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Parlamento europeo

INTERROGAZIONI SCRITTE CON RISPOSTA

2014/C 33 E/01 Interrogazioni scritte presentate dai deputati al Parlamento europeo e relative risposte date da un'Istituzione dell'Unione europea 1

(Cfr. nota per il lettore)

IT

Nota per il lettore

Questa pubblicazione contiene interrogazioni scritte presentate dai deputati al Parlamento europeo e le relative risposte date da un'istituzione dell'Unione europea.

Per ciascuna interrogazione e risposta, la versione nella lingua originale è presentata prima di un'eventuale traduzione.

In alcuni casi è possibile che la risposta sia redatta in una lingua diversa da quella dell'interrogazione: questo dipende dalla lingua di lavoro della commissione che deve fornire la risposta.

Queste interrogazioni e risposte sono pubblicate in conformità degli articoli 117 e 118 del regolamento del Parlamento europeo.

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ALDE	gruppo dell'Alleanza dei Democratici e dei Liberali per l'Europa
Verts/ALE	gruppo Verde/Alleanza libera europea
ECR	gruppo dei Conservatori e Riformisti europei
GUE/NGL	gruppo confederale della Sinistra unitaria europea/Sinistra verde nordica
EFD	gruppo Europa della Libertà e della Democrazia
NI	non iscritti

IT

IV

(Informazioni)

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PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

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(2014/C 33 E/01)

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(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004011/13
do Komisji
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(10 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Utworzenie kolejowego korytarza towarowego w oparciu o sieć kompleksową

Z uwagą odnoszę się do wszelkich inicjatyw Komisji mających na celu zwiększenie przepustowości oraz poprawę jakości transportu kolejowego w Unii Europejskiej. Kwestią o szczególnym dla mnie znaczeniu jest kolejowy transport towarowy i poprawa jego efektywności poprzez ułatwienie i przyspieszenie przejazdów, zwiększenie bezpieczeństwa oraz zmniejszenie zatłoczenia.

W związku z powyższym mam konkretne pytanie: czy według Komisji jest dopuszczalne utworzenie kolejowego korytarza towarowego w oparciu o linie kolejowe, które nie należą do sieci bazowej (core network), ale są wpisane do sieci kompleksowej (comprehensive network) w ramach jednolitej sieci transportowej TEN-T i tym samym rozszerzenie korytarza towarowego numer 5 o linię C-E-59 od granicy z Czechami do portu w Szczecinie w Polsce?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(23 maja 2013 r.)

W załączniku do rozporządzenia 913/2010 ([1]) wymieniono główne trasy kolejowych korytarzy towarowych, wskazując najważniejsze węzły w obrębie każdej z nich. Te główne trasy należy rozumieć jako ogólny opis geograficzny korytarzy, który *nie* określa dokładnego przebiegu tych korytarzy na poziomie konkretnych linii kolejowych.

Wyznaczenie linii kolejowych korytarzy w ramach szeroko rozumianych głównych tras w oparciu o analizę rynku transportowego jest zadaniem rady zarządzającej każdego z kolejowych korytarzy towarowych, jak określono w przedmiotowym rozporządzeniu ([2]). W stosownych przypadkach wyznaczone linie kolejowe muszą również obejmować trasy objazdowe i łączące je odcinki ([3]).

Zważywszy, że proponowana podstawowa sieć kolejowa transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej (TEN-T) dla przewozów towarowych obejmuje linie kolejowe ważne dla europejskiego kolejowego transportu towarowego, Komisja uważa za naturalne, że odpowiednie linie kolejowe, które będą należeć do podstawowej sieci kolejowej TEN-T dla przewozów towarowych, będą wyznaczane w odniesieniu do kolejowych korytarzy towarowych i będą stanowić rdzeń tych korytarzy. Jednak nawet linie kolejowe spoza podstawowej sieci kolejowej (a w niektórych przypadkach nawet spoza kompleksowej sieci kolejowej) mogą zostać wyznaczone jako kolejowe korytarze towarowe, w szczególności – choć nie tylko – w przypadku tras objazdowych. Wyznaczenie linii kolejowych korytarzy towarowych powinno być dyktowane potrzebami rynku.

W odniesieniu do linii kolejowej CE-59 do Szczecina należy zauważyć, że obecnie nie jest ona uwzględniona w głównej trasie RFC 5; jej włączenie wymagałoby modyfikacji głównej trasy, której można by dokonać w związku z dostosowaniem korytarzy kolejowego transportu towarowego oraz korytarzy sieci bazowej będącym obecnie przedmiotem dyskusji w ramach negocjacji międzyinstytucjonalnych poświęconych TEN-T ([4]) i wnioskowi w sprawie instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" ([5]).

([1]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 913/2010 z dnia 22 września 2010 r. w sprawie europejskiej sieci kolejowej ukierunkowanej na konkurencyjny transport towarowy, Dz.U. L 276 z 20.10.2010, s. 22–32.
([2]) Art. 2 lit. a) w związku z art. 9.
([3]) Art. 2 lit. a).
([4]) COM(2011) 650.
([5]) COM(2011) 665 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004011/13
to the Commission
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Establishing a rail freight corridor based on a comprehensive network

I pay careful attention to every measure proposed by the Commission to increase the capacity and improve the quality of rail transport in the European Union. One aspect which is particularly important to me is rail freight transport and ways to make it more efficient by making journeys easier and faster, increasing safety and reducing congestion.

I would like to ask the Commission if it is possible to establish a rail freight corridor based on railway lines which are not part of the core network but are included in the comprehensive network as part of the TEN-T single transport network, which would also mean extending freight corridor number 5 by line C-E-59 from the border with the Czech Republic to the port of Szczecin in Poland?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

Regulation 913/2010 ([1]) comprises in its Annex the Principal Routes of the Rail Freight Corridors (RFCs) by indicating major nodes along each corridor. These Principal Routes have to be understood as a general geographical description of the corridors, *not* outlining an exact alignment of the corridors on the level of specific railway lines.

It is the task of the Management Board of each RFC to designate railway lines to the corridor within the (wider) scope of the Principal Route, based on a transport market study as stipulated by the regulation ([2]). The designation also has to comprise, where appropriate, diversionary routes and connecting sections ([3]).

Taking into account that the proposed TEN-T Core Rail Network for Freight reflects railway lines of major importance for European rail freight, the Commission considers it as natural that relevant railway lines which will belong to the TEN-T Core Rail Network for Freight will become designated to the RFCs and form the backbone of these corridors. However, even railway lines outside the Core Rail Network (and in certain cases possibly even outside the Comprehensive Rail Network) may become designated to RFCs, in particular in — but not limited to — the case of diversionary routes. The designation of lines to the RFCs should be driven by market needs.

Concerning railway line CE-59 to Szczecin it has to be noted that Szczecin is currently not included in the Principal Route of RFC 5; its inclusion would require a modification of the Principal Route, which could be done in connection with the alignment of Rail Freight Corridors and Core Network Corridors currently under discussion in the interinstitutional negotiations of the TEN-T ([4]) and Connecting Europe Facility ([5]) proposal.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 22-32.
([2]) Art 2(a) in combination with Art 9.
([3]) Art 2(a).
([4]) COM(2011) 650.
([5]) COM(2011)665 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004012/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Eliminarea birocrației excesive în cadrul procesului de negociere cu statele membre pe marginea viitoarelor programe de dezvoltare rurală

Doresc să atrag atenția Comisiei asupra cazului unui inginer român, producător agricol și beneficiar al unei finanțări în cadrul fondurilor europene pentru agricultură și dezvoltare rurală. Fermierul a solicitat cea de-a doua tranșă de plată pentru Măsura 112 — „Instalarea tinerilor fermieri", iar autoritatea competentă, APDRP, i-a comunicat că nu este eligibil, întrucât în evidențele instituției de plată era în mod eronat înregistrat ca persoană fizică și nu ca persoană fizică autorizată. Fermierul a depus documente justificative, fără niciun rezultat. Autoritatea a sistat plata de 10 000 de euro și a solicitat restituirea sumei de 15 000 de euro, reprezentând prima tranșă. APDRP a recunoscut că a făcut o greșeală, dar a continuat procesul pentru obligarea beneficiarului la restituirea sumei încasate. Acesta este numai unul dintre cazurile de cetățeni români nemulțumiți de birocrația impusă de autoritățile române în accesarea fondurilor europene pentru agricultură.

Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarea întrebare: în situația în care un cetățean, beneficiar al unei finanțări din fondurile europene, epuizează toate căile de atac pe plan intern împotriva unei decizii pe care o consideră incorectă, cărei instituții europene trebuie să i se adreseze pentru reglementarea situației?

De asemenea, Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă va avea în vedere eliminarea birocrației excesive în cadrul procesului de negociere cu statele membre pe marginea viitoarelor programe de dezvoltare rurală.

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(14 iunie 2013)

Legislația care reglementează aprobarea Programelor de dezvoltare rurală pentru perioada 2014-2020 este dezbătută în prezent de către legislator. În comparație cu perioada de programare 2007-2013, această legislație prezintă o serie de propuneri de simplificare. De exemplu, cadrul de reglementare va fi, în mare măsură, folosit în comun de mai multe fonduri UE, inclusiv Fondul european agricol pentru dezvoltare rurală. Acest lucru va facilita atât adoptarea Programului de dezvoltare rurală, cât și punerea sa în aplicare. Cu toate acestea, Comisia va continua să aplice legislația în mod sistematic și riguros, în vederea reducerii ratei de eroare.

În ceea ce privește protecția drepturilor garantate de legislația UE, inclusiv cele care reglementează fondurile UE, Comisia atrage atenția asupra articolului 47 din Carta drepturilor fundamentale a Uniunii Europene, care prevede că orice persoană ale cărei drepturi și libertăți garantate de legislația Uniunii Europene sunt încălcate, are dreptul la o cale de atac eficientă în fața unei instanțe judecătorești. Protecția drepturilor garantate de legislația UE trebuie să fie garantată în fața instanțelor naționale independente, în cooperare cu Curtea de Justiție a UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004012/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Eliminating the excessive red tape involved in negotiating future rural development programmes with Member States

I would like to draw the Commission's attention to the case of a Romanian engineer and agricultural producer, who is also a beneficiary of funding from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. This farmer applied for the second payment instalment for Measure 112 — 'Setting up of young farmers' — but the relevant authority, the Payments Agency for Rural Development and Fisheries (APDRP), advised him that he was not eligible as he had been mistakenly registered in the records of the payments agency as a natural person and not as an authorised natural person. The farmer submitted supporting documentation, but to no avail. The authority stopped the payment of EUR 10 000 and requested that he refund the sum of EUR 15 000, equivalent to the first instalment. The APDRP acknowledged that it had made an error, but continued the process of forcing the beneficiary to refund the sum paid. This is just one of a number of cases where Romanian citizens are unhappy with the red tape imposed by the Romanian authorities when accessing European agricultural funds.

Can the Commission reply to the following question? In a situation where a citizen, who is a beneficiary of resources from European funds, exhausts every means of redress in his own country against a decision deemed incorrect, which European institution should he contact to resolve the situation?

Can the Commission also specify whether it is going to consider eliminating the excessive red tape involved in negotiating future rural development programmes with Member States?

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

The legislation governing the approval of the Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020 is currently being discussed by the legislator. In comparison to the programming period 2007-2013, this legislation puts forward a number of simplification proposals. As an example, the regulatory framework will be shared to a large extent by several EU Funds, including the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. This will facilitate both the adoption of the Rural Development Programme as well as its implementation. Nevertheless, the Commission will continue to apply the legislation consistently and rigorously with a view to decreasing the error rate.

With regard to the protection of rights under EC law, including those governing the EU funds, the Commission draws attention to Article 47 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which provides that everyone whose rights and freedoms guaranteed by EC law are violated has the right to an effective remedy before a tribunal. The protection of rights under EC law must be ensured before independent national courts, in cooperation with the Court of Justice of the EU.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-004013/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. balandžio 10 d.)

Tema: Suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalo statybos Baltijos regione finansavimas ES lėšomis

Lietuva pradėjo statyti nacionalinį suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalą (SGDT), kuris pradės veikti jau 2014 m. Pastačius tokį terminalą suskystintų gamtinių dujų (SGD) už konkurencingą rinkos kainą būtų galima gauti iš kitų šalių, pvz., iš Norvegijos, todėl prognozuojama, kad SGD kaina Lietuvoje galėtų sumažėti ketvirtadaliu ar penktadaliu. Lietuva per metus vidutiniškai suvartoja apie 3 mlrd. kubinių metrų dujų; jos gaunamos iš vienintelio išorės tiekėjo – įmonės „Gazprom".

Europos Sąjunga yra įsipareigojusi užtikrinti, kad po 2015 m. nė viena ES valstybė narė neliktų atskirta nuo Europos dujų ir elektros energijos tinklų ir turėtų prieigą bent prie dviejų skirtingų alternatyvių energijos išteklių tiekimo šaltinių. Vienas iš Komisijos pateiktų pagrindinių projektų Baltijos regione yra vieno didelio visam regionui skirto SGDT statyba ir jo dalinis finansavimas ES biudžeto lėšomis. Remiantis atliktu tyrimu, regioniniam terminalui parinkta statybos vieta yra Suomijos įlankoje; šiuo metu tai žiemą užšąlanti vietovė, o baigti statyti terminalą numatoma ne anksčiau kaip 2030 m. Tai reiškia, kad Baltijos regiono valstybės narės – tarp jų ir Lietuva – dar 17 m. liktų priklausomos nuo monopolistinio išorės tiekėjo. Per ateinančius 17 metų vien Lietuva įmonei „Gazprom" už dujas permokėtų apie 5 mlrd. JAV dolerių, o išaugus dujų poreikiui ši suma galėtų siekti ir 8,5 mlrd. dolerių. Todėl 17 m. truksianti tokio regioninio terminalo statyba netenka prasmės, prasilenkia su ekonomine ir politine logika ir lemia dar didesnę šio regiono energetinę priklausomybę nuo išorės tiekėjo.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad būtų tikslinga peržiūrėti šį sprendimą ir regioninio terminalo statybai skirtą finansavimą paskirstyti valstybėms narėms, savo jėgomis ir lėšomis statančioms ar statysiančioms SGDT Baltijos regione? Taip būtų galima žymiai greičiau užtikrinti saugų ir patikimą energijos tiekimą Baltijos regione ir pirkti dujas konkurencingomis rinkos kainomis – šito mes siekiame jau ne vienus metus.

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2013 m. gegužės 17 d.)

Komisija mano, kad visas rytines Baltijos jūros regiono šalis aptarnaujantis regioninis terminalas yra naudingiausias sprendimas žvelgiant iš ES perspektyvos. Tačiau tai nereiškia, kad dėl to ES parama negali būti skiriama tokiems projektams kaip Klaipėdos SGD terminalas, kuriais pavienės valstybės narės siekia kuo greičiau užtikrinti tiekimo saugumą. Parama tokiems projektams gali būti teikiama, jei jie atitinka ES politinius tikslus, ES *aquis* reikalavimus ir ES finansavimo priemonių reikalavimus. Tokios priemonės galėtų būti, pavyzdžiui, Europos regioninės plėtros fondo (ERPF) lėšos arba Europos investicijų banko (EIB) ar Europos rekonstrukcijos ir plėtros banko (ERPB) paskolos.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004013/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: EU financing for the construction of a liquefied natural gas terminal in the Baltic region

Lithuania has begun to construct a national liquefied natural gas terminal (LNGT), which will become operational as early as 2014. Once such a terminal has been constructed, it will be possible to obtain liquefied natural gas (LNG) at a competitive market price from other countries such as Norway and it is therefore predicted that the price of LNG in Lithuania could fall by 20-25%. On average, Lithuania consumes around three billion cubic metres of gas a year, which is obtained from one external supplier: Gazprom.

The European Union is committed to ensuring that from 2015, no Member State should remain isolated from European gas and electricity networks, and that they all should have access to at least two different sources of alternative energy resources. One of the main projects in the Baltic region submitted by the Commission is the construction of a single large LNGT for the entire region partially financed by funds from the EU budget. According to a survey carried out, the location chosen for the construction of the regional terminal is in the Gulf of Finland; currently this area is ice-bound in winter and it is expected that the construction of the terminal will not be completed until 2030. This means that Member States in the Baltic region — including Lithuania — would remain dependent on a monopolistic external supplier for another 17 years. Over the next 17 years, Lithuania alone would pay Gazprom around USD 5 billion for gas, and with increased gas demand, this amount could even reach USD 8.5 billion. It is therefore devoid of purpose to construct a regional terminal that lasts 17 years, that defies economic and political logic and increases this region's energy dependence on an external supplier even more.

Does the Commission not feel that it would be appropriate to review this decision and to allocate financing for the construction of a regional terminal to those Member States that are currently constructing or that will be constructing a LNGT in the Baltic region on their own with their own funds? It would thus be possible to ensure a secure and reliable energy supply in the Baltic region and to buy gas at competitive market prices much sooner, something we have been aiming to do for years.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

The Commission believes a regional terminal serving all Eastern Baltic countries is the solution that provides most benefits from the EU perspective. This does not preclude the possibility of EU assistance also to projects, such as the Klaipeda LNG terminal, that address immediate security of supply concerns of an individual Member State, provided they support the EU policy objectives, comply with the EU *acquis* and are eligible for EU funding instruments. Such instruments could be for instance the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or EIB/EBRD loans.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-004015/13
Komisi
Jiří Maštálka (GUE/NGL)
(10. dubna 2013)

Předmět: Zásada obezřetnosti

Zásada obezřetnosti je popsána v článku 191 Smlouvy o fungování Evropské unie (SFEU). Přijímáním preventivních opatření v případě ohrožení má zajišťovat vysokou úroveň ochrany životního prostředí. Vztahuje se rovněž na spotřebitelskou politiku a právní předpisy EU v oblasti potravin a v oblasti zdraví lidí, zvířat a rostlin. Zásadu obezřetnosti lze uplatnit, neumožňují-li vědecké údaje objektivní, definitivní vyhodnocení rizika, které představuje určitý jev, výrobek nebo proces.

Z tohoto důvodu byla zásada obezřetnosti zahrnuta do směrnice o obecné bezpečnosti výrobků (bod odůvodnění 1 a čl. 8 odst. 2 směrnice 2001/95/ES) a do směrnice o bezpečnosti hraček (bod odůvodnění 38 a článek 39 směrnice 2009/48/ES), a členské státy jsou tedy povinny tuto zásadu zohledňovat při posuzování rizika výrobků. Ačkoli se jedná o klíčový pilíř stávajících právních předpisů EU v oblasti bezpečnosti, není zásada obezřetnosti zmíněna ani v návrhu nařízení o bezpečnosti spotřebních výrobků (COM(2013)0078) ani v návrhu nařízení o dozoru nad trhem (COM(2013)0074). Vzhledem k tomu, že nařízením o dozoru nad trhem se rovněž změní směrnice o bezpečnosti hraček, zanikla by v budoucnu i zásada obezřetnosti.

Zachování této zásady je nezbytné, neboť evropští spotřebitelé a jejich sdružení potřebují nejčastěji prokázat nebezpečí spojená se spotřebními výrobky, které nespadají do potravinářského průmyslu. V případě přijetí opatření v rámci zásady obezřetnosti však mohou mít hospodářské subjekty povinnost prokázat neexistenci nebezpečí. Odstranění této zásady proto představuje problém nejen pro bezpečnost spotřebitelů, ale také pro orgány dozoru nad trhem, které podnikají preventivní kroky. Bez zásady obezřetnosti, která umožňuje odpovídající řízení rizik, mohou vznikat problémy při provádění efektivních opatření dozoru.

1. Proč byla zásada obezřetnosti, uvedená v čl. 8 odst. 2 směrnice o obecné bezpečnosti výrobků, odstraněna a vypuštěna z návrhu nařízení o bezpečnosti spotřebních výrobků (2013/0049(COD))?

2. Proč nebyla zásada obezřetnosti zahrnuta do návrhu nařízení o dozoru nad trhem?

3. Proč má Komise v úmyslu odstranit zásadu obezřetnosti ze směrnice o bezpečnosti hraček?

Odpověď komisaře Borga jménem Komise
(24. června 2013)

Zásada předběžné opatrnosti je obecná zásada v EU, která nemusí být nutně v právních textech výslovně uvedena, avšak je třeba ji při rozhodování zohledňovat, zejména pokud jde o řízení rizik v oblasti zdraví lidí, zvířat a rostlin nebo při ochraně životního prostředí ([1]). Návrh nařízení o dozoru nad trhem ([2]) stanoví pravidla pro provádění zásady předběžné opatrnosti ve všech oblastech, kde by měla být uplatňována, zejména v čl. 6 odst. 1 a článcích 12 a 13, které upravují řízení rizik na úrovni EU.

Ustanovení týkající se dozoru nad trhem uvedená ve směrnici 2001/95/ES ([3]) o obecné bezpečnosti výrobků, konkrétně v článcích 6 až 18, byla převedena do návrhu nového nařízení o dozoru nad trhem, v němž byla rovněž zapracována a dále rozvedena ustanovení kapitoly III nařízení (ES) č. 765/2008 ([4]). Komise navrhuje, aby budoucí nařízení o dozoru nad trhem bylo jediným právním nástrojem, který bude regulovat dozor nad trhem pro harmonizované i neharmonizované nepotravinářské výrobky.Z toho důvodu neobsahuje návrh nařízení o bezpečnosti spotřebních výrobků ([5]) pravidla pro dozor nad trhem.

([1]) Sdělení o zásadě předběžné opatrnosti z února 2000, KOM(2000) 1.
([2]) COM(2013) 75.
([3]) Úř. věst. L 218, 13.8.2008.
([4]) Úř. věst. L 11, 15.1.2002, s. 4.
([5]) COM(2013) 78.

Jedním z cílů návrhu nařízení o dozoru nad trhem je propojit, zjednodušit a posílit ustanovení týkající se dozoru nad trhem uvedená v nařízení (ES) č. 765/2008, směrnici 2001/95/ES o obecné bezpečnosti výrobků a několika dalších nařízeních a směrnicích, včetně směrnice 2009/48/ES ([6]) o bezpečnosti hraček, s cílem stanovit společná pravidla pro dozor nad trhem týkající se spotřebních a průmyslových výrobků.

([6]) Úř. věst. L 170, 30.6.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004015/13
to the Commission
Jiří Maštálka (GUE/NGL)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Precautionary principle

The precautionary principle is detailed in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). It aims at ensuring a higher level of environmental protection through preventive decision-taking in the case of risk. It also covers consumer policy and EU legislation concerning food and human, animal and plant health. The precautionary principle may be invoked where scientific data do not allow for an objective, definitive evaluation of the risk posed by a given phenomenon, product or process.

For this reason, the precautionary principle has been incorporated in the General Product Safety Directive (Recital 1 and Article 8.2 of Directive 2001/95/EC) and the Toy Safety Directive (Recital 38 and Article 39 of Directive 2009/48/EC), thereby requiring Member States to take this principle into account when assessing the risk of products. Despite being a crucial pillar of current EU safety legislation, the precautionary principle is neither mentioned in the draft Regulation on Consumer Product Safety (COM(2013)0078) nor in the draft Regulation on Market Surveillance (COM(2013)0074). As the regulation on Market Surveillance will also amend the Toy Safety Directive, the precautionary principle would also be superseded in the future.

Keeping this principle is crucial because, most often, European consumers and consumer associations need to demonstrate the dangers associated with consumer products which lie outside of the food industry. However, in the case of action being taken under the precautionary principle, economic operators may be required to prove the absence of danger. Likewise, its removal poses a problem not only for consumer safety but also for market surveillance authorities acting on a preventive basis as well. Without the precautionary principle, which allows for adequate risk management, problems may be encountered in implementing effective surveillance measures.

1. Why has the precautionary principle, referred to in Article 8.2 of the General Product Safety Directive, been removed and omitted from the draft Regulation on Consumer Product Safety (2013/0049(COD))?

2. Why has the precautionary principle not been included in the draft Regulation on Market Surveillance?

3. Why is the Commission planning to remove the precautionary principle from the Toy Safety Directive?

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

The precautionary principle is a general principle in the EU that, also without explicit mention in a legal text, needs to be taken in consideration by decision-makers, especially for risk-management in the area of human, animal, plant health or environmental protection ([1]). The proposal for a regulation on Market Surveillance ([2]) lays down rules for implementing the precautionary principle wherever it should be applied, essentially in Articles 6(1), 12 and 13 in which the risk management is organised at EU level.

The provisions on market surveillance contained in the General Product Safety Directive 2001/95/EC ([3]), namely its Articles 6 to 18, were moved to the proposal for a new Regulation on Market Surveillance which also integrates and further develops provisions of Chapter III of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 ([4]). The Commission proposes that the future Regulation on Market Surveillance is a single legal instrument which regulates market surveillance for harmonised and non-harmonised non-food products. The proposal for a regulation on Consumer Product Safety ([5]) has therefore no rules on market surveillance.

([1]) Communication on the precautionary principle of February 2000, COM(2000)1.
([2]) COM(2013)75.
([3]) OJ L 11/4, 15.1.2002.
([4]) OJ L 218, 13.8.2008.
([5]) COM(2013) 78.

One of the objectives of the proposal for a regulation on Market Surveillance is to merge, streamline and strengthen the market surveillance provisions of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, the General Product Safety Directive 2001/95/EC and several other Regulations and Directives, including Directive 2009/48/EC ([6]) on the safety of toys, in order to achieve common rules on market surveillance for consumer and industrial products.

([6]) OJ L 170, 30.6.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004016/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Montecatini Terme: possibili finanziamenti nel comparto del turismo

Montecatini Terme è una località termale con una forte vocazione turistica: quasi 200 hotel distribuiti in 2 km^2 con una capacità ricettiva pari a 14mila posti letto.

La città vorrebbe promuovere programmi volti a diversificare e destagionalizzare l'offerta turistica, sia per soddisfare le molteplici esigenze dei turisti che si recano a Montecatini, garantendo un servizio migliore e su misura, sia per venire incontro alle aspettative delle attività imprenditoriali coinvolte.

A tal fine, la città e le realtà imprenditoriali avvertono forte l'esigenza di dotarsi di uno strumento unico, secondo il modello DMO-Destination Management Organization, che sappia legare le esigenze e le aspettative dei soggetti pubblici e privati del territorio e che sia soprattutto in grado di pensare, progettare e realizzare gli specifici prodotti turistici collegati all'offerta turistica ed economica del territorio.

Tale soggetto avrebbe poi il compito di predisporre e gestire i necessari servizi relativi all'accoglienza turistica, gestire l'organizzazione di eventi complessi sul territorio e svolgere attività formativa a vantaggio di tutti quei soggetti facenti parte della filiera turistica, secondo una gestione globale e strategica del territorio.

Considerando che il turismo è un settore chiave per l'economia dell'UE, generando oltre il 10 % del PIL e occupando circa il 12 % della forza lavoro complessiva, può la Commissione:

— fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti a cui la città di Montecatini potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività e progetti che rientrano nel settore della cultura e del turismo sostenibile per sviluppare un'offerta turistica diversificata e di qualità, in grado di valorizzare il suo patrimonio naturale e culturale, anche con riferimento al futuro programma «Europa creativa»;

— fornire un quadro dei finanziamenti a cui la città di Montecatini potrebbe accedere per promuovere attività imprenditoriali, con particolare riferimento alle PMI, anche in vista del nuovo programma COSME 2014-2020;

— far sapere se esistono forme di sostegno per la creazione della struttura sopra descritta (in particolare per la fase di start-up);

— fornire un quadro della situazione?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

Una rassegna degli strumenti di finanziamento offerti dall'UE per i periodi 2007-2013 e 2014-2020 ai quali possono accedere gli operatori pubblici e privati del settore turistico è disponibile all'indirizzo:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7652.

Le attività connesse al turismo potrebbero essere cofinanziate dal Fondo europeo per lo sviluppo regionale nel quadro dell'asse prioritario V del programma della regione Toscana. Per ulteriori informazioni, la Commissione suggerisce all'onorevole parlamentare di contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione del programma:
Autorità di gestione del Programma Operativo Regionale Toscana
Direzione Generale «Competitività del sistema regionale e sviluppo delle competenze»
Via Luca Giordano, 13, 50132 FIRENZE
autoritagestionecreo@regione.toscana.it

Il sito web www.opencoesione.gov.it del Ministero per la Coesione Territoriale offre inoltre informazioni su tutti gli investimenti ammessi al cofinanziamento a carico dei fondi strutturali europei nel periodo 2007-2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004016/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Montecatini Terme: possible funding in the tourism sector

Montecatini Terme is a spa resort and popular tourist attraction: there are nearly 200 hotels spread over 2 km^2 providing accommodation for 14 000 guests.

The city would like to promote programmes aimed at diversifying its tourism services all year round, both to meet the various requirements of the tourists who visit Montecatini — by providing an improved and tailor-made service — and to meet the expectations of the businesses involved.

To achieve these goals, the city and its businesses say there is an urgent need for a single agency, based on the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) model, capable of meeting the requirements and expectations of public and private entities in the region and, above all, of devising, planning and creating specific tourism products linked to the region's tourism and business offer.

The agency would therefore have the task of organising and managing the services required to welcome tourists, as well as overseeing the organisation of complex events in the region and running training courses to benefit everyone working in the tourism sector, based on an overall management strategy for the region.

Tourism is a key sector for the EU economy, generating over 10% of GDP and employing around 12% of the total workforce.

— Can it provide details of the funding that the city of Montecatini could access in order to promote activities and projects in the field of culture and sustainable tourism so as to develop diversified, high-quality tourism facilities that capitalise on its natural and cultural heritage, including with reference to the future 'Creative Europe' programme?

— Can it provide details of the funding that the city of Montecatini could access in order to promote businesses, with specific reference to SMEs, including in the light of the new Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (COSME) 2014-2020?

— Can it state whether any forms of support exist for the creation of the abovementioned agency (particularly for the start-up phase)?

— Can it provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

An overview of EU financial instruments for the 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 periods for possible use by the tourism sector's public and private stakeholders can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=7652

Tourism related activities could be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund under priority 5 of the Tuscany programme. For more information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the programme:
Managing Authority of the Regione Toscana Programme
Direzione Generale Competitività del sistema regionale e sviluppo delle competenze
Via Luca Giordano, 13, 50132 Firenze
autoritagestionecreo@regione.toscana.it

The www.opencoesione.gov.it website of the Ministry for Territorial Cohesion provides information on all investments co-financed by the Structural Funds in the 2007-2013 period.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004017/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Vincoli di bilancio a causa del patto di stabilità: il caso del comune di Montale (Pistoia)

Nel Comune di Montale, in provincia di Pistoia, è stata avviata nel 2011 la costruzione di un asilo nido. Il finanziamento per la costruzione di tale struttura è stato ottenuto dalla regione Toscana attraverso un bando relativo al PAR FAS 2007-2013 intitolato «Bando per gli investimenti nei servizi per la prima infanzia — servizi per l'educazione non formale dell'infanzia, degli adolescenti e dei giovani», indetto nel 2009, con l'erogazione del finanziamento nel maggio 2010. Come previsto dalla legge, la restante copertura finanziaria del progetto è stata finanziata da un ente privato. Purtroppo nel corso del primo anno di lavori, la ditta aggiudicatrice del bando di gara, ha cominciato ad accusare forti difficoltà finanziarie compromettendo il proseguimento dei lavori, con successivo scioglimento del contratto. In seguito il progetto iniziale è stato modificato e affidato a un'altra impresa edile.

Il proseguimento dei lavori è attualmente ostacolato dai vincoli imposti dal patto di stabilità, i quali, oltre a impedire al comune di Montale di procedere alla realizzazione del progetto, di fatto aggravano la posizione debitoria del comune verso le imprese per le opere già realizzate.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1. riferire se intende esaminare la possibilità per le amministrazioni locali di aumentare il disavanzo, distinguendo tra spese correnti e spese per investimenti, per finanziare e completare i pagamenti relativi gli investimenti di pubblica utilità;

2. far sapere in che modo e in base a quali tempistiche introdurrà un meccanismo che permetta di escludere il debito arretrato contratto dalle amministrazioni locali per opere pubbliche verso le imprese dal calcolo dei parametri di stabilità;

3. fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta data da Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2013)

L'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento a restrizioni di bilancio imposte alle autorità locali italiane dal patto di stabilità interno dell'Italia, patto che rientra nella responsabilità nazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004017/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Budget constraints as a consequence of the Stability Pact: the case of the municipality of Montale (Pistoia)

In 2011, work began on the construction of a day nursery in the municipality of Montale, in the province of Pistoia. Funding for the construction of that facility was obtained from the Tuscany region through a tender procedure relating to the Regional Implementation Programme for Underutilised Areas Fund (PAR FAS) 2007-2013 entitled 'Tender for investment in early childhood services — services for the non-formal education of children, adolescents and young people', published in 2009, with the funds being released in May 2010. As stipulated by law, the remaining funding for the project was provided by a private entity. Unfortunately, during the first year of construction, the company awarded the contract began to run into significant financial difficulties, jeopardising the continuation of the works, and the contract was subsequently terminated. The initial project was later modified and entrusted to another construction company.

The continuation of the works is currently being held up by the constraints imposed by the Stability Pact. Not only are they preventing the municipality of Montale from completing the project, they are actually increasing the amount it owes to its contractors for the works already carried out.

Can the Commission therefore:

1. say whether it intends to examine the possibility of local authorities increasing the deficit, with a distinction made between current expenditure and investment expenditure, in order to finance and supplement payments relating to investment of public interest;

2. say how and when it will introduce a mechanism for excluding the outstanding debt owed by local authorities to contractors for public works from the calculation of stability parameters;

3. provide an overview of the situation?

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

The Honourable member refers to budgetary constraints on Italian local authorities imposed by Italy's Domestic Stability Pact, which falls under national responsibility.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004018/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Preoccupanti livelli di contaminazione da pesticidi delle acque superficiali e sotterranee in Italia

Il rapporto nazionale pesticidi nelle acque 2013 ([1]), realizzato dall'ISPRA ([2]) e pubblicato di recente, ha accertato il grave stato di contaminazione delle acque italiane superficiali e sotterranee. Nel 2010 sono stati rinvenuti residui nel 55,1 % dei 1 297 punti di campionamento delle acque superficiali e nel 28,2 % dei 2 324 punti di quelle sotterranee, per un totale di 166 tipologie di pesticidi — a fronte dei 118 del biennio 2007-2008 — individuati nella rete di controllo ambientale delle acque italiane. Si tratta, per la maggior parte, di residui di prodotti fitosanitari usati in agricoltura — solo in questo campo si utilizzano circa 350 sostanze — ma anche di biocidi impiegati in altri settori. Anche se spesso basse, le concentrazioni rilevate indicano una diffusione molto ampia della contaminazione.

Nel 34,4 % dei punti delle acque superficiali e nel 12,3 % dei punti di quelle sotterranee, i livelli risultano superiori ai limiti delle acque potabili. Le concentrazioni sono state confrontate anche con i limiti di qualità ambientale, recentemente introdotti, basati sulla tossicità delle sostanze per gli organismi acquatici. In questo caso il 13,2 % dei punti delle acque superficiali e il 7,9 % di quelli delle acque sotterranee hanno concentrazioni superiori al limite.

La contaminazione appare più diffusa nella pianura padano-veneta, a causa delle caratteristiche idrologiche di tale area, del suo intenso utilizzo agricolo e del fatto che le indagini sono sempre più complete nelle regioni del Nord Italia. A causa dell'assenza di dati sperimentali sugli effetti combinati delle miscele e di adeguate metodologie di valutazione, esiste la possibilità che il rischio derivante dall'esposizione ai pesticidi sia attualmente sottostimato.

I pesticidi più rilevati nelle acque superficiali sono: glifosate, AMPA, terbutilazina, terbutilazina-desetil, metolaclor, cloridazon, oxadiazon, MCPA, lenacil, azossistrobina. Nelle acque sotterranee le sostanze presenti in quantità maggiore sono: bentazone, terbutilazina e terbutilazina-desetil, atrazina e atrazina-desetil, 2,6-diclorobenzammide, carbendazim, imidacloprid, metolaclor, metalaxil. Continua a essere diffusa la contaminazione da erbicidi triazinici, come la terbutilazina, ma sono ancora largamente presenti anche sostanze fuori commercio da tempo, come l'atrazina e la simazina.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È la Commissione è a conoscenza del rapporto summenzionato?

2. Come intende la Commissione intervenire affinché venga scongiurata la possibilità che, attraverso la catena alimentare, i cittadini siano esposti indirettamente a questi contaminanti?

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

La Commissione ringrazia l'onorevole parlamentare di averla messa a conoscenza del rapporto dell'Ispra.

Nell'ambito della direttiva quadro in materia di acque, gli Stati membri sono tenuti a monitorare lo stato chimico dei corpi idrici sotterranei e superficiali nei rispettivi paesi e a riferire in proposito. Tale stato è determinato in base a norme stabilite a livello dell'Unione per alcune sostanze e nazionale per altre di interesse a quel livello. Entro il 2015 è necessario conseguire uno stato chimico buono, per ottenere il quale occorre conformarsi a dette norme. Gli Stati membri devono garantire, inoltre, che i corpi idrici usati per la produzione di acqua potabile in generale soddisfino, secondo il regime di trattamento delle acque applicato, i requisiti della direttiva sull'acqua potabile, compreso lo standard di 0,1 µg/l per singolo pesticida e di 0,5µg/l per il totale dei pesticidi.

([1]) http://www.isprambiente.gov.it/it/pubblicazioni/rapporti/rapporto-nazionale-pesticidi-nelle-acque-dati-2009-2010.-edizione-2013.
([2]) L'Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale si è basato sulle informazioni fornite dalle regioni e dalle agenzie regionali e provinciali per la protezione dell'ambiente.

La Commissione ha esaminato i dati forniti dall'Italia nei piani di gestione dei bacini idrografici del 2009 e ha iniziato a esaminare la sua relazione sull'attuazione dei programmi di misure. Per quanto riguarda i dati comunicati dagli Stati membri in base alla direttiva sull'acqua potabile, la Commissione sta elaborando i dati del periodo 2008-2010 e intende pubblicare le proprie conclusioni nel dicembre 2013, tenendo conto del rapporto dell'Ispra per valutare se l'Italia stia rispettando gli obblighi summenzionati e se, tra le altre cose, stia debitamente osservando i requisiti previsti dalla direttiva sull'utilizzo sostenibile dei pesticidi in relazione alla tutela dell'ambiente acquatico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004018/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Worrying levels of pesticide contamination of Italy's surface waters and groundwater

The National Report on Pesticides in Water 2013 ([1]), recently published by ISPRA ([2]), has established the serious state of contamination of Italy's surface waters and groundwater. In 2010, residues were found in 55.1% of the 1 297 surface-water points sampled and in 28.2% of the 2 324 groundwater points sampled. A total of 166 types of pesticides — compared with 118 in the two-year period 2007-2008 — were identified in Italy's environmental water monitoring network. Most of the residues were from plant-protection products used in agriculture — around 350 substances are used in that field alone — but some were also from biocides used in other sectors. Although often low, the recorded concentrations point to very widespread contamination.

The levels exceed drinking-water thresholds in 34.4% of the surface-water points and in 12.3% of the groundwater points. The concentrations were also compared with the recently introduced environmental quality standard limits, which are based on the toxicity of the substances to aquatic organisms. In this case, 13.2% of the surface-water points and 7.9% of the groundwater points have concentrations above the limit.

Contamination appears to be more widespread in the Po/Veneto Valley, due to the hydrological characteristics of that area, its intensive agriculture and the fact that the surveys carried out in the regions of northern Italy are increasingly thorough. Because of the lack of empirical data on the combined effects of mixtures and the lack of suitable assessment methods, it is possible that the risk from pesticide exposure is currently underestimated.

The pesticides most commonly found in the surface waters are: glyphosate, AMPA, terbuthylazine, desethyl-terbuthylazine, metolachlor, chloridazon, oxadiazon, MCPA, lenacil and azoxystrobin. In the groundwater, the substances present in the highest concentrations are: bentazone, terbuthylazine and desethyl-terbuthylazine, atrazine and desethyl-atrazine, 2,6-dichlorobenzamide, carbendazim, imidacloprid, metolachlor and metalaxyl. Contamination from triazine herbicides such as terbuthylazine continues to be widespread, but substances that have not been on sale for a long time — such as atrazine and simazine — are also still abundant.

1. Is the Commission aware of the abovementioned report?

2. What measures does it intend to take to ensure that the public is not indirectly exposed to these contaminants via the food chain?

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

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for making it aware of the ISPRA report.

Under the Water Framework Directive, Member States are required to monitor and report on the chemical status of surface and groundwater bodies in their countries. The status is determined relative to standards set at Union level for some substances and at national level for others of national concern. Good chemical status, which requires meeting those standards, is to be reached by 2015. In addition, Member States must ensure that water bodies used for the abstraction of drinking water generally allow, in view of the treatment regime applied, the requirements of the Drinking Water Directive to be met. These include meeting a standard of 0.1 µg/l for individual pesticides and 0.5µg/l for total pesticides.

([1]) http://www.isprambiente.gov.it/it/pubblicazioni/rapporti/rapporto-nazionale-pesticidi-nelle-acque-dati-2009-2010.-edizione-2013.
([2]) The Institute for Environmental Protection and Research has based its findings on the information provided by the regions and by the regional and provincial environmental protection agencies.

The Commission has been reviewing the data provided by Italy in its 2009 River Basin Management Plans and has begun reviewing its report on the implementation of its programmes of measures. As regards data provided by MS under the Drinking Water Directive, the Commission is currently processing data from 2008-2010 and aims to publish its findings in December 2013. It will take the ISPRA report into account in assessing whether Italy is on track as regards meeting the abovementioned obligations. Among other things it will assess whether Italy is taking due account of the requirements of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive in relation to the protection of the aquatic environment.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004019/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(10 april 2013)

Betreft: Chinese vogelgriep

Het H7N9-virus, beter bekend als de „Chinese vogelgriep", heeft afgelopen zondag zijn zevende slachtoffer geëist. Het aantal besmettingen was maandag (8 april) opgelopen tot 21. Het Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu (RIVM) heeft laten weten dat deze vogelgriep in Nederland voorlopig niet aan de orde is.

Ingaande 2005 heeft de Commissie een programma opgezet ([1]) voor de beheersing van SARS en nieuwe opkomende infectieziekten uit China. Dit programma duurde 39 maanden en liep af in 2008.

Het Europees Centrum voor ziektepreventie en -beheersing (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, ECDC) heeft inmiddels aangegeven ([2]) acht te slaan op de Chinese ontwikkelingen en de vinger aan de pols te houden.

1. Heeft het tot 2008 lopende beheersingsprogramma voor Chinese infecties adequate instrumenten en kennis opgeleverd om een nieuwe epidemie te ondervangen? Wordt deze kennis aangewend?

2. Geven de ontwikkelingen aanleiding tot het verscherpen van acties rondom epidemiebestrijding, bijvoorbeeld door een permanent infectiebeheersingsprogramma op te richten?

