a seguito di controlli e verifiche (…) in numerosi casi i centri assegnatari non presentano, a fine ottobre 2013, tre delle caratteristiche imprescindibili per la loro stessa esistenza». In altre parole, la Commissione ha riscontrato, dopo ben dieci mesi dalla pubblicazione della graduatoria, che mancherebbero i prerequisiti per garantire l'apertura stessa di un centro, quali l'esistenza di un sito Internet, la presenza fisica di una persona e l'assistenza telefonica durante gli orari di apertura al pubblico. Una simile situazione presenta inevitabilmente dei contorni preoccupanti sulla trasparenza e sul lavoro svolto dal comitato indipendente cui la Commissione fa riferimento nella sua risposta. Inoltre, presenta inevitabilmente gli aspetti di una discriminazione indiretta: i criteri di assegnazione utilizzati e, comunque, la prassi seguita per la valutazione dei criteri di assegnazione hanno messo tutti i centri non assegnatari, ma con un punteggio adeguato, in una posizione di particolare svantaggio rispetto a quelli ora dichiarati irregolari ma risultati vincenti nella graduatoria.

Considerato che la Commissione è tenuta ad accertare e garantire l'imparzialità, la trasparenza, nonché il corretto svolgimento delle procedure di assegnazione dei fondi per i centri Europe Direct Italia, si chiede alla Commissione:

— di riferire in merito alla situazione;

— di riferire sulle sanzioni applicate ai centri irregolari ed eventualmente di annullare il bando del 2013, procedendo a una riassegnazione dei fondi sulla base di una corretta graduatoria di punteggio.

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 dicembre 2013)

Come la Commissione ha già affermato nella risposta all'interrogazione scritta P-000175/2013 ([1]), le domande per ospitare i centri *Europa in diretta* in Italia sono state esaminate in base ai criteri di aggiudicazione di cui al punto 2.2.5 dell'invito a presentare proposte. La selezione è avvenuta in base al punteggio attribuito e a criteri di equilibrio geografico.

Riguardo alla qualità dei servizi offerti dai centri ED in Italia, la Rappresentanza della Commissione in Italia ha effettuato nell'ottobre di quest'anno una serie di controlli per verificare la qualità dei servizi d'informazione basilare forniti dalla precedente generazione di centri ED. Da essi è emerso che in alcuni, pochi, casi tali servizi non sono stati forniti nel modo descritto nel programma d'azione annuale.

Dei risultati di tali controlli si terrà conto al momento della valutazione della relazione finale sull'attuazione del programma d'azione per il 2013, la quale potrà dar luogo a una riduzione del saldo oppure anche al recupero totale o parziale del prefinanziamento dato alla sovvenzione.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bP-2013-000175 %2b0 %2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0 %2f%2fEN&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013309/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 November 2013)

Subject: Europe Direct centres 2013-2017: irregularities in the procedure for awarding grants for 2013 and cancellation of call for proposals

Written Question P-000175/2013 had already pointed out the crucial role played by the information network Europe Direct Italy (48 centres), launched through a public call for proposals for 2013-2017. In particular, emphasis was placed on the inadequacy of the current criteria for awarding grants for 2013 in the Piedmont region and irregularities in the evaluation phase and in the reasons given for the exclusion of the province of Alessandria, despite the fact that this province had been included in the 25 best practices brochure for 2012 by the Commission itself. The Commission's reply of 5 February 2013 (alongside the publication of the final list of places that are to receive grants in 2013) concerning the allegedly proper and correct evaluation process by an independent committee has, however, been contradicted, only a few months later, by the notice of 28 October 2013 sent to the ED centres, warning that following a number of checks and inspections, 'in many cases it has been ascertained that, at the end of October 2013, the centres to which grants have been awarded do not possess three of the essential characteristics required for their very existence'. In other words, ten months after publishing its list, the Commission found that the prerequisites for opening a centre were, in many cases, apparently lacking, such as the existence of a website, the physical presence of a person and the provision of telephone support during public opening hours. Such a situation inevitably raises concerns about transparency and about the work done by the independent committee to which the Commission refers in its reply. In addition, it inevitably appears to be a form of indirect discrimination, since the award criteria used and, in any case, the procedure followed for the evaluation of the award criteria, have put all the centres which were not awarded a grant but which had an adequate score, at a particular disadvantage compared to those that are now being declared irregular but which came out top in the ranking.

Given that the Commission is required to ascertain and guarantee that its action is unbiased and transparent and that the procedure for awarding funds for the Europe Direct centres in Italy is carried out fairly and properly, can the Commission:

— report on this situation;

— say what penalties have been applied to the irregular centres in question and, possibly, cancel the 2013 call for proposals and reallocate the funds on the basis of a proper scoreboard?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

As the Commission already stated in reply to Written Question P-000175/2013 ([1]), the applications to host Europe Direct Centres in Italy were evaluated on the basis of the award criteria specified in point 2.2.5 of the call for proposals. The selection was made on the basis of the points awarded and on the basis of the geographical balance.

Concerning the quality of the services offered by the EDIC's in Italy, the Representation of the Commission in Italy carried out controls in October this year to verify the quality of the basic information services provided by the previous generation of Europe Direct Centres. They showed that in a very limited number of cases, these services have not been provided as described in the Annual Action Programme.

The results of these controls will be taken into account during the evaluation of the final report on the implementation of the Action Programme for 2013 and may result in either a reduction of the payment of the balance or partial or total recovery of the pre-financing payment of the grant.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bP-2013-000175%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-013372/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Importazioni in Italia di triplo concentrato di pomodoro proveniente dalla Cina

Secondo quanto riportato da alcune fonti giornalistiche nazionali, in Italia viene importato triplo concentrato di pomodoro proveniente dalla Cina, in una situazione di incertezza relativa alla qualità del prodotto.

L'Italia è il maggiore importatore al mondo di concentrato, con 72 milioni di kg di prodotto importato nel 2012, il 10 % della produzione nazionale; negli ultimi quattro anni, secondo gli organi di stampa, sarebbero stati importati 500 milioni di kg di prodotto.

Il concentrato dovrebbe essere importato con il solo fine di essere inscatolato e poi esportato mentre, in alcune fabbriche italiane viene spesso aggiunta acqua al prodotto, che viene poi pastorizzato per essere successivamente trasformato in doppio concentrato.

Vista l'obbligatorietà dell'indicazione del luogo in cui è stato inscatolato e non quella relativa al luogo di coltivazione, il prodotto verrebbe esportato con la dicitura «Made in Italy» e i pomodori importati in Italia sarebbero anche coltivati nei laogai.

Va ricordato che nei fusti di pomodoro sono stati trovati 20 % di pomodoro, ed il restante 80 % sono scarti di lavorazione e che in Cina verrebbero usati pesticidi ed OGM che potrebbero risultare dannosi per la salute del consumatore.

È la Commissione al corrente della situazione?

Ritiene la Commissione di intervenire al fine di giungere ad una legislazione meno ambigua in termini di «made in alimentare» al fine di tutelare e informare opportunamente i consumatori?

Ritiene di implementare, infine, un sistema di verifiche volto ad imporre controlli più severi per la tutela del consumatore?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle questioni cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare.

Per quanto riguarda le indicazioni di origine sull'etichetta di tali prodotti alimentari, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione P-001571/2013 ([1]).

In merito ai controlli per la tutela del consumatore, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta alle interrogazioni P-001575/2013 e P-002228/2013 ([2]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013372/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Triple-concentrated tomato paste imported into Italy from China

According to Italian press reports, triple-concentrated tomato paste of dubious quality is being imported into Italy from China.

In 2012 Italy imported over 72 million kilograms of tomato paste (10% of total domestic production), making it the world's largest importer. The press have put the total amount of tomato paste imported into Italy over the last four years at 500 million kg.

Although tomato paste should be imported into Italy only for packaging and subsequent export, some factories add water to the paste and pasteurize it, with a view to turning it into a double concentrate.

The law requires the product label to indicate only where the paste was packaged and not where the ingredients were grown. This means that tomato paste can be exported under the label 'Made in Italy' when the tomatoes may actually have been grown in Chinese labour camps.