3. Is er sprake van voldoende openheid, transparantie en een toereikende uitwisseling met China en tussenliggende landen met betrekking tot het H7N9-virus?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(11 juni 2013)

1. De Chinese autoriteiten hebben in nauw contact met internationale organisaties en partners op de uitbraak van influenza A (H7N9) gereageerd. China heeft onmiddellijk kennis gegeven van de eerste gevallen van influenza A (H7N9) en blijft regelmatig verslag uitbrengen onder de bepalingen van de Internationale Gezondheidsregeling. De Chinese gezondheidsautoriteit verklaart tevens regelmatig te voorzien in epidemiologische verslagen aan internationale partners, waaronder de EU-delegatie in Beijing en het Europees Centrum voor ziektepreventie en -beheersing. De beschikbare informatie toont aan dat er verscherpte maatregelen rondom epidemiebestrijding zijn ingevoerd, mede dankzij de geleerde lessen van het ernstig acuut ademhalingssyndroom (SARS) in 2003.

2. Volgens de Chinese autoriteiten zal het door China ingevoerde systeem, dat een dergelijke reactie mogelijk maakt, op lange termijn duurzaam zijn. Het Chinese Centrum voor ziektebeheersing is onlangs uitgeroepen tot samenwerkingscentrum voor referentie en onderzoek op het gebied van influenza van de Wereldgezondheidsorganisatie en houdt toezicht op de epidemiologie van overdraagbare ziekten om tijdelijke en gepaste actie te ondernemen naar aanleiding van specifieke gevallen, waaronder influenza.

3. Naar aanleiding van de missie van het gemeenschappelijke onderzoeksteam inzake influenza A (H7N9) van China en de Wereldhandelsorganisatie, die van 19 tot en met 24 april 2013 in China plaatsvond, blijkt dat er een hoge mate van transparantie is bij de Chinese autoriteiten in de gezondheids- en landbouwsector.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/infectious-diseases/emerging-epidemics/projects/159_en.html
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/Lists/News/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?List=32e43ee8 %2De230 %2D4424 %2Da783 %2D85742124029a & ID=883&RootFolder=%2Fen%2Fpress%2Fnews%2FLists%2FNews.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004019/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Chinese bird flu

The H7N9 virus, commonly known as 'Chinese bird flu', claimed its seventh victim last Sunday. The number of infected people stood at 21 on Monday 8 April. The Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) has announced that this strain of bird flu is currently not a concern in the Netherlands.

In 2005, the Commission launched a programme for the control ([1]) of SARS and new emerging infectious diseases in China. This programme ran for 39 months and ended in 2008.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has already indicated that it is going to closely monitor developments in China ([2]).

1. Has the programme for surveillance and control of infectious diseases in China, which ran until 2008, provided appropriate tools and knowledge to respond to a new epidemic? Is this knowledge being implemented?

2. Will these developments give rise to stricter epidemic control measures, such as the establishment of a permanent infection control programme?

3. Is there sufficient openness, transparency and an adequate exchange of information with China and transit countries regarding the H7N9 virus?

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

1. The Chinese authorities responded to the outbreak of influenza A(H7N9) in close contact with international organisations and partners. China promptly notified the first cases of influenza A(H7N9) and continues to report regularly under the provisions of International Health Regulations. The Chinese health authority also indicates that it provides regular epidemiological reports to the international partners, including the European Union Delegation in Beijing and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. The information available demonstrates that strict epidemic control measures have been put in place, thanks also to the lessons learned from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003.

2. According to the Chinese authorities, the system put in place by China allowing such a response will be sustainable in the long term. The Chinese Centre for Disease Control has been recently designated as a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza, and it monitors the epidemiology of communicable diseases to allow timely and appropriate actions to respond to specific events, including influenza.

3. Following the mission of the Chinese and World Health Organisation Joint Investigation Team on influenza A(H7N9), that took place from 19 to 24 April 2013 in China, information has shown a good level of transparency by the Chinese authorities in the health and agricultural sector.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/infectious-diseases/emerging-epidemics/projects/159_en.html
([2]) http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/Lists/News/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?List=32e43ee8%2De230%2D4424%2Da783%2D85742124029a&ID=883&RootFolder=%2Fen%2Fpress%2Fnews%2FLists%2FNews

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004020/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Παράνομη και επικίνδυνη η φόρτωση ρυμουλκουμένων σε φορτηγά οχήματα δημόσιας χρήσης

Σύμφωνα με την ελληνική νομοθεσία αναφορικά με τις μεταφορές, τα φορτηγά οχήματα δημόσιας χρήσης λαμβάνουν άδεια όπου αναφέρεται ρητώς το είδος των μεταφερόμενων αγαθών-εμπορευμάτων, και η παράνομη αλλαγή κατηγορίας επισείει για τον ιδιοκτήτη ή μισθωτή σημαντικό χρηματικό πρόστιμο με βάση τον νόμο υπ' αριθ. 3446/2006. Στις διατάξεις του Ν. 383/76, μάλιστα, προβλέπεται ότι το μεταφορικό έργο των φορτηγών δημοσίας χρήσης (ΦΔΧ) αυτοκινήτων κοινού φόρτου (συρμών ή αρθρωτών με ενιαία ή ξεχωριστή άδεια κυκλοφορίας) συνίσταται στη μεταφορά αγαθών για τα οποία δεν απαιτείται ειδικοποιημένο όχημα, επομένως τα ΦΔΧ οχήματα κοινού φόρτου δεν προβλέπεται να μεταφέρουν άλλα οχήματα (ρυμουλκούμενα — λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι το ρυμουλκούμενο είναι όχημα που έλκεται και δεν μπορεί να θεωρηθεί φορτίο προς μεταφορά σύμφωνα με τον ορισμό του άρθρου 2 του Κώδικα Οδικής Κυκλοφορίας). Οι εν λόγω παραβάσεις θεωρείται ότι εγκυμονούν κινδύνους για την οδική ασφάλεια. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και ενώ είναι σαφές ότι η μεταφορά ρυμουλκούμενου από ΦΔΧ είναι παράνομη και επικίνδυνη, διαφαίνεται να υπάρχει κενό ως προς το καθεστώς που πρέπει να ισχύει για την κυκλοφορία εντός των λιμανιών, με αποτέλεσμα να παρατηρείται συχνά η εν λόγω παράβαση εντός των λιμένων, θέτοντας σε κίνδυνο την ασφάλεια τόσο των εργαζομένων όσο και των λοιπών οχημάτων που κινούνται εντός των λιμανιών.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Υπάρχει κάποια σχετική πρόβλεψη για το εν λόγω θέμα σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο; Είναι συμβατό και σύννομο οι κανόνες που ισχύουν αναφορικά με τις μεταφορές και την οδική ασφάλεια να μην εφαρμόζονται σε χώρους που υπάρχει έντονη κυκλοφορία φορτηγών οχημάτων, όπως τα λιμάνια;

— Τι ισχύει στα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη;

— Έχουν καταγραφεί περιπτώσεις ατυχημάτων που προκλήθηκαν από τέτοιου είδους παραβάσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαΐου 2013)

Δεν υπάρχει νομοθεσία της ΕΕ σχετικά με το θέμα που περιγράφει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου και η Επιτροπή μπορεί να αναφερθεί μόνο σε μη δεσμευτικές κατευθυντήριες γραμμές που δημοσιεύθηκαν το 2008 σχετικά με τη στοιβασία των εμπορευμάτων στα βαρέα φορτηγά οχήματα ([1]), οι οποίες ενδεχομένως παρέχουν χρήσιμες ενδείξεις σχετικά με τις ορθές πρακτικές που εφαρμόζονται στην κατάσταση που περιγράφει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της κάποιο συγκεκριμένο παρόμοιο πρόβλημα οδικής ασφάλειας στα άλλα κράτη μέλη ούτε διαθέτει πληροφορίες σχετικά με περιπτώσεις ατυχημάτων που προκλήθηκαν από τις παραβάσεις της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/topics/vehicles/cargo_securing_loads/index_el.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004020/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Illegal and dangerous carriage of trailers on commercial vehicles

Under Greek transport legislation, a licence must be obtained for commercial vehicles which explicitly states the type of goods/merchandise which they are authorised to carry and owners or hirers who illegally change that category must pay a large fine under Law 3446/2006. Law 383/76 states that ordinary commercial vehicles (trains or articulated lorries with single or separate vehicle registration) are used to transport goods which do not require a specialised vehicle; thus, ordinary commercial vehicles are not intended for the carriage of other vehicles (trailers, given that a trailer is a vehicle which is towed and does be qualify as a load for carriage in accordance with the definition in Article 2 of the Highway Code). Infringements of this legislation are considered to harbour dangers for road safety. Within this framework and given that the carriage of trailers by commercial vehicles is illegal and dangerous, there would appear to be a loophole in terms of the rules that should apply to traffic in ports. As a result, such infringements are frequently seen in harbours, where they are putting both workers and other vehicles circulating within the harbour in danger.

— Are there any provisions governing this issue at European level? Is it compatible and legal not to apply transport and road safety rules in areas in which there is heavy goods traffic, such as in ports?

— What applies in the other Member States?

— Are there any accidents caused by such infringements on record?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

There is no EU legislation on the specific matter described by the Honourable Member and the Commission can only refer to non-binding guidelines published in 2008 on the stowage of goods on heavy goods vehicles ([1]) which may provide useful indications on good practices applicable in the situation described by the Honourable Member. The Commission is not aware of any particular similar problem of road safety in the other Member States and does not have any information on the accidents caused the infringements to the Greek legislation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/topics/vehicles/cargo_securing_loads/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004021/13
to the Commission
Rebecca Taylor (ALDE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: The Falsified Medicines Directive and potential future shortages of medicines in the EU

Given that directive 2011/62/EU is due to come into force in July 2013, does the Commission think that, in order to avoid shortages of some medicines, it will be necessary to exempt further third countries from rules governing importation if:

— The country's regulatory framework for active substances is equivalent to that of the EU?

— An exporting plant has been inspected by a Member State and found to be compliant?

What measures, if any, is the Commission taking to encourage third countries to apply for exemptions under these criteria?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2013)

Since the adoption of the Falsified Medicines Directive the Commission has pro-actively engaged with all relevant stakeholders, first of all the regulatory authorities of exporting countries in order to raise their awareness of the upcoming rules — including the possibility of 'equivalence assessment' — and facilitate third-country manufacturers' compliance.

Concerning the equivalence assessment of a third country's regulatory framework, the ultimate decision on whether to apply for 'listing' under Article 111b of Directive 2001/83/EC is in the hands of the third countries. The Commission is committed to a timely processing of the applications.

The Falsified Medicines Directive provides for the possibility, where necessary to ensure the availability of medicinal products, of waiving the written confirmation if a Member State has inspected a specific plant and issued a Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certificate. Valid EU GMP certificates can be found in the EudraGDMP database ([1]). It is up to the Member States, which are fully aware of this option, to decide whether to make use of it.

Finally, the Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010761/2012 ([2]).

([1]) http://eudragmp.ema.europa.eu/inspections/displayWelcome.do
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004024/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Rimborsi di eccedenza IVA: possibile violazione della normativa dell'Unione

In Italia, una grande fetta del tessuto imprenditoriale lamenta la problematicità dei rimborsi in conto fiscale, in particolar modo dei crediti IVA.

Tale fenomeno colpisce le aziende soggette al pagamento di differenti aliquote IVA tra la fase di acquisto delle materie prime e la vendita del prodotto finito, che produce un accumulo costante di crediti da eccedenza IVA.

Il rimborso di tali importi, negli ultimi anni, è andato via via diminuendo, creando rischi finanziari per le imprese dovuti a mancanza di liquidità.

Secondo gli ultimi dati disponibili, al 31.1.2012 era stato versato poco più del 30 % delle istanze presentate per crediti risalenti all'anno 2010.

Recentemente, l'Agenzia delle entrate italiana, ente incaricato di effettuare i rimborsi e i relativi controlli, ha comunicato la messa a disposizione di alcuni importi per i crediti vantati dalle aziende.

Premesso che la questione del rimborso IVA e i lunghi tempi di pagamento rischiano di compromettere il buon andamento delle aziende coinvolte, come anche il mantenimento dei livelli occupazionali, può la Commissione rendere noto:

1. Se tali ritardi, non ragionevoli, non costituiscano una violazione della direttiva 2006/112/CE relativa al sistema comune d'imposta sul valore aggiunto, in particolare il suo articolo 183?

2. Se non consideri la liquidazione del pregresso dei crediti IVA delle aziende verso lo Stato una condizione che potrebbe rientrare nei fattori significativi in sede di valutazione della conformità del bilancio di uno Stato membro con i criteri di deficit e di debito del Patto di stabilità e crescita, analogamente alla fattispecie dei debiti commerciali dello Stato verso le aziende?

3. Un quadro della situazione?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004025/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Rimborsi di eccedenza IVA: palese violazione del diritto dell'UE da parte dell'Italia

In Italia, molte imprese vantano nei confronti dell'amministrazione dei crediti da eccedenza IVA. Tra queste vi è l'Inalpi S.p.A. («Inalpi»), la quale opera nel settore lattiero-caseario ed è attiva tramite la sua rete distributiva in Italia e all'estero. Al pari di altri imprese, Inalpi è soggetta al pagamento di differenti aliquote Iva tra la fase di acquisto delle materie prime (Iva al 10 % o al 21 %) e la vendita del prodotto finito (Iva al 4 %). L'attività ordinaria di Inalpi comporta quindi un costante accumulo di crediti da eccedenza Iva, dei quali l'impresa ha pacificamente il diritto di ottenere il rimborso. Tale rimborso deve tuttavia essere garantito tempestivamente, onde evitare qualsiasi rischio finanziario per le imprese e nel rispetto di quel principio di «perfetta neutralità» dell'Iva da sempre affermato a livello dell'UE. Nel 2001 l'Italia ha subito una condanna della Corte di giustizia per il ritardo nei rimborsi dei crediti Iva (sentenza del 25 ottobre 2001, causa C-78/00). Tuttavia, a partire dal 2010, tali rimborsi in Italia hanno subito un nuovo stallo, richiedendo in media circa due anni. Lo stesso governo italiano, in risposta ad un'interrogazione parlamentare, ha ammesso che al 31 gennaio 2012 era stato versato poco più del 30 % delle istanze presentate per crediti risalenti all'anno 2010, e ha affermato che «gli importi relativi alle restanti richieste verranno erogati nel corso del 2012, tenuto conto dell'effettiva disponibilità finanziaria». A causa di tali ritardi, Inalpi si trova oggi a dover gestire un ammanco di liquidità superiore a 8 milioni di euro e, pertanto, la società si è vista costretta a intraprendere un'azione civile per ottenere il rimborso dei crediti vantati nei confronti dello Stato. Nell'ambito di tale giudizio, l'Agenzia delle Entrate, ente incaricato dell'effettuazione dei rimborsi e dei relativi controlli, ha ammesso che le pratiche relative alle istanze di rimborso per l'anno 2012 non sono state ancora neppure avviate.

In data 28 febbraio 2013, Inalpi ha denunciato la reiterata violazione da parte dell'Italia delle norme e dei principi dell'UE in materia di Iva, depositando un formale esposto presso i Servizi della Commissione.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può la Commissione confermare che gli odierni ritardi nel rimborso dei crediti Iva da parte dal governo italiano costituiscono una nuova violazione del diritto dell'UE, e in particolare del principio di perfetta neutralità dell'Iva?

2. Come intende procedere la Commissione per porre fine a tale reiterata violazione, considerando anche l'adozione di provvedimenti urgenti alla luce dei gravi rischi che essa comporta?

3. Può la Commissione fornire un quadro della situazione?

Risposta congiunta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2013)

Alla Commissione sono pervenute varie denunce nei confronti dell'Italia, tra cui quella menzionata nell'interrogazione. Ciò che emerge è che, a partire dal 2010, i tempi di rimborso del credito IVA si sono allungati sensibilmente. Rimborsi che richiedono in media due anni sono incompatibili con la direttiva IVA ([1]). A questo proposito, la Commissione si riserva di prendere una decisione tempestiva sulla base dell'esame delle denunce pervenute. Inoltre, la Commissione non ritiene di essere di fronte ad un'infrazione ripetuta in quanto l'ultima infrazione di questo tipo risale a più di dieci anni fa. Considerato che l'analisi del fascicolo deve ancora essere ultimata, è prematuro fornire un quadro generale della situazione.

Il quadro normativo europeo in tema di sorveglianza di bilancio pubblico non prevede nessun trattamento speciale per specifiche voci di spesa che incidono sul debito e sul disavanzo. La liquidazione del debito commerciale pregresso incide più sul livello del debito che sul livello del disavanzo ([2]). Ciò potrebbe essere in contrasto con il parametro di riferimento per la riduzione del debito introdotto recentemente dal Patto di stabilità e crescita (PSC), che si applicherà all'Italia non appena l'attuale procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi (PDE) verrà revocata.

Nonostante l'obbligo di rispettare tale parametro, il PSC concede un certo margine di flessibilità riguardante i «fattori significativi» da considerare prima di avviare una procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi. La liquidazione del debito commerciale pregresso potrebbe rientrare tra i fattori attenuanti.

Per quanto il rimborso dei crediti IVA delle aziende porti ad un aumento del disavanzo, ciò potrebbe anche comportare una violazione del criterio del disavanzo del PSC, per il quale il ruolo dei «fattori significativi» ha un peso minore (ad esempio, non si può evitare di avviare una PDE per uno Stato membro con un debito superiore al 60 % del PIL, a meno che il disavanzo eccessivo non sia temporaneo, eccezionale e non rimanga vicino al valore di riferimento).

([1]) 2006/112/CE.
([2]) Come indicato nella dichiarazione congiunta del 18 marzo 2013 dei Vicepresidenti Olli Rehn e Antonio Tajani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004024/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Rimborsi di eccedenza IVA: possibile violazione della normativa dell'Unione

In Italy, a large portion of the business sector has been complaining about the difficulties of obtaining tax refunds, especially VAT receivables.

This affects companies subject to differing VAT rates between purchases of raw materials and sales of the finished product, which produces a constant accumulation of excess VAT credits.

In recent years, refunds have gradually been decreasing, creating financial risks for companies due to a lack of liquidity.

According to the latest data available, as of 31 January 2012 just over 30% of the claims applications dating back to 2010 had been paid.

Recently, Agenzia delle Entrate, the Italian Revenue Agency, the body responsible for processing refunds, announced that certain amounts were available for credits payable to businesses.

Given that the issue of the long delays associated with VAT refunds may jeopardise the smooth running of the businesses involved, as well as the maintenance of employment, can the Commission state:

1. Whether such unreasonable delays constitute an infringement of Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax, and in particular Article 183 thereof?

2. Whether it considers liquidation of companies VAT claims against the State might be one of the significant factors to use in assessing a Member States tax compliance burden with the deficit and debt criteria of the Stability and Growth Pact, similarly to the case of trade payables owed by the State to companies?

3. An overview of the situation?

Question for written answer E-004025/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Excess VAT refunds: clear breach of EC law by Italy

Many businesses in Italy have outstanding claims for VAT refunds. One of these is Inalpi SpA, which operates in the dairy sector and has an active distribution network in Italy and abroad. Like other businesses, Inalpi is subject to differing VAT rates, with purchases of raw materials being charged at 10% or 21%, and sales of the finished product at 4%. Inalpi's everyday business dealings therefore steadily accumulate excess VAT, which the company unquestionably has a right to reclaim. Refunds must, however, be granted promptly to avoid any financial risk for businesses and in compliance with the principle of VAT's 'absolute neutrality' that has always been ensured at EU level. In 2001, Italy was found guilty by the European Court of Justice of belatedly refunding VAT credits (judgment of 25 October 2001 in Case C-78/00). Since 2010, however, these refunds have once again slowed down in Italy and now take an average of about two years. The Italian Government, in response to a parliamentary question, admitted that as of 31 January 2012 just over 30% of the applications submitted for claims dating back to 2010 had been paid, and stated that 'the amounts for the outstanding applications will be paid out during 2012, depending on the actual availability of funds.' Because of these delays, Inalpi is now having to deal with a shortfall of over EUR 8 million, and was therefore forced to pursue a civil action to obtain payment of the claims against the State. During those proceedings, Agenzia delle Entrate, the body responsible for processing refunds, admitted that procedures relating to refund applications for the year 2012 have not yet even begun.

On 28 February 2013, Inalpi reported Italy for repeated infringement of the EU principles and rules on VAT, filing a formal complaint with the Commission services.

1. Can the Commission confirm that the Italian Government's current delays in refunding VAT credits constitute a fresh infringement of EC law, and in particular the principle of the absolute neutrality of VAT?

2. How does the Commission intend to put an end to this repeated infringement, including the adoption of urgent measures, in light of the serious risks involved?

3. Can the Commission provide an overview of the situation?

Joint answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

Several complaints against Italy have been filed with the European Commission, including the one referred to in the question. The time required to obtain refunds of VAT credits is said to have increased significantly since 2010. Delays in making refunds of two years on average are incompatible with the VAT Directive ([1]). Consequently, the Commission reserves the right to take a decision shortly with reference to the complaints received. The Commission does not view this as a repeat infringement, since the last infringement of this type took place over 10 years ago. As analysis of the matter is in the process of finalisation, it is too early to provide an overview of the situation.

The EU framework for budgetary surveillance does not envisage any special treatment for specific debt and deficit-increasing items. Liquidation of overdue commercial debt affects the level of debt more than the level of deficit ([2]). This may conflict with the debt reduction benchmark recently introduced in the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), which will apply to Italy as from the repeal of the current Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP).

A breach of that benchmark should be avoided, but the SGP allows some leeway to take account of 'relevant factors' before considering opening a procedure for excessive deficit. Liquidation of overdue commercial debt would represent a mitigating factor.

In so far as the refunding of firms' VAT credits leads to an increase in deficit, this could also imply breaching the deficit criterion of the SGP, for which the role played by 'relevant factors' is lesser (i.e. they cannot prevent a Member State with debt in excess of 60% of GDP from being put in EDP unless the deficit excess is temporary, exceptional and remains close to the reference value).

([1]) 2006/112/EC.
([2]) As indicated in the joint statement by Vice-Presidents Olli Rehn and Antonio Tajani of 18 March 2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-004027/13
do Komisji
Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (PPE)
(10 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsultacje społeczne – definicja grupy docelowej

W wewnętrznych dokumentach Komisji Europejskiej dotyczących konsultacji społecznych zdefiniowano grupę docelową, jako *„wszyscy udziałowcy zainteresowani danym problemem"*. Czy Komisja Europejska uznaje organizacje regionalne za *„udziałowców"* biorących czynny udział w konsultacjach społecznych? Pytanie jest o tyle zasadne, że Komisja w ostatnim czasie stwierdziła, że tylko paneuropejskie organizacje mają mieć możliwość wzięcia udziału w spotkaniach konsultacyjnych w celu przedyskutowania opcji dotyczących środków strukturalnych mających wzmocnić Unijny System Handlu Uprawnieniami do Emisji (ETS).

Z praktyki można zaobserwować fakt odmówienia wzięcia udziału – a *de facto* limitowanie udziałowców – w przygotowywanych konsultacjach społecznych organizacjom regionalnym.

Jeżeli zainteresowani udziałowcy reprezentujący przedsiębiorstwa z co najmniej 6 krajów członkowskich nie są dopuszczani do spotkań konsultacyjnych, czyż nie jest to podstawa do stwierdzenia naruszenia procesu konsultacyjnego?

Jakie są formalne podstawy dotyczące rozgraniczenia rodzajów oraz typów organizacji, które mogą być uznane za udziałowców (stronę konsultacji społecznych)?

W mojej niezależnej opinii zachodzi przypuszczenie stronniczości Komisji przy doborze uczestników.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Connie Hedegaard w imieniu Komisji
(13 maja 2013 r.)

Minimalne standardy Komisji dotyczące konsultacji określają, jakie strony powinny uczestniczyć w procesie konsultacji, aby zapewnione zostało podejście integracyjne ([1]). Organizacje regionalne są uznane za zainteresowane strony i mogą brać czynny udział w konsultacjach.

W przypadku wariantów dotyczących środków strukturalnych mających na celu wzmocnienie unijnego systemu handlu uprawnieniami do emisji (ETS) wszystkie zainteresowane strony – w tym organizacje regionalne – miały możliwość wyrażenia swoich opinii w trwających 12 tygodni otwartych konsultacjach internetowych ([2]) dostępnych publicznie za pośrednictwem strony internetowej „Twój głos w Europie". Oprócz konsultacji internetowych Komisja zorganizowała dwa spotkania konsultacyjne poświęcone temu zagadnieniu. Niemożliwe byłoby zapewnienie fizycznej obecności na spotkaniach konsultacyjnych setek podmiotów z licznych podgrup państw członkowskich i sektorów, zainteresowanych unijnym ETS. Aby zapewnić obecność jak najszerszej i najbardziej reprezentacyjnej grupy stron zainteresowanych unijnym ETS, pierwszeństwo przyznano organizacjom na poziomie UE, reprezentującym wszystkie regiony, a nie organizacjom będącym przedstawicielami pojedynczych regionów. Chcąc, aby reprezentowane były wszystkie interesy regionalne i krajowe, Komisja zaprosiła państwa członkowskie. Ponadto, aby umożliwić wszystkim zainteresowanym stronom śledzenie przebiegu spotkań, Komisja udostępniła transmisje internetowe na żywo, a wszystkie prezentacje umieściła w Internecie ([3]). Dla regionalnej organizacji sektorowej, o której wspomina szanowny Pan Poseł, Komisja zorganizowała również dwustronne spotkanie, które odbyło się w dniu 25 marca 2013 r. Z wymienionych wyżej powodów Komisja nie zgadza się, że proces konsultacji został zakłócony.

([1]) Ogólne zasady i minimalne standardy dotyczące konsultacji, opracowane przez Komisję, COM(2002) 704.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0017/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0070/index_en.htm i http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0071/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004027/13
to the Commission
Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (PPE)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Public consultations — definition of target group

In the Commission's internal documents on public consultations the target group is defined as 'all stakeholders with an interest in a particular problem'. Does the Commission recognise regional organisations as 'stakeholders', and can they be actively involved in public consultations? The question is justified in view of the Commission's recent pronouncement that only pan-European organisations are to be allowed to take part in consultation meetings for discussing options for structural funds to strengthen the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme.

It can be seen in practice that regional organisations are being refused the opportunity to take part in the public consultations which are being organised, which in fact means that stakeholders are being prevented from participating.

If interested stakeholders representing enterprises from at least six Member States are not being admitted to the consultation meetings, is this not a basis to conclude that the consultation process is being disrupted?

What are the formal grounds for determining which kinds or types of organisation can be recognised as stakeholders (parties in public consultations)?

In my personal opinion it would appear the Commission is showing partiality in the selection of participants.

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2013)

The Commission's minimum consultation standards indicate which parties should be involved in the consultation process to ensure an inclusive approach ([1]). Regional organisations are considered as stakeholders, and they can be actively involved in the consultations.

In the case of the options for structural measures to strengthen the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), all interested parties — including regional organisations — had an opportunity to express their views in a 12-week open Internet consultation ([2]), publically accessible via the Your Voice in Europe website. In addition to an online consultation, the Commission organised two consultation meetings on the subject. It would be impossible to have all hundreds of stakeholders from many subsets of Member States and sectors with an interest in the EU ETS physically attending the consultation meetings. To ensure the presence of an as broad and representative group of stakeholders with an interest in the EU ETS as possible, priority had been given to EU-level organisations representing all regions, rather than organisations representing individual regions. To ensure that any specific regional and national interests were represented, the Commission invited Member States. Moreover, to ensure that all stakeholders could follow the meetings, the Commission offered live webcasts of the meetings and posted all presentations online ([3]). The Commission also offered a bilateral meeting to the regional sectoral organisation the Honourable Member refers to, which took place on 25 March 2013. For all these reasons, the Commission does not agree that the consultation process has been disrupted.

([1]) Commission's general principles and minimum standards for consultation, COM(2002) 704.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0017/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0070/index_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0071/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004029/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(10 april 2013)

Betreft: „Plofkoffers" niet toegestaan op luchthaven van München

De veiligheid van de luchthaven in München laat niet toe dat er „plofkoffers" aan boord van een vliegtuig worden genomen. In deze koffertjes kunnen een identiteitskaart en enkele kredietkaarten en bankbiljetten geborgen worden. Ze worden vergrendeld met een cijferslot, en zijn voorzien van glazen inktpatronen die de inhoud onbruikbaar maken wanneer ze opengebroken zouden worden. Dergelijke koffertjes zijn doorgaans ongeveer 15 x 10 cm groot (dikte maximaal 3 cm).

Veiligheidsbeambten in München beweren dat een plofkoffer een veiligheidsprobleem vormt, hoewel het niet duidelijk is waarom dat zou zijn.

Op andere luchthavens in de Europese Unie (zelfs andere luchthavens in Duitsland, zoals Frankfurt) vormt het bezit van een plofkoffertje geen enkel probleem.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze toestand?

2. Kunnen luchthavens zelf beslissen zaken te verbieden die elders in de Europese Unie wel toegelaten zijn, zonder dat daar een plausibele motivering voor bestaat?

3. Eigenaars van plofkoffers kunnen voor problemen komen te staan wanneer ze niet weten dat ze niet toegelaten zijn. Wordt er op EU-vlak niet gestreefd naar een zekere eenvormigheid wat de veiligheidsregels voor luchtvaartpassagiers betreft?

4. Welke stappen overweegt de Commissie te nemen in dit concrete geval?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(6 juni 2013)

1. De Commissie was niet op de hoogte van situaties waarin passagiers plofkoffers mee aan boord van een vliegtuig wensten te nemen.

2. Hoewel luchthavens in gerechtvaardigde omstandigheden strengere beveiligingsmaatregelen mogen opleggen, lijken dergelijke maatregelen in dit geval onnodig. Plofkoffers kunnen explosieven, ontvlambare voorwerpen en vloeistoffen (kleurstof) bevatten. Volgens de EU-wetgeving is het in beginsel verboden deze drie zaken mee te nemen aan boord van een vliegtuig.

3 & 4. De Commissie is niet voornemens verdere actie te ondernemen. Overeenkomstig de EU-verordeningen is het onder bepaalde omstandigheden wel toegelaten om verboden artikelen te vervoeren. Deze omstandigheden zijn bepaald in punt 4.4.2 van de bijlage bij Verordening (EU) nr. 185/2010 van de Commissie van 4 maart 2010 tot vaststelling van gedetailleerde maatregelen voor de tenuitvoerlegging van de gemeenschappelijke basisnormen op het gebied van de beveiliging van de luchtvaart ([1]). Eigenaars van plofkoffers nemen voor de vlucht het best contact op met hun luchtvaartmaatschappij om zeker te zijn dat plofkoffers toegelaten zijn aan boord van het vliegtuig en om passende maatregelen te nemen indien dat niet het geval is.

([1]) PB L 55 van 5.3.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004029/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: 'Dye packs' not allowed at Munich Airport

Munich Airport does not permit 'dye packs' to be taken on board an aircraft for security reasons. These packs may contain an identity card and several credit cards and banknotes. They are locked with a combination lock and are equipped with glass ink cartridges which make the contents unusable if the pack is forced open. Dye packs are usually about 15 x 10 cm in size (with a maximum thickness of 3 cm).

Security officials in Munich claim that a dye pack represents a security problem, although it is not clear why that should be the case.

At other airports in the European Union (even at other airports in Germany, such as Frankfurt) carrying a dye pack is not a problem.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Can airports take independent decisions on banning items which are allowed elsewhere in the European Union without any plausible justification?

3. Dye pack owners can find themselves in a difficult situation if they do not know that such packs are not allowed. Are there no efforts at EU level to ensure some degree of uniformity with regard to safety regulations for air travellers?

4. What steps does the Commission intend to take in this specific case?

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

1. The Commission was not aware of situations where passengers wished to bring dye packs onto an aircraft.

2. While airports may impose more stringent security measures in justified circumstances, such measures seem unnecessary in this case as dye packs may contain explosives or incendiary elements as well as liquids (dye), all three of which are in principle banned from being brought on board an aircraft according to EU legislation.

3 and 4. The Commission does not intend to take any further action. EU regulations do permit the carriage of prohibited articles provided certain conditions are met. These are defined in Point 4.4.2 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 185/2010 of 4 March 2010 laying down detailed measures for the implementation of the common basic standards on aviation security ([1]). Dye pack owners should contact their air carrier before flying to ensure they are allowed and make suitable arrangements if they are not.

([1]) OJ L 55, 5.3.2010.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004030/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR) oraz Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(10 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Sytuacja w Republice Centralnej Afryki

Od czasu wybuchu rebelii w Republice Środkowej Afryki, sytuacja ludności cywilnej z dnia na dzień pogarsza się. Na porządku dziennym są grabieże, gwałty i głód. Ostatnie doniesienia prasowe mówią o załamaniu się krótkotrwałego pokoju w stolicy kraju – Bangi. Rabowane są domy prywatne oraz siedziby organizacji międzynarodowych.

Unia Europejska jest największym partnerem i darczyńcą RŚA. Kraj ten korzysta z funduszy w ramach inicjatywy Milenijnych Celów Rozwoju, Europejskiego Funduszu na rzecz Rozwoju czy Instrumentu na rzecz Pokoju w Afryce.

1. Jak w kontekście najnowszej sytuacji politycznej w kraju wyglądać będzie strategia Unii Europejskiej względem RŚA?

2. Jakie działania zostały do tej pory podjęte prze misję UE w Republice Środkowej Afryki celem ochrony obywateli Unii Europejskiej na tym terenie?

3. Czy pozycja UE w negocjacjach Umowy o Partnerstwie Gospodarczym z Unią Celną i Gospodarczą Afryki Środkowej zmieni się?

4. Czy strategia Unii Europejskiej i jej plan pomocy humanitarnej względem Republiki Środkowej Afryki, który w 2012 r. wyniósł 8 milionów euro, ulegną zasadniczej zmianie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(29 maja 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zwraca Szanownym Panom Posłom uwagę na swoje oświadczenie z dnia 25 marca br., w którym potępiła niekonstytucyjną zmianę rządu w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej i wezwała do przywrócenia ładu konstytucyjnego.

UE popiera przejściowe porozumienie wynegocjowane przez Wspólnotę Gospodarczą Państw Afryki Środkowej w ścisłej koordynacji z Unią Afrykańską. Wzywa wszystkie strony do podjęcia konkretnych środków mających na calu przywrócenie porządku publicznego oraz wzywa rząd tymczasowy do przedstawienia szczegółowego harmonogramu przywrócenia ładu konstytucyjnego.

UE monitoruje bieżącą sytuację we współpracy ze społecznością międzynarodową oraz z przedstawicielami regionu. UE będzie bacznie przyglądać się przestrzeganiu postanowień porozumienia przejściowego oraz postępowi w realizacji wspomnianego harmonogramu.

W ramach środków zapobiegawczych personel, który nie był niezbędny do utrzymania działalności delegatury UE w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej, został przeniesiony do Brukseli w dniu 26 marca br. Opiekę konsularną obywatelom państw członkowskich UE przebywającym w Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej zapewnia Ambasada Francji w Bangi.

Negocjacje dotyczące umów o partnerstwie gospodarczym ze Wspólnotą Gospodarczą i Monetarną Afryki Środkowej (CEMAC) obejmują region jako całość. Mimo że CEMAC chwilowo przeniosła swoją siedzibę z Bangi do Libreville, sytuacja kryzysowa nie ma na nie wpływu i będą one kontynuowane.

Strategia UE dotycząca Republiki Środkowoafrykańskiej, przedstawiona w krajowym dokumencie strategicznym (2008-2013), pozostaje w mocy, ponieważ koncentruje się na sposobie sprawowania rządów, odnowie infrastruktury, gospodarki i społeczeństwa oraz na skuteczniejszym wyeliminowaniu różnic między centrum a obrzeżami. W ramach reakcji na bieżącą sytuację kryzysową poziom pomocy humanitarnej w 2013 r. zwiększono o 50 proc. – obecnie jej suma wynosi 12 mln euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004030/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR) and Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in the Central African Republic

Since the start of the rebellion in the Central African Republic, the situation of the civilian population has been worsening daily. Looting, rape and hunger are a daily reality. Recent press reports have spoken of a breakdown of the short-lived peace in its capital, Bangui. Private homes and the offices of international organisations are being looted.

The European Union is the Central African Republic's biggest partner and main donor. The CAR benefits from financial aid under the Millennium Development Goals, the European Development Fund and the African Peace Facility.

1. In view of the current political situation there, what strategy will the EU adopt towards the country?

2. What action has so far been taken by the EU delegation in the CAR to protect citizens of European Union Member States there?

3. Will there be a change in the EU's position in negotiations over the Economic Partnership Agreement with the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa?

4. Will there be any substantial change to the European Union's strategy and its programme of humanitarian aid to the Central African Republic, which amounted to EUR 8 million in 2012?

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

The HR/VP refers the Honourable Members to her statement of 25 March condemning the unconstitutional change of government in the Central African Republic (CAR) and calling for the restoration of constitutional order.

The EU supports the transitional agreement mediated by the Economic Community of Central African States, in close coordination with the African Union. It urges all parties to take concrete measures to re-establish public order, as well as the transitional government to present a detailed roadmap for the restoration of constitutional order.

The EU monitors developments, in coordination with the international community and the region. It will remain vigilant as regards the respect of the transitional agreement and the progress made in the implementation of the roadmap.

As a precautionary measure, non-essential staff of the delegation of the EU in the CAR were relocated to Brussels on 26 March. The French Embassy in Bangui is ensuring the consular protection of citizens of EU Members States in the CAR.

Negotiations over the Economic Partnership Agreements with the Economic and Monetary Community of Central African (CEMAC) cover the region as a whole. Though CEMAC temporarily moved its headquarters from Bangui to Libreville, negotiations are not affected by the crisis and will continue.

The EU's strategy for the CAR as laid down in the Country Strategy Paper (2008-2013), remains valid as it concentrates on governance, social and economic rehabilitation and infrastructure as well as on improved accessibility to reduce the divide between centre and periphery. In response to the current crisis situation, the humanitarian aid available in 2013 has already been increased by 50% and now amounts to EUR 12 million.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004031/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(10 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Problem dostępu do służba zdrowia w poszczególnych krajach UE

Zgodnie z ostatnim raportem Health Barometre przeprowadzonym przez Europ Assistance i instytut badawczy Cerle Santé nagorzej w rankingu oceny dostępu do służby zdrowia wypada Polska.

Do najpoważniejszych wskazanych problemów w raporcie należą m.in. długie kolejki do szpitali oraz bardzo drogie usługi medyczne.

W związku z powyższym bardzo proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja monitoruje, jak wygląda dostęp do służby zdrowia w poszczególnych krajach UE?

2. Jakie działania są podejmowane lub będą podejmowane przez Komisję, aby zniwelować nierówności w dostępie do służby zdrowia w poszczególnych krajach UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(6 czerwca 2013 r.)

Komisja Europejska pragnie pomagać w zmniejszaniu znacznych nierówności zdrowotnych występujących na obszarze UE. W związku z tym w 2009 r. Komisja przyjęła komunikat pt. „Solidarność w zdrowiu: zmniejszanie nierówności zdrowotnych w UE" ([1]), aby wspierać zmniejszanie nierówności przy użyciu wszystkich funduszy i środków politycznych, którymi Unia dysponuje w tej dziedzinie. W 2013 r. Komisja przedstawi sprawozdanie z postępów na tym polu, poczynionych zarówno przez państwa członkowskie, jak i przez Komisję.

Unia może m.in. udzielać wsparcia z funduszy strukturalnych państwom członkowskim, które pragną poprawić dostęp do opieki zdrowotnej i zmniejszyć nierówności między regionami. Inwestycje ze środków Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju Regionalnego i Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego w sprzęt i technologie medyczne, w infrastrukturę i szkolenia powinny przyczyniać się do rozwoju usług opieki zdrowotnej, w szczególności w najuboższych regionach.

Co roku Komisja prowadzi europejskie badanie warunków życia ludności[1], obejmujące tematykę zdrowotną, oraz zbiera dane na temat niezaspokojonego zapotrzebowania na badania lekarskie i stomatologiczne oraz na leczenie, a także bada przyczyny nieudzielenia takich świadczeń. Za pomocą tego narzędzia Komisja Europejska monitoruje dostęp do opieki zdrowotnej w poszczególnych państwach członkowskich.

([1]) COM(2009)567.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004031/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: The problem of access to healthcare in different EU Member States

According to the latest Health Barometer report compiled by Europ Assistance and the Cercle Santé research institute, Poland is the lowest-ranked country in terms of access to healthcare.

The most serious problems highlighted in the report include long waiting lists for hospital treatment and the very high cost of medical services.

1. Does the Commission monitor the situation as regards access to healthcare in different Member States?

2. What action is being taken or will be taken by the Commission to eliminate inequalities in access to healthcare in different Member States?

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

The European Commission is keen to help bridge the wide health inequalities that exist in health across the EU. In this context, in 2009, the Commission adopted a communication on 'Solidarity in Health: Reducing Health Inequalities in the EU' ([1]) to contribute to the reduction of inequalities by using all relevant Community funds and policies. The Commission will report in 2013 on progress made in this area both by Member States and the Commission.

For example, the EU can support Member States wishing to improve access to healthcare and reduce regional inequalities, through the use of the Structural Funds. Investments in health equipment and technology, in infrastructure and in training by using the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund should contribute to development of healthcare services, in particular in the most deprived regions.

The Commission gathers annual EU-Statistics on Income and Living Conditions which includes health and collects data on unmet needs for medical and dental examination or treatment and the main reasons for not being able to receive these services. This is the tool with which the European Commission monitors access to healthcare in different Member States.

([1]) COM(2009) 567.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004032/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(10 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Finansowanie programu monitoringu lasów w UE

Brak wsparcia na finansowanie w latach 2011-2013 programu monitoringu lasów w UE spowodował przerwanie 25-letniego ciągu obserwacji tj. dostarczania informacji potrzebnych do kształtowania polityki leśnej i ekologicznej w poszczególnych krajach UE.

W związku z powyższym proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja przewiduje w przyszłości wsparcie finansowe na rozwój programu monitoringu lasów w UE?

2. Czy Komisja podejmuje działania zmierzające do wparcia programu monitoringu lasów w UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(29 maja 2013 r.)

Komisja przewidziała możliwość udzielenia wsparcia dla ustanowienia programu monitoringu lasów w ramach jej działań objętych obowiązującym rozporządzeniem LIFE+ ([1]). Ponadto w motywie 14 wniosku Komisji w sprawie nowego rozporządzenia LIFE, COM(2011) 874 wersja ostateczna ([2]) stwierdzono, że projekty leśne nadal będą miały priorytetowe znaczenie w ramach finansowania z programu LIFE.

([1]) Rozporządzenie (WE) nr 614/2007 Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 23 maja 2007 r. w sprawie instrumentu finansowego na rzecz środowiska (LIFE+); Dz.U. L 149 z 9.6.2007, s. 1.

([2]) Wniosek z dna 12 grudnia 2011 r. dotyczący rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady ustanawiającego Program działań na rzecz środowiska i klimatu (LIFE), http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/about/beyond2013.htm#proposal

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004032/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Funding of the EU forest monitoring scheme

The lack of financial support for the EU forest monitoring scheme from 2011 to 2013 has interrupted the 25-year observation period and cut off the supply of information needed to shape forest and ecological policy in the European Union's Member States.

1. Does the Commission plan to provide financial support in the future for development of the EU forest monitoring scheme?

2. Is the Commission taking action to support the EU forest monitoring scheme?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission has foreseen the possibility to support the establishment of forest information systems within its activities under the current LIFE+ regulation ([1]). In addition Recital 14 of the Commission proposal for the new LIFE Regulation COM(2011)874 final ([2]) states that forest projects will continue to be a priority for LIFE funding.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 concerning the Financial instrument for the Environment (LIFE+), OJ L 149, 9.6.2007, p. 1.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2011 on the establishment of a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE), http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/about/beyond2013.htm#proposal.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004033/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(10 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ujednolicenie prawa o zamówieniach publicznych w krajach UE

W polskiej ustawie Prawo zamówień publicznych przewidziana została możliwość zastosowania kryteriów oceny ofert zapewniających wybór oferty najkorzystniejszej, charakteryzującej się odpowiednio wysoką jakością usług świadczonych przez wykonawcę na rzecz zamawiającego. W definicji (art. 2 pkt 5 ustawy Prawo zamówień publicznych) sformułowane jest stanowisko, iż najkorzystniejsza oferta to oferta z najkorzystniejszym bilansem ceny i innych kryteriów odnoszących się do przedmiotu zamówienia.

Przepisy ustawy Prawo zamówień publicznych nie zmuszają zamawiających do wybierania ofert o najniższej cenie, co równałoby się faworyzowaniu ofert tanich kosztem ofert odpowiednich jakościowo. Jednakże, analizując praktykę zamawiających to głównie cena decyduje o wyborze danej oferty, a nie jakość świadczonych usług.

W związku z powyższym bardzo proszę Komisję o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja dostrzega przedmiotowy problem w poszczególnych krajach UE?

2. Czy Komisja zamierza ujednolicić prawo o zamówieniach publicznych w krajach UE? Jeżeli tak, to kiedy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(19 czerwca 2013 r.)

Dyrektywy 2004/18/WE i 2004/17/WE przewidują dwa kryteria udzielenia zamówienia: oferta najkorzystniejsza ekonomicznie oraz wyłącznie najniższa cena. Oba kryteria są jednakowo umocowane i w związku z tym instytucje zamawiające mają swobodę wyboru jednego z nich na potrzeby udzielenia zamówienia. Ze sprawozdania oceniającego Komisji z 2011 r. na temat skutków i skuteczności przepisów dotyczących zamówień publicznych wynika faktycznie, że kryterium oferty najkorzystniejszej ekonomicznie stosowane jest w odniesieniu do ok. 80 % łącznej wartości zamówień.

Zgodnie z orzeczeniem Trybunału Sprawiedliwości w sprawie C-247/02 *Sintesi*, przy ustalaniu kryteriów udzielenia zamówień publicznych instytucje zamawiające muszą brać pod uwagę charakter i specyfikę przedmiotowych zamówień oraz zastosować kryterium, które z największym prawdopodobieństwem zapewni wybór najlepszej oferty. Wyboru kryterium udzielenia zamówienia należy dokonywać na zasadzie indywidualnych przypadków, uwzględniając między innymi przedmiot umów. Kryterium oferty najkorzystniejszej ekonomicznie może być w wielu przypadkach właściwsze, natomiast w innych – nieodpowiednie. Dopóki przestrzegane są podstawowe zasady prawa UE, to instytucja zamawiająca decyduje, co chce kupić i jakie kryterium udzielenia zamówienia będzie odpowiednie do najlepszego zaspokojenia jej potrzeb.

W swoim wniosku dotyczącym reformy dyrektyw w sprawie zamówień publicznych Komisja nie zaproponowała nałożenia na instytucje zamawiające obowiązku udzielania zamówień publicznych wyłącznie na podstawie kryterium oferty najkorzystniejszej ekonomicznie. Wspomniany wniosek jest obecnie przedmiotem negocjacji w Parlamencie Europejskim i Radzie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004033/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(10 April 2013)

Subject: Harmonisation of public procurement legislation in the Member States

Poland's Public Procurement Act provides for tenders to be evaluated by applying criteria which ensure selection of the most advantageous tender in terms of a suitably high quality of the services to be provided by the supplier for the contracting authority. The definition contained in Article 2(5) of the Public Procurement Act states the position that the most advantageous tender is the tender providing the most advantageous balance of price and other criteria relating to the object of the contract.

The provisions of the Public Procurement Act do not force contracting authorities to select tenders with the lowest price, which would be equivalent to favouring cheap tenders to the detriment of tenders which are suitable in terms of quality. However, analysis of the practices of contracting authorities shows that it is mainly price which determines the selection of a particular tender, and not the quality of services to be provided.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem in the Member States?

2. Does the Commission intend to harmonise public procurement legislation in the Member States, and if so, when would this be done?

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

Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC provide for two contract award criteria; the most economically advantageous tender ('MEAT') and the lowest price only. Both criteria are placed on equal footing and therefore contracting authorities remain free to choose any of them for awarding the contract. In fact, it results from the Commission's Evaluation Report from 2011 on Impact and Effectiveness of Public Procurement Legislation that the MEAT criterion is used for around 80% of total contract value.

As the Court of Justice ruled in Case C-247/02 *Sintesi*, when fixing the criteria for the award of public contracts, contracting authorities must take into consideration the nature and specific characteristics of such contracts and choose the criterion most likely to ensure that the best tender is chosen. The choice of award criteria must be done on a case by case basis, taking into account, *inter alia*, the subject matter of the contracts. The MEAT criterion might be more appropriate in many cases, but inadequate in others. As long as basic principles of EC law are respected, it is for the contracting authority to decide what it wants to purchase and which award criteria would be suitable for best satisfying its needs.

In its reform proposal for public procurement directives the Commission did not propose to impose on contracting authorities the award of public contracts on the basis of the MEAT criterion only. This proposal is currently being negotiated in the European Parliament and the Council.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004231/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Presunto livellamento dei prezzi dei carburanti posto in essere dalle principali compagnie petrolifere in Italia

Un'indagine condotta dalla procura di Varese e dalla guardia di Finanza italiana, partita da una denuncia dell'associazione Codacons, ha rilevato come le 7 principali compagnie petrolifere che operano in Italia, hanno posto in essere accordi e manovre di natura finanziaria, atte a mantenere volontariamente livellati i prezzi dei carburanti alla pompa nel nostro Paese, in danno dei consumatori e del principio di concorrenza.

La Commissione:

— è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

— ritiene che negli altri 26 Stati membri siano in atto situazioni riconducibili a quella che emerge dalle evidenze dell'indagine italiana?

— intende aprire un'indagine su questa situazione?

Risposta di Joaquin Almunia a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è al corrente dell'indagine giudiziaria condotta dalla polizia tributaria e dalla procura di Varese in merito al presunto comportamento fraudolento delle principali compagnie petrolifere che operano in Italia.

Per quanto riguarda gli altri Stati membri, la Commissione nota che diverse autorità nazionali garanti della concorrenza (ANC), tra cui l'*Office of Fair Trading britannico*, la *Comisión Nacional de la Competencia* spagnola e il *Bundeskartellamt* tedesco, hanno svolto di recente indagini nel settore petrolifero concentrandosi soprattutto sulle presunte pratiche anticoncorrenziali a livello della vendita al dettaglio, ma non hanno rinvenuto prove di comportamenti anticoncorrenziali. L'indagine tedesca, ad esempio, ha concluso che non è stato possibile riscontrare elementi probatori in merito alla fissazione dei prezzi.

La Commissione segue da vicino gli sviluppi di mercato nel settore dei carburanti in Italia e negli altri Stati membri dell'Unione. Se necessario, non esiterà a intervenire, autonomamente o coordinandosi con le autorità nazionali garanti della concorrenza, contro comportamenti collusivi di imprese o l'abuso di posizione dominante nel settore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004231/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Alleged fuel price-fixing by the main oil companies in Italy

An investigation by the Varese public prosecutor's office and the Italian financial police, prompted by a complaint by the association Codacons, has found that the seven main oil companies operating in Italy have put in place financial agreements and manoeuvres in order to voluntarily maintain fuel pump prices in our country at the same level, at the expense of consumers and the principle of competition.

— Is the Commission aware of the facts described above?

— Does it believe that in the other 26 Member States there are situations similar to that uncovered by the Italian investigation?

— Does it intend to open an enquiry into this situation?

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

The Commission is aware of the criminal investigation of Varese's tax police and Public Prosecutor's Office into the alleged fraudulent behaviour of major fuel companies operating in Italy.

As regards other Member States, the Commission notes that several National Competition Authorities (NCAs), most recently the UK Office of Fair Trading, the Spanish *Comisión Nacional de la Competencia*, and the German *Bundeskartellamt,* have carried out investigations and enquiries in the oil sector. These recent NCA inquiries mainly focused on alleged anticompetitive practices at retail level, but did not find evidence of anticompetitive conduct. The German investigation, for instance, concluded that no evidence of price fixing could be found.

The Commission closely follows market developments in the fuel sector in Italy and in the other EU Member States. If required, it will not hesitate to act, either by itself or in coordination with the national competition authorities, against collusive behaviour of undertakings or abuse of a dominant position in the sector.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004233/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sicurezza delle comunità cristiane in Nigeria

In Nigeria gli attacchi portati avanti da estremisti islamici contro fedeli cristiani continuano senza sosta.

Nello stato di Plateau fra il 27 e il 28 marzo ci sono stati almeno 40 morti; il 29 marzo, nel distretto di Bokkos, sono stati colpiti due villaggi e 20 sono state le vittime. L'ultimo di questi attacchi terroristici è stato portato a termine nello stato di Kaduna il 31 marzo, dove un gruppo armato musulmano di etnia Fulana ha colpito il villaggio di Afaka, a maggioranza cristiano, uccidendo 19 persone.

— È la Commissione a conoscenza di questi fatti?

— Come valuta stia agendo il governo nigeriano per fermare questa situazione?

— Come intende agire nei confronti del governo della Nigeria affinché supporti le comunità cristiane di questo paese?

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

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza dei casi di violenza che avvengono nella regione del Middle Belt in Nigeria.

Le autorità federali e statali, sostenute dalle organizzazioni della società civile, stanno cercando di risolvere questa situazione preoccupante contrastando, tra le altre cose, le azioni di rappresaglia a seguito di scontri. I gruppi della società civile hanno promosso anche azioni di pace, dialogo e mediazione, che dovrebbero contribuire in misura significativa a ridurre il livello di violenza. Inoltre, è necessario affrontare le cause all'origine di tali tensioni in modo duraturo, prendendo in considerazione, ad esempio, le pratiche discriminatorie a livello statale e l'impunità dei casi di violenza tra le comunità.

L'Unione europea rimane impegnata nel dialogo e negli sforzi di cooperazione, anche nel campo della sicurezza. Il 21 marzo 2013 ad Abuja, si è svolta la prima sessione del dialogo locale sulla pace, la sicurezza e la stabilità tra la Nigeria e l'Unione europea. L'UE ha sottolineato la necessità di affrontare le cause all'origine della violenza, combattendo, ad esempio, la discriminazione e attuando riforme socioeconomiche che favoriscano in egual misura tutta la popolazione. Entrambe le parti hanno convenuto sulla necessità di adottare una strategia globale che comprenda il buon governo, lo Stato di diritto, il rispetto dei diritti umani, lo sviluppo economico inclusivo e la creazione di posti di lavoro. Queste importanti problematiche sono state altresì evidenziate durante la riunione ministeriale tra l'Unione europea e la Nigeria tenutasi lo scorso maggio. Recentemente, l'UE ha deciso di avviare iniziative specifiche volte a contrastare la mancanza di sicurezza nello Stato di Plateau. A dicembre del 2012, nell'ambito dello strumento per la stabilità, è stata adottata una decisione di finanziamento a sostegno della costruzione della pace e della prevenzione dei conflitti. Nel quadro del FES, l'UE sostiene i settori sociali (sanità, approvvigionamento idrico e strutture igienico-sanitarie) in diversi Stati, compreso il Middle Belt, così come anche la giustizia e il buon governo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004233/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Security of Christian communities in Nigeria

In Nigeria, Christians are being incessantly subjected to attacks by Islamic extremists.

In Plateau State, there were at least 40 deaths between 27 and 28 March; on 29 March, in the district of Bokkos, two villages were attacked, with 20 victims. The most recent of these terrorist attacks took place in Kaduna State on 31 March, when an armed Muslim gang from the Fulani ethnic group attacked the village of Afaka, which is mainly Christian, killing 19 people.

— Is the Commission aware of these facts?

— What is its view on the actions of the Nigerian Government to try to stop this situation?

— What action does it intend to take in relation to the Nigerian Government so that it supports the Christian communities in the country?

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

The European Union is aware of the violence in the Middle Belt of Nigeria.

The Federal and State-level authorities, with the assistance of civil society organisations, are trying to address this worrying situation, including by containing reprisal attacks whenever an incident took place. Civil society groups have also been active in promoting peace, dialogue and mediation. This should significantly contribute to decreasing the level of violence. The root causes of these tensions must also be durably addressed, including by tackling the discriminatory practices at State level and the impunity for inter-communal violence.

The European Union remains engaged in dialogue and cooperation efforts, including in the security area. On 21 March 2013 in Abuja, Nigeria and the European Union held the first session of the local dialogue on peace, security and stability. The European Union stressed the need to address the root causes of violence, including by fighting discrimination and implementing socioeconomic reforms that equally benefit all groups. Both parties agreed on the need to adopt a comprehensive strategy that includes good governance, the rule of law, respect of human rights, inclusive economic development and job creation. These important issues were also raised during the EU-Nigeria Ministerial meeting held in May. The EU has recently decided to launch specific actions to address insecurity in the Plateau State. Under the Instrument for Stability a financing decision to support peace building and conflict pervention was adopted in December 2012. Under the EDF the EU supports social sectors (health, water and sanitation) in several states including the Middle Belt, complemented by support to justice and good governance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004234/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Traffico di esseri umani e violazione dei diritti umani in Egitto

Nel Sudan orientale, al confine con l'Eritrea, è ubicato il campo di accoglienza di Shagarab per i richiedenti asilo ed i rifugiati, all'interno del quale vivono circa 30.000 persone. Dal rapporto redatto da Amnesty International «Egypt/Sudan — refugees and asylumseekers face brutal treatment, kidnapping for ransom, and human trafficking» risulta che da almeno 2 anni, in questi campi di accoglienza, avvengono rapimenti sistematici dei rifugiati, che sono trasportati nel deserto del Sinai, in Egitto e venduti a bande di criminali che li liberano solo nel caso le loro famiglie paghino un riscatto.

Dalle testimonianze raccolte da Amnesty International risulta che i sequestrati sono sottoposti a torture e violenze fino a che non viene pagato il riscatto richiesto; nel caso tale somma non venga corrisposta gli uomini sono venduti e destinati a lavori forzati e le donne costrette alla prostituzione.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti e del rapporto citato redatto da Amnesty International?

— Considerando la politica di vicinato fra l'UE e l'Egitto e l'art. 2 del Trattato sull'Unione europea, come intende agire per spingere il governo egiziano ad attivarsi concretamente per porre fine a tale situazione?

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

L'UE segue attentamente la situazione della tratta di esseri umani e dei rifugiati in Egitto, in particolare nella regione del Sinai. A tal proposito, l'UE intrattiene contatti regolari con il ministro degli Affari esteri e il ministro dell'Interno egiziani, così come con gli uffici regionali dell'Alto commissariato delle Nazioni unite per i rifugiati (UNHCR) e dell'Organizzazione internazionale per le migrazioni (OIM). L'UE ha espresso alle autorità competenti le sue preoccupazioni in numerose occasioni.

L'Unione intende, inoltre, continuare a sollecitare le autorità egiziane affinché adottino le misure appropriate per assicurare che i diritti umani dei migranti e dei rifugiati siano pienamente rispettati e le ha già esortate a consentire consentissero all'UNHCR di eseguire il proprio mandato su tutto il territorio egiziano, compresa la regione del Sinai, nel rispetto degli impegni internazionali del paese.

L'UE sta sostenendo finanziariamente il progetto dell'OIM «Progetto di protezione: aiutare i partner governativi e non governativi a proteggere i "diritti umani" dei migranti lungo la rotta dell'Africa orientale». Gli obiettivi del progetto consistono, tra l'altro, nel migliorare le capacità governative e non governative volte a sostenere e a monitorare i diritti dell'uomo dei migranti in Egitto, e in particolare dei gruppi vulnerabili; nell'aumentare la consapevolezza di una migrazione sicura e dei rischi dell'immigrazione irregolare presso le comunità vulnerabili nei paesi di origine e di transito; nel fornire, infine, soluzioni sostenibili e rispettose ai migranti detenuti e/o rimasti bloccati in Egitto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004234/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Trafficking of human beings and infringement of human rights in Egypt

The Shagarab camp for asylum-seekers and refugees, hosting approximately 30 000 people, is located in east Sudan, at the border with Eritrea. A report by Amnesty International entitled 'Egypt/Sudan — refugees and asylum-seekers face brutal treatment, kidnapping for ransom, and human trafficking' states that for at least two years systematic kidnappings of refugees from the camps have been taking place. Those seized are transported into the Sinai desert in Egypt and sold to criminal groups which only release them if their families pay a ransom.

The testimony gathered by Amnesty International indicates that those who have been kidnapped are subjected to torture and violence until the ransom demanded has been paid; if the money is not paid, the men are sold into forced labour and the women are forced into prostitution.

— Is the Commission aware of the facts described above and the report by Amnesty International?

— In view of the neighbourhood policy between the EU and Egypt and Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, how does the Commission intend to put pressure on the Egyptian Government to take concrete action to put an end to this situation?

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

The EU follows closely the situation of human trafficking and refugees in Egypt and in particular in the Sinai. The EU keeps regular contacts with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior as well as with the regional offices of UNHCR and IOM on these matters. Our concerns have been expressed at numerous occasions to the competent authorities.

The EU will continue to urge the Egyptian authorities to take the appropriate measures to ensure that the human rights of migrants and refugees are fully respected. We have called on them to allow UNHCR to implement its mandate on the entire territory of Egypt, including the Sinai region in compliance with Egypt's international commitments.

The EU is financially supporting the IOM project 'A Protection Project: Supporting governmental and nongovernmental partners to protect migrants' human rights along the East Africa Route'. The project's objectives include, *inter alia*, to strengthen governmental and non-governmental capacities to uphold and monitor migrants' human rights in Egypt, with special consideration to vulnerable groups, and to raise awareness on safe migration and the risks associated with irregular migration among vulnerable communities in origin and transit countries and provide sustainable and humane solutions to detained and/or stranded migrants in Egypt.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004235/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Attuazione del Fiscal compact e conseguenze per le imprese italiane di un eventuale blocco dei pagamenti pregressi da parte della Pubblica amministrazione

Il 14 marzo 2013 il Commissario europeo all'industria e all'imprenditoria, Antonio Tajani, e il Commissario europeo per gli affari economici e Monetari, Olli Rehn, hanno confermato con un comunicato congiunto la disponibilità della Commissione europea a valutare con la massima flessibilità l'eventuale sforamento, da parte dell'Italia, del patto di stabilità e crescita, che prevede un tetto del 3 % del rapporto deficit/Pil, laddove il superamento di detta soglia sia da imputarsi al pagamento dei debiti commerciali delle Pubbliche amministrazioni verso le imprese.

Successivamente il Commissario Tajani, sollecitando le autorità italiane ad un pagamento in tempi brevi delle esposizioni pregresse, ha affermato che l'entrata in vigore del Fiscal compact, prevista per la fine del 2013, e la mancanza di dati certi sull'ammontare dell'esposizione della Pubblica amministrazione verso le imprese sono, entrambi, fattori che potrebbero bloccare definitivamente il pagamento dei debiti pregressi della Pubblica amministrazione.

Considerato che il Presidente dell'Abi, l'Associazione delle Banche Italiane, stima il debito della Pubblica amministrazione in 100 miliardi di euro mentre, secondo la Banca d'Italia, tali debiti verso le imprese ammontano a circa 90 miliardi, può la Commissione riferire:

— se conferma le dichiarazioni secondo le quali i debiti della Pubblica amministrazione, se non saldati prima della completa attuazione del Fiscal compact, verrebbero congelati definitivamente;

— in caso affermativo, se ha valutato l'impatto che questo avrebbe sull'economia italiana?

— se le autorità italiane hanno già provveduto a comunicare tempestivamente il dato univoco e certo del debito effettivamente accumulato dalle amministrazioni pubbliche italiane verso le imprese;

— in che modo essa intende garantire la sua disponibilità a ricercare soluzioni condivise per tutelare i crediti delle imprese italiane esposte verso la Pubblica amministrazione?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2013)

Un rafforzamento della governance di bilancio europea ([1]) è entrato in vigore il 13 dicembre 2011. In base all'andamento del debito pubblico nonché al disavanzo pubblico è possibile avviare una procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi ([2]). Il criterio del debito definito nell'ambito del patto di stabilità e crescita ([3]) è stato reso operativo mediante un parametro di riferimento per la riduzione del debito. Il patto sopra menzionato consente di prendere in considerazione fattori pertinenti quando si intenda aprire una procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi in base ai criteri del disavanzo e del debito. In tale ambito una soluzione realistica al debito commerciale italiano può essere rappresentata da un piano di liquidazione mirante a riportare il debito a livelli non condizionati da ritardi nei pagamenti in tempi relativamente brevi; la liquidazione dei debiti commerciali potrebbe rientrare tra i fattori attenuanti ([4]). Il cosiddetto patto di bilancio (*Fiscal Compact*) che rientra nel trattato intergovernativo sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance in Europa non stabilisce norme più severe in materia.

L'8 aprile 2013 il governo italiano ha adottato un decreto legge ad effetto immediato che impegna l'Italia a pagare 40 miliardi di euro di arretrati durante il biennio 2013-2014. Tale decreto legge fornisce inoltre una quantificazione ufficiale del debito commerciale ripartita per amministrazione debitrice e data di scadenza, consentendo così di quantificare la percentuale in sofferenza. La Commissione seguirà con attenzione il processo di approvazione nel Parlamento nazionale e la sua attuazione.

([1]) Il cosiddetto «six-pack».
([2]) Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP).
([3]) Stability and Growth Pact (SGP).
([4]) Cfr. MEMO/13/231.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004235/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the Fiscal Compact and consequences for Italian enterprises of a possible block on old payments by the public administration

On 14 March 2013 Antonio Tajani, European Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, and Olli Rehn, European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, confirmed in a joint statement that the Commission was prepared to take an extremely flexible approach to assessing any infringement by Italy of the Stability and Growth Pact, which lays down a ceiling of 3% on the deficit/GDP ratio, where the breaching of the ceiling is due to the payment of commercial debt owed by public administrations to enterprises.

Commissioner Tajani then called upon the Italian authorities to pay the outstanding exposure quickly and stated that the entry into force of the Fiscal Compact, planned for the end of 2013, and the lack of clear data on the extent of the public administration's exposure to enterprises were both factors that could definitively block the payment of the public administration's debt overhang.

Since the president of the Association of Italian Banks (ABI) estimates that the public administration's debt is EUR 100 billion while, according to the Bank of Italy, these debts to enterprises amount to approximately EUR 90 billion, can the Commission say:

— whether it confirms the statements that the public administration's debts, if not settled prior to full implementation of the Fiscal Compact, would be definitively frozen?

— If so, has it assessed the impact this would have on the Italian economy?

— Have the Italian authorities already provided unambiguous and clear information, in a timely manner, on the debt actually accumulated by the Italian public administrations to enterprises?

— How does it intend to help find collective solutions in order to protect the claims of Italian enterprises with financial exposure to the public administration?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The enhanced European budgetary governance ([1]) entered into force on 13 December 2011. Accordingly, an Excessive Deficit Procedure ([2]) can now result from government debt developments as well as from government deficit. The debt criterion of the Stability and Growth Pact ([3]) was made operational via a debt reduction benchmark. However, the SGP allows for taking into account relevant factors when considering opening an EDP based on the deficit and debt criteria. In this context, a realistic solution to the Italian commercial debt overhang is likely to involve a liquidation plan with the objective of bringing such debt to levels not related to payment delays within a relatively short timeframe and that the liquidation of overdue commercial debt would represent a mitigating factor ([4]). The so-called Fiscal Compact, i.e. part of the inter-governmental Treaty for Stability, Convergence and Governance in Europe, does not provide for stricter rules in this respect.

On 8 April 2013, the Italian Government adopted an immediately-effective decree-law that provides for the payment of EUR 40 billion of arrears over 2013-14. It also provides for an official quantification of trade debt, according to the administration owing it and by date of expiry, thus allowing quantifying the proportion that is overdue. The Commission will carefully monitor its approval process through the national Parliament and its implementation.

([1]) So-called 'six-pack'.
([2]) EDP.
([3]) SGP.
([4]) MEMO/13/231.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004236/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Modifica del regolamento (CE) n. 1760/2000 sull'identificazione elettronica dei bovini e che sopprime le disposizioni relative all'etichettatura facoltativa delle carni bovine

Il 10 settembre 2012 il Parlamento europeo ha votato la proposta di regolamento COM(2011)0525 che modifica il regolamento (CE) n. 1760/2000, approvando la cancellazione del sistema di etichettatura facoltativa delle carni bovine contenuta negli artt. 16, 17 e 18 del regolamento (CE) n. 1760/2000. Qualora la proposta fosse definitivamente approvata anche dal Consiglio, i disciplinari di etichettatura volontaria e le loro eventuali modifiche non sarebbero più soggetti ad un controllo ex ante da parte dell'autorità competente che potrebbe verificare solo a posteriori, nel punto vendita, la veridicità delle informazioni facoltative fornite dal produttore al consumatore.

Le motivazioni addotte dalla Commissione ruotano intorno ai costi e alla burocrazia che gli Stati membri dovrebbero sopportare per applicare l'attuale sistema che si rivelerebbe pertanto inutile. In Italia, i dati dimostrano invece che soltanto nel 2011, secondo il Consorzio «L'Italia zootecnica», 618 000 bovini sono stati allevati secondo le regole dei disciplinari di etichettatura facoltativa riconosciuti dal Mipaaf e controllate da organismi di certificazione. Si consideri che USA e Canada, dove l'uso di ormoni è legale, stanno concertando un accordo con l'UE per il libero scambio di carne bovina. Occorre inoltre prendere atto dei recenti scandali alimentari che hanno colpito il mercato europeo e messo a rischio la salute dei consumatori europei.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— È a conoscenza della posizione delle associazioni italiane del settore che ritengono che gli articoli del regolamento (CE) n. 1760/2000 rappresentino un'importante barriera contro le contraffazioni? Se sì, perché non ne ha tenuto debitamente conto e quale strumento di tutela intende proporre?

— Ha valutato che la soppressione di tali articoli potrebbe agevolare la distorsione e l'inganno dei consumatori fuorviati con «autocertificazioni», quasi impossibili da controllare, soprattutto per la carne proveniente da paesi extra-UE?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

La Commissione era a conoscenza delle diverse posizioni assunte dalle parti interessate nel proporre la modifica al regolamento (CE) n. 1760/2000. La proposta è stata presentata insieme ad una valutazione di impatto che esplorava diverse opzioni di modifica del regolamento (SEC(2011)1009). La soppressione degli articoli relativi all'etichettatura facoltativa delle carni bovine nel regolamento (CE) n. 1760/2000 non agevolerebbe la distorsione e l'inganno dei consumatori in quanto nel regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 ([1]) relativo alle informazioni alimentari ai consumatori sono state stabilite disposizioni orizzontali sull'etichettatura di tutte le carni. A norma dell'articolo 36 di quest'ultimo, le informazioni sugli alimenti fornite su base volontaria non inducono in errore il consumatore. Per garantirne il rispetto gli Stati membri effettuano controlli ufficiali conformemente al regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 ([2]). Queste disposizioni, applicabili a tutti i tipi di alimenti prodotti nell'Unione o all'estero, intendono proteggere gli interessi dei consumatori e dare agli Stati membri gli strumenti per fare in modo che ciò avvenga.

Inoltre, l'abolizione dell'etichettatura facoltativa delle carni bovine era stata suggerita dal Gruppo di alto livello di parti interessate indipendenti sui costi amministrativi (relazione Stoiber) e presentata nella comunicazione della Commissione su un Programma d'azione per la riduzione degli oneri amministrativi nell'Unione europea (COM(2007)23). Il Parlamento europeo ha appoggiato questo Programma d'azione nella sua risoluzione del 10 luglio 2007 sulla riduzione dei costi amministrativi imposti dalla legislazione (2005/2140 (INI)).

([1]) GU L 304 del 22.11.2011.
([2]) GU L 165 del 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004236/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 on the electronic identification of bovine animals and deleting the provisions on voluntary beef labelling

On 10 September 2012 the European Parliament adopted the proposal for a regulation (COM(2011)0525) amending Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, approving the abolition of the voluntary beef labelling system contained in Articles 16, 17 and 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000. If the proposal is also definitively approved by the Council, the measures governing voluntary labelling and any amendments to them would no longer be subject to *ex-ante* scrutiny by the relevant authority; the authority would only be able to verify after the fact, at sales points, the truth of the voluntary information provided by producers to consumers.

The reasons given by the Commission revolve around the costs and the administrative burden that the Member States incur in applying the current system, which it says has therefore not proven to be helpful. In Italy, the data show, in fact, that in 2011 alone, according to the *Italia zootecnica* consortium, 618 000 bovine animals were reared in accordance with the rules of the voluntary labelling measures recognised by the Italian Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Forestry and checked by certification bodies. It should be noted that the United States and Canada, where the use of hormones is legal, are concluding an agreement with the EU for free trade in bovine meat. It should also be noted that recent food scandals have hit the European market and put European consumers' health at risk.

— Is the Commission aware of the position of the Italian associations in the sector, which consider that the articles in Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 constitute a significant barrier to counterfeiting? If so, why has it not taken this into due consideration, and what protection instrument does it intend to propose?

— Has it considered that the removal of these articles could facilitate distortion and the deception of consumers, who could be misled by 'self-certifications', which are nigh on impossible to check, particularly for meat from countries outside the EU?

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

The Commission was aware of the different positions raised by the various stakeholders when presenting its proposal amending Regulation (EC) 1760/2000. The proposal was presented together with an impact assessment exploring different options to amend the regulation (SEC(2011)1009). The proposed deletion of the articles on voluntary beef labelling in Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 would not facilitate distortion and deception of consumers because horizontal provisions concerning labelling of all meats have been laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 ([1]) on food information to consumers. According to Article 36 of this regulation, food information provided on a voluntary basis shall not mislead the consumer. In order to enforce compliance Member States carry out official controls in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]). These provisions, applicable to all types of food, whether produced in the Union or abroad, intend to protect the interest of consumers and give Member States the tools to make sure that this is the case.

In addition, abolishing voluntary beef labelling had been suggested by the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative costs (Stoiber report) and presented in the communication from the Commission on an Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the European Union (COM(2007)23). The European Parliament supported this Action Programme in its resolution of 10 July 2007 on minimising administrative costs imposed by legislation (2005/2140(INI)).

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.
([2]) OJ L 165, 30.4.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004237/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Distorsioni nel mercato RC auto italiano e danni per gli automobilisti italiani

I dati raccolti dall'Antitrust sui costi della polizza «Responsabilità civile autoveicoli», la cosiddetta RC Auto, cioè il contratto assicurativo obbligatorio associato a ogni veicolo immatricolato e circolante su strada, sono molto chiari. I premi pagati dagli automobilisti italiani per acquistare una polizza RC auto sono in media più elevati e crescono più velocemente rispetto a quelli dei principali paesi europei. Mentre in Europa questo prodotto costa circa 230 euro, in Italia gli automobilisti spendono annualmente almeno 407 euro. Il premio medio pagato dagli italiani, secondo l'Antitrust, corrisponde a più del doppio di quello pagato dai francesi e dai portoghesi, supera quello tedesco dell'80 % circa e quello olandese di quasi il 70 %.

La denuncia dell'Antitrust arriva proprio quando due delle tre principali compagnie assicurative italiane, Fondiaria Sai e Unipol, si apprestano a realizzare un fusione. A difesa degli automobilisti italiani, penalizzati da un mercato assicurativo troppo rigido e sbilanciato a favore delle grandi compagnie, le associazioni dei consumatori Adusbef e Federconsumatori chiedono il taglio delle tariffe, maggiore concorrenza nel settore e la garanzia di una maggiore flessibilità.

Considerato che una ricerca effettuata dall'ACI, l'Automobile club italiano, ha stimato la presenza nel nostro paese di circa 4 milioni di veicoli che circolano senza assicurazione anche per l'impossibilità da parte degli automobilisti di sostenere il costo della polizza a causa della crisi, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza di questi dati che descrivono le dinamiche del settore RC auto italiano;

— se ritiene che in Italia sia in atto una distorsione di tale mercato con violazione della normativa Antitrust vigente e, in caso affermativo, come intende intervenire;

— se reputa che esista una correlazione fra i dati inerenti al mancato pagamento delle polizze auto su veicoli circolanti e il prezzo delle stesse e se ha intenzione di indagare su questo fenomeno;

— quanti veicoli sprovvisti di polizza RCA circolano secondo i dati in suo possesso nel territorio dell'UE e quali sono gli Stati membri in cui il problema è più sentito;

— come intende agire per contrastare questo fenomeno e riequilibrare la situazione degli automobilisti italiani su quella della media europea?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

1. La Commissione segue gli sviluppi nei mercati nazionali di assicurazioni di autoveicoli ed è a conoscenza delle differenze di prezzo dei premi assicurativi nell'UE dovute a strutture di rischio e costi di risarcimento diversi tra gli Stati membri e anche al loro interno.

2. La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato all'indagine settoriale dell'Autorità italiana Garante per la Concorrenza e il Mercato (AGCM) del 22 febbraio 2013 ([1]).

L'AGCM ha riscontrato che, in media, dal 2007 al 2010 i prezzi dei premi assicurativi RC Auto in Italia sono aumentati notevolmente e che nello stesso tempo anche il costo del risarcimento dei sinistri ha avuto un incremento.

L'indagine non ipotizza che ci sia stata una violazione delle norme UE in materia di concorrenza.

Tuttavia l'AGCM ha identificato aree dove il funzionamento di questo mercato in Italia potrebbe essere migliorato e ha consigliato alcune misure per incoraggiare gli automobilisti a cambiare assicuratore.

([1]) http://www.agcm.it/trasp-statistiche/doc_download/3632-ic42-testo-indagine.html

3. Fondi di garanzia negli Stati membri provvedono a risarcire le vittime di incidenti automobilistici causati da autoveicoli non coperti da assicurazione. Tali fondi sono sostenuti dalle compagnie di assicurazione che operano in quel paese. I costi degli incidenti causati da veicoli non coperti da assicurazione gravano in ultima analisi sugli automobilisti assicurati attraverso il rincaro dei premi di assicurazione e dei contributi ai fondi di garanzia per la responsabilità civile. La lotta contro la guida senza copertura assicurativa è molto importante al fine di proteggere gli interessi dei conducenti assicurati.

4.-5. La Commissione crede che sia di vitale importanza lottare contro la circolazione di veicoli sprovvisti di polizza RCA. Ai sensi della direttiva 2009/103/CE, ([2]) gli Stati membri adottano tutte le opportune disposizioni al fine di assicurare che tutti gli autoveicoli in circolazione nell'UE siano coperti da assicurazione obbligatoria.

In conclusione, la Commissione chiede regolarmente agli Stati Membri di fornire stime circa la circolazione di veicoli sprovvisti di polizza RCA. Le ultime stime risalgono al 2010 e saranno fornite nuovamente in tempo utile.

([2]) GU L 263 del 7.10.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004237/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Distortions in the Italian third-party vehicle insurance market and effects on Italian drivers

The data collected by the Antitrust Authority on the costs of third-party vehicle insurance policies, namely the mandatory insurance contract for every vehicle that is registered and is driven on the roads, are very clear. The premiums paid by Italian drivers to purchase a third-party vehicle insurance policy are on average higher and are growing more rapidly than those in the other main European countries. Whereas in Europe this product costs approximately EUR 230, in Italy drivers spend at least EUR 407 per year. According to the Antitrust Authority, the average premium paid by Italians is more than double what is paid by the French and the Portuguese, it exceeds the premium in Germany by approximately 80% and the premium in the Netherlands by nearly 70%.

The complaint by the Antitrust Authority has been issued just as two of the three main Italian insurance companies, Fondiaria Sai and Unipol, are preparing to merge. To protect Italian drivers, who are penalised by an over-rigid insurance market that is imbalanced in favour of the large companies, the consumer associations Adusbef and Federconsumatori are calling for a cut in rates, greater competition in the sector and a guarantee of more flexibility.

A study carried out by the Italian Automobile Club (ACI) estimated that there are approximately 4 million vehicles on our country's roads without insurance, partly because it is impossible for drivers to afford policies as a result of the crisis.

— Is the Commission aware of these data, describing the dynamics in the Italian third-party vehicle insurance sector?

— Does it consider that the market is being distorted in Italy, with infringement of the applicable antitrust legislation? If so, what action does it intend to take?

— Does it believe there is a correlation between the data on failure to pay for insurance policies for vehicles on the road and the price of the policies? Does it intend to investigate this phenomenon?

— How many vehicles without third-party vehicle insurance are in circulation on EU territory, according to the data it possesses, and which Member States have the most acute problem?

— How does it intend to counteract this phenomenon and bring the situation of Italian drivers back into equilibrium with the European average?

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

1. The Commission follows developments in the national motor insurance markets and is aware of price differences in motor insurance premiums in the EU due to different risk structures and costs of claims between and within Member States.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the sectoral inquiry of the Italian competition authority (AGCM) of 22 February 2013 ([1]).

The AGCM noted that, on average, from 2007 to 2010, prices of third-party motor insurance in Italy have increased significantly. At the same time, the cost of reimbursing a claim for damages has also gone up.

The sectoral inquiry does not suggest that there is a violation of EU competition rules.

The AGCM, however, identified areas where the functioning of this market in Italy could be improved and recommended certain measures to encourage drivers to switch from one insurer to another.

3. Guarantee funds in the Member States compensate victims of traffic accidents caused by uninsured vehicles. These funds are supported by motor insurers operating in that country. Costs of accidents caused by uninsured vehicles are ultimately borne by insured drivers through higher insurance premiums and higher contributions to the third party liability guarantee funds. Combating uninsured driving is vital for protecting insured drivers' interests.

([1]) http://www.agcm.it/trasp-statistiche/doc_download/3632-ic42-testo-indagine.html

4-5. The Commission believes that it is essential to combat uninsured driving. According to Directive 2009/103/EC ([2]), Member States shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that motor vehicles in the EU are covered by compulsory insurance.

Finally, the Commission regularly asks the Member States to provide estimates of uninsured driving. This exercise was last done in 2010 and will be repeated in due course.

([2]) OJ L 263, 7.10.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004238/13
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Preparatory action 'Youth Guarantee'

Further to its answer to my priority Written Question P-009857/2012 of 26 November 2012, when does the Commission expect to be in a position to announce the results of the preparatory action 'Youth Guarantee', which is aimed at 'supporting partnerships for activation measures targeting young people through projects in the context of Youth Guarantee schemes at national, regional or local level' (Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion call for proposals No VP/2012/012, Budget Heading 04.04.17)?

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

The evaluation procedure of this call for proposal ([1]) has received a very high number of replies (115) implying some delays.

The results of the procedure should be available by mid-June 2013.

([1]) Call for Proposals VP/2012/012: preparatory action to support partnerships for activation measures targeting young people through projects in the context of Youth Guarantee schemes at national, regional or local level.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-004239/13
à Comissão
Mário David (PPE)
(15 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: Interdição de treinos em voos com passageiros

A segurança aérea é um dos pilares da política de transporte da UE. Trata-se de algo em que não é permitido facilitar nem improvisar, exigindo-se o cumprimento escrupuloso das regras. Pergunto à Comissão se uma empresa aérea da UE, e no seu espaço aéreo, pode fazer voos de treino em voos comerciais, com passageiros? Em caso afirmativo, há ou não a obrigação da concordância das autoridades dos países das rotas em que tais treinos são efetuados? E, se for permitido, assiste ou não aos passageiros o direito de saber previamente da existência de tais treinos no seu voo? E é ética e deontologicamente aceitável que o Comandante minta aos passageiros? E não pensa a Comissão que é de proibir taxativamente esses voos com passageiros?

Porquê esta questão? No passado dia 19 de março, viajei de Paris para Lisboa no voo Air France 1924, com chegada prevista às 17h25. Um voo sem história, uma aproximação normal e, surpresa, toque das rodas no chão e aterragem abortada! O Comandante justifica a operação com um golpe de vento. Nova aproximação, calma, e … novo borregar! Aí, o Comandante volta a anunciar «ventos traiçoeiros» e «garante» que «à terceira será de vez»! E foi, 40 minutos depois da hora prevista … Há 24 anos no Parlamento Europeu e depois de mais de 1 000 aterragens em Lisboa, nunca tinha borregado neste aeroporto! Mas, ao sair do avião, reparo na ficha de bordo e comento com a chefe de cabine a coincidência de tal ter ocorrido num dia em que a tripulação incluía 2 copilotos chineses. A reação intempestiva dela, arrancando a ficha afixada, fez-me indagar. Vamos aos factos: naquele dia, em Lisboa, nenhum outro voo abortou a aterragem! Quando das duas tentativas «frustradas», o vento era de 10 nós contrários e de 350 graus, as condições ideais para uma aterragem na pista principal de Lisboa, pelo que os controladores aéreos ficaram atónitos quando, e por duas vezes, o Comandante comunicou à Torre que tinha borregado por se sentir «desconfortável» com um vento inexistente! Consegui também apurar que a Air France tem um contrato de formação de pilotos chineses.

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(17 de maio de 2013)

Antes de lhe poderem ser atribuídas funções aos comandos de uma aeronave de transporte de passageiros, a pessoa responsável deve ter completado a formação obrigatória e ser titular de uma licença e qualificações, em conformidade com a legislação aplicável.

Além disso, não é possível simular situações anormais ou de emergência no decurso de voos comerciais.

No entanto, a formação de familiarização ulterior (designada por formação de linha) realiza-se com passageiros a bordo, a fim de formar o piloto na condução de operações normais. Tal formação é sempre ministrada por um comandante devidamente qualificado para o efeito.