What is more, some consignments have been found to have a tomato content as low as 20%, and China also uses pesticides and GMOs which could pose health risks to consumers.

Is the Commission aware of the above?

Does it intend to put forward a legislative proposal which clarifies the 'Made in' labelling arrangements for food products in order to ensure that consumers are properly informed and protected?

Does it intend to put in place more stringent checks to protect consumers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the issues referred to by the Honourable Member.

Regarding the indications of origin on the label of such food products, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Question P-001571/2013 ([1]).

Regarding the checks to protect consumers, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Questions P-001575/2013 and P-002228/2013 ([2]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-013373/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(26 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Attività di cava orizzontale in località collinare e fenomeno degli sinkholes ad Alcenago di Grezzana (VR) con gravi ripercussioni sulla sicurezza dei cittadini

Nell'area collinare di Alcenago di Grezzana in provincia di Verona, in corrispondenza del sottostante complesso di cave orizzontali a gallerie ove si effettua attività estrattiva di carbonato di calcio, da tempo si aprono in superficie voragini profonde fino a 50 metri e larghe fino a 30 metri; il cedimento del terreno in superficie, infatti, porta all'apertura di crateri noti col nome di sinkholes. Il fenomeno, dovuto evidentemente ai cedimenti delle gallerie di cava, ha avuto inizio il 2 ottobre del 2011 e si è nuovamente verificato il 23 ottobre 2013, con l'apertura di alcune nuove voragini sopra la cava denominata «Rie Lunghe». Tali fratture hanno comportato l'inghiottimento di strade, alberi, tralicci dell'alta tensione ecc., come si può constatare dalla visione di un filmato realizzato con riprese aeree ([1]). È possibile affermare che solo per caso fortuito non ci sono ancora state vittime, viste la ciclicità e l'imprevedibilità di tali fenomeni; uno di questi, in particolare, ha interessato la strada provinciale n. 12 che passa per Alcenago, sulla quale transitano ogni giorno migliaia di veicoli (e che è percorso di passaggio di scuolabus carichi di bambini). In un sopralluogo effettuato in data 6 novembre 2013, lo scrivente deputato ha personalmente verificato la pericolosità legata all'improvvisa apertura di tali voragini ([2]). I residenti vivono con grande angoscia e apprensione il verificarsi di tali fenomeni; tuttavia, le Autorità competenti non hanno ancora ordinato la sospensione dell'attività di cava, in merito alla quale, invece, è stato recentemente riproposto un progetto di ampliamento da parte della società di estrazione (procedimento già avviato nel 2010 ma successivamente sospeso in seguito al verificarsi dei primi sinkholes nel 2011). Fino a ora, inoltre, non sarebbe mai stato attuato un piano di messa in sicurezza della zona.

Sulla base di quanto esposto, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. è a conoscenza del fenomeno degli sinkholes ad Alcenago e della sua gravità e ciclicità?

2. Non ritiene che le Autorità competenti avrebbero dovuto e/o dovrebbero sospendere l'attività della cava, in applicazione del principio di precauzione (art. 191 TFUE)?

3. Non intende approfondire la questione contattando le Autorità competenti, al fine di verificare eventuali violazioni della normativa UE di settore?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei fenomeni osservati ad Alcenago di Grezzana.

Sulla scorta delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato, la Commissione non ravvisa alcun elemento di prova chiaro e sostanziale di una violazione del diritto ambientale dell'Unione europea.

([1]) Per la visione del firmato, v. http://goo.gl/lnQE7R.
([2]) Per alcune foto che danno una chiara rappresentazione della situazione in atto, si rinvia a quelle scattate in occasione del succitato sopralluogo effettuato dallo scrivente deputato, presenti al link http://goo.gl/blclFT e pagine successive.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013373/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Horizontal quarrying in a hilly area and opening up of sinkholes in Alcenago di Grezzana (Verona), having a serious impact on public safety

In the hilly area of Alcenago Grezzana, province of Verona, near the underlying complex of horizontal quarry tunnels in which calcium carbonate is extracted, for some time now deep chasms of up to 50 metres deep and 30 metres wide have been opening up. Surface subsidence, in fact, is leading to the opening up of craters known as sinkholes. This phenomenon, which is apparently due to the caving in of the quarry tunnels, began on 2 October 2011 and re-occurred on 23 October 2013, with new chasms opening up above the 'Rie Lunghe' quarry. These fractures have swallowed up roads, trees, pylons etc., as can be seen in an aerial film ([1]). It is only a matter of luck that there have not yet been any victims, given the cyclical and unpredictable nature of such phenomena. One recent episode, in particular, affected provincial road No 12 that goes through Alcenago and on which thousands of vehicles travel every day (including school buses full of children). In an inspection carried out on 6 November 2013, I myself personally verified the dangers related to the sudden opening up of these chasms ([2]). Local residents are feeling great anxiety and apprehension about the situation. However, the authorities responsible have not yet ordered the quarrying to be suspended; indeed, the mining company has recently re-submitted an extension project (a procedure that already commenced in 2010 but was later suspended following the opening up of the first sinkholes in 2011). Up to now, moreover, no plan to make the area safe has ever been implemented.

Given the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of the sinkholes problem in Alcenago and of its seriousness and cyclical nature?

2. Does it not agree that the authorities responsible should have suspended and/or should now suspend the quarrying activities in question, in compliance with the precautionary principle (Article 191, TFEU)?

3. Will it not look into the matter, by contacting the relevant authorities, in order to ascertain whether there have been any breaches of the relevant EU legislation?

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

The Commission has no information regarding the described phenomena in Alcenago di Grezzana.

From the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Commission cannot identify clear and substantial evidence of a breach of EU environmental law.

([1]) See http://goo.gl/lnQE7R
([2]) For some photos giving a clear idea of the current situation, please see those taken during the abovementioned inspection carried out, through the following link: http://goo.gl/blclFT and subsequent pages.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-013374/13
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(26 november 2013)

Angående: Möte om PR-strategi för det transatlantiska partnerskapet för handel och investeringar (TTIP)

Kommissionen höll den 22 november 2013 ett möte med medlemsstaterna angående en PR-strategi för det transatlantiska partnerskapet för handel och investeringar.

Avser kommissionen att i enlighet med EUF-fördraget, artikel 218.10, distribuera till parlamentet de dokument (inklusive men inte begränsat till talaranteckningar, protokoll, minnesanteckningar, presentationer, inbjudningar och diskussionsunderlag) som kommissionen presenterade på och/eller använde som underlag till mötet?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(23 december 2013)

Kommissionen strävar efter att ge allmänheten största möjliga insyn i de transatlantiska förhandlingarna. Det innebär bl.a. att nå ut till berörda parter, öka den allmänna medvetenheten om de frågor som behandlas och se till att så många som möjligt kan få information om processen och delta i den. Kommissionen utarbetar för närvarande en kommunikationsstrategi, och flera olika aktörer medverkar i dess utformning och genomförande. Det är skälet till att kommissionen ordnade ett möte den 22 november 2013 med press- och kommunikationsansvariga från medlemsstaternas myndigheter.

Kommissionen informerade parlamentet om detta möte genom ordföranden för INTA-utskottet ([1]). Kommissionen lämnade också ett arbetsdokument som den utarbetat för diskussionerna med de nationella företrädarna. Dokumentet distribuerades därefter till INTA-utskottets ledamöter. Kommissionen motsätter sig inte att dokumentet även distribueras till andra parlamentsledamöter. Kommissionen delade inte ut några andra dokument vid mötet än dem som finns på kommissionens webbplats för TTIP ([2]) (det transatlantiska partnerskapet för handel och investeringar).

Genom att dela med sig av information till parlamentet följer kommissionen ramavtalet med Europaparlamentet från 2009 (artiklarna 23–24, bilagorna 2 och 3) om att ge det ansvariga utskottet (INTA) all information som är relevant. Som en del av detta får INTA-utskottet alla dokument som delas med rådets kommitté för handelspolitik. Dessutom får INTA information av kommissionen om TTIP före och efter varje förhandlingsrunda.