No que respeita, mais concretamente, ao incidente a que se refere o Senhor Deputado, a Comissão contactou a transportadora aérea em causa e obteve confirmação dos dois procedimentos de aproximação falhada. A companhia confirma igualmente que o sucedido está em conformidade com procedimentos operacionais normais, em que cabia ao piloto decidir sobre os parâmetros para uma aterragem em condições de segurança.

Por último, foi confirmada a presença de dois tripulantes de voo da própria companhia na cabina, bem como de dois pilotos chineses, devidamente qualificados para o tipo de avião em causa (Airbus 320), que efetuavam um voo de familiarização com a rota. A companhia salientou que os dois procedimentos de aproximação falhada não estiveram, de modo algum, relacionados com a presença destes dois pilotos chineses na cabina.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004239/13
to the Commission
Mário David (PPE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Prohibition of pilot training on passenger flights

I would like to know whether an EU airline operating in EU airspace can use commercial flights carrying passengers to train pilots. If so, is approval required from the authorities in the countries through which such flights pass? Are passengers entitled to be informed about such training in advance? Is it ethically and morally acceptable for a flight captain to lie to passengers?

On 19 March 2013 I travelled from Paris to Lisbon on flight Air France 1924, which was scheduled to land at 17.25. The flight passed uneventfully and we made a normal approach but then, to our surprise, the landing was aborted as the wheels touched the ground! The reason given by the captain was a gust of wind. We made a fresh approach, which appeared to go smoothly, and then the landing was again aborted! The captain informed us that there were 'treacherous winds' and 'guaranteed' that it would be a case of 'third time lucky'! Which it was, 40 minutes after the scheduled arrival time. I have been a Member of the European Parliament for 24 years and have landed at Lisbon airport more than 1 000 times, but I had never before experienced an aborted landing at this airport. On leaving the aircraft I noticed from the on-board information sheet that the crew included two Chinese co-pilots and commented on this coincidence to the senior cabin crew member. Her abrupt reaction was to snatch the information sheet, which prompted me to make enquiries.

It turns out that there were no other aborted landings in Lisbon that day. When the Air France flight made its two failed attempts to land, there was a headwind at 350 degrees with a wind speed of 10 knots, ideal conditions for landing at Lisbon's main runway. Air traffic controllers were therefore astonished when the captain twice informed the tower that he was aborting the landing because he felt 'uncomfortable' with a non-existent wind! I also discovered that Air France has a contract to train Chinese pilots.

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

A person must have completed the required training and must have been issued a licence and ratings, according to the applicable legislation, before this person can be assigned duties at the controls of an airplane carrying passengers.

Furthermore, abnormal or emergency situations cannot be simulated during commercial air transportation flights.

However, further familiarisation training (known as line training) is conducted with passengers on board in order to train the pilot with the conduct of normal operations. This is always done with a qualified training captain as the commander.

More specifically, in relation to the incident the Honourable Member mentions, the Commission was in contact with the air carrier referred to. The Commission got confirmation of the initiation of the two missed approach procedures. The company also confirms that what happened is in accordance with standard operating procedures, whereby the pilot could make a judgment in relation to the parameters for a safety landing.

Finally, it was confirmed that on the flight deck were present two flight crew members of the company itself, as well as two Chinese pilots, the latter being fully qualified pilots on the airplane type (Airbus 320), who were in a route familiarisation flight. It was underlined by the company that the two missed approach procedures were in no way linked to the presence of these two Chinese pilots in the flight deck.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004240/13
a la Comisión
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(15 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Regulación comercial catalana

Uno de los mayores éxitos económicos de la Unión Europea es la creación de un mercado único europeo y la liberalización de nuestras economías; sin embargo, aún queda mucho recorrido para lograr un verdadero mercado único integrado, flexible y liberalizado.

Un ejemplo de regulación restrictiva y proteccionista lo sufrimos en Cataluña. La propia Autoridad Catalana de la Competencia (ACCO), organismo independiente del Gobierno autonómico catalán, considera que la normativa catalana de comercio es «injustificadamente restrictiva» y denuncia que tiene unos efectos adversos en la economía catalana, los consumidores y, paradójicamente, también sobre los pequeños comerciantes a los que la ley quiere defender.

La ACCO y muchos sectores empresariales y consumidores defienden que «en un momento de crisis como el actual, es conveniente una regulación comercial flexible que no introduzca trabas en la actividad económica».

¿Tiene la Comisión alguna hoja de ruta para avanzar en la integración y flexibilidad comercial en nuestro continente?

¿Apoya la Comisión que se debe liberalizar la regulación comercial en casos como Cataluña donde la propia regulación genera efectos adversos en la economía?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión sigue desarrollando el mercado interior y aprovechando su potencial no explotado como motor para el crecimiento. El informe de la Comisión sobre el ejercicio de supervisión del mercado del comercio y de la distribución señaló la presencia de numerosos obstáculos al mercado único en el sector minorista. La importancia de estos obstáculos se ha confirmado en el informe del Parlamento Europeo «Hacia un mercado interior del comercio y de la distribución más justo y eficaz». Para abordar estos obstáculos fundamentales detectados y desarrollar todo el potencial del sector minorista en Europa, el 31 de enero de 2013 la Comisión adoptó el Plan de Acción Europeo para el Comercio Minorista.

La Comisión tiene la intención de crear un Grupo sobre Competitividad en el Comercio Minorista, que debe ayudar a seguir desarrollando objetivos específicos para los ámbitos determinados, vigilar los progresos registrados, emitir recomendaciones con el fin de garantizar la plena aplicación de las acciones incluidas en este Plan y, en caso necesario, asesorar a la Comisión sobre posibles nuevas acciones. A este respecto, la Comisión seguirá supervisando las cuestiones específicas relacionadas con el establecimiento comercial, teniendo en cuenta todas las novedades que se produzcan en los Estados miembros, incluida España.

La Comisión ha seguido de cerca la aplicación de la Directiva de servicios en los Estados miembros. Está al corriente, en particular, de la Ley del Mercado Único y reconoce el grado de ambición del anteproyecto. Por principio, es importante que el ejercicio de una actividad económica no se tope con obstáculos internos entre diferentes regiones de un Estado miembro, ni con obstáculos en otros Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004240/13
to the Commission
Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Catalan trade regulation

One of the EU's major economic success stories is the creation of a single European market and the liberalisation of our economies. Nevertheless, there is still much to be done in order to achieve a real, integrated, flexible and liberalised single market.

One example of restrictive and protectionist rules is the situation we find in Catalonia. The Catalan Competition Authority (ACCO), which is independent of the Catalan autonomous regional government, itself considers the Catalan trade regulations to be 'unjustifiably strict' and maintains that they have an detrimental effect on the Catalan economy, consumers and, paradoxically, the small traders which the law aims to protect.

ACCO and many business and consumer sectors maintain that 'a time of crisis such as the present calls for flexible trade rules which do not create hurdles for economic activity'.

Does the Commission have any roadmap for making progress on commercial flexibility and integration on our continent?

Does the Commission support the liberalisation of trade regulations in cases such as that of Catalonia, where the rules themselves have an adverse impact on the economy?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission continues to further develop the internal market and exploit its untapped potential as an engine for growth. Numerous barriers to the Single Market in Retail were identified in the Commission's Retail Market Monitoring Report. The importance of those barriers has been confirmed in the EP's Report 'Towards a more efficient and fair retail sector'. To address these key obstacles identified and to unleash the full potential of the retail sector in Europe, the Commission has adopted on 31 January 2013 a European Retail Action.

The Commission intends to set up a Group on Retail Competitiveness that should help develop further specific objectives for the areas identified, monitor progress achieved, issue recommendations to ensure full implementation of the actions included in this Plan and, where necessary, will advise the Commission on possible new actions. In this regard, the Commission will continue to monitor the specific issues related to commercial establishment, taking into account all new developments which occur in the Member States, including Spain.

The Commission has followed the implementation of the Services Directive in Member States. It is particularly aware of the Ley del Mercado Unico and acknowledges the level of ambition of the first draft. As a matter of principle, it is important that the exercise of an economic activity does not face internal obstacles between different regions of a Member State as well as obstacles with other Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004241/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU withdrawal from Syria

With the recent death of a member of the EU Syria Delegation in a Damascus suburb, what protection is being given to EU staff based in war zones?

Additionally, with the withdrawal of all EU international staff and the closure of its Damascus office in December 2012, how is the EEAS ensuring that efforts are made to allow for a swift and peaceful ending to the conflict in Syria?

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

The fatal incident in Damascus involved an off-duty member of our local staff. Although a deeply regrettable incident, the EEAS had no duty of care in these circumstances.

The EEAS takes its duty of care responsibilities for staff, local and international, extremely seriously in all environments. In war zones a range of measures are used to protect staff including hardened accommodation, armoured vehicles, close protection teams and special security risk management measures.

The EU supports the joint Russian-US call for a peace conference on Syria. The EU stands ready to assist in any way possible and urges both sides of the conflict to enter into negotiations without preconditions. The EU continues its support for the mission of the Joint Special Representative of the UN and the League of Arab States to Syria, and demands, in this regard, that all Syrian parties work with his Office to implement rapidly the transition plan set forth in the final communiqué issued by the Action Group for Syria on 30 June 2012. The EU also supports the efforts of the Syrian Opposition Coalition (SOC) towards strengthening its structures, making them more inclusive and ensuring that the new SOC leadership continues with the political dialogue initiative of SOC's former President M. al-Khatib.

The EU has stepped up its assistance — both humanitarian and non-humanitarian, including support to the local population in rebel-contested areas. The overall support amount, including pledges, now reaches EUR 800 million. The Council has recently adopted a sanctions decision to further support to the Syrian civilian population. The EU agreed to review the sanctions regime regularly, taking into account the objective of helping the Syrian civilian population.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004242/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syrian child soldiers

With the continuation of the war in Syria, where over 70 000 people have been killed, there is now evidence which suggests that children are increasingly being used as porters, guards, informers and fighters, according to Childhood Under Fire. Unicef reports that there is a lost generation emerging in Syria, with three in every four children having lost a loved one during the course of the conflict.

With a growing pattern of children under the age of 18 being used by armed groups on both the opposition and government sides of the conflict, what is being done by the international community to ensure that the lives of children caught in the conflict are protected?

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

The EU is working closely with the Office of the Special Representative for children and armed conflict, Ms L. Zerrougui, including as regards the situation of children in Syria. The EU updated its priority list of countries for the implementation of the EU Guidelines on children and armed conflict after the last year's decision of the UN Security Council to include Syria on the UN 'black-list' of perpetrators of grave violations against children.

As noted recently by Ms Zerrougui (http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-releases/sc-must-ensure-an-end-to-the-violence-against-children-in-syria/), several grave violations against children are continuing to take place in Syria, including killing and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals and direct use of children in hostilities: 'Children as young as ten are recruited and used by armed opposition groups for military purposes, including as porters, messengers and combatants. Children are allegedly also being used as human shields by Governments forces.' The Security Council will address this issue latest during its annual debate on children and armed conflict in the Summer 2013.

The EU is also currently supporting Unicef's and other actors' efforts in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey with EUR 30 million to provide adequate education and psychosocial services to affected Syrian children, and is currently examining ways to scale up this support.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004243/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Funding to NGOs in the Middle East

According to NGO Monitor, the Commission provides millions of euros annually in funding to political advocacy NGOs operating in the Arab-Israeli conflict, with many of the groups engaging in campaigns and activities that are not consistent with EU foreign policy objectives.

An example of this is the Gaza-based Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and Oxfam Novib securing a EUR 298 339.08 grant from the EU to 'contribute to the abolition of the death penalty in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, applied by the Palestinian National Authority via judicial death sentences' by the Israeli military.

How does the Commission respond to these claims, and how does it ensure that advocacy work engages in purely legitimate activities?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The project 'Awareness-rasing and lobbying against the death penalty in the Occupied Palestinian Territory' was financed from 'European initiative for democracy and human rights' funds in 2005. The action's objectives were the following:

— to advocate and raise public awareness for the abolition of laws allowing for the death penalty; specifically Article 37 of the Palestinian Penal Law 74 of 1936 applicable to the Gaza Strip; Article 14 of the Jordanian Penal Law 16 of 1960 applicable to the West Bank and Palestine Liberation Organisation Revolutionary Penal Code of 1979 applicable to both areas;

— to contribute to the abolition of the Palestinian State Security Court;

— to provide legal aid to people charged with an offence which may result in the death penalty under Palestinian Law and to commute or abrogate death sentences by lobbying the Office of the President to issue a general moratorium on the death penalty or secure such a moratorium on a case by case basis.

— to raise international awareness with respect to extra-judicial executions committed by the Israeli military.

The grant awarded for this action was consistent with EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty and supported this specific project and not the general operations of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in question.

More generally, the EU monitors advocacy work in the same way as other funded activities-through visits, the implementation of visibility guidelines (including use of disclaimers), reviewing of field reports and through eligibility analyses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004244/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Iranian nuclear ambitions

Recently the situation in Iran was discussed in the Delegation for Relations with Israel. According to the Director of the Transatlantic Institute, Iran is only six weeks away from having enriched uranium weapons. With this increasing evidence of Iran's desire for nuclear weapons, how does the EU respond to such claims?

Additionally, is the EU taking part in the sanctions imposed against Iran, and will the EU take further action against the regime if it threatens the stability of the region?

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

The European Council has repeatedly stressed its serious and deepening concerns over Iran's nuclear programme and the lack of progress in talks between Iran and the IAEA. Together with the E3+3 (CHN, FR, GER, RF, UK, US), the HR/VP continues to be engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts aimed at seeking a negotiated solution to address international concerns over the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. Iran is being requested to bring its nuclear activities in full compliance with its international obligations under various UNSC and IAEA Board of Governors resolutions and to refrain from actions that increase the concerns of the international community about the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. The EU strongly supported the adoption of all relevant UNSC or IAEA Board of Governors' resolutions, calling on Iran to comply with all of its international obligations.

The EU sanction policy regarding Iran is part of the E3/EU+3's dual track approach consisting of diplomacy and sanctions. In response to Iran's ongoing violations of its international commitments, the EU adopted in 2012 two rounds of additional strong sanctions, beyond the ones imposed on Iran by UNSC Resolutions. The first round included a complete ban on the import of Iranian oil on the part of the EU, which took full effect on 1 July 2012. Another package decided in October includes additional measures in the areas of finance, trade, energy, transport, as well as additional designations. These measures, in particular the oil ban, are having a significant effect on Iran. The EU's sanctions target the nuclear, military and ballistic programmes of Iran directly and revenues that the Iranian government uses for these programmes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004246/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: EU funding for regions

According to recent reports, under the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) the poorest regions of richer Member States are going to receive major cuts to their regional funding. In the UK this will affect Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales the most.

Can the Commission state whether money will be allocated to ensure that those less well-off regions continue to receive adequate EU funds?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

Although the allocation distribution methodology proposed for the 2014-2020 period takes into account elements of national prosperity, it is primarily based on indicators related to the NUTS level 2 regions. This approach ensures that regional characteristics, measured in a comparable and harmonised way, determine the level of support.

In addition, on 26 March the UK Government published a proposal for the provisional distribution of the MFF allocation to the different UK regions. This would entail a 5% across-the-board reduction vis-à-vis 2007-2013 national allocations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004247/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Zimbabwean referendum

Following the successful referendum in Zimbabwe, the EU has announced that it will be suspending sanctions against most Zimbabwean officials.

Will the lifting of the sanctions be revoked with immediate effect if these officials misuse power in the future?

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

Following the holding of a peaceful and credible referendum on a new constitution on 16 March 2013 in Zimbabwe, the EU has agreed to immediately suspend the application of EU restrictive measures against 81 individuals and eight entities. The suspension will be subject to a three month review, assessing the validity of the conditions for the suspension. Should the situation on the ground seriously deteriorate, the EU could decide to immediately reactivate the measures.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004248/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Instability in the Central African Republic

With the recent reports of the death of 13 South African soldiers fighting militants in the Central African Republic, could the Commission state what support, if any, is being given to the Central African Republic Government in their fight against those trying to destabilise the region?

Additionally, does the EU plan to assist in the elections in the Central African Republic, to ensure that they remain free and fair?

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

The European Union is strongly concerned about the deteriorating security situation in the Central African Republic (CAR). The HR/VP refers the Honourable Member to her statements issued respectively on 21 April and 25 March.

The European Union has continued to provide support to the political process that led to the adoption, under mediation of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), of a transitional agreement to stabilise the country and restore the constitutional order.

Noting that security is a precondition for recovery, the EU has supported MICOPAX, an ECCAS-led peace support operation, since its inception in 2008. For 2013, the EU already provided a contribution of EUR 6.3 million.

As the delivery of all support to the country is currently extremely difficult, and since the needs — especially humanitarian — are rapidly growing, the EU is currently reviewing its strategy and support for CAR. In this context, the EU is also examining a possible support to assist the transitional authorities in the elections to ensure that will be free and fair. However, such assistance can only be mobilised at a later stage as a minimum level of security must be re-established first. The restoration of public order and security further conditions the recovery of the administrative activity in the CAR which is essential for any progress on the electoral process.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004708/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(26 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Pierwsza rosyjska organizacja skazana jako „zagraniczny agent"

25 kwietnia 2013 r. sąd w Moskwie wydał wyrok w sprawie organizacji „Gołos", monitorującej przebieg wyborów w Rosji. Sąd skazał organizację na karę grzywny w wysokości 300 tys. rubli za to, że nie zarejestrowała się ona jako „zagraniczny agent", czego wymaga ustawa o organizacjach otrzymujących finansowanie z zagranicy. Karę grzywny w wysokości 100 tys. rubli otrzymała również dyrektor wykonawcza „Gołosu", Lilia Szibanowa.

Jest to pierwszy wyrok dla organizacji pozarządowej podjęty na podstawie ustawy o „agentach zagranicznych", jednak takich spraw w ciągu ostatnich tygodni zostało wszczętych więcej. Jak alarmują obrońcy praw człowieka, sytuacja rosyjskiego społeczeństwa obywatelskiego jest obecnie najgorsza w całej postsowieckiej historii Federacji Rosyjskiej. W całym kraju trwają rewizje organizacji pozarządowych, które paraliżują ich działalność.

W związku z tym, pragnę zapytać, czy Komisja posiada informacje na temat skali rewizji, które odbywają się w biurach rosyjskich organizacji pozarządowych i czy ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie prześladowania organizacji „Gołos" i jej pracowników?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(26 czerwca 2013 r.)

Zgodnie z oświadczeniem Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej z dnia 26 marca 2013 r., UE jest poinformowana o kontrolach i inspekcjach wymierzonych w organizacje pozarządowe w Federacji Rosyjskiej. Dnia 28 kwietnia 2013 r. rzecznik Wysokiej Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącej wydał oświadczenie, w którym wyraził zaniepokojenie UE związane ze skazaniem na karę grzywny organizacji pozarządowej Golos i jej dyrektor na podstawie przedmiotowej ustawy.

Trwające akcje, którym towarzyszy wprowadzenie ostatniego pakietu ustaw, prześladowania działaczy społeczeństwa obywatelskiego oraz zaniechanie działania w kilku głośnych przypadkach naruszeń praw człowieka składają się na niepokojącą tendencję. Inspekcje i przeszukiwania wymierzone w rosyjskie organizacje pozarządowe zagrażają działaniom społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w Rosji i dyskredytują wielu beneficjentów zagranicznych środków finansowych, niezależnie od ich działalności, poprzez nazywanie ich „zagranicznymi agentami".

W ostatnim czasie UE wyrażała swoje opinie na ten temat podczas różnych dwustronnych kontaktów ze stroną rosyjską oraz wezwała Rosję do wywiązania się ze swoich zobowiązań międzynarodowych w zakresie wolności zrzeszania się, w szczególności wynikających z europejskiej konwencji praw człowieka. Szef delegatury Unii w Federacji Rosyjskiej przekazał władzom rosyjskim w dwustronnych kontaktach ten jasny sygnał ze strony UE.

Także konsultacje UE-Rosja dotyczące praw człowieka, które odbyły się 17 maja 2013 r., były okazją dla UE do uzyskania informacji dotyczących przyczyny tych bezprecedensowych kontroli oraz wyjaśnienia definicji „działalności politycznej", jak i kryteriów, według których organizacje pozarządowe zmuszone są do rejestracji jako „zagraniczni agenci". Z racji, iż wiele organizacji zostało postawionych przed sądem na skutek tych kontroli, a wiele innych otrzymało oficjalne „upomnienia", UE będzie uważnie śledzić rozwój wydarzeń w zakresie przedmiotowej ustawy za pośrednictwem swojej delegatury w Moskwie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004249/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Russian tax inspectors

With EU officials voicing concern over Russian tax inspectors carrying out checks on foreign-funded NGOs, could the Commission state what action will be taken against the Russian authorities?

Additionally, will Vice-President/High Representative Ashton speak to the relevant Russian authorities to explain why such action has taken place?

Question for written answer E-004708/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(26 April 2013)

Subject: First Russian organisation convicted under law on 'foreign agents'

On 25 April 2013, a court in Moscow passed sentence in a case brought against the Russian election monitoring organisation *Golos* (Voice). The court imposed a fine of RUB 300 000 on the organisation for its failure to register as a 'foreign agent', as required by a law on organisations receiving foreign funding. A fine of RUB 100 000 was also imposed on Lilya Shibanova, Executive Director of *Golos*.

This is the first judgment passed against a non-governmental organisation under the law on 'foreign agents'. However, many more such cases have been brought in recent weeks. Human rights defenders are alarmed that conditions for civil society in Russia are now worse than at any other point in the country's post-Soviet history. Raids are being conducted against NGOs throughout Russia, effectively paralysing their activities.

Does the Commission have information on the scale of the raids being conducted on the offices of Russian NGOs, and does it intend to make representations with regard to the persecution of *Golos* and its workers?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

As expressed by the HR/VP in a statement on 26 March 2013, the EU is aware of the checks and inspections affecting non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the Russian Federation. On 28 April 2013, the spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement expressing the EU's concerns on the fact that the NGO Golos and her director were fined on the basis of this law.

The ongoing raids, taken together with the recent package of legislation, the prosecution of civil society activists and the lack of action in some prominent cases of human rights abuses, constitute a troubling trend. The inspections and searches launched against the Russian NGO community undermine civil society activities in the country and discredit many recipients of foreign funds, regardless of their activities, by labelling them as foreign agents.

The EU has recently voiced its concerns in different bilateral contacts with the Russian side and has called on Russia to live up to its international commitments on freedom of association, notably the European Convention on Human Rights. The Head of the EU Delegation to the Russian Federation has conveyed the EU's strong message to the Russian authorities in bilateral contacts

The EU-Russian Human Rights Consultations which took place on 17 May 2013 gave the EU the opportunity to enquire why those unprecedented checks have taken place, clarify the definition of 'political activity' as well as the criteria applied to force an NGO to register as 'foreign agent'. As a number of organisations have been brought to court on the basis of those checks, and many others received official 'warnings', the EU will follow closely the developments in the implementation of this law through its Delegation in Moscow.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004609/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(24 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Pianista turco condannato con la condizionale per blasfemia

Il 15 aprile 2013, vari siti di informazione hanno riferito che il famoso pianista turco Fazil Say è stato condannato a 10 mesi di carcere con la condizionale con l'accusa di blasfemia, dopo aver inviato una serie di tweet, in cui si è detto avesse criticato l'Islam. La corte ha ritenuto Say colpevole di insulti «ai valori religiosi di una parte della popolazione».

Say non era in tribunale, quando la sentenza è stata pronunciata. È convinto che la causa sia stata istigata dal partito di governo AK. Say ha ammesso apertamente di essere ateo, e ha criticato il partito AK, dicendo che al loro ordine del giorno figura la promozione dei valori conservatori in Turchia. La BBC dichiara che altri critici all'interno della Turchia sono preoccupati che il partito AK voglia minare i valori laici tradizionali turchi. Crescono i timori che in Turchia si inaspriscano le restrizioni alla libertà di espressione.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante quanto alla condanna del pianista turco Fazil Say?

2. Qual è la valutazione dei funzionari UE in Turchia con riferimento al trattamento delle personalità di spicco, come Say, e altri, che vengono accusati di blasfemia?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(7 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del caso sollevato dagli onorevoli deputati e continua a seguire attentamente l'azione legale contro Fazıl Say.

Dopo essere stato condannato a dieci mesi di carcere con la condizionale, Fazıl Say ha chiesto un nuovo processo. La causa è stata rinviata al primo giudice di Istanbul che non si è ancora pronunciato sul caso. La Commissione attende la decisione del tribunale.

Essa si aspetta che la Turchia rispetti pienamente la libertà di espressione, in linea con la Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo e con la giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti umani.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004250/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(15 april 2013)

Betreft: Turkse pianist beledigd voor beledigen islam

De Turkse pianist Fazil Say is door een rechtbank in Istanbul veroordeeld tot een gevangenisstraf van tien maanden voorwaardelijk voor het beledigen van de islam.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Turkse pianist Fazil Say veroordeeld voor beledigen islam" ([1])?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de veroordeling van Fazil Say? Verwerpt de Commissie deze? Zo ja, is zij ertoe bereid Turkije, kandidaat-lidstaat, hierop aan te spreken? Zo neen, waarom niet?

In antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-005624/2012 schreef de Commissie naar aanleiding van de aanklacht jegens Fazil Say: „De vrijheid van meningsuiting en de vrijheid van gedachte, geweten en godsdienst, die ook de vrijheid om niet te geloven omvat, zijn grondrechten waarop de Commissie toezicht houdt in het kader van haar beoordeling van de vorderingen van Turkije bij het voldoen aan de politieke criteria. De Commissie heeft bij diverse gelegenheden gewezen op de dringende noodzaak dat Turkije tekortkomingen in dit verband aanpakt. De Commissie zal deze zaak op de voet blijven volgen."

3. Is de Commissie, naar aanleiding van de veroordeling van Fazil Say, voornemens voorts nog iets te ondernemen, behalve de situatie in Turkije „op de voet te volgen"? Is de Commissie ertoe bereid de daad bij het woord te voegen en consequenties te verbinden aan de veroordeling van Fazil Say? Zo ja, wat gaat zij doen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Acht de Commissie de veroordeling van Fazil Say in strijd met de vrijheid van meningsuiting en derhalve ook met de Criteria van Kopenhagen? Is de Commissie derhalve ertoe bereid de toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije te beëindigen? Zo neen, hoezeer dient de situatie in Turkije verder te verslechteren voordat de Commissie tot de conclusie komt dat Turkije nóóit tot de EU zal willen of kunnen toetreden?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(7 juni 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de door het geachte Parlementslid gesignaleerde kwestie. Zij blijft de rechtszaak tegen Fazil Say op de voet volgen.

Deze laatste heeft na zijn veroordeling tot een voorwaardelijke gevangenisstraf van tien maanden, om heroverweging verzocht. De zaak is teruggewezen naar de oorspronkelijke rechter in Istanboel, die daarover nog geen uitspraak heeft gedaan. De Commissie wacht op de beslissing van de rechter.

Zij verwacht van Turkije de volledige eerbiediging van de vrijheid van meningsuiting overeenkomstig het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens en de rechtspraak van het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens.

([1]) http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2013/04/15/turkse-pianist-fazil-say-veroordeeld-voor-beledigen-islam/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004250/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Turkish pianist sentenced for insulting Islam

A court in Istanbul has given the Turkish pianist Fazıl Say a ten-month suspended sentence for insulting Islam.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Turkish pianist Fazıl Say convicted of insulting Islam'? ([1])

2. How does the Commission view Fazıl Say's conviction? Does the Commission reject it? If so, is it prepared to tackle Turkey, a candidate country, about this? If not, why not?

In its answer to Written Question E-005624/2012, the Commission wrote in response to the criminal charge against Fazıl Say: 'Freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, which also includes the freedom not to believe, are fundamental rights monitored by the Commission in its appreciation of Turkey's progress towards meeting the political criteria. The Commission has on various occasions underlined the urgent need for Turkey to address shortcomings in this regard. The Commission will continue to closely follow this case.'

3. Does the Commission intend to take any additional action following the conviction of Fazıl Say besides just 'closely following' the situation in Turkey? Is the Commission prepared to translate words into actions and to highlight the consequences of Fazıl Say's conviction? If so, what is it going to do? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission view Fazıl Say's conviction as contrary to freedom of expression and, therefore, contrary to the Copenhagen Criteria? Is the Commission therefore prepared to terminate accession negotiations with Turkey? If not, how much does the situation in Turkey have to continue to deteriorate before the Commission reaches the conclusion that Turkey will never want or be able to join the EU?

Question for written answer E-004609/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(24 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Turkish pianist receives suspended sentence for blasphemy

On 15 April 2013, various news sites reported that the famous Turkish pianist Fazil Say was given a 10-month suspended jail sentence on a charge of blasphemy, after he posted a series of tweets, in which he was said to have criticised Islam. The court found Say guilty of 'insulting religious values of a part of the population'.

Say was not in the court when the sentence was handed out. He believes that the case was instigated by the ruling AK Party. Say has openly admitted that he is an atheist, and has criticised the AK party by saying that they have an agenda to promote conservative values inside Turkey. The BBC says that other critics inside Turkey are concerned that the AK Party wants to undermine traditional Turkish secular values. There are growing fears that increased restrictions to freedom of speech are being imposed inside Turkey.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the sentencing of Turkish pianist Fazil Say?

2. What is the assessment of EU officials in Turkey regarding the treatment of prominent individuals, such as Say, and others who are charged with blasphemy?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issue the Honourable Member raised. It continues to closely follow the lawsuit against Fazıl Say.

([1]) http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2013/04/15/turkse-pianist-fazil-say-veroordeeld-voor-beledigen-islam/.

Fazıl Say, after having received a 10-month suspended prison sentence, has requested a retrial. The case was sent back to the first court in Istanbul, which has yet to decide on the matter. The Commission awaits the decision of the court.

It expects Turkey to fully respect freedom of expression in line with the European Convention on Human rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004251/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(15 april 2013)

Betreft: Turkse regering start „reddingsactie" voor Turkse kinderen in christelijke/homoseksuele gezinnen (vervolgvraag)

De Turkse regering begint een „reddingsactie" voor Turkse kinderen die onder meer bij Nederlandse en Belgische pleeggezinnen zijn ondergebracht. De Turken vinden het maar niets dat de kinderen bij christelijke/homoseksuele gezinnen zijn geplaatst.

Op 15 april 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-001846/2013 over voornoemde kwestie. Daarin schrijft hij: „De Commissie wijst erop dat deze specifieke kwestie onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten valt en door het nationale recht wordt geregeld, met name door de wijze waarop in het nationale recht het begrip „het belang van het kind" wordt uitgelegd. Om die reden vindt de Commissie het niet passend om uitspraken te doen over de concrete zaak die in de door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde persberichten wordt vermeld."

1. Als de Commissie stelt dat deze specifieke kwestie onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten valt, impliceert zij daar dan mee dat Turkije zich onterecht bemoeit met de Nederlandse en Belgische pleeggezinnen? Zo ja, is de Commissie aldus van mening dat Turkije zijn boekje te buiten gaat? Zo neen, wat bedoelt de Commissie dan wél te zeggen?

2. Is de Commissie ertoe bereid Turkije, als kandidaat-lidstaat, op zijn ongepaste gedrag aan te spreken? Zo neen, hoe serieus neemt de Commissie dan het feit dat Turkije zich onterecht mengt in nationale aangelegenheden van lidstaten?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(27 juni 2013)

De Commissie kan het geachte Parlementslid op deze vervolgvraag geen ander antwoord geven dan op de eerdere schriftelijke vraag E-001846/2013 ([1]), waarnaar zij het geachte Parlementslid derhalve verwijst.

Kwesties waarvoor de lidstaten bevoegd zijn, moeten, waar nodig en passend, worden besproken tussen Turkije en de desbetreffende lidstaat.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004251/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: The Turkish Government launches a 'rescue campaign' for Turkish children fostered by Christian/homosexual families (follow-up question)

The Turkish Government is launching a 'rescue campaign' for Turkish children who have been put into the foster care of, amongst others, Dutch and Belgian families. The Turks do not like the fact that the children have been put into the foster care of Christian/homosexual families.

On 15 April 2013, Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-001846/2013 on the aforementioned issue. In his answer, he writes: 'The Commission would like to point out that this specific matter falls under Member States' competence and is governed by national law, in particular the way the latter interprets the notion of best interest of the child. Therefore, the Commission considers it not appropriate to express views on the concrete case mentioned in the press reports the Honourable Member referred to.'

1. If the Commission considers that this specific case falls within the competence of the Member States, is it implying that Turkey is interfering unjustifiably with Dutch and Belgian foster families? If so, does the Commission thus take the view that Turkey is going beyond its remit? If not, what is it then that the Commission is trying to say?

2. Is the Commission prepared to tackle Turkey, as a candidate country, about its inappropriate behaviour? If not, how seriously does the Commission take the fact that Turkey is interfering unjustifiably in the domestic affairs of Member States?

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

The Commission can offer no further comment on the issue raised by the Honourable Member in her follow-up question and would like to refer the Honourable Member to the answer to previous Written Question E-001846/2013 ([1]).

Matters falling under Member States' competence need to be discussed, as necessary and appropriate, between Turkey and Member States concerned.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004252/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Support for Iraq

Ten years after the beginning of the war in Iraq, could the EEAS give an update on what support is currently being given to the administration in terms of humanitarian assistance?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

Ten years after the beginning of the war in Iraq, humanitarian assistance is still necessary as some people, especially in rural areas, suffer from a lack of access to basic services such as safe water or quality healthcare. Indeed, ongoing sectarian violence continues to hinder the capacity of local authorities to provide such services.

EU humanitarian support to Iraq in 2013 is threefold: (i) Provision of water/sanitation and protection services to over 1 million vulnerable people inside Iraq through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (ii) Support to registration services and provision of cash assistance to 125 183 Iraqi refugees in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other implementing partners (iii) Multisectoral assistance (registration, shelter, non-food items distribution, food assistance) to 137 657 Syrian refugees in Iraq through UNHCR and World Food Programme (WFP).

Planned EU humanitarian support to Iraq in 2013 totals EUR 13.35 million.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004253/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — North Korea

With the increase in hostility on the part of North Korea in recent weeks, could High Representative Ashton state what the EEAS is doing to ensure that the threats which are being made by Pyongyang do not escalate into further instability in the region?

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

The EU is in contact with its key partners in the region. The EU is a strong supporter of a unified response by the the international community notably through the UN Security Council and works actively for that. In addition, the EU has kept its communication channels with DPRK open; urging the leadership there to take a constructive path and to reengage with the international community, including in the framework of the Six Party Talks.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004255/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διακανονισμός Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων (ΕΤΕπ) και εταιρίας Siemens

Στις 15.3.2013 ανακοινώθηκε ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Τράπεζα Επενδύσεων και η εταιρία Siemens κατέληξαν σε διακανονισμό για «εικαζόμενες παραβιάσεις της πολιτικής καταπολέμησης απάτης της ΕΤΕπ» σε σχέση με έργα που χρηματοδοτήθηκαν από την τράπεζα. «Ο διακανονισμός έγινε έπειτα από έρευνα από την ΕΤΕπ και τον OLAF για συμπεριφορά "επιχειρησιακού τμήματος" (business unit) της Siemens σε διαγωνισμό της ΕΤΕπ. Η εταιρία Siemens δεσμεύτηκε ότι συγκεκριμένο επιχειρησιακό τμήμα θα απέχει από την υποβολή προσφορών για έργα που χρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΤΕπ και από κάθε είδους σχέση με την τράπεζα ως πλειοδότης, επιχειρηματίας, σύμβουλος ή προμηθευτής, για 18 μήνες. Επιπλέον η Siemens συμφώνησε να παρέχει χρηματοδότηση συνολικού ύψους 13,5 εκατομμύριων ευρώ σε διάστημα πέντε ετών σε διεθνείς οργανισμούς, διακυβερνητικές οργανώσεις, μη κυβερνητικές οργανώσεις και επαγγελματίες ή ακαδημαϊκούς φορείς που υποστηρίζουν σχέδια ή άλλες πρωτοβουλίες για την ενθάρρυνση της χρηστής διακυβέρνησης και την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς». Σε σχέση με το μέγεθος της εταιρίας, τον αριθμό των σκανδάλων στα οποία έχει εμπλακεί παγκοσμίως αλλά και τα τεράστια ποσά που έχουν επιδικαστεί από δικαστήρια της Αμερικής για αποζημιώσεις, ο παραπάνω διακανονισμός, με την «ποινή» 18μηνης αποχής μόνο του συγκεκριμένου επιχειρησιακού τμήματος από έργα της ΕΤΕπ και την υποχρέωση παροχής 13,5 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ σε ΜΚΟ κ.ά., βεβαίως δεν φαίνεται να αποτελεί «ισχυρό χτύπημα στην διαφθορά».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Μπορεί να δώσει ακριβή στοιχεία σχετικά με την έρευνα της ΕΤΕπ και της OLAF; Για ποια ακριβώς έργα υπήρξαν παραβιάσεις που οδήγησαν σε αυτό τον διακανονισμό, τι είδους παραβιάσεις ήταν και ποιος ο οικονομικός τους αντίκτυπος;

— Είναι νόμιμος ο επιχειρησιακός «διαμελισμός» μιας εταιρίας από τους θεσμούς της ΕΕ για παραβιάσεις των κανονισμών περί δημοσίων συμβάσεων; Σε ποιον κανονισμό αναφέρεται αυτή η πρακτική; Υπάρχει προηγούμενο; Ποιο; Ποιο ακριβώς είναι το «επιχειρησιακό τμήμα» της εταιρίας στο οποίο αναφέρεται η ανακοίνωση;

— Θα απαιτήσει η Επιτροπή την επιστροφή των δημόσιων πόρων που, με δωροδοκίες και άλλες αθέμιτες πρακτικές, απέσπασε η Siemens για τη συγκεκριμένη υπόθεση; Τι δεσμεύσεις ανέλαβε η ΕΤΕπ έναντι της εταιρίας στον εν λόγω διακανονισμό; Συνεχίζονται οι έρευνες για άλλες υποθέσεις της Siemens; Για ποιες;

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

Η Επιτροπή ενημερώθηκε από την Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Καταπολέμησης της Απάτης (OLAF) ότι η έρευνα σχετικά με την εταιρία Siemens έχει κλείσει με διακανονισμό μεταξύ των εμπλεκόμενων μερών: της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων (ΕΤΕπ) και της Siemens. Η ΕΤΕπ εξέδωσε δελτίο τύπου σχετικά με την εν λόγω συμφωνία ([1]) στις 15 Μαρτίου 2013.

Η OLAF δεν μπορεί να γνωστοποιήσει λεπτομερή στοιχεία σχετικά με την έρευνα για λόγους προστασίας των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων.

Οι πλειοδότες οι οποίοι αποτέλεσαν αντικείμενο οριστικής καταδικαστικής απόφασης για λόγους απάτης, κατά την έννοια του άρθρου 1 της σύμβασης σχετικά με την προστασία των οικονομικών συμφερόντων της ΕΕ, πρέπει να αποκλείονται της συμμετοχής σε δημόσια σύμβαση ([2]).

Η συμφωνία που επιτεύχθηκε στο πλαίσιο του διακανονισμού περιλαμβάνει δέσμευση από μέρους της Siemens ότι το συγκεκριμένο επιχειρησιακό τμήμα θα απέχει οικειοθελώς από την υποβολή προσφορών για έργα που χρηματοδοτούνται από την ΕΤΕπ και από κάθε είδους σχέση με την τράπεζα για 18 μήνες.

Στο πλαίσιο της συμφωνίας αυτής, η Siemens δεσμεύτηκε επίσης να παρέχει χρηματοδότηση συνολικού ύψους 13,5 εκατομμύριων ευρώ σε διάστημα πέντε ετών σε διεθνείς οργανισμούς, διακυβερνητικές οργανώσεις, μη κυβερνητικές οργανώσεις, επαγγελματικές ενώσεις ή/και ακαδημαϊκούς φορείς που υποστηρίζουν σχέδια ή άλλες πρωτοβουλίες για την ενθάρρυνση της χρηστής διακυβέρνησης και την καταπολέμηση της διαφθοράς.

([1]) http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/news/all/eib-and-siemens-settlement-agreement.htm?lang=en&
([2]) Άρθρο 45 παράγραφος 1 στοιχείο γ) της οδηγίας 2004/18/ΕΚ.

Επιπλέον, η Siemens έχει συμφωνήσει να συνεργάζεται εκ του σύνεγγυς και να βοηθά την ΕΤΕπ στην προώθηση των προσπαθειών της για διερεύνηση εικαζόμενων απαγορευμένων συμπεριφορών σε κάθε χρηματοδοτούμενο από την ΕΤΕπ σχέδιο. Και τα δύο μέρη συμφώνησαν επίσης να ανταλλάσσουν βέλτιστες πρακτικές σε σχέση με τα πρότυπα συμμόρφωσης και την καταπολέμηση της απάτης και της διαφθοράς.

Η Επιτροπή ενημερώθηκε από την OLAF σχετικά με δύο άλλες εν εξελίξει έρευνες που αφορούν τη Siemens. Δεδομένου ότι οι υποθέσεις αυτές είναι σε εξέλιξη, η OLAF δεν δύναται να δώσει περαιτέρω πληροφορίες για το θέμα στο παρόν στάδιο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004255/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Settlement between the European Investment Bank and Siemens

On 15 March 2013, it was announced that the European Investment Bank (EIB) and Siemens had reached an agreement over 'alleged violations of the EIB Anti-Fraud Policy' in connection with projects financed by the EIB. 'The settlement was reached following investigations by both the EIB and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) into the conduct of a Siemens business unit in relation to an EIB tender. Siemens has made a commitment that the business unit will refrain from bidding on EIB-financed projects or enter into any relationship with the EIB as a tenderer, contractor, consultant or supplier for a period of 18 months. Siemens also commits to provide funds totalling EUR 13.5 million over five years to international organisations, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and entrepreneurs or academic institutions that support projects or other initiatives that promote good governance and the fight against corruption'. In relation to the size of the company, the number of scandals it has been involved in worldwide, and also the very large fines imposed on it by US courts as compensation, the above settlement involving an 18-month 'sanction' against the specific business unit from EIB projects and the obligation to provide EUR 13.5 million to NGOs and others, hardly looks like a 'powerful blow against corruption'.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

— Can it provide accurate data in relation to the EIB and OLAF investigations? In relation to which projects exactly did the violations that led to this settlement take place? What sort of violations were they and what was their financial impact?

— Is it legitimate to 'cut off' a business unit of a company from EU institutions in relation to violations of public procurement regulations? What is the regulation that applies to this practice? Is there a precedent? What is the precedent? Which exactly is the 'business unit' of the company to which the statement refers?

— Will the Commission request or demand reimbursement of the public funds obtained by Siemens in this specific affair through bribery and other unlawful practices? What undertaking has the EIB made in the settlement in relation to the company? Are investigations under way in relation to other Siemens cases? What are these cases?

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

The Commission has been informed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) that the investigation on Siemens has been closed with a settlement between the parties involved: the European Investment Bank (EIB) and Siemens. EIB issued a press release on this agreement ([1]) on 15 March 2013.

OLAF cannot disclose any details concerning that investigation for the reasons of the protection of human rights.

Tenderers which have been subject to a final conviction for reason of fraud within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention relating to the protection of the financial interests of the EU, have to be excluded from participation in a public contract ([2]).

The agreement found in the settlement includes a commitment by Siemens that the concerned business unit will voluntarily refrain from bidding on EIB financed projects or enter into any relationship with the EIB for a period of 18 months.

As part of this Settlement, Siemens also commits to provide funds, totaling EUR 13.5 million over five years, to international organisations, inter-governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, business associations, and/or academic institutions that support projects or other initiatives that promote good governance and the fight against corruption.

([1]) http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/news/all/eib-and-siemens-settlement-agreement.htm?lang=en&.
([2]) Article 45(1)(c) of Directive 2004/18/EC.

Furthermore, Siemens has agreed to closely cooperate and assist the EIB going forward in its efforts to investigate alleged prohibited conduct in any EIB-financed project. Both parties also agreed to exchange best practices in relation to compliance standards and the fight against fraud and corruption.

The Commission has been informed by OLAF that it has two other ongoing investigation involving Siemens. Given that these cases are ongoing OLAF can give no further information on the matter at this stage.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004256/13
a la Comisión
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Kinga Gál (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), László Tőkés (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) y Edit Bauer (PPE)
(15 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Festival Liet International, solicitud de apoyo de la Comisión

Desde hace varios años, la Asociación Liet International organiza un festival de canto dedicado a artistas procedentes de las minorías lingüísticas de Europa.

Ampliamente difundido por televisión, este espectáculo se inspira en el festival anual de Eurovisión. Se celebra en una sala grande, se moviliza el voto del público a través de Internet, y el ganador se determina por una decisión de un jurado proveniente de todas las identidades culturales que compiten.

Por él han pasado artistas sami, asturianos, corsos, bretones, galeses… con lo que se ha rendido homenaje a la diversidad cultural y lingüística europea con demasiada frecuencia ignorada por los festivales oficiales.

Al consagrar a estas lenguas y culturas, que están entre las más amenazadas en Europa, un evento cultural y mediático de alto nivel y de resonancia internacional, se motiva cultural y lingüísticamente a los más jóvenes para que recuperen dichas lenguas europeas en peligro de extinción y vuelvan a utilizarlas.

Entonces surge la pregunta: los organizadores de este festival europeo sólo han recibido respuestas negativas a sus reiteradas solicitudes de apoyo financiero de la Comisión. ¿Por qué tanto rechazo?

¿Podemos esperar una actitud más positiva para la edición 2013 que se celebrará en diciembre?

Los diputados abajo firmantes sostienen que se trata de un evento cultural de gran interés europeo, que reúne todos los requisitos para recibir apoyo financiero, tanto para su organización como para la transmisión televisiva.

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión está de acuerdo en que eventos culturales como el que organiza Liet International pueden contribuir notablemente a la promoción de las lenguas minoritarias y la diversidad lingüística en la EU. Liet International solicitó en 2012 financiación en el marco del Programa Cultura ([1]) para su festival «Liet International 2012 Asturias». La solicitud no cumplía los requisitos de subvencionabilidad del capítulo correspondiente a festivales del Programa Cultura, como se especifica en la guía del programa, y no fue seleccionado, por tanto, para recibir financiación.

Puesto que el Programa Cultura termina en 2013, ya no es posible solicitar subvenciones para festivales con cargo al programa. La Comisión ha propuesto el establecimiento del Programa Europa Creativa para el periodo 2014-2020 en sustitución de los programas Cultura y Media. Tras la adopción de la propuesta por el Consejo y el Parlamento, las convocatorias de propuestas y las condiciones de participación se publicarán en el sitio web de la Comisión ([2]).

([1]) Decisión n° 1855/2006/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 12 de diciembre de 2006, por la que se establece el programa Cultura (2007-2013), DO L 372 de 27.12.2006, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004256/13
an die Kommission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Kinga Gál (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), László Tőkés (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) und Edit Bauer (PPE)
(15. April 2013)

Betrifft: Das Festival Liet International — Plädoyer für eine Unterstützung durch die Kommission

Seit einigen Jahren organisiert die Vereinigung Liet International ein Gesangsfestival für Künstler aus den sprachlichen Minderheiten Europas.

Als Vorlage für die über zahlreiche Fernsehkanäle übertragene Veranstaltung diente das alljährliche Festival „Eurovision". Veranstaltungsort ist eine große Halle, das Publikum wird zur Abstimmung über das Internet aufgerufen und der Gewinner durch eine Jury (aus Vertretern sämtlicher kultureller Identitäten, die bei dem Festival zusammenkommen) bestimmt.

Das Festival ist samischen, asturischen, korsischen, bretonischen und walisischen Künstlern gewidmet und erweist dergestalt einer kulturellen und sprachlichen Vielfalt in Europa die Ehre, die bei offiziellen Festivals häufig nicht beachtet wird.

Indem diesen Sprachen und Kulturen unter den in ganz Europa am meisten bedrohten eine kulturelle Veranstaltung mit hoher Medienwirkung und internationalem Echo gewidmet wird, werden Kultur- und Sprachakteure unter den jüngsten Menschen motiviert, sich diese bedrohten europäischen Sprachen wieder anzueignen und ihre Verwendung wiederzubeleben.

Daher stellt sich eine Frage: Bislang wurden die wiederholten Anträge der Veranstalter dieses europäischen Festivals auf finanzielle Unterstützung von der Kommission samt und sonders abschlägig beschieden. Warum ist dies der Fall?

Besteht Hoffnung, dass sich diese Haltung für die Ausgabe 2013, die im Dezember stattfinden wird, zum Positiven wendet?

Die Unterzeichneten (Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments) machen sich dafür stark, dass es sich um ein Kulturereignis von hohem europäischem Interesse handelt, das sämtliche Voraussetzungen für eine finanzielle Unterstützung sowohl im Hinblick auf seine Organisation als auch seine Übertragung im Fernsehen erfüllt.

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(29. Mai 2013)

Die Kommission teilt die Ansicht, dass kulturelle Veranstaltungen wie das Festival der Vereinigung Liet International einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Förderung der Minderheitensprachen und der sprachlichen Vielfalt in der EU leisten können. Liet International hat 2012 eine Finanzhilfe aus dem Programm „Kultur" ([1]) für das Festival „Liet International 2012 Asturias" beantragt. Da der Antrag nicht den Förderkriterien des für Festivals geltenden Aktionsbereichs gemäß dem Programmleitfaden genügte, wurde die Veranstaltung nicht für eine Finanzhilfe ausgewählt.

Das Programm „Kultur" läuft 2013 aus, so dass keine Finanzhilfen für Festivals mehr in diesem Rahmen beantragt werden können. Für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 hat die Kommission das Programm „Kreatives Europa" vorgeschlagen, das an die Stelle der Programme „Kultur" und MEDIA treten soll. Sobald das Programm „Kreatives Europa" vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat angenommen wurde, werden die Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen sowie die Bedingungen für die Gewährung einer Finanzhilfe auf der Website der Kommission ([2]) veröffentlicht.

([1]) Beschluss Nr. 1855/2006/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. Dezember 2006 über das Programm „Kultur" (2007-2013) (ABl. L 372 vom 27.12.2006, S. 1).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_de.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004256/13
à la Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Kinga Gál (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), László Tőkés (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) et Edit Bauer (PPE)
(15 avril 2013)

Objet: Festival LIET International, pour un soutien par la Commission

Depuis plusieurs années l'association LIET International organise un festival de chant dédié aux artistes issus des minorités linguistiques de l'Europe.

Largement diffusé sur les télévisions, ce spectacle s'inspire du festival annuel Eurovision. Il se déroule dans une grande salle, mobilise le vote du public par Internet, et le vainqueur est désigné par décision d'un jury issu de toutes les identités culturelles qui concourent.

Il a ainsi consacré des artistes sami, asturien, corse, breton, gallois… mettant ainsi à l'honneur une diversité culturelle et linguistique européenne bien trop souvent ignorée des festivals officiels.

En donnant à ces langues et cultures parmi les plus menacées en Europe un évènement culturel et médiatique de haut niveau et à résonnance internationale, il motive les acteurs culturels et linguistiques parmi les plus jeunes à se réapproprier ces langues européennes menacées et à en relancer l'usage.

Aussi une question se pose: les organisateurs de ce festival européen n'ont eu que des réponses négatives à leurs demandes répétées de soutien financier auprès de la Commission. Pourquoi un tel refus?

Peut-on espérer une attitude plus positive pour l'édition 2013 qui aura lieu en décembre?

Les députés européens soussignés soutiennent en effet qu'il s'agit d'un évènement culturel d'un grand intérêt européen, qui réunit toutes les conditions pour recevoir un soutien financier, tant pour son organisation que pour sa diffusion télévisée.

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(29 mai 2013)

La Commission reconnaît que les événements culturels comme ceux qu'organise Liet International peuvent présenter un grand intérêt pour la promotion des langues minoritaires et de la diversité linguistique dans l'UE. Liet International a demandé, en 2012, à bénéficier d'un soutien financier au titre du programme «Culture» ([1]) pour son festival «Liet International 2012 Asturias». Cette demande ne répondait pas aux critères d'admissibilité énoncés dans le volet du programme Culture consacré aux festivals, tels que définis dans le guide du programme, et n'a donc pas été retenue.

Le programme Culture s'achevant en 2013, il n'est plus possible de solliciter des subventions pour l'organisation de festivals au titre de ce programme. La Commission a proposé la mise en place du programme «Europe créative» pour la période 2014-2020, qui remplacera à la fois le programme Culture et le programme MEDIA. Lorsque cette proposition aura été adoptée par le Conseil et le Parlement, les appels à propositions et les conditions de participation seront publiés sur le site web de la Commission ([2]).

([1]) Décision n° 1855/2006/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 12 décembre 2006 établissant le programme Culture (2007-2013) — JO L 372 du 27.12.2006, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_fr.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004256/13
alla Commissione
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Kinga Gál (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), László Tőkés (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) e Edit Bauer (PPE)
(15 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sostegno finanziario della Commissione al Festival LIET INTERNATIONAL

L'associazione LIET INTERNATIONAL organizza da vari anni un festival di canto dedicato agli artisti provenienti dalle minoranze linguistiche dell'Europa.

Ampiamente trasmesso dalle televisioni, questo spettacolo si ispira al festival annuale dell'Eurovisione: si svolge in una grande sala, mobilita il voto del pubblico su Internet e il vincitore viene scelto da una giuria composta dai rappresentanti di tutte le identità culturali in gara.

Il festival ha visto la partecipazione di artisti sami, asturiani, corsi, bretoni, gallesi, rendendo così omaggio a una diversità culturale e linguistica europea fin troppo spesso ignorata dai festival ufficiali.

Offrendo a queste lingue e culture, fra le più minacciate in Europa, un avvenimento culturale e mediatico di alto livello e con una risonanza internazionale, si motivano i giovani, attivi in campo culturale e linguistico, a riappropriarsi di queste lingue europee minacciate e a rilanciarne l'uso.

Tuttavia, gli organizzatori di questo festival europeo si sono visti sistematicamente rifiutare le ripetute domande di sostegno finanziario da parte della Commissione. Perché un tale rifiuto?

É possibile confidare in un atteggiamento più positivo per l'edizione 2013, che si svolgerà in dicembre?

I sottoscritti deputati europei ribadiscono che si tratta di un avvenimento culturale di grande interesse europeo, il quale riunisce tutte le condizioni per ricevere un sostegno finanziario, sia per la sua organizzazione che per la relativa trasmissione televisiva.

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La Commissione riconosce che eventi culturali come quelli organizzati da Liet International possono essere utili per la promozione delle lingue minoritarie e della diversità linguistica nell'UE. Nel 2012 Liet International ha chiesto un finanziamento a valere sul programma Cultura ([1]) per il suo festival «Liet International 2012 Asturias». La candidatura non soddisfaceva i criteri di ammissibilità di cui al capitolo «festival» del programma Cultura, quali indicati nella guida del programma, e non è stata quindi selezionata per un finanziamento.

Poiché il programma Cultura giunge a scadenza nel 2013, non è più possibile chiedere sovvenzioni per festival in forza di tale programma. La Commissione ha proposto di istituire per il periodo 2014-2020 il programma «Europa creativa», che sostituirà i programmi Cultura e MEDIA. Una volta adottata la proposta di Europa Creativa da parte del Consiglio e del Parlamento, gli inviti a presentare proposte e le condizioni di partecipazione verranno pubblicati sul sito web della Commissione ([2]).

([1]) Decisione n. 1855/2006/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 12 dicembre 2006, che istituisce il programma Cultura (2007-2013), GU L 372 del 27.12.2006, pagg. 1-11.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004256/13
a Bizottság számára
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Gál Kinga (PPE), Mészáros Alajos (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Tabajdi Csaba Sándor (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), Tőkés László (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) és Bauer Edit (PPE)
(2013. április 15.)

Tárgy: Bizottsági támogatás a Liet International fesztivál számára

A Liet International egyesület már több éve szervez olyan dalfesztiválokat, melyeken Európa nyelvi kisebbségeihez tartozó művészek lépnek fel.

A rendezvényt, melyet számos televízió is közvetít, az évente megrendezett Eurovíziós Dalfesztivál inspirálta. A verseny egy nagy előadóteremben zajlik, a közönség az interneten keresztül adhatja le szavazatait, a győztest pedig a részt vevő kultúrközösségek tagjaiból összeálló zsűri választja ki.

A résztvevők között szerepeltek már többek között számik, asztúriaiak, korzikaiak, bretonok és walesiek, tisztelegve Európa kulturális és nyelvi sokszínűsége előtt, melyet a hivatalos fesztiválok sokszor figyelmen kívül hagynak.

Az, hogy e legveszélyeztetettebbek közé tartozó európai nyelvek és kultúrák egy ilyen magas színvonalú és nemzetközi visszhangot kiváltó kulturális és médiaesemény középpontjává válnak, arra ösztönzi e kulturális és nyelvi közösségeket, és többek között azok legfiatalabb tagjait, hogy újraélesszék e veszélyeztetett európai nyelveket, és újra használni kezdjék azokat.

Ezzel kapcsolatban felmerül egy kérdés: ezen európai fesztivál szervezői többször kértek pénzügyi támogatást a Bizottságtól, ám eddig kizárólag elutasító választ kaptak. Mi az oka ennek a visszautasításnak?

A 2013. évi, decemberben megrendezésre kerülő esemény kapcsán számíthatunk-e pozitívabb hozzáállásra?

Az aláíró európai képviselők véleménye szerint jelentős európai érdekű kulturális eseményről van szó, amely – akár a megrendezés, akár a televíziós közvetítés tekintetében – a pénzügyi támogatás odaítélésének valamennyi feltételét kielégíti.

Androulla Vassiliou válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2013. május 29.)

A Bizottság egyetért azzal, hogy a Liet International által szervezettekhez hasonló kulturális rendezvények hasznosak lehetnek a kisebbségi nyelvek és a nyelvi sokszínűség támogatására az EU-ban. A Liet International a Kultúra program ([1]) keretében 2012-ben támogatásért folyamodott a „Liet International 2012 Asturias" elnevezésű fesztiváljának finanszírozására. A kérelem nem felelt meg a Kultúra programban a fesztiválokra vonatkozóan – a program útmutatójában – meghatározott jogosultsági feltételeknek, és így nem részesült támogatásban.

Mivel a Kultúra program 2013-ban lezárul, a program keretében már nem lehet fesztiváltámogatásra pályázni. A Bizottság javasolta a 2014–2020-as időszakra szóló „Kreatív Európa" program létrehozását, amely felváltja mind a Kultúra, mind a MEDIA programot. Amint a Tanács és az Európai Parlament elfogadja a „Kreatív Európa" programra vonatkozó javaslatot, a Bizottság honlapján ([2]) közzétételre kerülnek a pályázati felhívások és a részvételi feltételek.

([1]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2006. december 12-i 1855/2006/EK határozata a Kultúra program (2007–2013) létrehozásáról (HL L 372., 2006.12.27., 1. o.)
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004256/13
till kommissionen
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Kinga Gál (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), László Tőkés (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) och Edit Bauer (PPE)
(15 april 2013)

Angående: Stöd till Liet International-festivalen från kommissionen

I många år har föreningen Liet International organiserat en melodifestival för artister från språkliga minoritetsområden i Europa.

Evenemanget, som sänds i ett stort antal tv-kanaler, har inspirerats av den årliga Eurovisionsschlagerfestivalen. Festivalen hålls i en stor sal och allmänheten kan rösta via internet. Segraren utses av en jury bestående av personer från alla de kulturer som deltar.

Således har bland annat samiska, asturiska, korsikanska, bretonska och gäliska artister deltagit och därmed hyllat den kulturella och språkliga mångfald i Europa som ofta ignoreras vid många officiella festivaler.

Dessa språk och kulturer tillhör Europas mest hotade, men ett sådant kulturellt evenemang som ges stort mediautrymme och internationell uppmärksamhet, kan fungera som motivation för unga människor från dessa kulturer och språkområden att lära sig dessa hotade europeiska språk och åter börja använda dem.

Till detta har vi en fråga: Organisatörerna av denna europeiska festival har alltid fått avslag på sina ansökningar om ekonomiskt stöd från kommissionen. Varför har dessa ansökningar avslagits?

Finns det förhoppningar om en mer positiv inställning rörande 2013 års evenemang, som kommer att äga rum i december?

De undertecknande Europaparlamentsledamöterna anser att detta är ett kulturellt evenemang av stort europeiskt intresse, som uppfyller alla krav för att få ekonomiskt stöd för såväl organisationen som tv-sändningarna.

Svar från Androulla Vassiliou på kommissionens vägnar
(29 maj 2013)

Kommissionen instämmer att kulturevenemang, till exempel som sådana som anordnas av Liet International, kan vara av värde för att främja EU:s minoritetsspråk och språkliga mångfald. Liet International ansökte om bidrag år 2012 inom ramen för programmet Kultur ([1]) till sin festival "Liet International 2012 Asturias". Ansökan överensstämde inte med kriterierna i Kultur-programmets festivaldel, vilka anges i programhandledningen, och fick därför inte bidrag.

Eftersom programmet Kultur avslutas 2013 är det inte längre möjligt att ansöka om bidrag till festivaler inom det programmet. Kommissionen har lagts fram ett förslag om att inrätta programmet Kreativa Europa för åren 2014–2020, vilket skulle ersätta både Kultur- och Media-programmen. När väl förslaget om Kreativa Europa har antagits av rådet och Europaparlamentet kommer inbjudningar att lämna förslag och villkor för deltagande att offentliggöras på kommissionens webbplats ([2]).

([1]) Europaparlamentets och rådets beslut nr 1855/2006/EG av den 12 december 2006 om inrättande av programmet Kultur (2007–2013) (EUT L 372, 27.12.2006, s. 1).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004256/13
to the Commission
François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE), Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE), Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE), Kinga Gál (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Ulrike Rodust (S&D), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Csaba Sándor Tabajdi (S&D), Nils Torvalds (ALDE), László Tőkés (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE) and Edit Bauer (PPE)
(15 April 2013)

Subject: Commission support for the Liet International festival

For a number of years, the Liet International association has organised a song festival dedicated to artists who sing in European minority languages.

The event is widely broadcast on television and takes its inspiration from the annual Eurovision Song Contest. It is held in a large hall, the public vote via the Internet and the winner is decided by a jury made up of representatives of all the cultural identities taking part.

It has given a platform to Sami, Asturian, Corsican, Breton and Welsh artists, to name but a few, thus showcasing a European cultural and linguistic diversity that is all too often missing from official festivals.

Devoting a major cultural and media event, which strikes an international chord, to some of the most endangered languages and cultures in Europe inspires some of the youngest cultural and language stakeholders to reclaim these endangered European languages and revive them.

There is one question: the organisers of this European festival have only had their repeated requests to the Commission for financial support turned down. Why have they been turned down?

Can they expect a more positive attitude towards the 2013 festival, which will be held in December?

The undersigned Members of the European Parliament maintain that the festival is a cultural event of great interest for Europe, which meets all the conditions to receive financial support, both for arranging the festival and for broadcasting it on television.

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission agrees that cultural events like the ones organised by Liet International can be valuable for the promotion of minority languages and linguistic diversity in the EU. Liet International applied for funding under the Culture Programme ([1]) in 2012 for its 'Liet International 2012 Asturias' festival. The application did not comply with the eligibility criteria of the festival strand of the Culture Programme, as specified in its programme guide, and was hence not retained for funding.

As the Culture Programme comes to its end in 2013, it is no longer possible to apply for grants for festivals under this programme. The Commission has proposed to establish the Creative Europe Programme for the period 2014-2020, replacing both the Culture and the MEDIA Programmes. Once the Creative Europe proposal has been adopted by the Council and the Parliament, the calls for proposals and conditions for participation will be published on the Commission website ([2]).

([1]) Decision No 1855/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 establishing the Culture Programme (2007-2013), OJ L 372, 27.12.2006, p. 1-11.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004257/13
aan de Commissie
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(16 april 2013)

Betreft: Hacken van vliegtuigen

Tijdens de Hack-in-the-box conferentie in Amsterdam op 12 april is een applicatie gepresenteerd waarmee een hacker de controle over vliegtuigsystemen kan overnemen. Met deze app kon de hacker een simulatievliegtuig bewust laten neerstorten.

1. Heeft de Commissie kennis genomen van de presentatie van de genoemde applicatie tijdens de Hack-in-the-box conferentie?

2. Staan de Commissie en EASA in nauw contact met de ontwikkelaar van de applicatie?

3. Is het in de praktijk mogelijk de controle over vliegtuigsystemen over te nemen door middel van de gepresenteerde applicatie? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Heeft de Commissie aanwijzingen dat (terroristische) organisaties al applicaties ontwikkelen om via deze methode aanslagen te plegen?

5. Hoe gaat de Commissie voorkomen dat pogingen slagen om met dergelijke applicaties aanslagen te plegen?

6. Geldt deze bedreiging ook voor andere vervoersmodaliteiten zoals het spoorvervoer en de zeevaart? Zo ja, zal de Commissie alles in het werk stellen om ook die modaliteiten te beschermen tegen mogelijke overname van de besturingssystemen door (terroristische) hackers?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(17 mei 2013)

1 en 2. De Commissie en het EASA zijn goed bekend met deze presentatie. Het EASA heeft het bedrijf uitgenodigd om de technische achtergrond van de applicatie voor te stellen.

3. Het EASA en andere autoriteiten die verantwoordelijk zijn voor de veiligheid van de luchtvaart, vliegtuigbouwers en systeemaanbieders onderzoeken dit al sinds maart 2013. De resultaten van het onderzoek naar deze applicatie worden momenteel onderzocht. Voorlopig wordt betwijfeld of de applicatie in staat is om in de realiteit de boordapparatuur van een vliegtuig over te nemen. Deze is immers beveiligd op basis van protocollen en luchtvaartrichtsnoeren.

Botsingen tussen vliegtuigen of tussen een vliegtuig en de grond worden voorkomen aan de hand van bewakingssystemen aan boord en radarsystemen op de grond.

Het EASA zal zijn onderzoek echter voortzetten en de Commissie zal het van nabij volgen.

4. De Commissie beschikt niet over aanwijzingen van lidstaten over een onmiddellijke bedreiging door het gebruik/misbruik van dergelijke instrumenten.

5. De Commissie is voornemens om haar optreden op dit gebied te versterken door het EASA nauwer te betrekken bij de cyberveiligheid van luchtverkeersbeheer (*Air Traffic Management* — ATM). Dit optreden maakt eveneens deel uit van het SESAR-programma.

6. De Commissie zet zich ten volle in om alle wijzen van vervoer tegen cyberdreiging te beschermen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004257/13
to the Commission
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Hacking of aircraft

During the 'Hack in the Box' conference in Amsterdam on 12 April 2013, an application enabling hackers to take control of aircraft systems was presented. With this app, the hacker is able to deliberately crash a simulation plane.

1. Is the Commission aware of the presentation of the said application during the 'Hack in the Box' conference?

2. Are the Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in close contact with the application's developer?

3. Is it possible in practice to take control of aircraft systems by means of the presented application? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission have any indications that (terrorist) organisations are already developing applications in order to carry out attacks using this method?

5. What plans does the Commission have in order to thwart attempts at carrying out attacks with such applications?

6. Does this threat also apply to other modes of transport, such as rail and maritime transport? If so, does the Commission intend to make every effort to protect these modes of transport, too, against possible takeover of control systems by (terrorist) hackers?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

1-2. The Commission and EASA are well aware of this presentation. EASA has invited the company to present the technical background of the presentation.

3. The claim has been investigated by EASA and other aviation safety authorities, manufacturers and system suppliers since March 2013. The current results in relation to this application are being analysed but as it stands there are doubts about its capacity to affect the real equipment on board of an aircraft which is protected, based on protocols and aeronautical guidance.

On-board surveillance systems and ground based radar safety nets prevent the risk of collision between aircrafts and between aircraft and the ground.

EASA will however continue its investigation and the Commission will follow this closely.

4. The Commission has no indications from Member States of immediate threat stemming from the potential use/abuse of such devices.

5. The Commission plans to reinforce its action in this field with a closer involvement of EASA in cyber security protection in relation to Air Traffic Management (ATM). This action is also part of the SESAR programme.

6. The Commission is fully committed to protect all modes of transport from cyber threat.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004258/13
an den Rat
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16. April 2013)

Betrifft: Bewegung im Kampf gegen Steueroasen — das Steuerabkommen mit Liechtenstein

1. Was ist der aktuelle Stand des Entwurfs des Steuerabkommens mit Liechtenstein?

2. Woran liegt es, dass dieses vor Jahren ausgehandelte Steuerabkommen vom Rat noch nicht verabschiedet wurde?

3. Wann fanden im Rat die letzten Beratungen über den Entwurf dieses Steuerabkommens statt?

4. Wann wird der Rat die Beratungen über den Entwurf dieses Steuerabkommens wieder aufnehmen?

5. Österreich und Luxemburg haben in der Presse angekündigt, einem automatischen Informationsaustausch über Zinserträge zustimmen zu wollen. Beurteilt der Rat diese Erklärungen im Hinblick auf die Wiederaufnahme der Beratungen für hilfreich?

6. Denkt der Rat über eine Neuverhandlung des Entwurfs des Steuerabkommens mit Liechtenstein nach?

Antwort
(24. Juli 2013)

Der Rat hat sich bereits mehrfach mit der Zusammenarbeit mit Liechtenstein in Steuersachen befasst.

Zum einen hat der Rat im Jahr 2006 einen Beschluss angenommen, mit dem die Kommission ermächtigt wurde, Verhandlungen mit Liechtenstein über ein Betrugsbekämpfungsabkommen aufzunehmen. Im Laufe der Verhandlungen wurden die zuständigen Gruppen des Rates angehört, und im Februar 2009 hat der Rat die Kommission ersucht, die Verhandlungen mit Liechtenstein fortzuführen, um eine effektive Amtshilfe und einen tatsächlichen Zugriff auf Informationen sicher-zustellen ([1]). Im Dezember 2009 hat die Kommission dem Rat die Entwürfe für Ratsbeschlüsse über die Unterzeichnung bzw. über den Abschluss des Abkommens ([2]) vorgelegt; diese Dokumente werden seitdem im Rat aktiv erörtert.

Zum anderen hat die Gruppe „Verhaltenskodex" des Rates im Jahr 2010 mit der Verbreitung der Grundsätze des Verhaltenskodex (Unternehmensbesteuerung) in Drittländern begonnen. Dies betrifft mehrere Drittländer, wobei der Schwerpunkt der Arbeiten auf Beratungen mit Liechtenstein liegt. Die Gruppe analysiert derzeit mehrere Fragen im Zusammenhang mit dem neuen Steuergesetz Liechtensteins.

([1]) Dok. 6116/09.
([2]) Dok. 16989/09 und 16990/2/09 REV 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004258/13
to the Council
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Progress in the fight against tax havens — the tax agreement with Liechtenstein

1. What is the current status of the draft tax agreement with Liechtenstein?

2. Why has this tax agreement, which was negotiated several years ago, still not been adopted by the Council?

3. When was this draft tax agreement last discussed in the Council?

4. When will the Council resume discussions of this draft tax agreement?

5. Austria and Luxembourg have announced in the press that they wish to agree to an automatic exchange of information on interest income. Does the Council consider these statements to be helpful in relation to the resumption of discussions?

6. Is it considering renegotiating the draft tax agreement with Liechtenstein?

Reply
(22 July 2013)

The Council has on several occasions addressed the issue of cooperation with Liechtenstein on tax matters.

Firstly, in 2006 the Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations for an anti-fraud agreement with Liechtenstein. During the negotiations relevant working parties of the Council were consulted and in February 2009 the Council invited the Commission to continue the negotiations in order to ensure effective administrative assistance and access to information ([1]). In December 2009 the Commission presented to the Council the draft decisions on signature and conclusion of the agreement and these documents have been and are actively discussed in the Council ([2]).

Secondly, in 2010 the Council's Code of Conduct Group started work on promotion of the principles of the Code of Conduct (Business Taxation) in third countries. Among other countries, the work concentrates on discussions with Liechtenstein. The Group is currently involved in the analysis of several issues regarding Liechtenstein's new Tax Act.

([1]) 6116/09.
([2]) 16989/09 and 16990/2/09 REV 2.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004260/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Android de Google: abus de position dominante

Selon un récent rapport, Google utiliserait son système d'exploitation pour téléphones mobiles Android comme un cheval de Troie pour tromper ses partenaires, monopoliser le marché des téléphones mobiles et contrôler les données des consommateurs. Google obligerait les constructeurs qui utilisent Android à proposer quasi exclusivement les applications phares de Google, comme Maps, YouTube ou Play, et à accepter aussi toute une gamme d'autres applications Google. Ces applications sont proposées par défaut à l'utilisateur au détriment des offres concurrentes. Par ailleurs, cette politique met Android en mesure de contrôler les données des consommateurs dans un marché mobile qu'il domine largement.

1. La Commission a-t-elle eu vent de telles pratiques?

2. Ne s'agit-il pas, une fois encore, d'un abus de position dominante via les plates-formes mobiles, vers lesquelles les consommateurs se tournent de plus en plus et qui sont dominées par le système d'exploitation Android de Google?

3. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle réagir?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2013)

La Commission a pris connaissance des problèmes que posent les pratiques commerciales de Google liées à son système d'exploitation Android. Au cours des derniers mois, plusieurs acteurs du marché ont porté ces mêmes questions à l'attention de la Commission. Elles font également l'objet d'une plainte formelle introduite par l'association professionnelle FairSearch auprès de la Commission à la fin mars 2013.

La Commission examine actuellement les problèmes évoqués dans la plainte de FairSearch afin d'établir s'il peut s'agir d'une infraction au droit de la concurrence de l'UE. Cette décision dépend d'une série d'éléments factuels, juridiques et économiques qui doivent être pris en considération au regard du cas d'espèce.

La Commission est déterminée à appliquer les règles de concurrence de l'UE de manière à garantir la concurrence, l'innovation et des conditions équitables pour tous les acteurs du marché.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004260/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Google Android: abuse of dominant position

According to a recent report, Google is using its Android mobile operating system as a Trojan horse to deceive partners, monopolise the mobile market and control consumer data. Smartphone makers who use Android are apparently required by Google to include flagship Google apps such as Maps, YouTube or Play on an almost exclusive basis, and also to agree to a whole range of other Google apps being given default placement, which puts competing providers at a disadvantage. This policy also allows Android to control consumer data in the mobile market which it dominates.

1. Is the Commission aware of such practices?

2. Is this not another example of abuse of a dominant position via mobile platforms, which are used ever more frequently by consumers and which are dominated by Google's Android operating system?

3. How does the Commission intend to respond?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issues raised with regard to Google's business practices in relation to its Android operating system. During the past months, a number of market players have brought the very same issues to the Commission's attention. These issues are also part of a formal complaint filed by the industry association FairSearch with the Commission at the end of March 2013.

The Commission is currently looking into the issues raised in the FairSearch complaint with a view to establishing whether they may amount to an infringement of EU competition law. This depends on a range of factual, legal and economic factors which need to be considered with regard to the particular case.

The Commission is committed to enforcing EU competition rules in a way which ensures that competition, innovation and a level playing field are preserved amongst all market players.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004261/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Aide fiscale aux clubs belges

La Commission s'est penchée sur l'aide fiscale accordée aux clubs belges de football.

1. Quels sont les motifs de l'enquête?

2. Quel fut l'élément déclencheur? Est-ce bien une plainte de l'Allemagne qui a incité les autorités européennes à de nouveaux devoirs d'enquête?

3. Quelles en sont les conclusions (partielles ou totales)?

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

Dans sa réponse à une lettre de la Commission du 1er octobre 2012 adressée à tous les États membres, la Belgique a informé celle-ci des modalités de son régime fiscal applicable aux clubs de football. L'objet de la lettre de la Commission était de lui permettre d'avoir un aperçu du financement du football professionnel au sein de l'UE et de l'incidence éventuelle des règles du traité relatives aux aides d'État sur ce financement.

Cette lettre a été motivée par le fait que, ces dernières années, la Commission a reçu des plaintes de la part de citoyens de plusieurs États membres à propos de mesures d'aide présumées en faveur de clubs de football professionnels. Cependant, seules quelques rares mesures d'aide en faveur de clubs de football professionnels ont été notifiées à la Commission pour approbation en application de l'article 108, paragraphe 3, du TFUE.

À ce jour, la Commission n'a encore reçu aucune plainte en matière d'aides d'État au sujet du régime fiscal belge.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004261/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Fiscal aid for Belgian football clubs

The Commission has looked into fiscal aid granted to Belgian football clubs.

1. Why did the Commission investigate this?

2. What prompted the investigation? Was it a complaint from Germany that led the EU authorities to conduct a new investigation?

3. What partial or full conclusions have been drawn from it?

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

Belgium informed the Commission of its fiscal regime regarding football clubs in the reply to a letter from the Commission of 1 October 2012 to all Member States. The purpose of this letter was to enable the Commission to get an overview of the financing of professional football in the EU and the possible impact of the state aid rules of the Treaty on this financing.

The reason for the letter was that the Commission has in the past years received complaints from citizens in several Member States concerning alleged aid measures favouring professional football clubs. But only very few aid measures to professional football clubs have been notified to the Commission for approval pursuant to Article 108(3) TFEU.

No state aid complaints have so far been received regarding the Belgian fiscal regime.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004263/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Abus de position dominante Mastercard

Les paiements par carte revêtent une importance capitale au sein du marché intérieur de l'UE, en particulier pour les achats transfrontières ou par internet. Les entreprises et les consommateurs européens réalisent annuellement plus de 40 % de leurs paiements scripturaux par carte. Il est donc capital pour la Commission d'empêcher les distorsions de la concurrence qui pourraient découler des dispositions interbancaires relatives aux commissions ou d'autres conditions.

Certaines rumeurs, provenant de ceux qui avaient déjà interdit certaines commissions interbancaires de MasterCard en 2007 et examinent actuellement les pratiques de Visa, laisseraient penser que Mastercard, géant américain des cartes de crédit, a dépassé les limites une fois encore.

1. Mastercard entrave-t-il la concurrence, en violation des règles de l'UE en matière d'ententes et d'abus de position dominante, sur le marché des paiements par carte dans l'Espace économique européen?

2. Les commissions interbancaires et pratiques connexes appliquées par l'entreprise ne sont-elles pas anticoncurrentielles?

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

La Commission est en effet préoccupée par les commissions multilatérales d'interchange («CMI»).

Les commissions interbancaires transfrontalières appliquées par MasterCard au sein de l'EEE ont déjà fait l'objet d'une décision d'interdiction par la Commission en 2007 ([1]). Le 24 mai 2012, le Tribunal a rejeté le recours formé par MasterCard à l'encontre de cette décision ([2]). MasterCard a ensuite formé un pourvoi contre cet arrêt devant la Cour de justice de l'UE. En 2009, MasterCard a offert des engagements unilatéraux prévoyant le plafonnement de ses CMI appliquées aux cartes de débit et de crédit ([3]) à 0,20 % et 0,30 % respectivement ([4]).

En mars 2008, la Commission a également engagé une procédure en application de l'article 101 du TFUE à l'égard de Visa ([5]). Visa Europe a proposé de limiter les CMI appliquées aux cartes de débit ([6]) à 0,20 % ([7]).

La procédure à l'encontre des CMI appliquées par Visa aux opérations par cartes de crédit s'est poursuivie ([8]). Récemment, Visa Europe a offert des engagements consistant à plafonner les CMI qu'elle applique aux cartes de crédit ([9]) à 0,30 %, ainsi qu'à modifier ses règles ([10]) en matière d'acquisition transfrontalière ([11]). Cette proposition sera soumise aux acteurs du marché.

La procédure Visa couvre également les CMI interrégionales ([12]) et l'acquisition transfrontalière. La Commission a engagé récemment une nouvelle procédure à l'encontre de MasterCard afin de pouvoir examiner ces aspects également dans ce cadre ([13]).

([1]) Voir IP/07/1959 et MEMO/07/590. Cette interdiction a été prononcée en raison non pas d'un abus de position dominante, mais d'une violation de l'article 101 du TFUE résultant d'une décision d'association d'entreprises anticoncurrentielle.
([2]) Voir le communiqué de presse n° 69/2012 du Tribunal de l'UE.
([3]) Pour les opérations transfrontalières effectuées au moyen de cartes de paiement «consommateurs» au sein de l'EEE.
([4]) MasterCard a déclaré publiquement qu'elle maintiendrait les mêmes niveaux de commissions jusqu'à ce que la Cour se prononce, en dépit de l'expiration formelle des engagements. Voir le formulaire transmis le 1er août 2012 par MasterCard à la Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), p. 19 (http://services.corporate-ir.net/SEC.Enhanced/SecCapsule.aspx?c=148835&fid=8305374).
([5]) La communication des griefs a été adressée en avril 2009. Voir MEMO/09/151.
([6]) Pour les opérations transfrontières au sein de l'EEE et les transactions nationales dans 10 États membres de l'UE ou pays de l'EEE.
([7]) Ces engagements ont été rendus contraignants par la Commission en décembre 2010. Voir IP/10/1684.
([8]) Une communication des griefs complémentaire a été adressée aux entités de Visa en 2012 et 2013. Voir IP/12/871.
([9]) Pour les opérations transfrontières au sein de l'EEE et les transactions nationales dans 10 États membres de l'UE ou pays de l'EEE.
([10]) Cette réforme permettra aux banques d'appliquer des CMI transfrontières moins élevées lorsqu'elles se font concurrence pour l'obtention de clients (commerçants) à l'échelle transfrontière.
([11]) Voir MEMO/13/431.
([12]) Ces commissions s'appliquent par exemple lorsqu'un touriste américain utilise une carte dans une boutique située dans l'EEE.
([13]) Voir IP/13/314.

Outre l'application des règles en matière d'ententes et d'abus de position dominante, la Commission entend proposer, avant l'été, une réglementation sur les commissions interbancaires appliquées aux cartes de paiement. Par ailleurs, plusieurs autorités nationales de concurrence ont ouvert des enquêtes ou ont déjà adopté des décisions à l'encontre de banques et des systèmes de paiement de Visa et de MasterCard en ce qui concerne les CMI nationales pratiquées dans le cadre de ces mécanismes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004263/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: MasterCard abusing its dominant position

Card payments are vitally important in the EU internal market, particularly for cross-border or online purchases. Every year, European businesses and consumers make over 40% of their non-cash payments by card. It is thus vital for the Commission to prevent distortions of competition that could be caused by inter-bank arrangements on fees or other conditions.

According to rumours from those who had already banned some of MasterCard's inter-bank fees in 2007 and are currently looking into Visa's practices, MasterCard, the US credit card giant, has overstepped the mark once again.

1. Is MasterCard hindering competition in the card payment market in the European Economic Area, in breach of EU antitrust rules?

2. Are the inter-bank fees and related practices applied by MasterCard anti-competitive?

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

Multilateral inter-bank fees ((Multilateral Interchange Fees or MIFs) are indeed a concern for the Commission.

MasterCard's cross-border inter-bank fees within the EEA have already been prohibited by a Commission decision in 2007 ([1]). On 24 May 2012, the General Court rejected MasterCard's challenge against the Commission decision ([2]). MasterCard has appealed this judgment to the ECJ. In 2009, MasterCard offered unilateral Undertakings to cap its debit and credit card MIFs ([3]) at 0.20% and 0.30% respectively ([4]).

The Commission also opened proceedings under Article 101 TFEU against Visa in March 2008 ([5]). Visa Europe offered commitments to cap its debit card MIFs ([6]) at 0.20% ([7]).

The proceedings against Visa's credit card MIFs continued ([8]). Recently, Visa Europe proposed commitments to cap its credit card MIFs ([9]) at 0.30% as well as to reform its cross-border acquiring ([10]) rules ([11]). This proposal will be market tested.

The scope of the Visa proceedings also includes inter-regional MIFs ([12]) and cross-border acquiring. The Commission recently opened new proceedings against MasterCard to investigate these aspects also within this scheme ([13]).

In addition to its antitrust enforcement, the Commission intends to propose a regulation on inter-bank fees for card payments before the summer. At the same time several national competition authorities are investigating or have already adopted decisions against banks and the payment schemes Visa and MasterCard for the domestic MIFs of these schemes.

([1]) See IP/07/1959 and MEMO/07/590. This prohibition was not for abuse of dominance but for the breach of Article 101 TFEU through an anticompetitive decision of an association.
([2]) See press release no 69/2012 of the General Court of the EU.
([3]) For cross-border transactions with consumer cards within the EEA.
([4]) MasterCard publicly said it would maintain the same levels of fees until the ECJ's judgment, despite the formal expiration of the Undertakings. See MasterCard's SECfiling of 1 August 2012, p. 19 (http://services.corporate-ir.net/SEC.Enhanced/SecCapsule.aspx?c=148835&fid=8305374).
([5]) The Statement of Objections was issued in April 2009. See MEMO/09/151.
([6]) For cross-border transactions within the EEA and domestic transactions in 10 EU Member States or EEA countries.
([7]) These commitments were made binding by the Commission in December 2010. See IP/10/1684.
([8]) A Supplementary Statement of Objections was sent to the Visa entities in 2012 and 2013. See IP/12/871.
([9]) For cross-border transactions within the EEA and domestic transactions in 10 EU Member States or EEA countries.
([10]) This reform will allow banks to apply reduced cross-border MIFs when they compete for clients (merchants) cross-border.
([11]) See MEMO/13/431.
([12]) Such fees apply, for example, when a US tourist uses a card at a shop in the EEA.
([13]) See IP/13/314.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004264/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Tirer le meilleur parti des mesures environnementales

1. La Commission compte-t-elle reconsidérer, comme l'y exhorte le Parlement, les demandes relatives à la création d'une base de données sur les meilleures pratiques permettant de diffuser les meilleures pratiques de mise en œuvre parmi les États membres et parmi les entités régionales et locales?