([1]) Utskottet för internationell handel.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/ttip/resources/

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013374/13
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Meeting on a PR strategy for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

On 22 November 2013, the Commission held a meeting with the Member States on a PR strategy for the transatlantic trade and investment partnership.

In accordance with Article 218(10) of the TFEU, does the Commission intend to provide Parliament with the documents (including, but not limited to, speaking notes, minutes, memos, presentations, invitations and discussion papers) presented by the Commission and/or used as input to the meeting?

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

The Commission aims at the fullest possible transparency towards citizens regarding the transatlantic negotiations. This involves reaching out to various stakeholders, raising public awareness on the issues at stake and ensuring that as many people as possible can be kept informed of, and involved in, the process. The Commission is developing a communications strategy, with a broad range of players involved in its formulation and implementation. This is the reason why the Commission organised a meeting on 22 November 2013 with press and communication professionals from Member State governments.

The Commission informed Parliament of this meeting through the Chair of the INTA ([1]) Committee. It also provided an issues paper that the Commission had prepared for the discussions with Member State officials. This document was subsequently distributed to members of the INTA Committee. The Commission would not object to any further distribution of this issues note to other Members of the Parliament. The Commission did not distribute any other document at the meeting, other than those available on the Commission's TTIP website ([2]).

In sharing information with Parliament, the Commission is fully abiding by the 2009 Framework Agreement with Parliament (Article 23-24, annexes 2 and 3) to provide all relevant information to the responsible Committee (INTA). As part of this, the INTA Committee receives all the documents that are shared with the Council's Trade Policy Committee. Furthermore, as regards TTIP, the Commission briefs the INTA before and after each negotiating round.

([1]) International Trade Committee.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/ttip/resources/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-013396/13
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(26 novembre 2013)

Oggetto: Determinazione delle piccole quantità (articolo 9, paragrafo 1, lettera c), della direttiva 147/2009/CE) per alcune specie appartenenti all'ordine dei Passeriformi

L'articolo 9, paragrafo 1, lettera c), della direttiva 147/2009/CE prevede la possibilità di ricorrere a deroghe per consentire la cattura, la detenzione o altri impieghi misurati di determinati uccelli.

Per poter applicare una deroga a norma del suddetto dispositivo occorre rispettare, tra le altre, quattro condizioni specifiche: la deroga deve riguardare «impieghi misurati»; deve riferirsi a «piccole quantità»; la cattura, la detenzione o altri impieghi misurati sono ammissibili solo in «condizioni rigidamente controllate»; l'applicazione della deroga deve avvenire «in maniera selettiva».

Tenuto conto che il principio dell'articolo 9, paragrafo 1, lettera c), può essere applicato a tutte le specie — anche a quelle che non figurano nell'allegato II — e ritenendo perciò che gli strumenti applicativi ai fini del soddisfacimento del medesimo debbano essere in principio disponibili per qualsivoglia specie, si chiede pertanto alla Commissione:

1. Non ritiene opportuna una revisione delle indicazioni espresse dalla «Guida alla disciplina della caccia nell'ambito della direttiva 79/409/CEE sulla conservazione degli uccelli selvatici», sussistendo indubbiamente difficoltà per soddisfare tutti i parametri necessari per un approccio tecnicamente robusto al calcolo delle piccole quantità anche con metodi alternativi, che debbono comunque risultare coerenti con la direttiva 147/2009/CE e la stessa Guida sopra menzionata?

2. Come altrimenti suggerisce di reperire i dati necessari al calcolo delle piccole quantità necessarie in una richiesta di deroga per la specie *Sturnus vulgaris* e determinati Fringillidae da parte di una regione italiana, dato che per alcuni sembrano essere non facilmente coerenti i requisiti richiesti dalla Guida? E come riterrebbe ciò esplicabile in Italia, mancando questa chiarezza interpretativa a livello europeo?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(6 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione non ha in prospettiva alcuna revisione della Guida alla caccia sostenibile nel quadro della direttiva «uccelli» (2009/147/CE) ([1]), la quale contiene già gli orientamenti e chiarimenti utili circa le deroghe e la determinazione delle «piccole quantità». Lo Stato membro che intenda valersi delle possibilità di deroga deve accertarsi che siano soddisfatti tutti i requisiti imposti al riguardo da tale direttiva.

La «piccola quantità» dev'essere calcolata in base a solidi dati scientifici. La Commissione raccomanda quindi alle autorità degli Stati membri intenzionate a concedere una deroga a norma dell'articolo 9, paragrafo 1, lettera c), della direttiva «uccelli» di accertare in ogni specifico caso, tramite i loro istituti scientifici, se siano disponibili dati adeguati e pertinenti e se siano soddisfatte le condizioni stabilite dalla direttiva. Infine, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole deputato alle risposte alle interrogazioni scritte sullo stesso argomento E-008888/2012, E-001031/2013 e E-004671/2013.

([1]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013396/13
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Directive 2009/147/EC 9(1)(c) — Calculating 'small numbers' for certain species of songbird

Article 9(1)(c) of Directive 2009/147/EC allows exemptions for the capture, keeping or other judicious use of certain birds.

In order for an exemption to be accepted, a number of conditions must be met, including the following: it must represent 'judicious use'; it must cover only 'small numbers' of birds; capture, keeping or other judicious use must be carried out under 'strictly supervised conditions'; and they must also be carried out on a 'selective basis'.

Article 9(1)(c) covers all species, not only those which appear in Annex II. Details of the method to be used to meet the above conditions therefore need to be available for all species.

1. Does the Commission intend to revise the recommendations set out in the Guide to sustainable hunting under the Birds Directive, given how difficult it is to meet all of the conditions for calculating small numbers? Even when alternative methods are used, it is difficult to comply with Directive 2009/147/EC and the Guide's recommendations.

2. If not, what are the Commission's recommendations for collecting data to calculate small numbers of starlings and certain finches in a particular region, as is required in order to apply for an exemption, given that some of the Guide's instructions are inconsistent? How can people in Italy be expected to understand the requirements when the European authorities have failed to provide a clear interpretation of the rules?

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

The Commission does not envisage to revise the 'Guide on Sustainable Hunting under the Birds Directive' (2009/147/EC ([1])) which already provides relevant guidance and clarification in relation to derogations and to the determination of 'small numbers'. If a Member State wants to avail of the derogation possibilities, it has to ensure that all the relevant requirements of the Birds Directive are respected.

The calculation of the 'small numbers' is to be made on a solid scientific basis. The Commission would therefore recommend Member States' authorities, wishing to grant a derogation under Article 9.1.c of the Birds Directive, to assess, through their scientific institutions and for each specific case, if the appropriate and relevant data are available and if the conditions required by the directive are fulfilled or not. Finally the Commission would refer the Honorable Member to its responses to written questions E-008888/2012, E-001031/2013 and E-004671/2013 on the same issue.

([1]) OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-013397/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Επιστροφές κερδών ελληνικών ομολόγων από τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωζώνης

Με τις αποφάσεις του Eurogroup της 21ης Φεβρουαρίου 2012, της 27ης Νοεμβρίου 2012 και της 13ης Δεκεμβρίου 2012, τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωζώνης, δεσμεύονται να μεταφέρουν στον ειδικό λογαριασμό για την εξυπηρέτηση του ελληνικού δημόσιου χρέους τα κέρδη που δημιουργούν τα ελληνικά κρατικά ομόλογα που κατέχουν οι εθνικές κεντρικές τράπεζες, καθώς και τα κέρδη που αποκόμισε η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ) και έχει διανείμει στους μετόχους της (SMPs και ANFAs). Επίσης, στην Πρώτη Αξιολόγηση του Δεύτερου Προγράμματος Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής, αναφέρεται ότι ένα από τα μέτρα για την ελάφρυνση του ελληνικού χρέους, κατά το Eurogroup, είναι η ανανέωση (rollover) των ομολόγων που κατέχουν οι εθνικές κεντρικές τράπεζες. Τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωζώνης, όμως, δεν έχουν προχωρήσει σε όλες τις απαραίτητες ενέργειες για την ελάφρυνση του ελληνικού χρέους και λόγω του γεγονότος ότι οι εθνικές κεντρικές τράπεζες επικαλούνται νομικά εμπόδια, όπως παραβίαση του άρθρου 123 της ΣΛΕΕ.

Με δεδομένο ότι η υπαναχώρηση των κρατών μελών από τις συμφωνίες του Eurogroup, για την οποία δεν υπάρχει καμία πληροφόρηση, δημιουργεί πολύ μεγάλο χρηματοδοτικό κενό στο ελληνικό πρόγραμμα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς σχολιάζει τα νομικά εμπόδια που επικαλούνται οι εθνικές κεντρικές τράπεζες;

2. Ως μέλος της τρόικα, τι έχει προτείνει για την κάλυψη του χρηματοδοτικού κενού του προγράμματος, με δεδομένο ότι την ευθύνη για τη μη τήρηση των συμφωνηθέντων την έχουν το Eurogroup και τα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ και όχι η Ελλάδα;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή, σεβόμενη την ανεξαρτησία των εθνικών κεντρικών τραπεζών, δεν τοποθετείται επί των αποφάσεών τους να απαντήσουν. Η συμφωνία του Eurogroup σχετικά με τα κέρδη από το πρόγραμμα SMP και το πρόγραμμα ANFA έχει ήδη τεθεί σε εφαρμογή. Τα κράτη μέλη έχουν ήδη αποδώσει στην Ελλάδα όλα τα κέρδη από το πρόγραμμα ANFA για το 2012 και το 2013 και το μεγαλύτερο μέρος των κερδών από το πρόγραμμα SMP για το 2013.

Οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής δημοσιεύουν τακτικά εκτιμήσεις των δανειακών αναγκών της Ελλάδας στις σχετικές εκθέσεις ανασκόπησης — η τελευταία δημοσιεύτηκε τον Ιούλιο του 2013 ([1]). Κατά την τρέχουσα ανασκόπηση καταρτίζεται επικαιροποιημένη εκτίμηση των δανειακών αναγκών της Ελλάδας, η οποία θα κοινοποιηθεί στα σχετικά έγγραφα του προγράμματος. Στην παρούσα φάση, δεν δικαιολογούνται υποθέσεις σχετικά με το μέγεθος του χρηματοδοτικού κενού και πιθανούς τρόπους κάλυψής του.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013397/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Return of profits made from Greek bonds by euro area Member States

By the Eurogroup's decisions of 21 February 2012, 27 November 2012 and 13 December 2012, the euro area Member States undertook to transfer, onto a special account created for servicing Greece's public debt, the profits generated by Greek Government bonds held by national central banks and the profits made by the European Central Bank (ECB) which it has distributed to its shareholders (SMPs and ANFAs). Furthermore, the first evaluation of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme states that one of the measures to ease the Greek debt, according to the Eurogroup, is the rollover of bonds held by national central banks. The euro area Member States, however, have not taken all the necessary actions to ease the Greek debt, *inter alia* because the national central banks have invoked legal obstacles, such as a breach of Article 123 TFEU.

Given that failure of Member States to honour the agreements reached by the Eurogroup, without any information being provided in this connection, is creating a very large financial shortfall in the Greek programme, will the Commission say:

1. How does it view the legal arguments invoked by the national central banks?

2. As a member of the Troika, what measures has it proposed to cover the financial shortfall of the programme, given that the responsibility for the failure to honour the agreements lies with the Eurogroup and the EU institutions and not with Greece?

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

In respect of the independence of the National Central Banks, the Commission does not comment on their decisions of responding. The Eurogroup agreement as far as SMP and ANFA profits are concerned is already being implemented. Member States have already transferred to Greece all the ANFA profits for 2012 and 2013 and most of the SMP profits for 2013.

The Commission services publish regularly the assessment of Greece's financing needs in their review reports — the latest in July 2013 ([1]) An updated assessment of Greece's financing needs is being prepared during the ongoing review mission and will be communicated in the related programme documents. Speculation at this stage about the size of the gap and possible ways to cover it is not warranted.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-013400/13
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(26. studenog 2013.)

Predmet: Europska prijestolnica kulture 2020. godine

Mnogi gradovi u Hrvatskoj javno su najavili da će se natjecati za titulu Europske prijestolnice kulture 2020. godine kada će tu prestižnu titulu nositi jedan hrvatski i jedan irski grad.

Ministrica kulture Republike Hrvatske poslala je 30. listopada 2013. pismo predsjednici Odbora za kulturu i obrazovanje Europskog parlamenta Doris Pack, u kojem je ministrica izrazila svoju zabrinutost u vezi sa sadašnjom situacijom provođenja projekta Europske prijestolnice kulture te o potencijalnoj opasnosti da se ne postigne sporazum o članku 11. u Odluci prijedloga Europske komisije o Europskim prijestolnicama kulture od 2020. do 2033. godine.

Uzimajući u obzir da još ne postoji dogovor između Parlamenta i Vijeća, da natječaj EPK-a treba biti raspisan 6 godina prije preuzimanja prestižne titule te vremenski aspekt, postoji bojazan hrvatske javnosti da će projekt Europske prijestolnice kulture 2020. godine postati upitan te da hrvatski i irski gradovi neće imati priliku natjecati se za tu prestižnu titulu.

Poduzima li Komisija sve što je u njezinoj domeni kako ovaj vitalni projekt za europsku, a samim time i za hrvatsku kulturu, ne bi došao u pitanje te kako bi i jedan hrvatski grad 2020. godine bio Europska prijestolnica kulture?

Odgovor gđe Vassiliou u ime Komisije
(20. prosinca 2013.)

Komisija dijeli zabrinutost koju je izrazio časni zastupnik.

Od druge polovine 2012. Europski parlament i Vijeće raspravljaju o prijedlogu Odluke o utvrđivanju djelovanja Unije u pogledu Europske prijestolnice kulture za razdoblje 2020. — 2033. koje je Komisija predala 20. srpnja 2012. ([1]) kako bi osigurala kontinuitet ove inicijative i nakon 2019.

Europski parlament i Vijeće postigli su dogovor o svim pitanjima osim o jednom: koja će institucija biti ovlaštena za službeno imenovanje Europske prijestolnice kulture (članak 11. prijedloga). Parlament se po tom pitanju slaže s početnim prijedlogom Komisije u kojemu se podržava pravo Komisije na imenovanje. Međutim, Vijeće podržava vlastito pravo na imenovanje.

U izostanku dogovora između dva suzakonodavca možda bude potrebno drugo čitanje koje će rezultirati odlaganjem donošenja Odluke na razdoblje koje je u ovom trenutku nemoguće procijeniti. To kašnjenje može ugroziti organizaciju Europske prijestolnice kulture u 2020. Stoga je Komisija pozvala suzakonodavce da budu fleksibilni i nađu zajedničko stajalište. Donošenje takve odluke nalazi se u konačnici u rukama Parlamenta i Vijeća.

Ta dva suzakonodavca iskazala su svoju spremnost na uvođenje iznimke kojom će se zemljama domaćinima 2020. (Hrvatska i Irska) omogućiti da odgode objavu poziva na podnošenje prijava te ih objave „u najkraćem mogućem roku" nakon donošenja Odluke. Međutim, takva bi iznimka bila korisna samo ako se Odluka donese početkom 2014.

([1]) COM (2012) 407 završna verzija.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013400/13
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: European Capital of Culture 2020

Many cities in Croatia have announced that they will compete for the title of European Capital of Culture 2020, when one Croatian and one Irish town will be awarded this prestigious title.

On 30 October 2013, the Croatian Minister of Culture sent a letter to the Chair of the EP's Committee, Doris Pack, expressing her concerns regarding the way the European Capital of Culture project is currently being run and the risk that an agreement will not be reached on Article 11 of the proposal for a decision of the Commission on European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033.