2. La Commission va-t-elle étudier comment déployer les technologies de l'information et de la communication afin de fournir le plus d'informations possible sur la façon dont la législation environnementale doit être mise en œuvre?

3. Pourquoi la Commission ne crée-t-elle pas, en collaboration avec les autorités nationales et avec le concours approprié de l'AEE, une commission des plaintes à laquelle les citoyens pourront communiquer les problèmes liés à la mise en œuvre de la législation environnementale?

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

1. Bien que la Commission n'envisage pas d'établir une base de données générale sur les meilleures pratiques environnementales, elle promeut déjà et est déterminée à promouvoir et encourager les meilleures pratiques par l'intermédiaire de divers autres moyens, notamment la publication de documents d'orientation et le soutien aux réseaux professionnels tels que les services d'inspection ou les juges.

2. Les stratégies globales de mise en œuvre (telles que la communication COM(2012)95 ([1])) et certaines législations environnementales spécifiques existantes de l'Union européenne, notamment la directive 2003/4/CE ([2]) et la directive 2007/2/CE ([3]), reconnaissent le rôle essentiel des technologies de l'information et de la communication dans la diffusion d'informations aux citoyens. Cette législation jette les bases pour la mise à disposition de renseignements en ligne sur la mise en œuvre des législations environnementales de l'Union européenne. La Commission étudie les moyens de poursuivre la réalisation de ses objectifs.

3. La Commission exploite déjà un système général de gestion des plaintes permettant aux citoyens de déposer des plaintes concernant des violations de la législation environnementale de l'Union. Les caractéristiques de ce système sont détaillées dans la communication de la Commission COM(2002)141 ([4]) actualisée par COM(2012)154 ([5]). Il n'existe actuellement aucun cadre général similaire permettant de déterminer la manière dont les autorités nationales compétentes devraient traiter les plaintes déposées au niveau national. Dans sa communication COM(2012)95, la Commission a considéré qu'il serait intéressant d'examiner la manière dont la gestion des plaintes peut être améliorée dans les États membres. La proposition d'un 7e programme d'action en matière d'environnement formulée par la Commission ([6]) envisage de mettre en place des mécanismes de gestion des plaintes cohérents et efficaces au niveau national. Dix études concernant la gestion des plaintes ont déjà été effectuées dans plusieurs États membres ([7]) et d'autres sont prévues (pour un bref aperçu, voir l'annexe).

([1]) 7.3.2012.
([2]) JO L 41 du 14.2.2003, p. 26.
([3]) JO L 108 du 25.4.2007, p. 1.
([4]) 20.3.2002.
([5]) 2.4.2012.
([6]) COM(2013) 710 final du 29.11.2012.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/aarhus/pdf/mediation_and_complaint-handling.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004264/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Making the most of environmental measures

1. Is the Commission planning to reconsider Parliament's demand for the introduction of a database of best practices, allowing best implementation practices to be disseminated across Member States and across regional and local entities?

2. Does the Commission intend to carry out any studies into ways in which information and communication technology can be deployed to provide as much information as possible on how environmental legislation should be implemented?

3. Why does the Commission not work together with national authorities, and with the involvement of the EEA as appropriate, to create a complaint unit where citizens can communicate problems related to the implementation of environmental legislation?

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

1. Whilst the Commission has no plans to introduce a general database of environmental best practices, it is already promoting and committed to promote best practices through a variety of other means, including publication of guidance documents and support for professional networks such as inspectorates and judges.

2. The crucial role of information and communication technology in disseminating information to citizens is recognised in the overall implementation strategies (such as Communication COM(2012)95 ([1])) and in specific existing EU environment legislation, notably Directive 2003/4/EC ([2]) and Directive 2007/2/EC ([3]). This legislation lays the basis for the provision of online information on how EU environment legislation is being implemented. The Commission is looking at ways to further achieve its objectives.

3. The Commission already operates a general complaint-handling system allowing citizens to submit complaints about breaches of EU environment legislation. The features of the system are set out in the Commission Communication COM(2002) 141 ([4]) as updated by COM(2012) 154 ([5]). There is currently no similar general framework on how the competent national authorities should respond to complaints submitted at national level. In its communication COM(2012) 95, the Commission considered it worthwhile to explore how complaint-handling can be improved in the Member States. The Commission's proposal for a 7th Environmental Action Programme ([6]) envisages setting up consistent and effective complaint-handling mechanisms at national level. 10 studies on complaint-handling in various Member States were already completed ([7]) and others are being planned (for a short overview, see the annex).

([1]) 7.3.2012.
([2]) OJ L 41, 14.2.2003, p. 26.
([3]) OJ L 108, 25.4.2007, p. 1.
([4]) 20.3.2002.
([5]) 2.4.2012.
([6]) COM(2013) 710 final, 29.11.2012.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/aarhus/pdf/mediation_and_complaint-handling.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004265/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Cadre pluriannuel sur le financement de la coopération de l'Union européenne en faveur des États ACP

Concernant le cadre financier pluriannuel sur le financement de la coopération de l'Union en faveur des États d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique et des pays et territoires d'outre-mer pour la période 2014-2020, les nouvelles modalités de financement, comme la combinaison de subventions et de prêts, comportent des avantages certains dans un contexte de raréfaction des ressources publiques.

1. Néanmoins, la Commission compte-t-elle réaliser des études d'impact approfondies et indépendantes afin de mesurer l'impact de ces nouvelles modalités de financement sur la réduction de la pauvreté, sur l'environnement, etc.?

2. La Commission va-t-elle publier des lignes directrices et des critères précis clarifiant les principes devant guider la sélection des projets dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de ces nouveaux types d'outils?

3. Comment la Commission compte-t-elle renforcer les synergies et les complémentarités entre les activités de la Commission, de la BEI et des autres institutions financières bilatérales européennes, telles que les banques de développement?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(7 juin 2013)

1. La combinaison de subventions de l'UE et d'autres modes de financement peut permettre de mobiliser d'importants investissements dans les pays partenaires de l'UE. Le financement mixte constitue l'un des outils utilisés par la Commission pour atteindre des objectifs stratégiques et, par conséquent, les exigences standard en matière de contrôle et d'évaluation s'appliquent également. Cette évaluation mesure entre autres l'impact de ces nouvelles modalités de financement sur la réduction de la pauvreté et sur l'environnement. En outre, des évaluations sont effectuées à mi-parcours. Celle qui porte sur le Fonds fiduciaire UE-Afrique pour les infrastructures peut être consultée librement.

2. Le financement mixte est mis en œuvre dans le cadre du champ d'action et des priorités stratégiques définis dans la programmation stratégique et régionale. Des critères de sélection sont définis sur cette base. Le processus d'examen et d'approbation concernant chaque opération de financement mixte comporte également des critères techniques qui servent à vérifier, entre autres, la valeur ajoutée de la subvention de l'UE et la soutenabilité de la dette.

En décembre 2012, une plate-forme européenne de financement mixte pour la coopération extérieure a été mise en place en vue de tirer le meilleur parti possible des mécanismes mixtes disponibles dans le domaine de l'action extérieure. La plate-forme (au sein de laquelle le Parlement a le statut d'observateur) réexamine actuellement les mécanismes mixtes existants. Les meilleures pratiques et les enseignements tirés du passé (par exemple en ce qui concerne la sélection des projets) fourniront des indications quant à la mise en œuvre des actions correspondantes.

3. Le financement mixte permet une meilleure coordination entre bailleurs de fonds et financiers, renforçant ainsi la cohérence des politiques, l'efficacité de l'aide et la visibilité de l'UE. La plate-forme européenne est également en train de réfléchir à la manière d'accroître davantage les synergies entre les institutions financières européennes et les banques de développement régionales.

Comme pour toutes les interventions de la Commission, le fait que cette dernière joue un rôle de premier plan dans le processus d'examen et d'approbation et soit pleinement engagée tout au long du cycle du projet garantit la cohérence du financement mixte avec les objectifs stratégiques et d'autres activités.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004265/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Multiannual framework regarding the financing of EU cooperation for ACP States

New funding arrangements, such as combined grant/loan funding under the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework regarding the financing of EU cooperation for the African, Caribbean and Pacific States and Overseas Countries and Territories have definite advantages in a context of ever more scarce public resources.

1. Nevertheless, does the Commission intend to carry out detailed and independent impact studies in order to measure the impact of these new funding arrangements on poverty reduction, the environment, etc.?

2. Is the Commission planning to publish guidelines and precise criteria clarifying the principles that should inform the selection of projects when these new arrangements are implemented?

3. How does the Commission intend to boost synergy and complementarity between the activities of the Commission, the EIB and other European bilateral financial institutions, such as the development banks?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

1. By blending EU grants with additional non-grant resources, important investments in EU partner countries can be catalysed. Blending is one of the tools used by the Commission to achieve policy objectives and thus standard monitoring and evaluation requirements also apply. This assessment includes impact on poverty reduction and the environment. Furthermore, mid-term reviews are carried out. That of the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund is publicly available.

2. Blending is carried out within the scope and policy priorities as defined in strategic and regional programming. On this basis selection criteria are defined. The screening and approval process for individual blending operations also includes technical criteria that check *inter alia* the added value of the EU grant and debt sustainability.

In December 2012 an EU Platform for Blending in External Cooperation was set up to optimise the use of blending in external action. The Platform (Parliament is an observer) is currently reviewing existing blending mechanisms. Best practice and lessons learned (e.g. project selection) will inform the implementation of corresponding actions.

3. Blending increases coordination among donors and financiers, enhancing policy coherence, aid effectiveness and EU visibility. The EU Platform is currently also analysing how synergy between European financial institutions and regional development banks can be further increased.

As with all Commission interventions, the consistency of blending with policy objectives and other activities is ensured by the Commission playing a leading role in the screening and approval process and being strongly engaged throughout the project cycle.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004266/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Adaptation des Fonds structurels pour l'égalité des genres

Dans son rapport sur les répercussions de la crise économique sur l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et les droits des femmes (2012/2301(INI); P7_TA(2013)0073), le Parlement européen demande à la Commission d'envisager une nouvelle adaptation des Fonds structurels de sorte à renforcer le soutien aux domaines concentrant l'emploi féminin qui sont susceptibles d'être touchés par la crise, ainsi que l'aide aux services de garde d'enfants, à la formation et à l'accès à l'emploi.

Quelles actions concrètes la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour faire suite à la demande des parlementaires européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(12 juin 2013)

Les propositions de la Commission concernant de nouveaux règlements sur les Fonds structurels et d'investissement européens (Fonds ESI) promeuvent le principe de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes ([1]).

La proposition de règlement portant dispositions communes (RPDC) ([2]) contient plusieurs dispositions concrètes visant à mettre en pratique le principe de l'intégration de la dimension d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans l'ensemble du processus de financement, parmi lesquelles une obligation de tenir compte de ce principe dans la préparation et la mise en œuvre des programmes, la prise en considération de la dimension «hommes-femmes» en tant que principe clé dans les procédures et critères de sélection, ainsi que des évaluations ex ante portant également sur le caractère adéquat de toutes les mesures prévues pour promouvoir l'égalité des chances entre les femmes et les hommes.

En ce qui concerne le Fonds social européen (FSE) ([3]), la proposition de règlement du FSE affirme clairement l'obligation pour les États membres d'intégrer effectivement la dimension «hommes-femmes» dans leurs politiques et programmes. L'article 7 souligne l'obligation d'appliquer une double méthode: la prise en compte systématique de la dimension d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, comme indiqué brièvement ci-dessus, et des actions spécifiques. Ces dernières peuvent être programmées dans le cadre de n'importe laquelle des priorités d'investissement du FSE, telles que «l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et la conciliation de la vie professionnelle et de la vie privée» ou «l'amélioration de l'accès à des services abordables, durables et de qualité».

Les nouveaux Fonds ESI seront directement liés à la Stratégie Europe 2020, dans laquelle la dimension «hommes-femmes» est un facteur important pour atteindre l'objectif d'un taux d'emploi de 75 % tant pour les femmes que pour les hommes.

Enfin, la Commission cofinance depuis 2009 un réseau d'apprentissage FSE axé sur le principe de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes. Ce réseau compte actuellement des partenaires de 17 États membres; il se concentrera sur les effets de la crise dans le domaine de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes lorsqu'il présentera à la Commission des recommandations relatives à l'intégration de cette dimension dans le FSE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=fr

([2]) Règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil portant dispositions communes relatives au Fonds européen de développement régional, au Fonds social européen, au Fonds de cohésion, au Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural et au Fonds européen pour les affaires maritimes et la pêche relevant du Cadre stratégique commun, portant dispositions générales applicables au Fonds européen de développement régional, au Fonds social européen et au Fonds de cohésion, et abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 1083/2006.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=231&langId=fr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004266/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Adaptation of the Structural Funds for gender equality

In its report on the impact of the economic crisis on gender equality and women's rights (2012/2301(INI); P7_TA(2013)0073), Parliament calls on the Commission to consider a further adaptation of the Structural Funds, in order to ensure additional support for areas of women's employment likely to be affected by the crisis, as well as support for childcare, training and access to employment.

What concrete action does the Commission plan to take in response to Parliament's request?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission's proposals for new Regulations on European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) promote the principle of gender equality ([1]).

The proposed Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) ([2]) contains several concrete provisions to make concrete the principle of the gender mainstreaming in the whole funding process, such as an obligation to ensure it in the preparation and implementation of programmes; gender perspective as a key principle in selection procedures and criteria; *ex ante* evaluations also covering the adequacy of all planned measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women.

As regards the European Social Fund (ESF) ([3]), the proposed ESF Regulation clearly states the obligation for MS to effectively integrate the gender dimension into their policies and programmes. Article 7 stresses the obligation to pursue a dual approach: by gender mainstreaming, as briefly mentioned, and by specific actions. The latter may be programmed under any ESF investment priority, such as 'equality between men and women and reconciliation between work and private life' or 'enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services'.

The new ESI Funds will be directly linked to the Europe 2020 strategy, where the gender dimension is an important factor to achieve the target of the 75% employment rate for women and men.

Finally, and since 2009, the Commission has co-financed an ESF Learning Network which focuses on Gender Mainstreaming. This network currently has partners from 17 MS and will focus on the impact of the crisis on gender when providing recommendations to the Commission on Gender Mainstreaming in the ESF.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=en

([2]) Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund covered by the Common Strategic Framework and laying down general provisions on the Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=231&langId=en

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004267/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Interdiction des expérimentations du secteur cosmétique sur les animaux

L'interdiction des tests de produits cosmétiques sur les animaux prise par l'Union européenne prend effet aujourd'hui, décision dont la majorité du Parlement européen se réjouit à juste titre. Cette mesure est en accord avec ce que beaucoup de citoyens européens croient fermement: le développement des cosmétiques ne justifie pas les tests sur les animaux.

Le principal grief des industries cosmétiques est, je cite, «que la science n'est pas encore prête à combler le manque de connaissances et que les alternatives aux tests sur les animaux ne répondent pas à toutes les questions de sécurité», et que «de plus, cette interdiction est un frein à l'innovation pour l'industrie cosmétique européenne et améliore très peu le bien-être global de l'animal».

L'Union européenne prévoit de financer le développement de méthodes alternatives aux tests sur les animaux. 309 millions de dollars y ont déjà été consacrés entre 2007 et 2011.

1. Quels sont les résultats de ces premiers investissements et qu'en est-il ressorti?

2. Quelles sont les alternatives imaginées par la Commission ou, du moins, quelles sont les pistes explorées?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2013)

Les travaux de recherche visant à mettre au point des méthodes d'essai de substitution financée au titre du septième programme-cadre de recherche, de développement technologique et de démonstration (7^e^ PC, 2007-2013) ont pour but de pallier l'important déficit de connaissances dans le domaine, à savoir le manque de connaissances scientifiques de base en matière d'essais toxicologiques et de sciences biomédicales. Ces connaissances sont essentielles pour pouvoir déterminer avec certitude tous les éventuels effets indésirables d'une substance chimique sur un organisme et être ainsi en mesure d'évaluer correctement la validité des méthodes d'essai de remplacement.

Ces travaux ont également pour objectif de mettre au point de nouvelles méthodes d'essai ne nécessitant pas l'utilisation d'animaux, reposant sur les technologies en «-omique», la biologie systémique et l'informatique, ainsi que les systèmes d'essai in vitro (cellulaire). Un exemple actuel de cette recherche au titre du 7^e^ PC est le consortium public-privé SEURAT-1 ([1]). Le laboratoire de référence de l'Union européenne pour la promotion des méthodes de substitution à l'expérimentation animale (LRUE CEVMA) du Centre commun de recherche de la Commission suit de près la validation des méthodes de remplacement, qui sera au centre de ces travaux. De plus amples informations sur les résultats et les progrès des projets en cours bénéficiant d'un soutien de l'Union sont disponibles sur le site web de l'action de coordination à l'échelle de l'UE intitulée AXLR8 ([2]). Les activités de recherche soutenues par l'UE ont produit un volume considérable de connaissances scientifiques, qui ont été publiées dans de grandes revues scientifiques.

La proposition de la Commission pour Horizon 2020, à savoir le programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation (2014-2020), prévoit de poursuivre le soutien à l'amélioration des méthodes d'essai garantissant la sécurité des personnes, y compris des méthodes de substitution à l'expérimentation animale ([3]). À ce stade de la procédure législative, cependant, il n'est pas possible de prévoir l'affectation des fonds en faveur de ce domaine de la recherche.

([1]) http://www.seurat-1.eu
([2]) http://www.axlr8.eu
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:fr:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004267/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Ban on animal testing in the cosmetics sector

The EU's ban on animal testing for cosmetics enters into force today. This decision has rightly been welcomed by a majority in Parliament. This ban is in line with what many EU citizens firmly believe: that the development of cosmetics does not warrant animal testing.

The main complaint of the cosmetics industry is, and I quote, 'that science is not yet ready to bridge existing knowledge gaps and that non-animal alternatives cannot address all ingredient safety questions', and that '[f]urthermore, the ban acts as a brake on innovation for the European cosmetics industry while achieving little to improve global animal welfare.'

The EU plans to fund the development of alternative methods to animal testing. USD 309 million have already been channelled into such development between 2007 and 2011.

1. What results have these initial investments had and what has been achieved?

2. What alternatives does the Commission have in mind or, at least, what possibilities have been explored?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

Research into alternative methods funded through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) aims to address the important knowledge gaps in the field, namely the lack of basic scientific knowledge in toxicological and biomedical sciences. Such knowledge is essential to be able to ascertain with confidence all possible adverse effects that a chemical could have on an organism and thus to be able to properly assess the validity of alternative testing methods.

This research also has the objective of developing potential new animal-free testing methods, based on 'omics' technologies, systems biology and computational approaches, and *in vitro* (cell based) test systems. A current example of such research under FP7 is the public-private consortium SEURAT-1 ([1]). The key aspect of the validation of alternative methods is closely followed by the European Union Reference Laboratory for Alternatives to Animal Testing (EURL ECVAM) of the Commission's Joint Research Centre. Further details on results and current progress in EU-supported projects are available at the website of the EU coordination action AXLR8 ([2]). EU-supported research has produced a large body of scientific knowledge, which has been published in mainstream scientific journals.

The Commission proposal for Horizon 2020 — the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), envisages further support for the development of methods for better human safety testing, including alternatives to animal testing. ([3]) At this stage of the legislative process, however, it is not possible to predict the possible allocation of funds to this area of research.

([1]) http://www.seurat-1.eu
([2]) http://www.axlr8.eu
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0811:FIN:en:PDF

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004268/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Fairplay financier dans le monde du football

Cette saison, Lionel Messi est l'auteur de 39 buts en Liga et de 5 réalisations en Ligue des champions. Une prestation hors du commun. Une autre performance mérite cependant d'être soulignée: son club, le FC Barcelone, est endetté à hauteur de 578 millions d'euros. Salaires mirobolants, déséquilibre financier, iniquité entre les clubs… la situation est partout la même en Europe.

1. Comment se positionne la Commission vis-à-vis de la proposition Platini d'une nouvelle réglementation portant sur le fairplay financier des clubs des tops européens?

2. La Commission travaille-t-elle à mettre en place des textes législatifs afin d'appuyer cette proposition?

3. Chaque année, les clubs de football dépensent trois milliards d'euros en transferts de joueurs. Entre 1995 et 2011, les sommes dépensées ont été multipliées par sept. Pourtant, moins de 2 % des indemnités de transfert profitent aux clubs plus modestes qui jouent un rôle essentiel dans la formation de nouveaux talents. Dès lors, pourquoi la Commission ne créerait-elle pas une redevance sur les indemnités de transfert avec pour objectif d'améliorer la redistribution des fonds entre les clubs riches et les clubs moins fortunés?

4. Les salaires des joueurs évoluant dans des clubs affiliés à l'UEFA augmentent en effet plus rapidement que les recettes de ces mêmes clubs. Dans 15 championnats affiliés à l'UEFA, la masse salariale dépasse 70 % des revenus des clubs. Une situation, à terme, intenable. La Commission va-t-elle encourager par des actes le système de «salary cap», que le championnat anglais de rugby a mis en place dès 1999?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(20 juin 2013)

Comme indiqué dans sa communication «Développer la dimension européenne du sport» ([1]), la Commission se félicite de l'adoption de mesures visant au renforcement du fair-play financier dans le football européen, tout en rappelant que ces mesures doivent respecter les règles de la concurrence et du marché intérieur. Le 21 mars 2012, le vice-président de la Commission Joaquín Almunia et le président de l'UEFA Michel Platini ont publié une déclaration commune sur l'interaction entre l'application des règles de fair-play financier par l'UEFA et le contrôle des aides d'État assuré par la Commission, en soulignant que l'objectif commun était de parvenir à une situation où les clubs de football professionnel évoluent en fonction de leurs moyens. La Commission n'entend pas proposer de législation à l'appui des mesures de fair-play financier édictées par l'UEFA.

L'idée d'introduire une redevance sur les indemnités de transfert afin d'accroître la solidarité entre les clubs de football a été émise dans une étude indépendante sur les transferts de joueurs ([2]). L'étude sera présentée et examinée au sein du groupe d'experts de l'UE «Bonne gouvernance» qui a été créé sur la base de la résolution du Conseil instaurant un plan de travail de l'UE en faveur du sport pour 2011-2014 ([3]). Ce groupe d'experts, avec l'aide de la Commission, doit présenter des recommandations au Conseil sur les transferts et les agents sportifs, d'ici la fin de 2013. Sur cette base, le Conseil assurera un suivi politique approprié.

En ce qui concerne le plafonnement des salaires, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire à la réponse qu'elle a donnée à la question écrite E-6876/2008 ([4]).

([1]) COM(2011)12 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/documents/f-studies/cons-study-transfers-final-rpt.pdf
([3]) 2011/C 162/01.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004268/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Financial fair play in football

This season, Lionel Messi has scored 39 goals in La Liga, and 5 in the Champions League. This is an extraordinary record. However, there is another record that deserves to be highlighted: his club, FC Barcelona, is in debt to the tune of EUR 578 million. The same situation is seen throughout Europe: extravagant salaries, financial imbalance, inequality between clubs, and so on.

1. What is the Commission's position on Michel Platini's proposal for a new financial fair play regulation for the top European clubs?

2. Is the Commission working on drafting legislation in support of this proposal?

3. Every year, football clubs spend EUR 3 billion on player transfers. Between 1995 and 2011, the amount spent increased seven-fold. However, less than 2% of transfer fees trickle down to smaller clubs, which play a vital role in developing new talent. In view of this, why does the Commission not introduce a levy on transfer fees with the aim of improving the redistribution of funds between rich clubs and less wealthy clubs?

4. The salaries of players playing for UEFA-affiliated clubs are increasing at a faster rate than the revenue of those clubs. In 15 UEFA-affiliated leagues, the wage bill exceeds 70% of clubs' revenue. This situation is unsustainable in the long run. Will the Commission take action to encourage a 'salary cap' system, as introduced in top-flight English rugby in 1999?

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

As stated in its communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' ([1]), the Commission welcomes the adoption of measures aimed at enhancing financial fair play in European football while recalling that such measures have to respect Internal Market and competition rules. On 21 March 2012, Commission Vice-President Joaquín Almunia and UEFA President Michel Platini issued a joint statement on the interaction between the application of Financial Fair Play rules by UEFA and the control of state aid by the Commission, highlighting that the joint intention was to achieve a situation in which professional football clubs live within their own means. The Commission does not intend to propose legislation in support of UEFA's Financial Fair Play measures.

The idea of introducing a levy on transfer fees to increase solidarity amongst football clubs was presented in the independent study on the transfers of players ([2]). The study will be presented and discussed within the EU Expert Group 'Good Governance', set up on the basis of the Council Resolution establishing an EU Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014 ([3]). The Expert Group, with the assistance of the Commission, is expected to make recommendations in the area of transfers and sports agents to the Council by the end of 2013. On this basis, the Council will ensure appropriate political follow-up.

With regard to salary caps, the Commission wishes to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-6876/2008 ([4]).

([1]) COM(2011)12 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/documents/f-studies/cons-study-transfers-final-rpt.pdf
([3]) 2011/C 162/01.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004269/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Cas de force majeure pour le passager aérien européen

La Commission veut renforcer les droits des passagers face aux compagnies aériennes lorsqu'ils demandent des remboursements ou des compensations en cas de retard.

Elle envisage d'établir une liste des conditions qui définissent les cas de «force majeure», une expression qui sert souvent d'argument aux compagnies aériennes pour excuser les retards. En contrepartie, les délais donnant droit à une compensation seraient allongés: 5 heures pour un trajet de 1 500 kilomètres et 9 heures pour 3 500 kilomètres.

1. Quels sont les critères pris en compte pour créer la liste des cas de force majeure?

2. Quel est cette liste?

3. À combien se montent les indemnités globales versées aux consommateurs européens dans ce cadre ces dernières années?

4. Quelle a été la base de calcul pour proposer ou décider des nouveaux délais pour l'octroi d'une compensation?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(23 mai 2013)

1 et 2. Dans la proposition de règlement modifiant les droits des passagers aériens ([1]), la définition proposée par la Commission pour la notion de «circonstances extraordinaires» découle directement de l'interprétation donnée par la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) dans l'arrêt *Wallentin-Hermann* ([2]). Pour plus de clarté, une liste non exhaustive de circonstances à considérer comme extraordinaires et de circonstances à considérer comme non extraordinaires figure à l'annexe 1 de la proposition. Cette liste reprend les cas ayant le plus fréquemment conduit, par le passé, à des divergences d'interprétation et renforce la sécurité juridique.

3. Aucune statistique n'est disponible sur les montants des indemnisations. Le droit à une indemnisation en cas de retard important découle de l'interprétation donnée par la CJUE dans l'arrêt *Sturgeon* ([3]), selon laquelle les passagers de vols retardés devraient avoir le même droit à une indemnisation que les passagers de vols annulés. La CJUE a confirmé ce point en octobre 2012, lorsqu'elle a maintenu son interprétation dans l'arrêt *Nelson* ([4]).

4. La proposition de définition de la notion de circonstances extraordinaires exclut la plupart des problèmes techniques. La Commission a proposé des seuils de déclenchement qui se fondent sur des délais raisonnables permettant aux transporteurs aériens de régler les problèmes techniques et qui reposent sur des données relatives aux retards et sur des calculs de coûts. Le seuil de déclenchement proposé est de 5 heures pour l'ensemble des trajets au sein de l'UE, quelle que soit la distance de vol. Pour les trajets hors-UE, les seuils de déclenchement proposés sont de 5 heures pour les vols inférieurs ou égaux à 3 500 km, de 9 heures pour les vols entre 3 500 et 6 000 km et de 12 heures pour les vols supérieurs ou égaux à 6 000 km. Le seuil de 5 heures a par ailleurs été choisi pour garantir la cohérence interne du règlement, puisque le seuil ouvrant le droit des passagers à un remboursement est, lui aussi, d'une durée minimale de 5 heures de retard.

([1]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil modifiant le règlement (CE) nº 261/2004 établissant des règles communes en matière d'indemnisation et d'assistance des passagers en cas de refus d'embarquement et d'annulation ou de retard important d'un vol, ainsi que le règlement (CE) nº 2027/97 relatif à la responsabilité des transporteurs aériens en ce qui concerne le transport aérien de passagers et de leurs bagages, COM(2013)130 final.
([2]) Affaire C-549/07 Wallentin-Hermann.
([3]) Affaires jointes C-402/07 et C-432/07, Sturgeon e.a., arrêt du 19 novembre 2009.
([4]) Affaires jointes C-581/10 et C-629/10, Nelson e.a., arrêt du 23 octobre 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004269/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Cases of *force majeure* for EU air passengers

The Commission wants to strengthen passengers' rights when they ask airlines for refunds or compensation in the event of delays.

It plans to draw up a list of conditions for establishing when *force majeure*, an expression which airlines often use to justify delays, applies. In return, passengers would have to be delayed for longer before being entitled to compensation: five hours for a journey of 1 500 kilometres and nine hours for 3 500 kilometres.

1. What criteria were considered when the list of cases of *force majeure* was drawn up?

2. What is this list?

3. How much compensation of this kind has been paid out in total to European consumers in recent years?

4. What calculation was used as a basis for proposing or deciding the new delay times entitling passengers to compensation?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

1 and 2. In the revision of air passenger rights ([1]), the Commission has proposed a definition of the term 'extraordinary circumstances' that is directly inspired from the interpretation given by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in the Wallentin-Hermann judgment ([2]). For further clarification, a non-exhaustive list of circumstances considered as extraordinary or as non-extraordinary is given in Annex 1 of the proposal. It addresses the most common cases that have led to divergent interpretations in the past and enhances legal certainty.

3. There are no statistics available on the paid amounts of compensation. Such right to compensation stems from the interpretation made by the CJEU in the *Sturgeon* judgment ([3]), according to which passengers of delayed flights should have the same right to compensation as passengers of cancelled flights. This was confirmed in October 2012 when the CJEU maintained its interpretation in the *Nelson* ([4]) judgment.

4. The definition proposed for extraordinary circumstances excludes most technical defaults. The Commission proposed time thresholds that take into account realistic delays within which airlines can cope with technical defaults and which are based on delay data and cost calculations. The proposed threshold would be 5 hours for all intra-EU journeys, irrespective of their distance. For extra-EU journeys, the proposed thresholds are 5 hours for journeys of 3 500 km or less, 9 hours for journeys between 3 500 and 6 000 km and 12 hours for journeys of 6 000 km and more. The five-hour threshold was also chosen to ensure the internal coherence of the regulation, as a passenger's right to reimbursement also arises after five hours' delay.

([1]) COM(2013) 0130 final, 'Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air'.
([2]) Case C-549/07 *Wallentin-Hermann*.
([3]) Joined cases C-402/07 and C-432/07 *Sturgeon and Others*, 19 November 2009.
([4]) Joined cases C-581/10 and C-629/10 *Nelson and Others*, 23 October 2012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004270/13
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Intégration des migrants

L'Union européenne se trouve à un moment charnière de sa politique de l'emploi. Depuis 2012, et pour la première fois en temps de paix aux XX[e] et XXI[e] siècles, sa population en âge de travailler est en recul. Sans une augmentation de l'immigration, elle diminuera de 14 millions de personnes dans les dix prochaines années.

Ce phénomène a non seulement des effets négatifs à long terme sur l'équilibre des systèmes de retraite européens, mais il entraîne aussi, à moyen et à court terme, une pénurie de main-d'œuvre. Malgré un taux de chômage d'environ 10 % (23,8 millions de personnes) à l'échelle de l'Union européenne, cette pénurie est déjà perceptible aujourd'hui et s'accentuera dans les prochaines années. À titre d'exemple, en 2015, entre 380 000 et 700 000 emplois ne seront pas pourvus dans les technologies de l'information.

L'immigration qualifiée constitue une approche importante pour résoudre ce double problème — recul de la population en âge de travailler et pénurie de main-d'œuvre. Les citoyens européens l'ont compris, et les sondages de l'Eurobaromètre montrent que 70 % d'entre eux considèrent l'immigration comme étant nécessaire pour l'économie européenne.

Le Conseil compte-t-il établir un cadre juridique garantissant aux femmes immigrantes le droit de détenir leur propre passeport et leur propre permis de séjour, et permettant de tenir pour criminellement responsable toute personne qui leur soustrait ces documents?

Réponse
(1[er] juillet 2013)

En application de l'article 17, paragraphe 2, du TUE, un acte législatif de l'Union ne peut être adopté que sur proposition de la Commission (droit d'initiative de la Commission européenne) et, en vertu des dispositions de l'article 79 du TFUE, le Parlement européen et le Conseil ne peuvent que statuer conformément à la procédure législative ordinaire pour adopter des mesures.

En outre, l'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire est attirée sur le fait que, en ce qui concerne l'immigration légale, un certain nombre d'instruments législatifs adoptés récemment traitent des problèmes auxquels il est fait référence dans sa question. Il s'agit notamment de la directive 2009/50/CE du 25 mai 2009 établissant les conditions d'entrée et de séjour des ressortissants de pays tiers aux fins d'un emploi hautement qualifié ([1]) et de la directive 2011/98/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 13 décembre 2011 établissant une procédure de demande unique en vue de la délivrance d'un permis unique autorisant les ressortissants de pays tiers à résider et à travailler sur le territoire d'un État membre et établissant un socle commun de droits pour les travailleurs issus de pays tiers qui résident légalement dans un État membre ([2]).

En outre, deux propositions de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil, présentées par la Commission, l'une établissant les conditions d'entrée et de séjour des ressortissants de pays tiers dans le cadre d'un détachement intragroupe et l'autre établissant les conditions d'entrée et de séjour des ressortissants de pays tiers aux fins d'un emploi saisonnier, font actuellement l'objet de négociations entre les deux colégislateurs. Une troisième proposition de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative aux conditions d'entrée et de séjour des ressortissants de pays tiers à des fins de recherche, d'études, d'échange d'élèves, de formation rémunérée et non rémunérée, de volontariat et de travail au pair (refonte) a été soumise par la Commission en mars 2013, au sujet de laquelle les travaux ont débuté dans les instances compétentes du Conseil. Ces trois propositions visent à renforcer le cadre des droits conférés aux ressortissants de pays tiers qui viennent séjourner et travailler dans l'Union.

Il convient, à cet égard, de signaler également que le Conseil est pleinement conscient des dangers auxquels sont exposées les femmes victimes de la traite des êtres humains.

([1]) JO L 155 du 18.6.2009, p. 17.
([2]) JO L 343 du 23.12.2011, p. 1.

Dans ses conclusions sur l'éradication de la violence à l'égard des femmes dans l'Union européenne, le Conseil a demandé instamment aux États membres «de veiller à identifier le plus tôt possible, autant que faire se peut, toutes les victimes de la traite des êtres humains, y compris les ressortissants de pays tiers et de l'UE, et à leur accorder une aide et un soutien, d'assurer notamment que les ressortissants de pays tiers se voient accorder un délai de réflexion et un titre de séjour, conformément à la directive 2004/81/CE ([3]) ou, selon le cas, aux règles nationales, et qu'il leur soit permis de retourner en toute sécurité dans leur pays d'origine s'ils le souhaitent».

Dans le Pacte européen pour l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes (2011-2020), le Conseil a invité à prendre des «mesures destinées à lutter contre toutes les formes de violence à l'égard des femmes», et notamment à «renforcer la prévention de la violence à l'égard des femmes et la protection des victimes et des victimes potentielles, y compris des femmes issues des groupes défavorisés ([4])».

Il y a également lieu de rappeler que, dans le domaine de la lutte contre l'immigration illégale, la directive 2009/52/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 juin 2009 prévoyant des normes minimales concernant les sanctions et les mesures à l'encontre des employeurs de ressortissants de pays tiers en séjour irrégulier ([5]) vise à apporter des réponses aux problèmes mentionnés dans la question. Toutefois, en ce qui concerne les sanctions pénales applicables en cas de rétention de passeport, le Conseil n'a pas reçu de proposition de la Commission.

([3]) Directive 2004/81/CE du Conseil du 29 avril 2004 relative au titre de séjour délivré aux ressortissants de pays tiers qui sont victimes de la traite des êtres humains ou ont fait l'objet d'une aide à l'immigration clandestine et qui coopèrent avec les autorités compétentes; JO L 261 du 6.8.2004, p. 19.

([4]) JO C 155 du 25.5.2011, p. 10.

([5]) JO L 168 du 30.6.2009, p. 24.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004270/13
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Integration of migrants

The EU is at a turning point in its employment policy. Since 2012, and for the first time in the 20th and 21st centuries during peacetime, the EU working age population has been declining. Without increased immigration, the working population will shrink by 14 million in the next decade.

This phenomenon not only has a long-term impact on the balance of European pension systems, but it also entails a shortage of manpower in the medium and short terms. Despite EU unemployment sitting at around 10% (23.8 million people), this shortage is already being felt and it will become more noticeable in the coming years. By way of example, between 380 000 and 700 000 vacancies in IT services will go unfilled in 2015.

Skilled immigrants are essential for resolving this dual problem of a shrinking workforce and a shortage of manpower. EU citizens understand this, and Eurobarometer surveys show that 70% of them believe that immigration is vital for the EU economy.

Will the Council draw up a legal framework guaranteeing the right of female immigrants to keep their own passport and their own residence permit, and making it a criminal offence for anyone to take those documents away?

Reply
(1 July 2013)

In accordance with Article 17(2) TEU, Union legislative acts may only be adopted on the basis of a Commission proposal (the right of initiative of the European Commission), and Article 79 TFEU provides that the European Parliament and the Council may act only and adopt measures in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure.

The attention of the Honourable Member is also drawn to the fact that, in the context of legal immigration, a series of recently adopted legislative instruments address the issues to which he refers in his Question. These instruments include Council Directive 2009/50/EC of 25 May 2009, on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment ([1]) and Directive 2011/98 EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third-country workers legally residing in a Member State ([2]).

Furthermore, Commission proposals for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer, as well as for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment are currently being negotiated between the two co-legislators. A third proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing (recast) was submitted by the Commission in March 2013 and the work has begun in the competent Council bodies. These three proposals aim at enhancing the framework of rights attributed to third-country nationals who come to reside and work in the Union.

In this context, it should also be noted that the Council is fully aware of the dangers faced by women who are the victims of human trafficking.

In its Conclusions on the Eradication of Violence Against Women in the European Union, the Council urged the Member States to 'Ensure early identification as far as possible, and assistance and support, to all victims of trafficking in human beings including third-country and EU nationals. In particular, ensure that third-country nationals are granted a reflection period and a residence permit in conformity with Directive 2004/81/EC ([3]), or, where applicable, national rules, and are enabled to return safely to their countries of origin if they wish to do so.'

([1]) OJ L 155, 18.6.2009, p. 17.
([2]) OJ L 343, 23.12.2011, p. 1.
([3]) Council Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2004 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities; OJ L 261, 6.8.2004, p. 19.

In the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020), the Council called for 'Measures to tackle all forms of violence against women,' including strengthening 'the prevention of violence against women and the protection of victims and potential victims, including women from all disadvantaged groups ([4]).'

It should also be recalled that, with regard to the fight against illegal immigration, Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009, providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals ([5]), aims to address the issues described in the Question. However, as regards criminal sanctions for withholding passports, the Council has not received any proposal from the Commission in this respect.

([4]) OJ C 155, 25.5.2011, p. 10.
([5]) OJ L 168, 30.6.2009, p. 24.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004271/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Statut de la mutualité européenne

Le Parlement a adopté plusieurs résolutions appelant à l'adoption d'un règlement sur le statut de la mutualité européenne. Il est regrettable que, ayant retiré la proposition de statut européen pour les mutualités en 2006, la Commission n'ait fait aucune nouvelle proposition qui doterait les mutualités d'un instrument juridique adéquat pour faciliter leurs activités transfrontalières. Par conséquent:

1. La Commission compte-t-elle, comme demandé par le Parlement européen, présenter une nouvelle proposition de statut pour les mutualités européennes?

2. Quels sont les résultats de l'étude commandée par la Commission sur la situation actuelle et les perspectives des mutualités dans l'Union européenne, qui analyse les difficultés rencontrées par les mutualités du fait de l'absence de cadres juridiques dans certains États membres pour la création de nouvelles mutualités, en raison des critères en matière de capitaux et de l'absence de solutions de regroupement?

3. Que propose la Commission comme solutions appropriées pour résoudre ces problèmes afin de mieux reconnaître les contributions apportées par les mutualités à l'économie sociale, notamment un statut?

4. La Commission va-t-elle réellement introduire dans la proposition de règlement, sur la base de l'article 352 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, les principales caractéristiques des mutualités basées sur des personnes, à savoir le principe de non-discrimination en ce qui concerne la sélection des risques et celui de l'orientation démocratique de leurs membres, en vue d'améliorer les conditions sociales des communautés locales et de la société au sens large dans un esprit de mutualité?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(11 juillet 2013)

La Commission partage entièrement l'avis du Parlement quant à la nécessité d'accroître le mutualisme en Europe, compte tenu, en particulier, de la conjoncture économique.

C'est dans cette optique que la Commission a financé une étude, publiée en octobre 2012, sur la situation actuelle et les perspectives des mutualités dans l'Union européenne, et, notamment, sur les problèmes juridiques et administratifs qu'elles peuvent rencontrer dans leurs activités transfrontalières; l'idée d'adopter un statut de mutualité européenne, qui permettrait aux mutuelles de s'étendre à toute l'Europe, a également été examinée. ([1])

En mars 2013, la Commission a publié un questionnaire dans le contexte d'une consultation publique ([2]), l'objectif étant de recueillir l'avis des parties prenantes sur les conclusions de l'étude précitée; la consultation a été clôturée à la mi-juin. Ses résultats, qui seront disponibles au troisième trimestre 2013, serviront à un nouvel examen approfondi des initiatives à prendre dans ce domaine. La contribution de M. Berlinguer, récemment adoptée par le Parlement européen, sera également prise en considération.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/mutuals/prospects_mutuals_fin_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/mutuals/prospects_mutuals_annex_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/mutuals/public-consultation/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004271/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Statute for a European mutual society

Parliament has adopted several resolutions calling for the adoption of a regulation on the statute for a European mutual society. It is regrettable that the Commission, having withdrawn its proposal for a statute for a European mutual society in 2006, has not brought forward any new proposals which would give mutual societies a suitable legal instrument to facilitate their cross-border activities. Therefore:

1. Will the Commission submit a new proposal for a statute for European mutual societies, as Parliament has requested?

2. What is the outcome of the study commissioned by the Commission on the current situation and prospects of mutuals in the European Union, which explores the difficulties mutuals have due to the lack of existing legal frameworks in some Member States for the creation of new mutuals due to capital requirements and the lack of solutions for grouping?

3. What adequate solutions does the Commission propose in order to resolve these problems so as to better recognise the contributions of mutuals to the social economy, and do they include a statute in particular?