As no agreement currently exists between Parliament and the Council, and given that time is a factor and that the European Capital of Culture competition must be organised six years before the prestigious title is awarded, there is now a fear among Croats that the European Capital of Culture 2020 project is standing under a question mark and that Croatian and Irish cities will not have the opportunity to compete for the prestigious title.

Is the Commission taking all steps available to it in order to ensure that the future of this vital project for European — and hence for Croatian — culture does not come into doubt, as well as to ensure that one Croatian city is awarded the European Capital of Culture title for 2020?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

The Commission shares the concerns of the Honourable Member.

Since the second half of 2012, the European Parliament and the Council have been discussing the proposal for a decision establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033, which the Commission submitted on 20 July 2012 ([1]) in order to ensure the continuity of this initiative beyond 2019.

They have come to an agreement on all issues but one: the EU institution which would be entitled to formally designate the European Capitals of Culture (Article 11 of the proposal). On this point, the Parliament, in line with the Commission's initial proposal, supports a Commission designation. However, the Council favours a Council designation.

In the absence of an agreement between the two co-legislators, a second reading might be needed, which would result in postponing the adoption of the decision by a period of time that is difficult to estimate at this stage. This delay might jeopardise the organisation of the European Capital of Culture in 2020. Therefore, the Commission has invited the co-legislators to show flexibility and find a common position. The adoption of such a decision ultimately rests in the hands of the Parliament and the Council.

The two co-legislators have indicated that they are ready if necessary to introduce a derogation, which will enable the two Member States who will host the action in 2020 (Croatia and Ireland) to postpone the launch of their calls for submission of applications, and publish them 'as soon as possible' after the adoption of the decision. However, such a derogation would be useful only if a decision were to be adopted early in 2014.

([1]) COM(2012) 407 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013409/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(26 November 2013)

Subject: Negotiation of EU membership of a seceded territory of an EU Member State on the basis of Article 48 TFEU

The Commission will be aware that the Scottish Government has released its 'White Paper' ('Scotland's Future — Your Guide to an Independent Scotland', 26 November 2013) on the process by which Scotland could become independent from the United Kingdom.

The White Paper includes a proposal for an independent Scotland to use Article 48 TFEU as the basis for seeking EU membership. The Scottish Government has argued that Article 48 would allow for a 'continuity effect', meaning that Scotland could negotiate EU membership from within the EU. The Scottish Government had previously stated that it would use Article 49, the procedure under which any country may apply for membership.

Can the Commission clarify whether Article 48 could be invoked by a territory seceding from a Member State in order to negotiate EU membership?

Article 48 states that the Government of any Member State can submit to the Council proposals for the amendment of the Treaties. Can the Commission confirm that the government of an independent Scotland would not constitute the Government of a Member State in that regard?

Lastly, can the Commission confirm whether, even with regard to Article 48, it still stands by its earlier reply of 1 February 2013 to Written Question E-011632/2012, specifically the assertion that 'if part of the territory of a Member State would cease to be part of that state because it were to become a new independent state, the Treaties would no longer apply to that territory'?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(20 December 2013)

As the Commission has noted in its reply to Written Question E-008133/2012, it is not its role to express a position on questions of internal organisation related to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State.

Scenarios such as the separation of one part of a Member State or the creation of a new state would not be neutral as regards the EU Treaties. The European Commission would express its opinion on the legal consequences under EC law upon request from a Member State detailing a precise scenario.

As the Commission has confirmed in the reply to written questions P-009756/2012 and P-009862/2012, the EU is founded on the Treaties which apply only to the Member States who have agreed and ratified them. If part of the territory of a Member State would cease to be part of that state because it was to become a new independent state, the Treaties would no longer apply to that territory. In other words, a new independent state would, by the fact of its independence, become a third country with respect to the EU.

Under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, any European state which respects the principles set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union may apply to become a member of the EU. If the application is accepted by the Council acting unanimously, an agreement is then negotiated between the applicant state and the Member States on the conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties which such admission entails. This agreement is subject to ratification by all Member States and the applicant state.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013459/13
to the Commission
Andrew Duff (ALDE)
(27 November 2013)

Subject: Scotland and the EU

In its recent White Paper, the Scottish Government says that an independent Scotland would seek to continue its membership of the European Union on the basis of a negotiation conducted under Article 48 TEU.

Does the Commission agree with this proposal?

Why would Article 49 not be the appropriate legal base for an independent Scotland to apply for EU membership?

The Scottish Government also says that an independent Scotland would emulate Sweden and choose unilaterally not to join the euro.

Would the Commission welcome an application for EU membership from a country which had already presumed that it would not conform to the Treaties with respect to economic and monetary union?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012 and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013558/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(28 November 2013)

Subject: Adverse health effects of high-voltage pylons

Has the Commission any evidence of the existence of a correlation between adverse effects on human, plant or animal health and long-term exposure (such as living adjacent to such pylons) to high-voltage (110kv to 400kv) pylons?

If negative health effects have not been linked to long-term exposure to high-voltage pylons, is the Commission aware of any ongoing research on same?

If such research is ongoing, when might we expect the results?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)

Regarding the first question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-09216/2013 ([1]). The scientific review is being finalised and will be available for public consultation beginning of 2014.

The Commission is currently funding the ARIMMORA project, which is examining the mechanisms behind the epidemiological correlation between exposure to ELF-MF and childhood leukaemia, the results becoming available at the end of 2014 ([2]).

Other data on research projects can be found, for instance, in databases maintained by the World Health Organisation ([3]) or the Research Center for Bioelectromagnetic Interaction in Germany ([4]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Advanced research on interaction mechanisms of electromagnetic exposures with organisms for risk assessments — http://arimmora-fp7.eu
([3]) http://www.who.int/peh-emf/research/database/en/index1.html
([4]) http://www.emf-portal.de/_index.php

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013567/13
à la Commission
Isabelle Thomas (S&D)
(29 novembre 2013)

Objet: Reconnaissance des contraintes liées à l'insularité

Députée d'une circonscription riche en territoires insulaires, je souhaite attirer l'attention de la Commission sur les difficultés rencontrées par les habitants des îles.

En effet, de nombreux surcoûts sont liés à cette insularité. Pour ce qui concerne les activités agricoles, des projets de mutualisation et de rationalisation des pratiques de culture et d'élevage sont expérimentés, mais malgré ces efforts, ce «handicap géographique» cause une hausse des coûts (transport maritime, énergie, eau, etc.) non négligeable par rapport au territoire continental si l'on prend en compte l'ensemble des frais, de l'amont à l'aval de la chaine de production.

La Commission envisage-t-elle de reconnaitre le caractère spécifique de cette périphéricité insulaire au même titre que pour les territoires de haute montagne? Peut-on envisager une politique d'aides tenant compte de ces contraintes?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(9 janvier 2014)

Les règlements fixant le cadre pour les Fonds structurels et d'investissement européens 2014-2020 mettent l'accent sur la nécessité de tenir compte des spécificités territoriales, y compris de la situation particulière des îles, dans le processus de programmation.

Les taux de cofinancement peuvent être modulés pour prendre en considération la couverture des zones souffrant de handicaps naturels ou démographiques graves et permanents, y compris les États membres insulaires éligibles au Fonds de cohésion et les autres îles, à l'exclusion de celles où est située la capitale d'un État membre ou ayant un lien permanent avec le continent. En outre, les exigences de concentration thématique applicables à toutes les régions de niveau NUTS 2 constituées exclusivement d'États membres insulaires ou d'îles qui sont situées dans des États membres bénéficiant d'un soutien du Fonds de cohésion ou qui sont des régions ultrapériphériques correspondent à celles applicables aux régions moins développées, pour mieux tenir compte de leurs besoins de développement.