4. Will the Commission actually include in the proposal for a regulation, on the basis of Article 352 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the main characteristics of person-based mutuals, namely the principle of non-discrimination with regard to risk selection and the democratic orientation of their members, with a view to improving social conditions of local communities and of wider society in a spirit of mutuality?

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

The Commission fully shares the Parliament's view of the need for more mutualism in Europe, particularly in the current economic situation.

It is in this context that the Commission financed a study (published in October 2012) analysing the current situation and prospects of mutual societies in Europe, including *inter alia* the legal and administrative problems that they encounter during cross-border activities; the idea of adopting a Statute for a European Mutual Society, allowing mutual societies to expand across Europe, was also examined ([1]).

In March 2013 a questionnaire was published by the Commission for a public consultation ([2]), seeking views of stakeholders on the findings of the above study, which closed in mid-June. The results of the consultation, which will become available in the third quarter of 2013, will be the basis for a further thorough examination of the appropriate policy initiatives to be taken in the area. The input of Mr Berlinguer's, recently adopted by the European Parliament, will also be taken into consideration.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/mutuals/prospects_mutuals_fin_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/mutuals/prospects_mutuals_annex_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/mutuals/public-consultation/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004272/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Produits pour lutter contre l'addiction à l'alcool

Peut-être un espoir pour les alcooliques: un nouveau traitement vient d'être autorisé par l'Agence européenne du médicament. Le Selincro coupe l'envie de boire et le plaisir ressenti, en agissant directement au niveau du cerveau.

Selon une étude réalisée sur 2 000 patients pendant 6 mois, 60 % des personnes ont réduit de manière importante leur consommation.

1. Comment se positionne la Commission sur la demande de spécialistes d'effectuer des études supplémentaires pour connaître ses effets sur la durée et lorsqu'il est combiné avec d'autres molécules?

2. Que dit la Commission sur le fait que 10 à 15 % des patients traités souffrent de nausées, parfois de coups de fatigue, qui durent rarement au-delà du 3e jour de traitement?

3. Même si ce médicament a un intérêt à être autorisé sur le marché, ne faut-il pas le tester en association avec d'autres médicaments, contre d'autres médicaments et s'assurer qu'il y a une balance acceptable en termes d'efficacité et de tolérance?

4. Ce médicament ne devrait-il pas être accompagné d'un étiquetage dissuadant les malades de croire que ce produit pourrait les sortir de l'alcoolodépendance, ce qui serait à la fois irréaliste et dangereux?

5. Sera-t-il prévu un soutien automatique (suivi ou psychothérapie) aux patients qui se verraient prescrire ce médicament?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(7 juin 2013)

La Commission a délivré une autorisation de mise sur le marché pour le Selincro en février 2013 ([1]).

1. Comme indiqué dans le rapport européen public d'évaluation ([2]), l'efficacité à long terme du Selincro a été évaluée sur la base d'une étude de tolérance et d'une durée de sûreté d'un an. L'autorisation de mise sur le marché oblige son titulaire à mener des activités de pharmacovigilance, dont une étude sur le mode d'emploi du Selincro et la fréquence de certains effets indésirables dans la pratique clinique.

2. La notice accompagnant le Selincro[1] apporte une réponse aux préoccupations évoquées par l'auteur de la question, notamment dans les sections consacrées aux effets indésirables et à la capacité de conduire un véhicule et d'utiliser des machines.

3. Un placebo a servi de comparateur lors de la mise au point du Selincro, puisqu'il n'existe actuellement aucun médicament approuvé pour réduire la consommation d'alcool chez les patients alcooliques. Aucune étude *in vivo* des interactions entre médicaments n'a été conduite[2]. Toutefois, des informations utiles sur les interactions avec d'autres médicaments et sur d'autres formes d'interactions sont fournies dans la notice[1]. L'évaluation scientifique a conclu que le rapport bénéfice/risque du produit était favorable[2].

4. La notice[1] contient les informations suivantes: «Le Selincro est indiqué dans la réduction de la consommation d'alcool chez les patients adultes dépendants avec une consommation à haut risque…»

5. Conformément à son indication autorisée[1], le Selincro «… ne doit être prescrit qu'en association avec un soutien psychosocial continu mettant l'accent sur l'observance du traitement et la réduction de la consommation d'alcool».

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/alfregister.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/002583/human_med_001620.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004272/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Products for combating alcohol addiction

A new treatment that has just been authorised by the European Medicines Agency may offer hope to alcoholics: Selincro takes away the desire to drink and stops the pleasure felt, by acting directly on the brain.

According to a six-month study carried out on 2 000 patients, 60% of those tested significantly reduced their intake.

1. What is the Commission's position on the request by specialists to carry out additional studies in order to understand the treatment's effects in the long term and when it is combined with other molecules?

2. What is the Commission's response to the fact that 10-15% of the patients treated suffer from nausea and sometimes from bouts of fatigue, which rarely last beyond the third day of treatment?

3. Although there are advantages to be gained from authorising the marketing of this drug, should it not be tested in combination with, and against, other drugs, and should an acceptable balance in terms of effectiveness and tolerance not be ensured?

4. Should this drug not come with a label dissuading patients from believing that it could cure their alcohol dependence, something which would be both unrealistic and dangerous?

5. Will automatic support (counselling or psychotherapy) be offered to patients who are prescribed this drug?

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

The Commission granted the marketing authorisation for Selincro in February 2013 ([1]).

1. As stated in the European Public Assessment Report ([2]), the long-term efficacy of Selincro was evaluated on the basis of a one-year safety and tolerability study. The authorisation obliges the marketing authorisation holder to perform pharmacovigilance activities, which include a study to investigate the pattern of use of Selincro and frequency of selected adverse reactions in routine clinical practice.

2. The product information of Selincro ([1]) addresses the safety concerns mentioned by the Honourable Member, particularly in the sections on undesirable effects and on ability to drive and use machines.

3. The chosen comparator in the development programme of Selincro was placebo, as there is currently no approved medicinal product for the reduction of alcohol consumption in patients with alcohol dependence. No *in vivo* drug-drug interaction studies have been conducted ([2]). However, relevant information on interaction with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction is provided in the product information. The scientific evaluation concluded that benefit-risk balance of the product is positive ([2]).

4. The package leaflet ([1]) contains the following information: 'Selincro is used for the reduction of alcohol consumption in adult patients with alcohol dependence who still have a high level of alcohol consumption …'

5. The authorised indication ([1]) of Selincro foresees that the product '… should only be prescribed in conjunction with continuous psychosocial support focused on treatment adherence and reducing alcohol consumption'.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/community-register/html/alfregister.htm
([2]) http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/medicines/human/medicines/002583/human_med_001620.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058001d124

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004273/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Agents de joueurs

L'encadrement juridique de la profession d'agent au sein de l'Union européenne est hétérogène.

1. Que propose la Commission?

2. Quand est-il prévu de mettre en place des normes à l'échelle de l'Union pour réglementer ce métier?

3. La Commission estime-t-elle qu'il faut améliorer la transparence concernant les revenus des agents et veiller à une harmonisation minimale de leurs contrats, à la mise en place d'un système disciplinaire et de contrôle ainsi qu'à la création d'un registre d'agents de joueurs?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(14 juin 2013)

La Commission reconnaît les différentes réglementations applicables à la profession d'agent sportif dans les États membres de l'UE. «L'Étude sur les agents sportifs dans l'Union européenne» ([1]) livre une analyse détaillée de ces réglementations. Il en ressort que l'encadrement juridique actuel au niveau de l'UE permet de garantir aux agents la liberté d'établissement et la libre prestation de services.

La conférence européenne sur les agents sportifs organisée par la Commission en novembre 2011 a confirmé ces conclusions. Les participants à cette conférence en ont retiré qu'une autorégulation du mouvement sportif constituait la meilleure démarche pour aller de l'avant, tout en n'excluant pas la possibilité d'une intervention de l'UE si cette approche se révélait inefficace. L'harmonisation de la profession d'agent sportif et le dialogue avec les acteurs du football professionnel ont été retenus comme futurs cadres de travail éventuels.

La Commission suit de près les travaux menés par la FIFA afin de mettre à jour les réglementations actuellement en vigueur applicables à la profession d'agent de joueurs de football, notamment en vue d'améliorer la transparence de leurs activités.

Ces travaux sont également analysés par le groupe d'experts de l'UE sur la bonne gouvernance dans le sport, qui doit formuler des propositions en ce sens d'ici fin 2013. Dans cette optique, la Commission poursuit son dialogue avec les acteurs du secteur sportif et les États membres.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/documents/f-studies/etude_agents_sportifs_rapport_final_novembre_2009_fr.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004273/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Sports agents

The profession of agent is regulated within the European Union in different ways.

1. What does the Commission propose?

2. When will rules be adopted at EU level in order to regulate this profession?

3. Does the Commission believe there is a need for more transparency regarding agents' incomes, for minimum harmonisation of their contracts, for the implementation of a disciplinary and monitoring system, and for the creation of a register of sports agents?

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

The Commission acknowledges the different regulations applicable to the profession of sports agent in the EU Member States. A detailed analysis of these regulations is available in the Study on Sports Agents in the EU ([1]). According to the study, the current regulatory framework at EU level is appropriate to ensure the agents' freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services.

These findings were confirmed at the EU Conference on Sports Agents organised by the Commission in November 2011. The participants in the conference concluded that a self-regulatory approach by the sports movement was the most appropriate way forward, albeit while maintaining the option of EU action if self-regulation fails to deliver the expected results. The standardisation of agents' activities and the social dialogue on professional football were retained as possible frameworks for further work.

The Commission is following the work carried out by FIFA in order to update the current regulations applicable to players' agents in football, notably with a view to increasing transparency in the activities of agents. This topic is also being examined by the Expert Group on Good Governance who is expected to make proposals in this respect by the end of 2013. The Commission is pursuing its dialogue with sports stakeholders and Member States in this context.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/documents/f-studies/study_on_sports_agents_in_the_eu_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004274/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Libre circulation des joueurs

Quelle est votre appréciation globale de la jurisprudence de l'Union européenne concernant la liberté de circulation des sportifs, en l'occurrence les arrêts Bosman, Kolpak, Simutenkov et Olivier Bernard?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(14 juin 2013)

Le sport relève du droit de l'Union européenne dans la mesure où il constitue une activité économique.

Lorsqu'une activité sportive prend la forme d'un emploi rémunéré ou d'une prestation de services contre rémunération, ce qui est le cas des activités des sportifs semi-professionnels ou professionnels, elle entre dans le champ d'application de l'article 45 ou de l'article 46 du TFUE.

D'après la jurisprudence de la Cour, il est clair que l'article 45 du TFUE concerne les restrictions à la libre circulation des travailleurs de toute nature visant à régler, de façon collective, le travail salarié, y compris les règles d'une association sportive. Un individu peut invoquer ledit article devant une juridiction nationale pour lui demander de supprimer des dispositions discriminatoires, sans qu'il soit besoin de mesures d'application supplémentaires à cette fin.

Une mesure qui constitue un obstacle à la libre circulation des travailleurs ne peut être acceptée que si elle poursuit un but légitime compatible avec le traité et est justifiée par des raisons impérieuses d'intérêt public. Même si ces conditions étaient remplies, cette mesure devrait tout de même être appliquée de telle manière qu'elle garantisse la réalisation de l'objectif en question et qu'elle n'excède pas ce qui est nécessaire à cette fin.

Concernant le sport professionnel, la Cour a déjà eu l'occasion de statuer que, compte tenu de l'importance sociale considérable que revêtent l'activité sportive et, plus particulièrement, le football dans l'Union européenne, il convient de reconnaître que l'objectif consistant à encourager le recrutement et la formation des jeunes joueurs est légitime (cf. arrêt *Bosman*, point 106).

Les services de la Commission suivent de très près les évolutions dans ce domaine et les règles limitant la libre circulation des sportifs (objectifs clairs, pas de mesures de substitution, proportionnalité, etc.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004274/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Free movement of players

What is the Commission's overall assessment of EU case-law on the free movement of sportspeople, with specific reference to the Bosman, Kolpak, Simutenkov and Olivier Bernard rulings?

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

Sport is subject to European Union law in so far as it constitutes an economic activity.

Where a sporting activity takes the form of gainful employment or the provision of services for remuneration, which is true of the activities of semi-professional or professional sportsmen, it falls within the scope of Article 45 TFEU or Article 56 TFEU.

It is clear from the Court's case-law that Article 45 TFEU does cover restrictions to free movement of workers of any nature aimed at regulating gainful employment in a collective manner, including sport association rules. Article 45 TFEU can be relied on by an individual before a national court as a basis for requesting that court to disapply discriminatory provisions without any further implementing measures being required to that end.

A measure which constitutes an obstacle to freedom of movement for workers can be accepted only if it pursues a legitimate aim compatible with the Treaty and is justified by overriding reasons in the public interest. Even if that were so, application of that measure would still have to be such as to ensure achievement of the objective in question and not go beyond what is necessary for that purpose.

In regard to professional sport, the Court has already had occasion to hold that, in view of the considerable social importance of sporting activities and in particular football in the European Union, the objective of encouraging the recruitment and training of young players must be accepted as legitimate (see *Bosman*, paragraph 106).

The Commission services follow very closely the development in this field and the rules limiting free movement of sportspeople (clear objectives, no alternative measures, proportionality etc.).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004275/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Réglementation du fonctionnement de la chaîne d'approvisionnement alimentaire

Le 5 décembre 2012, quatre membres de la Commission ont demandé, après la réunion du Forum à haut niveau sur l'amélioration du fonctionnement de la chaîne d'approvisionnement alimentaire, de «dégager le plus rapidement possible un accord sur le cadre volontaire relatif à la lutte contre les pratiques commerciales déloyales».

Par ailleurs, selon la Copa-Cogeca qui représente les agriculteurs européens, «un système mixte combinant des codes volontaires et une législation définissant les pratiques déloyales et abusives peut en effet contribuer à un meilleur fonctionnement de la chaîne d'approvisionnement alimentaire».

Face aux récents scandales liés à la circulation intracommunautaire de viande de cheval en violation flagrante de toutes les pratiques commerciales, la Commission n'estime-t-elle pas que les codes de conduite volontaires sont désormais insuffisants et qu'elle doit sans délai prendre les initiatives menant à une législation de niveau européen pour lutter enfin contre les pratiques commerciales déloyales dans la chaîne alimentaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(29 mai 2013)

L'application de la législation relative à la chaîne alimentaire relève de la compétence des États membres ([1]); ceux-ci sont tenus d'instaurer un système de contrôle officiel pour s'assurer du respect des exigences légales par les opérateurs et sanctionner les défauts de conformité. La Commission assure un suivi régulier de l'exécution par les États membres de leurs fonctions de contrôle, notamment par des vérifications sur le terrain.

Dans les scandales évoqués par l'auteur de la question, le système évoqué plus haut a bien fonctionné et a permis de déceler des violations des règles en vigueur. Néanmoins, la proposition relative aux contrôles officiels ([2]) vise à le renforcer encore, et de trois manières en particulier: en obligeant les États membres à punir de sanctions dissuasives les violations délibérées de la réglementation, en exigeant que les plans de contrôle nationaux comprennent des inspections régulières et inopinées destinées à repérer les éventuelles infractions intentionnelles, et en autorisant la Commission à imposer des programmes d'essai coordonnés.

Des discussions sont engagées avec les États membres autour d'actions spécifiques pour lutter contre la fraude alimentaire, améliorer les programmes d'essai et modifier les règles actuelles, dont celles qui régissent les passeports pour les chevaux.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 882/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 29 avril 2004 relatif aux contrôles officiels effectués pour s'assurer de la conformité avec la législation sur les aliments pour animaux et les denrées alimentaires et avec les dispositions relatives à la santé animale et au bien-être des animaux (JO L 165 du 30.4.2004, p. 1).

([2]) Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil concernant les contrôles officiels et les autres activités officielles servant à assurer le respect de la législation sur les denrées alimentaires et les aliments pour animaux ainsi que des règles relatives à la santé et au bien-être des animaux, à la santé et au matériel de reproduction des végétaux et aux produits phytopharmaceutiques, et modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 999/2001, (CE) n° 1829/2003, (CE) n° 1831/2003, (CE) n° 1/2005, (CE) n° 396/2005, (CE) n° 834/2007, (CE) n° 1099/2009, (CE) n° 1069/2009, (CE) n° 1107/2009, (UE) n° 1151/2012, (UE) n° [….]/2013 ainsi que les directives 98/58/CE, 1999/74/CE, 2007/43/CE, 2008/119/CE, 2008/120/CE et 2009/128/CE (règlement sur les contrôles officiels), COM(2013) 265.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004275/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Regulation of the functioning of the food supply chain

On 5 December 2012, following the meeting of the High-Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain, four Members of the Commission made calls 'to reach without further delay an agreement on a voluntary framework for tackling unfair trading practices'.

In addition, according to Copa-Cogeca, which represents European farmers, 'a mixed system with the operation of voluntary codes backed by legislation that defines unfair and abusive practices can indeed contribute to a better operation of the food supply chain'.

In view of the recent scandals relating to the circulation of horsemeat within the EU in flagrant violation of all trading practices, does the Commission not believe that voluntary codes of conduct are now insufficient and that it must, without further delay, take initiatives towards European-level legislation to tackle unfair trading practices in the food chain once and for all?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The responsibility for enforcing food chain legislation lies with Member States ([1]), which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving therefrom and sanction non-compliances. The Commission regularly monitors delivery by the Member States of their control duties, including through on-the-spot audits.

In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the official controls systems established by the Member States have worked well and have allowed them to identify violations of applicable rules. Notwithstanding this, the proposal on official controls ([2]) aims at further strengthening the existing system, especially in three areas: to require Member States to impose dissuasive penalties in case of intentional violation of the rules; to require that national control plans include regular, unannounced inspections directed at identifying possible intentional violations; and to allow the Commission to impose coordinated testing programmes.

Specific actions for fighting food fraud, improving testing programmes or modifying the current rules for example about horse passports are being discussed with the Member States.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health, plant reproductive material, plant protection products and amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, 1829/2003, 1831/2003, 1/2005, 396/2005, 834/2007, 1099/2009, 1069/2009, 1107/2009, Regulations (EU) No 1151/2012, [...]/2013, and Directives 98/58/EC, 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC, 2008/119/EC, 2008/120/EC and 2009/128/EC (Official controls Regulation), COM(2013) 265.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004276/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Faillite du système européen d'alerte rapide pour les denrées alimentaires

Le 20 juillet 2012, la Commission publiait un communiqué de presse vantant les mérites du système européen d'alerte rapide pour les denrées alimentaires et les aliments pour animaux (RASFF), communiqué selon lequel ce système «écarte ou atténue de nombreux risques en matière de sûreté alimentaire» et «les contrôles effectués nous garantissent une alimentation sans danger».

1. À la lumière de la situation chaotique et totalement incontrôlée lors des récents scandales relatifs aux plats préparés à base de viande de cheval, qui ont circulé sans aucun contrôle ou analyse à l'intérieur de l'Union, la Commission peut-elle faire savoir si elle assume encore ce communiqué de presse?

2. Dans le cas contraire, quelles mesures urgentes la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour mettre en place dans les plus brefs délais les mesures, analyses et contrôles qu'elle prétendait déjà en vigueur et détaillait dans son communiqué de presse de 2012?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(7 juin 2013)

Les mesures mentionnées dans le communiqué de presse intitulé «Alimentation: Les contrôles de l'Union européenne nous garantissent une alimentation sans danger» ont bien été prises. Il a notamment été procédé au lancement de l'iRASFF, plate-forme de notification en ligne permettant au RASFF de fonctionner avec plus de rapidité et d'efficacité que jamais. Tous les membres du RASFF sont promptement informés des risques graves touchant à l'alimentation humaine ou animale et peuvent ainsi réagir d'une manière coordonnée pour protéger la santé des citoyens de l'Union.

La décision de recourir au RASFF lors du récent scandale de la découverte, dans des produits à base de bœuf, de viande de cheval faussement étiquetée «bœuf» a donné d'excellents résultats. Par conséquent, l'une des mesures prévues dans le plan d'action mis en place à la suite de ce scandale consiste à garantir un échange rapide d'informations et d'alertes en cas de violation susceptible de constituer une fraude; c'est là une démarche analogue à celle qu'adopte le RASFF en cas de risque grave.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004276/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Failure of the European rapid alert system for food

On 20 July 2012, the Commission published a press release extolling the virtues of the European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), which stated that 'many food safety risks have been averted or mitigated' thanks to this system and 'safety controls ensure our food is safe'.

1. In view of the chaotic and completely uncontrolled situation during the recent scandal relating to ready meals containing horsemeat, which have circulated without any controls or analysis within the EU, can the Commission state whether it still supports this press release?

2. If not, what urgent measures does the Commission intend to take in order to put in place as soon as possible the measures, analyses and controls which it claimed were already in force and which were described in its 2012 press release?

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

The actions mentioned in the press release 'Food: Latest Report shows EU Controls ensure our food is safe' have been implemented, such as the launching of the platform iRASFF, an online notification platform which helps RASFF work faster and more efficiently than ever. All members of the RASFF system are swiftly informed of serious risks found in food or feed so that together they can react to food safety threats in a coordinated way to protect the health of EU citizens.

In reference to the recent fraud scandal with the discovery of horse meat in beef products, on which the presence of horse meat was not labelled, it was decided to call in the RASFF, with excellent result. Therefore one of the actions in the action plan following the horse meat scandal is to ensure a procedure for rapid exchange of information and alerts in cases of violations which may constitute a fraud, similar to what RASFF does in case of serious risks.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004277/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Empreinte carbone des activités online

Selon certaines estimations, à chaque minute, 48 heures de nouveaux contenus vidéo sont téléchargées sur YouTube, 700 000 utilisateurs de Facebook partagent des contenus, plus de 2 millions de requêtes de recherche sont traitées par Google et plus de 200 millions de courriels sont envoyés, sans parler des tweets, des blogs, etc. Si l'on songe qu'une seule requête peut produire entre quelques dixièmes de grammes et quelques grammes d'émissions de CO_2, selon le type d'énergie assurant le fonctionnement des appareils utilisés, il est clair que les rejets de CO_2 résultant de ces usages peuvent être substantiels. Les estimations actuelles de ces émissions, provenant notamment du secteur, varient fortement et sont étroitement liées aux différentes méthodes utilisées.

1. Les produits et services TIC consommeraient aujourd'hui 8 à 10 % de l'électricité dans l'Union européenne et produisent jusqu'à 4 % de ses émissions de carbone. Sur quoi se basent ces mesures?

2. Que propose la Commission pour une meilleure transparence dans la mesure de l'impact des TIC sur l'environnement?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Kroes au nom de la Commission
(27 mai 2013)

Ces estimations tiennent compte de la consommation d'électricité des réseaux de télécommunications fixes et mobiles, des centres de données, des serveurs et des équipements destinés aux utilisateurs finaux tels que les modems, les ordinateurs portables, les ordinateurs de bureau, les téléviseurs, les téléphones mobiles et les tablettes.

Les mesures sont fondées sur des inventaires des équipements, la consommation électrique des produits et la palette énergétique de chaque État membre pour déterminer les émissions de carbone des différents produits.

Comme l'Honorable Parlementaire l'a fait observer dans la question, la variabilité des résultats est trop importante. Étant donné que de nombreux rapports mettent en avant le potentiel des TIC pour améliorer l'efficacité énergétique et pour réduire les émissions de carbone dans d'autres secteurs, la Commission a estimé qu'il était prioritaire d'accroître la transparence sur l'empreinte écologique de ce secteur. Dans sa stratégie numérique pour l'Europe, la Commission a invité le secteur des TIC à élaborer un cadre pour mesurer son empreinte énergétique et son empreinte carbone. En réponse à cet appel, des normes ont été élaborées, notamment par l'UIT, l'IENT et la CEI ([1]). Ensuite, plus de 25 entreprises du secteur des TIC ont expérimenté les méthodes afin de vérifier si elles sont bien cohérentes et réalistes. Et le résultat est encourageant ([2]). En parallèle, une évaluation d'impact est en cours concernant d'éventuelles mesures de suivi.

Les parties prenantes sont encouragées à utiliser les méthodes développées et, lorsque les données sont disponibles, à baser les estimations sur l'analyse du cycle de vie complet des produits, y compris l'extraction de matières premières, la fabrication, l'utilisation et le traitement en fin de vie.

([1]) UIT (Union internationale des télécommunications), IENT (Institut européen de normalisation des télécommunications), CEI (Commission électrotechnique internationale).

([2]) Voir http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-231_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004277/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Carbon footprint of online activities

According to some estimates, every minute, 48 hours of new video content is uploaded onto YouTube, 700 000 Facebook users share content, more than 2 million searches are performed using Google and more than 200 million emails are sent, not to mention tweets, blogs, etc. If we suppose that a single query can produce between several tenths of a gram and several grams of CO_2 emissions, depending on the kind of energy used to power the appliances used, the release of CO_2 as a result of this activity could be substantial. The current estimates of these emissions, which mostly come from the sector itself, vary wildly and are closely linked to the different methods used.

1. Today, IT products and services are thought to consume 8 to 10% of the EU's electricity and produce up to 4% of its carbon emissions. What are these measurements based on?

2. What does the Commission propose for greater transparency with regard to the impact of IT on the environment?

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

These estimates include the electricity consumption of Telecommunication networks, both landline and mobile, Data centres, servers and end user equipment like modems, laptops, computers, TVs, mobile handsets, tablet.

The measurements are based on inventories of equipment, electricity consumption of the products and the energy mix of every Member State to derive the carbon emission of the different products.

As pointed out in the question, the variability of results is too broad. Given numerous reports highlighting the potential of ICT to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in other sectors the Commission has made better transparency around the sector's environmental footprint a priority. In its Digital Agenda for Europe, the Commission called on the ICT industry to develop a framework to measure its energy and carbon footprint. In response to this call standards have been developed notably by the ITU, ETSI and the IEC ([1]). As a next step over 25 ICT companies have piloted the methodologies to establish whether they are coherent and workable and the result is encouraging ([2]). In parallel, an impact assessment is ongoing on possible follow-up measures.

Stakeholders are encouraged to use the developed methodologies and, where data is available, to base the estimates on full Life Cycle Analysis of the products including mining of raw materials, manufacturing, use and end of life treatment.

([1]) ITU (International Telecommunication Union), ETSI (European Telecommunication Standardisation Institute), IEC (International Electrotecnical Committee).

([2]) See http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-231_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004278/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Bouquet énergétique du futur de l'Union européenne

La feuille de route pour l'énergie à l'horizon 2050 de la Commission pour une économie faible en carbone a été publiée en décembre 2011. Elle propose plusieurs scénarios pour la future structure de l'approvisionnement énergétique en Europe afin d'atteindre l'objectif de réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre.

L'Union européenne est en bonne voie pour atteindre ses objectifs en matière d'énergie renouvelable d'ici à 2020, déclarent les députés européens dans la résolution adoptée le jeudi 14 mars. Ils ajoutent que les énergies renouvelables constitueront, à long terme, le cœur du bouquet énergétique européen.

1. La Commission soutient-elle le passage vers les biocarburants de 3e génération, basés sur des déchets des cultures vivrières, et l'imposition de conditions semblables aux biocarburants importés?

2. La Commission partage-t-elle l'opinion du Parlement sur le fait que l'énergie nucléaire devrait rester à terme une source importante, que le gaz naturel jouera également un rôle important, sur le court à moyen terme, puisqu'il représente une manière rapide et bon marché de diminuer notre dépendance aux autres combustibles fossiles, plus polluants, et que le pétrole devrait lui aussi continuer à faire partie de notre bouquet énergétique en 2050, de manière plus faible qu'aujourd'hui, et qu'il devrait être principalement utilisé pour les transports longue distance de passagers et de marchandises?

3. La Commission considère-t-elle, comme le Parlement, que le taux et la qualité actuels de rénovation des bâtiments doivent être considérablement élargis, afin de permettre à l'Union européenne de réduire la consommation d'énergie de son parc immobilier d'ici 2050 de 80 % par rapport aux niveaux de 2010?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(12 juin 2013)

1. La Commission a souligné l'importance des biocarburants pour la décarbonisation du secteur des transports de l'Union Européenne dans la feuille de route vers une économie à faible intensité de carbone [COM(2011)112 final], dans la feuille de route pour l'énergie à l'horizon 2050 [COM(2011)885 final] et dans les documents d'accompagnement correspondants. Au sujet des émissions de gaz à effet de serre résultant des changements indirects d'affectation des sols provoqués par l'augmentation de la demande de biocarburants dans l'Union européenne, la Commission a suggéré, dans sa proposition [COM(2012)595 final], de limiter la part des biocarburants conventionnels produits à partir de cultures alimentaires pouvant être comptabilisée dans l'objectif en matière d'énergies renouvelables de la directive sur les énergies renouvelables (2009/28/CE) et de renforcer les incitations en faveur des biocarburants avancés en améliorant la comptabilisation de leur contribution à ce même objectif. Les règles comptables et les critères de durabilité fixés par la directive sur les énergies renouvelables s'appliquent aussi bien aux matières premières énergétiques et aux biocarburants nationaux qu'à ceux qui sont importés.

2. Comme elle l'a reconnu dans sa communication intitulée «Feuille de route pour l'énergie à l'horizon 2050» (COM/2011/885), la Commission estime que l'énergie nucléaire est appelée à jouer un rôle déterminant dans la transformation du système énergétique; le gaz sera également essentiel à cet égard puisque, grâce aux technologies existantes, le remplacement du charbon (et du pétrole) par le gaz pourrait contribuer à la réduction des émissions; par ailleurs, le pétrole sera probablement encore présent dans le bouquet énergétique en 2050 et sera surtout utilisé pour certains transports de passagers et de marchandises à longue distance.

3. La Commission estime en effet qu'il faut considérablement améliorer le rythme et le degré de rénovation des bâtiments pour pouvoir exploiter pleinement le potentiel d'économies d'énergie réalisables avec un bon rapport coût-efficacité dans le parc immobilier européen. L'Union européenne pourra ainsi atteindre ses objectifs à long terme en matière d'efficacité énergétique et de lutte contre le changement climatique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004278/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Future energy mix of the EU

The Commission's energy roadmap for 2050 for a low carbon economy was published in December 2011. It proposes several scenarios for the future structure of Europe's energy supply in order to meet the target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The European Union is on track to meet its targets in terms of renewable energy by 2020, according to MEPs in the resolution adopted on Thursday 14 March. They add that renewables will, in the long term, move to the centre of the energy mix in Europe.

1. Does the Commission support the move towards third generation biofuels based on food crop waste products, and does it believe that similar conditions should be imposed on imported biofuels?

2. Does the Commission share Parliament's opinion that nuclear energy should remain an important contributor in the long term, that natural gas will also play an important role in the short to medium term since it represents a quick and cost-efficient way of reducing reliance on other more polluting fossil fuels, and that oil should also remain in the energy mix in 2050, albeit with a lower share than today, and that it should be used mainly in long-distance passenger and freight transports?

3. Does the Commission believe, as Parliament does, that the current rate and quality of building renovation needs to be substantially scaled up, in order to allow the EU to reduce the energy consumption of its building stock by 80% in relation to 2010 levels between now and 2050?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

1. The Commission underlined the importance of biofuels in decarbonising the EU transport sector in its Low-Carbon Economy (COM(2011) 112 final) and the Energy Roadmap 2050 (COM(2011) 885 final) and their supporting documents. In its proposal on how to address the issue of emissions from indirect land use change caused by additional demand for biofuels in the EU (COM(2012) 595 final), the Commission proposes to limit the contribution of conventional food crop based biofuels that can be counted towards the renewable energy target of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) and strengthen the incentives for advanced biofuels through improved multiple counting towards this same target. Accounting rules and sustainability requirements contained in the Renewable Energy Directive apply equally to domestic and imported feedstocks and biofuels.

2. As acknowledged by the Commission's Communication 'Energy Roadmap 2050' (COM(2011) 885), the Commission considers that nuclear energy will be needed to provide a significant contribution in the energy transformation process; that gas will be critical for the transformation of the energy system as substitution of coal (and oil) with gas could help to reduce emissions with existing technologies; and that oil is likely to remain in the energy mix even in 2050 and will mainly fuel parts of long distance passenger and freight transport.

3. The Commission indeed considers that the rate and depth of building renovation needs to be substantially improved to ensure that the cost-effective savings potential in the European building stock is fully exploited. This will allow the EU to meet its long-term climate and energy efficiency objectives.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004279/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Perturbateurs endocriniens: suite à donner au rapport de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments

L'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) a rendu public, le mercredi 20 mars, l'un de ses rapports les plus attendus. L'agence, basée à Parme, avait été saisie à l'automne 2012 par la direction générale de la santé et des consommateurs de la Commission européenne afin de rendre un avis scientifique sur les perturbateurs endocriniens — ces substances chimiques interférant avec le système hormonal et suspectées de jouer un rôle important dans la multiplication des troubles et des pathologies.

L'EFSA devait en particulier répondre à plusieurs questions. Comment définir un perturbateur endocrinien? Comment distinguer les effets indésirables imputables à cette classe de molécules? Selon l'agence européenne, «il n'existe pas de critère scientifique spécifique défini pour distinguer les effets nocifs potentiels des perturbateurs endocriniens par rapport à une régulation normale des fonctions corporelles (appelées réponses adaptatives)».

1. Faut-il en conclure que la distinction entre un effet acceptable et un effet indésirable devra être établie pour chaque substance?

2. Même si l'EFSA évoque, dans son rapport, le «potentiel d'activité» des perturbateurs endocriniens, toute substance ayant une activité endocrinienne ne doit-elle pas être considérée comme un perturbateur?

3. Que répond la Commission au rapport de l'EFSA, sachant que le Parlement a pris position et qu'il est en total désaccord avec les tentatives visant à introduire le critère d'activité en tant que seuil de définition des perturbateurs endocriniens? Ces derniers se trouvent dans les emballages alimentaires, les produits de soins de la peau, les produits cosmétiques, les matériaux de construction, les produits électroniques, les meubles et les sols.

4. Quelles sont les mesures que la Commission entend prendre pour protéger efficacement la santé humaine, dès lors qu'un nombre croissant d'études scientifiques laisse entendre que les perturbateurs endocriniens jouent un rôle tant dans les maladies chroniques, notamment les cancers hormono-dépendants, l'obésité, le diabète et les maladies cardiovasculaires, que dans les problèmes de procréation?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(7 juin 2013)

Conformément à l'avis scientifique publié en mars 2013 ([1]) par l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments sur les perturbateurs endocriniens, un jugement d'expert au cas par cas est actuellement nécessaire pour déterminer le seuil biologique entre modulation endocrinienne et effet indésirable.

Dans son avis, l'Autorité souscrit à la définition de perturbateur endocrinien que donne l'OMS dans son programme international sur la sécurité chimique (2002) ([2]), laquelle requiert un lien de cause à effet entre le mode d'action et l'effet indésirable. Une substance ayant une activité endocrinienne peut avoir des effets sur le système endocrinien, mais seul un perturbateur endocrinien peut avoir des effets indésirables.

La définition de perturbateur endocrinien de l'OMS est également entérinée dans le «State of the art assessment on endocrine disruptors» (Kortenkamp, janvier 2012) ([3]), dans la résolution du Parlement européen sur la protection de la santé publique contre les perturbateurs endocriniens (janvier 2013) ([4]), dans le rapport de l'OMS et du PNUE sur les substances chimiques perturbant les fonctions endocriniennes (février 2013) ([5]) ainsi que dans le rapport du groupe consultatif d'experts sur les perturbateurs endocriniens (CCR, mars 2013) ([6]). Aucun désaccord ne semble donc exister entre l'Autorité et le Parlement européen au sujet de cette définition.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3132.pdf
([2]) http://www.who.int/ipcs/publications/new_issues/endocrine_disruptors/en/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/endocrine/documents/studies_en.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2013-0027+0+DOC+PDF+V0//E
([5]) http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/endocrine/en/
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm?id=1410&dt_code=NWS&obj_id=16530&ori=RSS

Plusieurs textes législatifs de l'Union [comme le règlement (CE) n° 1107/2009 ([7]), le règlement (UE) n° 528/2012 ([8]), la directive 2000/60/CE ([9]) et le règlement (CE) n° 1907/2006 ([10])] proposent des mesures pour contrôler les perturbateurs endocriniens. La Commission entend mettre au point une stratégie conforme aux définitions internationales exposées au point 3 et scientifiquement étayée pour garantir que la santé humaine et l'environnement jouissent d'une protection maximale.

([7]) JO L 309 du 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([8]) JO L 167 du 27.6.2012, p. 1.
([9]) JO L 327 du 22.12.2000, p. 1.
([10]) JO L 396 du 30.12.2006, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004279/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Endocrine disruptors: follow-up to the European Food Safety Authority report

On 20 March, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published one of its most eagerly anticipated reports. In autumn 2012, the Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumers asked the authority, based in Parma, to deliver a scientific opinion on endocrine disruptors — chemical substances which interfere with the hormone system and which are thought to play a significant role in the development of disorders and pathologies.

EFSA was supposed to respond to several questions in particular. What is the definition of an endocrine disruptor? How can we distinguish the adverse effects linked to this class of molecules? According to the European authority, 'there are no specific scientific criteria defined to distinguish potential adverse effects of endocrine disruptors from normal regulation of body functions (so-called "adaptive responses")'.

1. Should we conclude that the distinction between an acceptable effect and an adverse effect ought to be established for each substance?

2. Although EFSA mentions the 'potential activity' of endocrine disruptors in its report, should all substances with endocrine activity not be considered disruptors?

3. How would the Commission respond to EFSA's report, given that Parliament has taken a position and is completely opposed to the attempts to introduce the activity criterion as a threshold for the definition of endocrine disruptors? These substances are found in food packaging, skincare products, cosmetic products, building materials, electronic products, furniture and flooring.

4. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure effective protection for human health, given that a growing number of scientific studies are showing that endocrine disruptors play a role in both chronic illnesses, including hormone-dependent cancers, obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, and in fertility problems?

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

According to the European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Opinion on endocrine disruptors issued in March 2013 ([1]), for the time being a case-by-case expert judgment is required to assess when a biological threshold between endocrine modulation and adverse effect is crossed.

The European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Opinion endorses the WHO/IPCS (2002) ([2]) definition of endocrine disruptor, which requires a causal link between the endocrine-mediated mode of action and the adverse effect. A substance with endocrine activity may result in effects on the endocrine system, but only an endocrine disruptor may cause adverse effects.

The WHO/IPCS (2002) definition of endocrine disruptor has also been endorsed by the 'State of the art assessment on endocrine disruptors' (Kortenkamp, January 2012) ([3]), by the 'European Parliament Resolution on the protection of public health by endocrine disruptors' (January 2013) ([4]), by the WHO/UNEP report on endocrine disrupting chemicals (February 2013) ([5]) and by the report of the Endocrine Disrupters Expert Advisory Group (JRC, March 2013) ([6]). Therefore, it seems that there is no disagreement between the European Food Safety Authority and the European Parliament on the definition of endocrine disruptor.

([1]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3132.pdf
([2]) http://www.who.int/ipcs/publications/new_issues/endocrine_disruptors/en/.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/endocrine/documents/studies_en.htm
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2013-0027+0+DOC+PDF+V0//E.
([5]) http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/endocrine/en/.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm?id=1410&dt_code=NWS&obj_id=16530&ori=RSS.

In several EU pieces of legislation (e.g. Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([7]), Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 ([8]), Directive 2000/60/EC ([9]), Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 ([10])) there are measures to control endocrine disrupters. An approach consistent with international definitions outlined in point 3 and science based will be developed by the Commission to ensure the highest level of protection to human health and to the environment.

([7]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1-50.
([8]) OJ L 167, 27.6.2012, p. 1-123.
([9]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1-73.
([10]) OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1-849.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004280/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Gibraltar et ses faveurs fiscales envers les opérateurs de jeux en ligne

Bien qu'ayant des atouts touristiques, ce ne sont pas vraiment ceux-ci qui rendent Gibraltar intéressant pour les opérateurs de jeux d'argent. Effectivement, sans les faveurs fiscales que l'île propose aux investisseurs, elle serait certainement une banale destination touristique.

En se basant à Gibraltar, les sites de poker et de casinos en ligne peuvent à la fois servir ceux qui marchent déjà vers l'approbation des jeux et ceux qui sont encore enclavés par les mesures restrictives. Certes, d'autres endroits comme Antigua ou les réserves de Kahnawake sont à leurs dispositions, mais ils préfèrent rester sur Gibraltar qui a l'avantage d'être proche de l'Europe, et qui reste pour l'instant, l'endroit le plus lucratif pour leurs affaires.

Avec un taux de 15 % d'imposition sur les bénéfices, il est tout à fait compréhensible que les opérateurs décident de s'y installer.

1. Que compte faire la Commission, qui dans le même temps se bat contre l'évasion fiscale et les paradis fiscaux, concernant Gibraltar et ses opérateurs de jeux en ligne établis dans l'île pour ses largesses fiscales?

2. N'y-a-t-il pas concurrence déloyale de la part des entreprises de jeux en ligne basées à Gibraltar par rapport aux entreprises effectuant les mêmes prestations au sein d'États membres qui ne sont pas des paradis fiscaux?

3. La Commission a-t-elle commandité ou compte-t-elle commanditer une analyse d'impact du gambling business à Gibraltar en terme, par exemple, de création et suppression d'emplois en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2013)

1 et 3. La Commission ne prend actuellement aucune mesure dans le domaine de la fiscalité directe visant spécialement les opérateurs de jeux en ligne établis à Gibraltar; elle ne prévoit pas non plus de réaliser une analyse d'impact sur les opérations de jeux d'argent à Gibraltar.

Les États membres sont autorisés à établir les régimes fiscaux qu'ils jugent appropriés, dès lors que ceux-ci sont conformes à la législation de l'Union européenne.

2. Le groupe «Code de conduite» établi par les États membres pour lutter contre la concurrence fiscale déloyale a récemment passé en revue la loi relative à l'impôt sur le revenu à Gibraltar, adoptée en 2010. Dans son rapport au Conseil daté du 23 novembre 2012 ([1]) le groupe a conclu que certains aspects de cette loi, qui ne concernent pas les jeux en ligne, étaient dommageables. Le Royaume-Uni a déjà informé le groupe sur les travaux qu'il a déjà entamés pour assurer le respect des principes énoncés dans ce code de conduite.

Les autres États membres sont libres d'instaurer des mesures visant à prévenir les abus, s'ils les estiment nécessaires pour préserver leur assiette d'imposition, du moment que ces mesures sont conformes à la législation de l'UE.

Quant à la fiscalité indirecte, bien que Gibraltar ne soit pas couvert par le champ d'application territorial de la TVA, les jeux en ligne relèvent des règles sur la fiscalité des entreprises fournissant des services en ligne à des clients. Il n'existe pas d'exonération en bloc de la TVA pour les entreprises de jeux et une taxe peut être perçue en fonction du pays dans lequel les clients résident ainsi que des modalités de mise en œuvre de toute exonération éventuelle par les États membres.