En ce qui concerne la politique agricole commune, les îles ont accès à tous les instruments disponibles au titre des 1er et 2e piliers. Le deuxième pilier de la PAC comporte une série de mesures ciblées qui peuvent spécifiquement répondre aux défis socio-économiques auxquelles les îles sont confrontées. Les États membres pourraient également désigner les îles comme des zones soumises à des contraintes naturelles ou à d'autres contraintes spécifiques. Dans ces régions, les agriculteurs pourraient bénéficier d'une compensation, totale ou partielle, des handicaps auxquels est exposée la production agricole. La nouvelle période 2014-2020 offre également une possibilité de soutien au revenu additionnel en faveur des agriculteurs exerçant leur activité dans des zones soumises à des contraintes, sous la forme d'un paiement découplé fondé sur la superficie dans le cadre du 1er pilier.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013567/13
to the Commission
Isabelle Thomas (S&D)
(29 November 2013)

Subject: Recognition of constraints relating to islands

As Member of the European Parliament for a constituency that includes a number of islands, I should like to draw the Commission's attention to the difficulties faced by islanders.

There are, in fact, many additional costs related to such insularity. As regards agricultural activities, pooling projects and the streamlining of cultivation and livestock practices have been experimented, but despite these efforts, the 'geographical handicap' results in higher costs (shipping, energy, water, etc.) that are not insignificant when compared to the mainland, taking into account all costs, upstream and downstream of the production chain.

Will the Commission recognise the specific nature of such island remoteness as it does for mountain areas? Would it consider introducing an aid policy to take account of these constraints?

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

The regulations setting the framework for the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investments Funds emphasise the need to take account of territorial specificities, including the specific situations of islands, in the programming process.

The co-financing rates may be modulated to take account of the coverage of areas with severe and and permanent natural or demographic handicaps, including island Member States eligible under the Cohesion Fund, and other islands, except those on which the capital of a Member State is situated or which have a fixed link to the mainland. Furthermore, the thematic concentration requirements applicable to all NUTS2 level regions consisting solely of island Member States or islands which are situated in Member States receiving Cohesion Fund support, or which are outermost regions, correspond to those applicable to less developed regions, to better reflect their development needs.

As regards the common agricultural policy islands have access to all tools available in both the 1st and 2nd pillar. The second pillar of the CAP has a range of targeted measures which can specifically tackle the socio economic challenges islands are facing. Member States could also identify islands as areas facing natural or other specific constraints. In such areas farmers could be compensated in total or partly for disadvantages to which the agricultural production is exposed. The new period 2014-2020 brings along also a possibility for an additional income support to farmers in constrained areas in the form of a decoupled area-based payment under the first pillar.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-013578/13
an die Kommission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(29. November 2013)

Betrifft: Fördermittel zum Bau der Schanze in der Vogtlandarena im Vogtland in Sachsen

Am 11. Dezember 2002 soll das Kultusministerium für den Bau der Schanze in der Vogtlandarena in Sachsen einen Zuwendungsbescheid über 4,4 Mio. EUR aus dem Europäischen Fonds für Regionale Entwicklung erlassen haben.

Später erfolgte die Information, dass die Europäische Kommission diese Fördermittel zurückgefordert hat.

Können Sie das bestätigen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(8. Januar 2014)

Für das betreffende Projekt sollte ursprünglich eine Förderung aus dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) im Rahmen des Programms für grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit 2000-2006 zwischen Sachsen und der Tschechischen Republik bereitgestellt werden.

Die zuständigen Behörden in Sachsen entschieden jedoch, die EFRE-Förderung zurückzuziehen. Aus diesem Grund waren die Kosten des Projekts nicht in der abschließenden Ausgabenerklärung für das Programm enthalten.

Es ist also auf eine Entscheidung des Mitgliedstaats selbst zurückzuführen, dass das Projekt keine EFRE-Förderung erhielt.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013578/13
to the Commission
Cornelia Ernst (GUE/NGL)
(29 November 2013)

Subject: Funding for the construction of a ski jump in Saxony's Vogtland Arena

On 11 December 2002, the Saxon Ministry for Culture apparently issued a decision to grant over EUR 4.4 million from the European Fund for Regional Development for the construction of a ski jump in the Vogtland Arena.

It is thought, however, that the Commission then claimed back these funds.

Can the Commission confirm whether this is the case?

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

The project in question was initially going to receive support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the framework of the 2000-2006 cross-border cooperation programme between Saxony and the Czech Republic.

However, the Member State authorities in Saxony decided to withdraw the ERDF support, and therefore the costs for the project were not included in the final statement of expenditure for the programme.

Therefore the project did not receive ERDF funding, because of a decision by the Member State itself.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-013591/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πλειστηριασμοί ακινήτων πρώτης κατοικίας Ελλήνων πολιτών

Στις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2013 λήγει η προστασία των δανειοληπτών στεγαστικών δανείων στην Ελλάδα για του πλειστηριασμούς ακινήτων που αποτελούν πρώτη κατοικία. Στην εφημερίδα «Έθνος της Κυριακής» δημοσιεύθηκε στιχομυθία Ελλήνων αξιωματούχων με την Τρόικα, η οποία επιμένει στον τερματισμό του μέτρου, σύμφωνα με την οποία τροϊκανός, με ανοίκειο τρόπο, απήντησε στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση ότι «αν θέλετε να κάνετε κοινωνική πολιτική φτιάξτε καταλύματα για τους αστέγους». Η πληροφορία αυτή αναπαράχθηκε από όλα τα ΜΜΕ στην Ελλάδα με προφανές αποτέλεσμα τη δημιουργία κλίματος ανησυχίας στο ελληνικό κοινό και τη διόγκωση του αντιευρωπαϊσμού. Η συμπεριφορά αυτή της Τρόικα που απάδει προς τους κανόνες της δημοκρατίας και το ευρωπαϊκό πνεύμα, ευλόγως ερμηνεύεται και σαν προσπάθεια ανάμειξης στα εσωτερικά της χώρας, αφού κατά την κοινή λογική παραβιάζει το δημοκρατικό της πολίτευμα και υπεισέρχεται σε αρμοδιότητες της ελληνικής Βουλής, ενώ συνάμα ωθεί τους Έλληνες ψηφοφόρους προς ακραία κόμματα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχουν μήπως οδηγίες, και από που, οι τροϊκανοί να αναμειγνύονται στα εσωτερικά πράγματα της Ελλάδος και να επιδιώκουν ανατροπή της υπάρχουσας συνταγματικής τάξης;

2. Αν όχι, διαθέτουν τη στοιχειώδη νοημοσύνη να αντιληφθούν ότι οποιαδήποτε οικονομική θεωρία λαμβάνει προεχόντως υπόψη τις κοινωνικές επιδράσεις και την κοινωνική συνοχή για τη λήψη οποιουδήποτε οικονομικού μέτρου;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η τρόικα δεν έχει ποτέ προτείνει περίθαλψη για τους αστέγους που έχασαν τα σπίτια τους σε κατασχέσεις. Οι εταίροι της τρόικας έχουν πάντοτε υποστηρίξει πλήρως τις προσπάθειες για την προστασία των πραγματικά ευάλωτων ομάδων. Η συζήτηση είναι ο μόνος και καλύτερος τρόπος για την επίτευξη αυτού του σκοπού.

1. Η απάντηση στο ερώτημα του αξιότιμου μέλους του Κοινοβουλίου είναι αρνητική.

2. Ο κοινωνικός αντίκτυπος των πολιτικών υπήρξε από ανέκαθεν βασική μέριμνα στη χάραξη πολιτικής στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, και προφανώς το πρόγραμμα περιέχει μεγάλο αριθμό μέτρων για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και τη βελτίωση του δικτύου κοινωνικής προστασίας στην Ελλάδα. Σχετικά με το συγκεκριμένο θέμα στο οποίο αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην ερώτησή του, η θέση της Επιτροπής είναι ότι πρέπει να βρεθεί μία ισορροπημένη λύση, η οποία να ενισχύει τη νοοτροπία της καταβολής πληρωμών στην Ελλάδα, ενώ παράλληλα να προστατεύει τους πλέον ευάλωτους.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013591/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(2 December 2013)

Subject: Auctions of primary homes of Greek citizens

On 31 December 2013 the protection of mortgage borrowers in Greece from the auctioning of primary homes comes to an end. The newspaper *Ethnos tis Kyriakis* has published a heated exchange between Greek officials and the Troika, which insists on the termination of the measure, during which a member of the Troika replies uncouthly to the Greek Government: 'if you want to make social policy, build accommodation for the homeless.' This information has been relayed by all the Greek media, thereby understandably creating a climate of unease among the Greek public and stoking anti-European sentiment. This behaviour by the Troika, which is in breach of the rules of democracy and the European spirit, is being justly interpreted as an attempt to intervene in the domestic affairs of Greece, since, in defiance of common sense, it violates the principles underpinning Greek democracy and encroaches upon the powers of the Hellenic Parliament, while at the same time pushing Greek voters towards extremist parties.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Do members of the Troika have instructions (and from whom?) to intervene in Greece's internal affairs and to seek the overthrow of the existing constitutional order?

2. If not, do they have the basic intelligence to realise that any economic theory has to take into account first and foremost the social impact and social cohesion of any economic measure?

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

The Troika has never proposed shelter for homeless people who lose their houses to fore closers. The Troika partners have always fully supported efforts to protect the truly vulnerable. The discussion is only about the best way of doing so.

1. The answer to the question of the Honourable Member is No.

2. The social impact of policies has always been a key concern in policy design in the context of the adjustment programme for Greece, and the programme evidently contains a large number of measures to tackle unemployment and improve Greece's social safety net. On the specific issue raised by the Honourable Member in his question, the position of the Commission is that a balanced solution needs to be found which reinforces the payment culture in Greece while protecting the most vulnerable.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013623/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(2 décembre 2013)

Objet: Incidence de la jurisprudence du Comité européen des droits sociaux sur la révision de la directive 96/71/CE

La concurrence déloyale, voire frauduleuse, engendrée entre États membres par l'application de la directive 96/71/CE concernant le détachement de travailleurs effectué dans le cadre d'une prestation de services, a poussé la Commission européenne à en initier la révision en mars 2012.

Alors qu'un consensus peine à être dégagé au niveau du Conseil de l'Union européenne, les États membres étant partagés entre libéralisme et régulation, la décision publiée le 20 novembre 2013 par le Comité européen des droits sociaux apporte, à la veille du Conseil EPSCO des 9 et 10 décembre 2013, un possible changement de paradigme.

La décision concerne l'arrêt C-341/05 Laval un Partneri du 18 décembre 2007 de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne. Elle met en évidence plusieurs violations de la Charte sociale européenne et précise qu'en vertu de cette charte, il n'est pas garanti aux travailleurs détachés un traitement au moins aussi favorable qu'aux travailleurs du pays d'origine, en l'espèce suédois.

La Charte sociale européenne est un traité du Conseil de l'Europe ratifié par l'ensemble des États membres de l'Union européenne. L'Union européenne coopère avec le Conseil de l'Europe sur la base du mémorandum d'accord de 2007, et, conformément au Traité de Lisbonne, doit adhérer à la Convention européenne sur les Droits de l'homme.

1. Quelle portée juridique la Commission compte-t-elle donner à la décision du Comité européen des droits sociaux sur le droit communautaire?

2. La Commission prévoit-elle de tenir compte de cette jurisprudence dans le cadre de la révision de la directive 96/71/CE permettant de modifier le droit européen en vue de lutter contre les distorsions de concurrence qu'elle génère, tant du point de vue du travailleur détaché, que de celui du pays où s'exerce le détachement?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(7 janvier 2014)

La décision du Comité européen des droits sociaux à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence fait toujours l'objet de discussions au sein du Comité des ministres dans le cadre de la procédure de contrôle prévue par la procédure de réclamations collectives au titre de la charte sociale européenne. À ce stade, la Commission préfère par conséquent s'abstenir de commenter l'interprétation du comité et son éventuelle incidence sur le droit de l'Union et, notamment, sur la Charte des droits fondamentaux, qui définit un certain nombre de droits sociaux et de principes fondamentaux.

La Commission tient également à souligner qu'elle n'a l'intention de ne présenter aucune autre proposition de révision de la directive 96/71/CE que la proposition ([1]) relative à une directive d'application, faisant actuellement l'objet d'un débat interinstitutionnel à la suite de l'adoption de l'approche générale par le Conseil le 9 décembre 2013. Il faut néanmoins remarquer que cette proposition n'est pas concernée par la décision du Comité européen des droits sociaux qui traite essentiellement de questions que ne couvre pas ladite proposition.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final du 21 mars 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013623/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(2 December 2013)

Subject: Impact of a decision by the European Committee of Social Rights on the revision of Directive 96/71/EC

The unfair, and in some cases unlawful, competition generated between Member States by the application of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services prompted the Commission to initiate a revision of the directive in March 2012.

At a time when a consensus is proving difficult to achieve in the Council of the European Union, with the Member States split between a free-market approach and one based more on regulation, the decision published by the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) on 20 November 2013, ahead of the ESPHCA Council meeting to be held on 9 and 10 December 2013, points to a possible paradigm shift.

The decision concerns the judgment handed down by the Court of Justice of the European Union on 18 December 2007 in Case C-341/05, Laval un Partneri v Svenska Byggnadsarbetareförbundet and Others. The decision highlights a number of violations of the European Social Charter and states that, under the Charter, posted workers are not guaranteed the same treatment as local workers, in this case in Sweden.

The European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty which has been ratified by all the EU Member States. Cooperation between the EU and the Council of Europe is governed by the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding, and, under the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has pledged to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights.

1. What legal weight does the Commission give to the ECSR decision?

2. Does the Commission intend to take this decision into account in the context of a revision of Directive 96/71/EC which is designed to address the distortions of competition that directive generates, as regards both posted workers and the countries to which workers are posted?

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

The decision of the European Committee of Social Rights to which the Honourable Member refers is still the subject of discussion in the Committee of Ministers under the supervisory process provided for in the European Social Charter's Collective Complaint procedure. The Commission therefore prefers to refrain at this stage from commenting on the Committee's interpretation and its possible impact on Union law, and in particular on the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which sets out a considerable number of fundamental social rights and principles.

The Commission would also point out that it does not intend to present any proposal to revise Directive 96/71/EC other than its proposal ([1]) for an enforcement Directive, which is currently the subject of interinstitutional discussion after the Council's agreed general approach of 9 December 2013. However, this proposal is not affected by the decision of the European Committee of Social Rights as it deals mainly with issues not covered by this proposal.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-013681/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Θέση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τους πλειστηριασμούς κατοικιών Ελλήνων δανειοληπτών

Σε προηγούμενη ερώτησή μου σχετικά με τους πλειστηριασμούς κατοικιών Ελλήνων δανειοληπτών (E-010813/24.9.2013), είχα ρωτήσει την Επιτροπή ποιες είναι οι δικές της προτάσεις, ως μέλος της τρόικας, στην διαπραγμάτευση, με δεδομένη την εκπνοή της προθεσμίας απαγόρευσης των πλειστηριασμών στις 31.12.2013. Η Επιτροπή μου απάντησε, μεταξύ άλλων, ότι «Η σκοπιμότητα λήψης περαιτέρω μέτρων για τη διευκόλυνση του διακανονισμού του χρέους και οι επιπτώσεις τους για τις ελληνικές τράπεζες θα συζητηθούν με τις αρχές κατά την επόμενη αποστολή ελέγχου, τον Νοέμβριο του 2013. Η Επιτροπή, για να εφαρμοστεί το βέλτιστο πρότυπο αντιμετώπισης του προβλήματος, ζήτησε λεπτομερή στοιχεία από τις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές σχετικά με τις παραμέτρους των ανεξόφλητων χρεών. Η Επιτροπή θα είναι σε θέση να διατυπώσει τη γνώμη της αφού λάβει τα αιτηθέντα στοιχεία».

Δεδομένου ότι επί του παρόντος δεν έχει ακόμα ληφθεί τελική απόφαση και ότι, σύμφωνα με τα δημοσιεύματα του Τύπου στις συζητήσεις μεταξύ ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και τρόικας επί του θέματος, υπάρχουν εμπλοκές,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει τα αιτηθέντα στοιχεία ώστε να είναι σε θέση να διατυπώσει την γνώμη της; Ποια είναι αυτά τα στοιχεία; μπορεί να τα κοινοποιήσει;

2. Ποια είναι η συγκεκριμένη θέση της Επιτροπής, ως προς την άρση της απαγόρευσης των πλειστηριασμών στις διαπραγματεύσεις της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης με την τρόικα;

3. Υπάρχει κάποια πρόβλεψη για το πώς θα αντιμετωπιστούν οι στεγαστικές ανάγκες των οικογενειών που ενδεχομένως θα χάσουν τα σπίτια τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Το ζήτημα που έθεσε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου είναι υπό συζήτηση με τις ελληνικές αρχές στο πλαίσιο της τρέχουσας επανεξέτασης του προγράμματος προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα. Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί ότι πρέπει να βρεθεί μία ισορροπημένη λύση, η οποία να ενισχύει τη νοοτροπία καταβολής των πληρωμών στην Ελλάδα, ενώ παράλληλα να προστατεύει τους πλέον ευάλωτους.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013681/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(3 December 2013)

Subject: The Commission's position on the auctioning of the homes of Greek borrowers

In a previous question on the auctioning of the homes of Greek borrowers (E-010813/2013), I had asked the Commission what its own proposals were, as a member of the Troika, in the negotiations, given that the deadline for the suspension of auctions expires on 31 December 2013. The Commission replied, *inter alia*, that: 'The desirability of further measures in order to facilitate debt resolution and their implications for Greek banks will be discussed with the authorities during the upcoming review mission in November 2013. In order to apply the best model to tackle the problem, the Commission has requested detailed data from the respective Greek Authorities on outstanding debt parameters. The Commission will be able to formulate its opinion upon receiving requested data.'

Since no final decision has yet been taken and since, according to press reports, discussions on this subject between the Greek Government and the Troika are in difficulties:

Will the Commission say:

1. Has it received the data it had requested so as to be in a position to formulate its opinion? What are these data? Can it disclose them?

2. What is its specific position regarding the lifting of the ban on auctions in the negotiations between the Greek Government and the Troika?

3. Has any provision been made about how to address the housing needs of the families who are likely to lose their homes?

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

The issue raised by the Honourable Member is under discussion with the Greek authorities in the context of the ongoing review of the adjustment programme for Greece. The Commission believes that a balanced solution needs to be found which reinforces the payment culture in Greece, while protecting the most vulnerable.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013726/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 décembre 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre la fraude à la sécurité sociale

La Commission européenne estime que le système belge de lutte contre la fraude à la sécurité sociale avec de la main-d'œuvre étrangère est illégal.

1. La législation européenne permet à des entreprises situées à l'étranger de détacher temporairement des travailleurs dans un autre pays, à condition que ces travailleurs soient munis d'un formulaire type délivré par l'administration de leur pays d'origine. Mais cela donne lieu à de nombreuses fraudes, certaines entreprises créant des sociétés boîtes aux lettres à l'étranger pour pouvoir utiliser, en Belgique, des travailleurs étrangers et les payer moins chers. Que propose la Commission pour faire baisser la fraude?

2. Que propose la Commission pour faciliter les démarches entre les différentes autorités européennes? La Belgique et d'autres pays se plaignent de ne recevoir que peu de réponses à leurs demandes.

3. C'est d'ailleurs pour remédier à cette situation que la Belgique a adopté une réglementation fin 2012 qui prévoit l'inspection sociale. Les juges peuvent suspendre d'autorité le formulaire si la fraude sociale est avérée. Mais cela n'est pas du goût de la Commission européenne qui vient d'entamer une procédure d'infraction contre la Belgique. Quel est l'argumentaire de la Commission, là où le gouvernement belge voit un instrument de lutte contre le dumping social?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(7 janvier 2014)

1. La proposition ([1]) de directive d'exécution dote les États membres d'instruments plus efficaces pour le suivi et la mise en œuvre des conditions d'emploi, notamment en ce qui concerne le contournement des règles applicables, par exemple par des «sociétés boîtes aux lettres». Dans le prolongement de l'approche générale adoptée par le Conseil des ministres de l'emploi et des affaires sociales le 9 décembre 2013, la Commission s'attachera à aider le Conseil et le Parlement à trouver un accord sur le texte final de la directive.

Conformément au règlement n° 883/2004 portant sur la coordination des systèmes de sécurité sociale, les cotisations de sécurité sociale pour les travailleurs détachés à titre temporaire doivent être payées dans leur État membre d'origine et les travailleurs détachés sont tenus de produire un certificat attestant que les cotisations de sécurité sociale y sont effectivement payées.

2. Le règlement définit des procédures visant à améliorer la coopération administrative entre les États membres. De plus, en cas de doute justifié quant à l'authenticité du certificat d'un travailleur détaché, il existe une procédure qui a fait ses preuves, fixant des délais pour les réponses, ainsi qu'une procédure spéciale de conciliation en cas de désaccord.

3. Le règlement n'empêche par conséquent pas les États membres de lutter contre les fraudes ou le dumping social. La Belgique n'a néanmoins jamais appliqué la procédure mentionnée ci-dessus. Il n'appartient pas aux États membres de décider unilatéralement de refuser les certificats de sécurité sociale, mais ils doivent dialoguer avec l'État membre les ayant émis. Il ressort de la législation et de la jurisprudence de l'UE que les institutions des autres États membres doivent accepter de tels documents aussi longtemps qu'ils n'ont pas été retirés ou déclarés invalides par l'État membre qui les a émis.

([1]) Proposition de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative à l'exécution de la directive 96/71/CE concernant le détachement de travailleurs effectué dans le cadre d'une prestation de services (COM(2012) 131 final du 21 mars 2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013726/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(4 December 2013)

Subject: Combating social security fraud

The Commission has deemed Belgium's method of combating social security fraud through the use of foreign workers to be illegal.

1. Under EU legislation, companies with an address outside a given country can temporarily second workers to another country, provided that those workers are covered by a standard certificate issued by the administration in their country of origin. However, this opens the door to numerous types of fraud and, in the case of Belgium, some companies have set up letterbox companies abroad so that they can use foreign workers in Belgium and pay them less. How does the Commission intend to limit this type of fraud?

2. What action will the Commission take to facilitate cooperation between the authorities in the various EU countries? Belgium and other countries have complained that their requests are seldom answered

3. It was in order to rectify this situation that Belgium adopted a regulation at the end of 2012 which made it possible for the Social Inspectorate to take action. Judges can also suspend the certificate if social security fraud is proven. However, this is not to the liking of the Commission, which has just launched infringement proceedings against Belgium. How does the Commission explain this approach to something the Belgian Government views as an instrument to combat social dumping?

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

1. The proposal ([1]) for an enforcement directive offers the Member States more effective instruments for monitoring and enforcing employment conditions, particularly with regard to the circumvention of the rules applicable, such as through 'letter-box companies'. Following the general approach which was reached by the Council of ministers of Employment and Social Affairs on 9 December 2013, for the Commission will do its utmost to assist the Council and Parliament in agreeing on the final text of this directive.

According to the social security Regulation 883/2004, social security for temporarily posted workers is payable in their Member State of origin and posted workers have to produce a certificate to prove that they are indeed paying social security there.

2. The regulation sets out provisions to improve the administrative cooperation between Member States. Moreover, if there is a justified doubt whether the certificates of any posted workers are genuine, there is a tried and tested procedure, with fixed deadlines for replies, and a special conciliation procedure in cases of disagreement.

3. Therefore, the regulation does not prevent Member States from tackling fraud or social dumping. However, Belgium has never used the conciliation procedure mentioned above. Member States cannot unilaterally decide not to accept social security certificates, but have to raise any question with the issuing Member States. According to EC law and case-law, such a document has to be accepted by the institutions of the other Member States for as long as they have not been withdrawn or declared invalid by the Member State in which they were issued.

([1]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of service (COM(2012) 131 final of 21 March 2012).

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