([1]) Document 16488/12 FISC 173.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004280/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar and its tax concessions for online gambling operators

Gibraltar's appeal to gambling operators has little to do with its tourist attractions. There would be nothing to distinguish the island from other tourist destinations were it not for the tax concessions it grants to investors.

Online poker and casino sites which base their operations in Gibraltar can provide services both to countries which are already moving towards more relaxed gambling laws and to those which still impose restrictive measures. They could of course choose other locations such as Antigua or the Kahnawake reserve, but they prefer to stay in Gibraltar, which has the advantage of being close to Europe and is at present the most lucrative site for their operations.

With a 15% tax rate on profits, it is not hard to see why companies decide to set up operations there.

1. In view of the fact that the Commission is currently working to combat tax evasion and tax havens, what action is it planning to take in respect of Gibraltar and the online gambling operators which have established themselves on the island in order to enjoy its tax breaks?

2. Are the Gibraltar-based online gambling companies not engaging in unfair competition against companies providing the same services in Member States which are not tax havens?

3. Has the Commission commissioned, or is it planning to commission, an impact analysis of gambling operations in Gibraltar, in terms of job creation or losses in Europe, for example?

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

1 and 3. The Commission is not currently taking any actions in the area of direct taxation specifically targeting online gambling operators established in Gibraltar, nor is the Commission planning to undertake an impact analysis of gambling operations in Gibraltar.

Member States are entitled to establish the tax regimes they see fit, so long as these comply with EC law.

2. The Code of Conduct Group, established by Member States to combat unfair tax competition, has recently reviewed Gibraltar's 2010 Income Tax Act. In its report to the Council dated 23 November 2012 ([1]) the Group concluded that certain aspects of the Act, which do not relate to online gambling, were harmful. The United Kingdom has already informed the Group about work already begun to ensure compliance with the principles of the Code.

Other Member States are free to introduce such anti-abuse measures as they think are necessary to defend their tax bases, so long as they comply with EC law.

Regarding indirect tax, although Gibraltar is outside the territorial scope of VAT, online gambling falls within rules for tax on business to customers electronically supplied services. There is no blanket exemption from VAT for gambling and tax may be due depending on where customers are located and how Member States implement any exemption.

([1]) Document 16488/12 FISC 173.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004281/13
aan de Raad
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(16 april 2013)

Betreft: Verplaatsing van de mars voor gelijkheid door Vilnius

De gemeentelijke autoriteiten van Vilnius hebben besloten de mars voor gelijkheid door de centrale Gediminas-straat van de Litouwse hoofdstad te verbieden. Volgens de gemeentelijke autoriteiten van Vilnius is de mars verplaatst naar de minder centraal gelegen Upės-straat naar aanleiding van informatie die erop zou wijzen dat „tijdens de mars een bedreiging voor de openbare veiligheid kan ontstaan". De politie heeft verklaard dat niet objectief kan worden aangetoond dat de doelstellingen van de mars niet kunnen worden verwezenlijkt wanneer het evenement op een andere locatie dan de Gediminas-straat wordt gehouden.

Is de Raad op de hoogte van het feit dat de autoriteiten van Vilnius hebben geweigerd toestemming te verlenen om de Baltische Gay Pride in juli 2013 langs de door de organisatoren gevraagde route te laten plaatsvinden?

Is de Raad op de hoogte van het feit dat deze weigering werd gerechtvaardigd op grond van veiligheidsoverwegingen, aangezien de politie van Vilnius niet gelooft in staat te zijn de Baltische Gay Pride naar behoren te beschermen indien deze op de gevraagde locatie plaatsvindt?

Is de Raad van mening dat indien de autoriteiten van Vilnius niet in staat zijn adequate bescherming te bieden bij een evenement als de Baltische Gay Pride, zij zeker niet in staat zullen zijn adequate bescherming te bieden bij evenementen op hoog niveau tijdens het Litouwse voorzitterschap van de EU van juli tot en met december van dit jaar?

Deelt de Raad de mening dat indien de Litouwse autoriteiten in staat zijn bescherming te bieden bij een EU-evenement op hoog niveau, zij ook in staat zouden moeten zijn adequate bescherming te bieden bij de Baltische Gay Pride?

Antwoord
(22 juli 2013)

De Raad heeft deze aangelegenheid noch besproken, noch daarover een standpunt ingenomen. De Raad herinnert eraan dat de lidstaten verantwoordelijk zijn voor de handhaving van de openbare orde en de bescherming van de binnenlandse veiligheid.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004281/13
to the Council
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Relocation of Vilnius march for equality

The Vilnius municipal authorities have decided to ban the march for equality through the Lithuanian capital's central Gediminas Avenue. According to the Vilnius municipal authorities, the march has been relocated to the less centrally located Upės Street, due to information leading to believe that 'a threat to public security may arise during the march'. The police department has stated that there are no objective arguments which prove that the goals of the march could not be achieved if the event was held in a location other than Gediminas Avenue.

Is the Council aware that the Vilnius authorities have refused to authorise the Baltic Gay Pride in July 2013 to take place along the route requested by the organisers?

Is the Council aware of the fact that this refusal has been justified by security concerns, given that the Vilnius police do not believe that they can adequately protect the Baltic Gay Pride at the preferred location?

Is the Council of the opinion that if the Vilnius authorities are unable to provide adequate protection for an event such as the Baltic Gay Pride, it will certainly not be capable of providing adequate security for high-level events during the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU from July to December of this year?

Would the Council agree that if the Lithuanian authorities are capable of providing protection for a high-level EU event, they would also be capable of ensuring adequate protection for the Baltic Gay Pride?

Reply
(22 July 2013)

The Council has neither discussed nor taken a view on this matter. The Council recalls that maintaining law and order and safeguarding internal security are the responsibility of Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004282/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Professor Davinderpal Singh Bhullar

Following my Written Question E-006691/2011, I have been contacted by a constituent informing me that the Indian Supreme Court has confirmed that Professor Davinderpal Singh Bhullar is to receive the death penalty.

Could the Vice-President/High Representative clarify what actions are being taken, in response to this declaration by the Indian authorities, to try to prevent the sentence from being carried out?

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

The European Union has used all opportunities to convey to the Indian authorities its principled opposition to the death penalty under all circumstances, including in recent weeks. A statement was issued by the HR/VP on 11 February 2013 on the execution of Mr Afzal Guru.

The EU has been following closely the case of Professor Davinderpal Singh Bhullar and those of several other individuals recently sentenced to death. Certain modalities of Professor Bhullar's process have come under scrutiny in India and outside the country and we hope that full light will be shed, as rapidly as possible, on alleged shortcomings.

The EU looks forward to continuing discussing these issues with the Indian authorities, including at the next sessions of the EU-India Human Rights Dialogue and through appropriate diplomatic contacts in the country.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004283/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(16 april 2013)

Betreft: Verplaatsing van de mars voor de gelijkheid in Vilnius

De gemeentelijke autoriteiten van Vilnius hebben besloten om de mars voor de gelijkheid uit de Gediminas-laan in het centrum van de hoofdstad van Litouwen te weren. Volgens de gemeentelijke autoriteiten is de mars verplaatst naar de minder centraal gelegen Upes-straat omdat zij heeft vernomen dat de openbare veiligheid tijdens de mars in gevaar zou kunnen worden gebracht. Volgens de politie kan niet objectief worden aangetoond dat de doelen van de mars niet kunnen worden bereikt als het evenement niet in de Gediminas-laan wordt gehouden.

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het feit dat de autoriteiten van Vilnius geen toestemming hebben gegeven om de Baltische Gay Parade in juli 2013 langs de door de organisatoren gekozen route te houden?

Is de Commissie ervan op de hoogte dat deze weigering om veiligheidsredenen heeft plaatsgevonden, aangezien de politie van Vilnius van mening is dat zij de Baltische Gay Parade op de voorkeurslocatie niet toereikend kan beschermen?

Is de Commissie van mening dat indien de autoriteiten van Vilnius niet in staat zijn om voldoende bescherming te bieden aan een evenement als de Baltische Gay Parade, zij zeker niet staat zullen zijn de veiligheid van evenementen op hoog niveau tijdens het Litouwse EU-voorzitterschap van juli tot december van dit jaar te garanderen?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat als de Litouwse autoriteiten in staat zijn om EU-evenementen van hoog niveau te beveiligen, zij ook in staat moeten worden geacht om de veiligheid tijdens de Baltische Gay Pride te garanderen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(12 juni 2013)

Kwesties met betrekking tot de organisatie van openbare bijeenkomsten in de lidstaten en de veiligheid van de aanwezigen bij dergelijke evenementen, vallen onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten. De Commissie is niet bevoegd om zich te mengen in de manier waarop lidstaten openbare bijeenkomsten organiseren. Het is dus aan de lidstaten om ervoor te zorgen dat hun verplichtingen met betrekking tot de grondrechten — die voortkomen uit internationale overeenkomsten en uit hun nationale wetgeving — in dat verband worden nageleefd.

De Commissie blijft de strijd tegen homofobie en discriminatie op grond van seksuele geaardheid steunen met volle inzet van al haar bevoegdheden uit hoofde van de Verdragen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004283/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Relocation of Vilnius march for equality

The Vilnius municipal authorities have decided to ban the march for equality through the Lithuanian capital's central Gediminas Avenue. According to the Vilnius municipal authorities, the march has been relocated to the less centrally located Upės Street, due to information leading to believe that 'a threat to public security may arise during the march'. The police department has stated that there are no objective arguments which prove that the goals of the march could not be achieved if the event was held in a location other than Gediminas Avenue.

Is the Commission aware that the Vilnius authorities have refused to authorise the Baltic Gay Pride in July 2013 to take place along the route requested by the organisers?

Is the Commission aware of the fact that this refusal has been justified by security concerns, given that the Vilnius police do not believe that they can adequately protect the Baltic Gay Pride at the preferred location?

Is the Commission of the opinion that if the Vilnius authorities are unable to provide adequate protection for an event such as the Baltic Gay Pride, it will certainly not be capable of providing adequate security for high-level events during the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU from July to December of this year?

Would the Commission agree that if the Lithuanian authorities are capable of providing protection for a high-level EU event, they would also be capable of ensuring adequate protection for the Baltic Gay Pride?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

Issues pertaining to the organisation of public meetings in the Member States and to the safety of the individuals during those events fall under the competence of the Member States. The Commission has no power to intervene in how Member States organise public meetings. In that matter, it is thus for Member States to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their domestic laws — are respected.

The Commission reiterates its commitment to combating homophobia and discrimination based on sexual orientation to the full extent of the powers conferred on it by the Treaties.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004284/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Visita in Turchia del Segretario di Stato statunitense, John Kerry

Il 7 aprile 2013 diversi quotidiani hanno riferito in merito alla visita in Turchia del Segretario di Stato statunitense, John Kerry. Egli ha annunciato che la Turchia può contribuire in modo importante alla ripresa dei dialoghi di pace tra israeliani e palestinesi, sostenendo che «la Turchia può svolgere un ruolo chiave, dare un importante contributo al processo di pace in tanti modi».

Secondo diverse fonti, sembra che il primo ministro turco, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, sarà invitato a fungere da mediatore e a chiedere che Hamas riconosca Israele e rinunci alla sua lotta armata. È prevista una visita in Turchia di una delegazione israeliana guidata da Yaakov Amidror, consigliere per la sicurezza nazionale, allo scopo di avviare colloqui ad alto livello. Un funzionario israeliano ha affermato che «l'obiettivo è di migliorare le relazioni tra i due paesi. Noi speriamo sia possibile».

1. Qual è la posizione del VP/HR in merito alle notizie di un possibile ruolo di mediatore della Turchia nel quadro del ripristino dei dialoghi di pace tra Palestina e Israele?

2. Quali provvedimenti è disposto ad adottare il VP/HR al fine di sostenere gli sforzi di Turchia, Israele e dell'Autorità palestinese intesi a portare alla negoziazione di un accordo di pace effettivo?

3. Il VP/HR si è tenuto in contatto con John Kerry durante la visita di quest'ultimo in Medio Oriente e Turchia? In caso affermativo, quali conclusioni sono state raggiunte in relazione al ruolo di mediatore della Turchia con Hamas?

4. Ha il VP/HR trattato con John Kerry la questione dell'Iran e, in particolare, la curiosa contraddizione per cui, da un lato, si presume che le banche turche stiano finanziando il commercio con l'Iran, mentre dall'altro la Turchia sta chiaramente fornendo un deciso sostegno ai ribelli siriani che cercano di far cadere il più stretto alleato dell'Iran, il presidente al Assad, e si dice che stia addirittura armando, assieme al Qatar, il gruppo salafita siriano legato ad al-Qaida, il Fronte al Nusra?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente non commenta le notizie riportate dalla stampa. Si è tenuta in contatto frequente con il segretario di stato statunitense John Kerry, relativamente agli interessi comuni dell'UE e degli USA in Medio Oriente.

Il recente riavvicinamento tra Israele e la Turchia può solo risultare d'aiuto per affrontare le numerose sfide che affliggono attualmente la regione del Medio Oriente, tra cui la situazione nella Striscia di Gaza; l'UE è disposta, con tutti i suoi partner nella regione, ad avviare un dialogo che porti a un cambiamento radicale della situazione nella Striscia di Gaza in linea con la risoluzione 1860/2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004284/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — US Secretary of State John Kerry talks in Turkey

On 7 April 2013, various newspapers reported on US Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to Turkey. He announced that Turkey can play an important role in helping revive peace talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians. He mentioned that 'Turkey can be a key, an important contribution to the process of peace in so many ways'.

According to a number of reports, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will be asked to mediate and ask that Hamas recognise Israel and abandon its armed struggle. An Israeli delegation headed by the country's National Security Advisor, Yaakov Amidror, is due to spend time in Turkey in order to engage in high-level talks. One Israeli official said that 'the goal is to improve the relationship between the two countries. We hope it's possible'.

1. What is the position of the VP/HR regarding the news of a possible mediation role by Turkey in renewing peace talks between the Palestinians and Israelis?

2. What steps is the VP/HR prepared to take in order to help support efforts between Turkey, Israel and the Palestinian Authority to work on negotiating an effective peace agreement?

3. Has the VP/HR been in touch with Mr Kerry during his visit to the Middle East and Turkey? If so, what conclusions have been reached on the subject of Turkey's mediating role with Hamas?

4. Did the VP/HR raise the issue of Iran with Mr Kerry and, in particular, the curious contradiction whereby, on the one hand, Turkish banks are allegedly financing trade with Iran yet, on the other hand, Turkey is clearly in strong support of the Syrian rebels who aim to overthrow Iran's closest ally, President al Assad, and, allegedly, is even — along with Qatar — arming the Salafist al Quaeda-linked group, Jabhat al Nusra, in Syria?

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

The HR/VP does not comment on press reports. She has been in frequent contact with Mr Kerry as regards the common interests of the EU and the US in the Middle East region.

The recent Israeli-Turkish rapprochement can only help in tackling the wide range of challenges which the region currently faces. The situation in the Gaza Strip is one of these — the EU is willing to engage with all its partners in the region to work towards a fundamental change in the situation of the Gaza Strip, in line with UNSCR 1860/2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004285/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Danni provocati da Hamas al patrimonio mondiale dell'UNESCO

Il 14 aprile 2013 il giornale online *Al-Monitor* ha riportato che le brigate Ezzedin al Qassam, il braccio militare di Hamas, hanno distrutto una parte dell'antico porto di Antedone a Gaza allo scopo di ampliare il proprio campo di addestramento militare. Il porto marittimo di Antedone è stato dichiarato patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità dall'UNESCO nel 2012.

Il vice ministro del Turismo di Gaza, Muhammad Khela, ha spiegato che il sito è stato occupato per usi militari e non a fini civili, affermando che «non possiamo essere [sic] d'ostacolo alla resistenza palestinese; siamo tutti parte di un progetto di resistenza, promettiamo comunque che il sito sarà utilizzato in modo limitato e che non subirà alcun danno». Egli ha inoltre chiesto fondi supplementari, sostenendo che «se nella zona fossero già stati compiuti degli scavi, non credo sarebbe stato possibile per nessuno occuparla», e che «questo dovrebbe essere compito dell'UNESCO e degli altri gruppi di donatori».

La riunione semestrale dell'UNESCO, che si protrarrà fino al 26 aprile, prevede cinque punti all'ordine del giorno relativi alle questioni palestinesi, tuttavia non viene menzionata la distruzione del sito archeologico da parte di Hamas per destinarlo a campo di addestramento per terroristi. L'ambasciatore statunitense, David T. Killion, l'ha descritta come «altamente politicizzata» e intesa a «isolare Israele».

1. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in merito all'ampliamento dei campi terroristici di Hamas nell'antico porto di Antedone?

2. Quali provvedimenti intende adottare per impedire al braccio armato di Hamas di estendere le proprie attività in questo sito dichiarato patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità?

3. Ha intenzione di discutere la questione con le autorità competenti in seno all'UNESCO?

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

Secondo le informazioni ottenute dal SEAE, Hamas ha effettivamente costruito una serie di sbarramenti di sabbia e rifugi lungo il sito, che è stato anche colpito da un missile israeliano in novembre, durante l'escalation della violenza nella Striscia di Gaza. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente invita tutti a rispettare la Convenzione dell'Aia per la protezione dei beni culturali in caso di conflitto armato. Tuttavia, poiché la politica dell'Unione europea è di non avere contatti con Hamas, l'Unione europea ha ridotto i mezzi per prevenire qualsiasi attività del braccio armato di Hamas nel sito.

L'Unione europea è a conoscenza dei chiarimenti richiesti dall'UNESCO in merito al porto di Antedone a Gaza e accoglie con favore l'accordo raggiunto durante la 191ª sessione del Consiglio esecutivo dell'UNESCO di inviare una missione dell'UNESCO a Gerusalemme est.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004285/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Hamas damages to Unesco world heritage site

On 14 April 2013, the online journal *Al-Monitor* reported that Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, bulldozed a part of the ancient Anthedon harbour in Gaza in order to expand its military training zone. The Anthedon seaport was designated a world heritage site by Unesco in 2012.

The Deputy Minister for Tourism in Gaza, Muhammad Khela, has explained that the location was taken over for military use and not civic purposes, stating that 'we can't stand [sic] as an obstacle in the way of Palestinian resistance; we are all a part of a resistance project, yet we promise that the location will be limitedly used without harming it at all'. Moreover, he has requested additional funds, saying that 'if the location was excavated already, I don't think it would have been possible for anyone to take it over', and that 'it should be Unesco and other donating groups' job to do so'.

The biannual Unesco meeting, which runs until 26April, lists five items on its agenda concerning Palestinian issues, yet there is no mention of Hamas bulldozing the heritage site for use as a terrorist training camp. The US Ambassador, David T. Killion, described it as 'highly politicised' and designed to 'single out Israel'.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the expansion of Hamas terrorist camps on the ancient Anthedon harbour?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative going to take to stop Hamas' military wing from expanding its activities onto this cultural heritage site?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative going to discuss the issue with the relevant Unesco authorities?

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

According to the information which the EEAS has obtained, Hamas has indeed constructed a range of sand barriers and huts alongside the site, which was also hit by an Israeli missile during the November escalation in the Gaza Strip. The HR/VP calls on all to respect the Hague Convention for the protection property in the event of armed conflict. However, given the EU's no-contact policy vis-à-vis Hamas, the EU has limited means to prevent any activities by Hamas' military wing there.

The EU is aware of clarifications sought on the Anthedon harbour in Gaza within Unesco. It does, however, welcome the agreement reached during the 191th session of Unesco's Executive Board to send a Unesco mission to East Jerusalem.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004286/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Mancata indagine sull'omicidio dei cosiddetti «collaboratori» di Gaza

L'11 aprile 2013 Human Rights Watch (HRW) riferisce che l'organizzazione Hamas a Gaza evidentemente non ha iniziato l'indagine promessa sul brutale assassinio avvenuto a novembre 2012 di sette prigionieri palestinesi accusati di collaborazionismo con Israele, nonostante Hamas abbia anche fissato il termine dell'11 aprile 2013 perché i sospetti collaboratori si consegnino alla polizia con la certezza che sarà concessa l'amnistia.

I sette uomini in questione sono stati uccisi in pieno giorno con la sospetta collusione di membri dell'apparato di sicurezza. Tuttavia, finora Hamas non ha fatto alcun serio tentativo di indagare sugli omicidi. Il direttore di HRW per il Medio Oriente dichiara che «l'incapacità o la mancanza di volontà da parte di Hamas di indagare sugli esecrandi omicidi di sette uomini svuota di significato le sue affermazioni secondo cui a Gaza vige l'autorità del diritto».

Il 25 novembre 2012, il primo ministro di Gaza Ismail Hanniyeh dichiara che Hamas ha istituito una commissione indipendente per indagare sulle uccisioni e che la commissione indipendente per i diritti umani a Gaza ha redatto alcune raccomandazioni che Hamas dichiara di prendere in considerazione. Tuttavia la maggior parte delle famiglie dei defunti dichiara di non essere stata contattata dalla commissione. In almeno quattro casi risulta che le autorità giudiziarie hanno ignorato le dichiarazioni secondo cui agli uomini è stato negato l'accesso ai familiari o l'assistenza giuridica.

Secondo la commissione indipendente per i diritti umani, i tribunali militari hanno emesso almeno 13 condanne a morte nei confronti di presunti collaboratori a Gaza e il ministro dell'interno è responsabile di almeno sei di queste esecuzioni da quando Hamas è salita al poter nel 2007.

1. Quali misure è disposto a prendere il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per chiedere al governo di Hamas di condurre un'indagine adeguata sull'uccisione illegale di sette sospetti collaboratori a novembre 2012?

2. Qual è la posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per quanto riguarda l'annuncio di Hamas dell'11 aprile 2013 circa l'amnistia per i sospetti collaboratori con Israele?

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

Dato che Hamas figura nell'elenco delle organizzazioni terroristiche, e considerata l'attuale separazione politica tra la Cisgiordania e la Striscia di Gaza, i mezzi di cui l'UE dispone per affrontare direttamente i problemi con le autorità de facto della Striscia di Gaza sono molto limitati. Tuttavia, in una serie di dichiarazioni locali, i capimissione dell'UE a Gerusalemme e Ramallah hanno regolarmente condannato le sentenze capitali pronunciate ed eseguite nella Striscia di Gaza nel 2012.

In merito a questo specifico incidente, il 21 novembre 2012, in una dichiarazione al Parlamento europeo, l'AR/VP ha deplorato le esecuzioni sommarie di sette palestinesi nella Striscia di Gaza come la più palese violazione dei diritti umani. L'AR/VP ha inoltre sottolineato la necessità che tutte le parti rispettino pienamente il diritto umanitario internazionale.

Nella sua relazione sui progressi della politica europea di vicinato per il 2012, l'UE ha ancora una volta rilevato che i sospetti collaboratori erano stati giustiziati in maniera sommaria, senza alcun procedimento giudiziario.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004286/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Failure to investigate the murder of so-called Gaza 'collaborators'

On 11 April 2013, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that the Hamas organisation in Gaza has apparently failed to begin a promised investigation into the brutal killing in November 2012 of seven Palestinian prisoners accused of collaborating with Israel. Hamas has even set a deadline of 11 April 2013 for suspected collaborators to turn themselves in, with the assurance that they will be granted amnesty.

The seven men in question were killed in broad daylight with the suspected collusion of members of the security apparatus. However, so far Hamas has not made any serious attempts to investigate the murders. HRW's Middle East director has said that 'Hamas's inability or unwillingness to investigate the brazen murders of seven men makes a mockery of its claims that it's upholding the rule of law in Gaza.'

On 25 November 2012, Gaza's Prime Minister Ismail Hanniyeh stated that Hamas had established an independent committee to investigate the killings and the Independent Commission for Human Rights in Gaza drafted some recommendations, which Hamas said they would take into consideration. However, most of the families of the deceased say that they have not been contacted by the committee. In at least four cases, the judicial authorities appear to have ignored claims that the men had been denied access to family members or legal assistance.

According to the Independent Commission for Human Rights, military courts have issued at least 13 death sentences against alleged collaborators in Gaza, with the Interior Ministry being responsible for six of these executions since Hamas came to power in 2007.

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to call for the Hamas government to conduct a proper investigation into the illegal killing of the seven suspected collaborators in November 2012?

2. What is the Vice-President/High Representative's position regarding Hamas' announcement on 11 April 2013 of an amnesty for suspected collaborators with Israel?

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

Given the fact that Hamas is listed as a terrorist organisation, and given the current political schism between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the EU's means to directly address issues with the de-facto authorities in the Gaza Strip are very limited. Yet in a number of local statements, EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah have regularly condemned the death sentences issued and carried out in the Gaza Strip in 2012.

Concerning this specific incident, on 21 November 2012, in a statement delivered to the EP, HR/VP deplored the summary executions of seven Palestinians in the Gaza Strip as the grossest violation of human rights. She also stressed the need for all sides to fully respect international humanitarian law.

In its European Neighbourhood Policy Progress report for 2012, the EU once again noted that suspected collaborators were summarily executed without any resort to judicial process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004287/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ruolo della cosiddetta «polizia morale» a Gaza

Habitat

Secondo quanto riferito il 9 aprile 2013 dal quotidiano londinese *Times*, le strade di Gaza sono percorse da «squadre della modestia» o «ronde della moralità» che cercano di prelevare gli uomini che sfoggiano tagli di capelli ritenuti «anti-islamici» per rasarli a zero. Gli uomini presi di mira portano i capelli lunghi, scolpiti o modellati con il gel, secondo la moda occidentale. Un imbianchino fermato ha raccontato che le guardie lo hanno caricato a forza in un veicolo e che, prima di liberarlo, gli hanno rasato a zero i capelli, che gli arrivavano alle spalle. La stessa persona avrebbe dichiarato che la gente viene prelevata per strada senza alcuna ragione, aggiungendo che nessuno sa cosa succederà ancora.

A partire dal 2007 Hamas ha preso provvedimenti per applicare i dettami più rigorosi della legge coranica. Vi sono stati numerosi tentativi di dare un giro di vite su tutti gli aspetti della vita quotidiana ritenuti contrari all'islam, con misure che comprendono la rigida separazione dei sessi e il controllo dell'abbigliamento. Nel 2010, ad esempio, Hamas ha vietato agli uomini di lavorare nei saloni di parrucchieri per donna e anche i pantaloni stretti e a vita bassa sono finiti nell'occhio del ciclone. Il vice Primo ministro, Ziad al-Zaza, afferma tuttavia che si tratta di episodi isolati.

1. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante indicare qual è la sua posizione in merito alle segnalazioni sempre più numerose secondo cui, a Gaza, le «ronde della moralità» stando usando la mano pesante contro i giovani che, a loro giudizio, adottano un comportamento «contrario all'islam»?

2. Quali misure è disposto il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ad adottare per far comprendere chiaramente alle autorità di Gaza che la Commissione non intende sostenere o tollerare l'introduzione nella Striscia di Gaza di controlli di polizia di matrice religiosa?

3. I rappresentanti dell'UE nella regione si stanno già attivando per affrontare la questione e sono impegnati in un dialogo con i funzionari competenti a Gaza?

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

Pur non essendo in grado di costatare il verificarsi degli eventi specifici riferiti dall'onorevole deputato, l'UE è a conoscenza di altri casi (di cui all'interrogazione scritta e-004008/2013) che mostrerebbero una tendenza preoccupante delle autorità a imporre la propria ideologia alla società di Gaza.

Fino a quando la Striscia di Gaza rimarrà politicamente separata dalla Cisgiordania, l'UE avrà scarsi mezzi per affrontare direttamente questo o qualsiasi altro problema con le autorità *de facto* che controllano il territorio. Poiché la sua politica esclude contatti diretti con Hamas, l'UE non potrà avviare pertanto un dialogo su questa o altre questioni con le autorità competenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004287/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The role of so-called 'morality brigades' in Gaza

On 9 April 2013, the *Times* of London reported that so called 'modesty gangs' or 'morality brigades' are roaming the streets of Gaza seeking to kidnap men with what they consider to be 'un-Islamic' haircuts and shaving them. Men are targeted if they have western-style, long, slicked back or stylised hair. A painter who was captured said that the vigilantes bundled him into a vehicle and shaved his shoulder-length hair before releasing him. He is quoted as saying 'they take you off the street for no reason. I don't know what they are going to do next'.

Since 2007, Hamas has taken steps to implement strict aspects of Islamic law. There have been numerous attempts to crack down on all aspects of daily life deemed un-Islamic, with measures including the rigid separation of the sexes and inspection of civilian clothing. In 2010, for example, Hamas banned men from working in women's hair salons and there was also a crack-down on tight low-waisted trousers. However, Deputy Prime Minister, Ziad al-Zaza, claims that the reports refer to isolated incidents.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the growing number of reports inside Gaza that militant 'morality brigades' are imposing a rigid crack-down on young people who they consider to be engaging in 'un-Islamic' behaviour?

2. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to clearly state to the Gazan authorities that the Commission will not support or condone the introduction of religious policing in the Gaza Strip?

3. Are EU authorities in the region already taking steps to address this issue, and are they engaged in dialogue with the relevant Gazan officials?

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

While not being in a position to verify the occurrence of the specific incidents referred to by the Honourable Members, the EU is aware of a number of other instances (also referred to in Written Question E-004008/2013) that seem to be part of a worrying trend whereby the authorities appear to be imposing their ideology on Gaza society.

As long as the Gaza Strip remains politically separated from the West Bank, the EU has limited means to directly address this or any other issue with the de-facto authorities in Gaza. The EU has a no-contact policy vis-à-vis Hamas and will therefore not engage in dialogue on this, or other, issues with the relevant authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004288/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — decapitazioni a Papua Nuova Guinea e violenza legata alla stregoneria

L'8 aprile 2013 una serie di fonti di informazione ha riferito della decapitazione, a Papua Nuova Guinea, di due anziane donne che sarebbero state altresì precedentemente torturate per tre giorni a titolo di punizione in quanto sospettate di stregoneria. La polizia locale non è stata in grado di intervenire. Prima di essere decapitate le due donne sono state brutalmente ferite a colpi di coltello e accetta. Gli assassini sono stati descritti da un ispettore di polizia come un'assurda barbarie.

Le decapitazioni fanno seguito a un altro episodio in cui, secondo quanto riportato, sei donne sarebbero state accusate di stregoneria e torturate con ferri roventi nell'ambito di un «sacrificio» pasquale nella provincia degli Altopiani del Sud. A febbraio un'altra donna è stata accusata di stregoneria, denudata e arsa viva da un gruppo di criminali. L'organizzazione per i diritti umani *Amnesty International* è preoccupata per l'escalation della violenza legata alla stregoneria e ha esortato il governo a debellare le pratiche in questione dal paese.

L'UE fornisce attualmente a Papua Nuova Guinea 104 milioni di EUR a titolo del documento di strategia nazionale per il periodo 2008-2013. Tra le principali aree di intervento figurano lo sviluppo economico finalizzato a migliorare i mezzi di sussistenza in ambito rurale attraverso piani di sviluppo distrettuali, il potenziamento delle risorse umane volto a incrementare l'istruzione di base nelle regioni remote e la gestione del sistema di istruzione, nonché il buon governo.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante consapevole del fenomeno della violenza legata alla stregoneria a Papua Nuova Guinea?

2. In che modo i contributi dell'UE a Papua Nuova Guinea sono sfruttati per migliorare il livello di istruzione delle comunità rurali e quindi debellare il problema della violenza legata alla stregoneria?

3. Qual è la posizione dei funzionari dell'UE presenti nella regione in merito ai possibili provvedimenti da adottare per tutelare i singoli e affrontare il problema della violenza legata alla stregoneria, anche per quanto concerne gli sforzi volti ad assicurare alla giustizia i responsabili dei delitti in questione?

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

È un crimine orrendo che sconcerta e per atti di violenza tanto abominevoli non può esservi alcuna giustificazione. L'Unione europea confida nel cambiamento generazionale introdotto dal governo del primo ministro O'Neill per l'adozione di misure concrete e tempestive volte a migliorare la condizione delle donne in Papua Nuova Guinea e continuerà a sostenere tutti gli sforzi per combattere la violenza di genere, compresa qualsiasi forma di violenza commessa con l'accusa pretestuosa di stregoneria. Sin dal suo insediamento, il governo di O'Neill ha condannato apertamente tali reati promettendo indagini accurate e sentenze severe avviando, inoltre, l'iter legislativo di abrogazione della legge sulla stregoneria del 1971. L'Unione europea sta anche sollecitando le autorità a intraprendere azioni ulteriori in termini di istruzione e sensibilizzazione, di iniziative politiche e legislative e per la protezione e l'assistenza delle vittime. Inoltre, l'UE continua a sostenere iniziative concrete volte a migliorare le condizioni di vita delle donne in Papua Nuova Guinea attraverso programmi di cooperazione e lavorando con la società civile. Ad esempio, la seconda fase del nostro programma di sviluppo delle risorse umane (26 milioni di euro) garantirà che l'equilibrio tra i generi sia tenuto in debito conto per quanto riguarda le opportunità di formazione e l'offerta di corsi di qualificazione professionale. L'emancipazione delle donne è essenziale, poiché a essere accusate di stregoneria e di altri reati sono spesso i più deboli e indigenti.

In occasione della Giornata internazionale della donna 2013, svoltasi l'8 marzo, sui principali giornali del paese è stata pubblicata una dichiarazione dell'UE contro la violenza sulle donne e i bambini.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004288/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Beheadings in Papua New Guinea and sorcery-related violence

On 8 April 2013, a number of news sources reported that two elderly women in Papua New Guinea were beheaded after being tortured for three days as punishment for suspected sorcery. The local police were not able to intervene. The two women were brutally subjected to knife and axe wounds before being beheaded. The murders were described by a police inspector as 'barbaric and senseless'.

The beheadings follow another report of six women also being accused of sorcery and tortured with hot irons in an Easter 'sacrifice' in the Southern Highlands. In February, another woman was accused of sorcery, stripped naked and burned to death by a mob. The human rights organisation, Amnesty International, is concerned about the rise in sorcery-related violence. It has urged the government to stamp out the practice in the country.

The EU currently provides Papua New Guinea with EUR 104 million through its Country Strategy Paper for 2008-2013. The main focus areas include rural economic development to improve rural livelihoods through district development plans, human resource development to improve basic education in remote regions and management of the education system, and good governance.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the phenomenon of sorcery-related violence in Papua New Guinea?

2. What efforts are being made through EU contributions to Papua New Guinea to improve education in rural communities in order to stamp out the problem of sorcery-related violence?

3. What is the assessment of EU officials in the region regarding steps that could be adopted to protect individuals and tackle the problem of sorcery-related violence, including efforts to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice?

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

This horrific crime is shocking and there can be no justification whatsoever for such abhorrent acts of violence. The EU is counting on the generational change brought by the government of PM O'Neill to take concrete and swift measures to improve the situation of women in the country. The EU will continue to support all efforts in the fight against gender based violence including any form of violence committed under the pretext of alleged sorcery. Since it took office, the O'Neill government has been outspoken in denunciating these crimes while promising thorough investigations and severe sentences. The legislative process to repeal the Sorcery Act of 1971 has also been initiated. The EU is also urging the authorities to take further actions in terms of education/awareness raising, legislative & policy initiatives and with respect to victims' protection and treatment. Besides, the EU continues through its cooperation programmes and its work with the civil society to support concrete initiatives aiming at improving women's life in Papua New Guinea. For instance, the second phase of our Human Resources Development Programme (EUR 26 million) will ensure that gender balance is duly taken into account in terms of training opportunities and trade classes offer. Women's empowerment is essential as sorcery and other crimes often target the weakest and the poorest.

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2013 on 8 March 2013, an EU local statement on violence against women and children has been published in the main papers of the country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004289/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Caccia primaverile di quaglie e tortore a Malta e nuove ripetute violazioni della direttiva Uccelli 147/2009/CE

L'associazione BirdLife Malta ha denunciato in questi giorni ([1]) che le autorità maltesi hanno approvato delle norme ([2]) con le quali si consente nell'isola la caccia in deroga ai sensi dell'articolo 9 della direttiva «Uccelli» ([3]) a complessivi 5 000 capi di quaglia (Coturnix coturnix) e 11 000 capi di tortora (Streptopelia turtur) nel periodo compreso tra il 10 aprile 2013 e il 30 aprile 2013. La deroga è stata concessa a tutti i possessori di licenza di caccia pari a 9 487 cacciatori; il carniere per cacciatore è di 2 uccelli al giorno e 4 nell'intera stagione primaverile. Per ciascun cacciatore maltese nell'arco della stagione di caccia primaverile risulterà quindi una media di 0,5 quaglie e 1,1 tortore. In entrambi i casi, si tratta di un carniere che ciascun cacciatore raggiunge facilmente già nelle prime ore di caccia del 10 aprile.

È chiaro che la norma non rispetta le condizioni di cui ai commi 1 e 2 dell'art. 9 della direttiva e in particolare non vi saranno i rigidi controlli richiesti, perché la norma maltese prevede solo 7 agenti ogni 1000 cacciatori. Inoltre l'unità ALE ([4]) addetta ai controlli sulla caccia conta solo 18 unità, alle quali si aggiungono per la stagione di caccia poche unità della polizia locale, non disponendo pertanto delle complessive 66 unità previste dalla norma. Conseguentemente, i carnieri complessivi stabiliti risultano non veritieri dato che non saranno garantiti da alcun rigido controllo ed è logico supporre che il carniere reale sarà superiore rispetto a quanto previsto di diversi ordini di grandezza.

Può la Commissione intervenire con urgenza affinché si determini un intervento straordinario per reagire alla nuova infrazione, dando avvio al procedimento speciale di sospensione, tramite ricorso alla Corte di giustizia europea, ai sensi degli articoli 83 e 84 del regolamento di procedura della Corte di giustizia?

Può la Commissione avviare, ai sensi dell'articolo 260 del TFUE e secondo i criteri della comunicazione della Commissione (SEC(2005)1658), il procedimento volto a far dichiarare dalla Corte di giustizia europea che la Repubblica maltese non ha preso le misure che l'esecuzione delle sentenze della Corte comporta, per far fissare dalla stessa Corte l'importo di una somma forfettaria o di una penalità adeguata alle circostanze?

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

La sentenza della Corte ([5]) ha statuito che tra il 2004 e il 2007 Malta ha consentito la caccia primaverile in modo sproporzionato. Tuttavia la Corte ha lasciato aperta la possibilità di una deroga limitata per la caccia primaverile alla tortora e alla quaglia in condizioni rigidamente controllate, in considerazione delle particolari circostanze prevalenti a Malta. Le misure relative a una limitata stagione venatoria primaverile sono previste dai pertinenti regolamenti nazionali ([6]) che sembrano tenere adeguatamente conto del principio di proporzionalità invocato dalla Corte.

Per quanto concerne l'apertura di una stagione venatoria primaverile nell'anno in corso, Malta ha informato la Commissione che, dopo aver valutato le informazioni rese disponibili dal comitato Ornis di Malta e i dati del carniere della precedente stagione venatoria autunnale, si è ritenuto che le condizioni per l'applicazione di una deroga venatoria primaverile dal 10 al 30 aprile 2013 fossero state soddisfatte.

Al fine di verificare se nell'applicare la deroga siano state rispettate le condizioni rigorose poste dalla direttiva Uccelli dell'UE ([7]), la Commissione esaminerà attentamente la dettagliata relazione presentata in proposito dal governo maltese unitamente alle relazioni eventualmente presentate da altri portatori di interesse. In caso di mancato rispetto delle condizioni suddette, la Commissione potrebbe vedersi costretta a proseguire l'azione finalizzata all'esecuzione della normativa UE.

([1]) Comunicati BirdLife Malta del 09/04/2013, 13/04/2013 e 15/04/2013: http://www.birdlifemalta.org/media/press/hunting/.
([2]) L.N. 122 e 123 del 2013 pubblicate nel supplemento alla gazzetta del governo di Malta n°19.062 del 28 marzo 2013.
([3]) Direttiva 147/2009/CE.
([4]) Administrative Law Enforcement.
([5]) C-76/08 Commissione contro Malta.
([6]) Avviso legale 221 del 2010, come modificato dagli avvisi legali 83 e 113 del 2011, e 122 del 2013.
([7]) GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004289/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Spring quail and turtle dove hunting in Malta and new and repeated infringements of Directive 147/2009/EC (Birds Directive)

The association BirdLife Malta recently reported ([1]) that the Maltese authorities have approved regulations, ([2]) by way of derogation from Article 9 of the Birds Directive, ([3]) permitting the hunting of a total of 5 000 common quail (Coturnix coturnix) and 11 000 turtle doves (Streptopelia turtur) across the island between 10 April 2013 and 30 April 2013. The derogation has been granted to all 9 487 licensed hunters; the bag limit for each hunter is two birds a day and four throughout the spring season. This will therefore equate to an average of 0.5 quail and 1.1 turtle doves for every Maltese hunter during the spring hunting season. In both cases, each hunter will easily be able to reach the bag limit as soon as hunting begins, in the early hours of 10 April.

Clearly, the regulation does not meet the conditions laid down in Article 9(1) and (2) of the directive and, in particular, the strict controls requested will not be carried out, because the Maltese regulation provides for only 7 agents per 1 000 hunters. Furthermore, the ALE unit ([4]) responsible for performing the hunting controls has only 18 units, which are supplemented by a few local police units during the hunting season. This figure therefore falls short of the 66 units in total stipulated by the regulation. Consequently, the total bag limits laid down are inaccurate since they will not be guaranteed by any strict controls. It is logical to assume that the actual bag limit will exceed that stipulated by various orders of magnitude.

Can the Commission urgently intervene so that extraordinary action is taken in response to the new infringement, through the launch of a special suspension procedure, via the Court of Justice of the European Union, pursuant to Articles 83 and 84 of the Court's Rules of Procedure?

Can the Commission launch, under Article 260 TFEU and in accordance with the criteria in Commission communication (SEC(2005)1658), the procedure by which the Court of Justice of the European Union may rule that the Republic of Malta has failed to take the measures required in order to comply with the Court's judgment, so that the Court sets the amount of a lump sum or penalty payment that is appropriate in the circumstances?

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

The Court's judgment ([5]) held that Malta had disproportionately permitted spring hunting between 2004 and 2007. However the judgment left open the possibility of a limited spring hunting derogation of Turtle Dove and Quail under strictly supervised conditions in view of the specific circumstances prevalent in Malta. The measures related to a limited spring hunting season are provided for in the relevant national regulations ([6]) which appear to take properly into consideration the principle of proportionality invoked by the Court.

With regard to the opening of a spring hunting season this year, Malta informed the Commission that following the assessment of the information made available by the Malta Ornis Committee and the autumn bag data for the previous autumn hunting season, it was considered that the conditions for applying a Spring hunting derogation from 10 April to 30 April 2013 were met.

The Commission will carefully analyse the detailed derogation report to be submitted by the Maltese Government, together with any other reports that may be submitted by the relevant stakeholders, with a view to see whether the derogation has been applied in line with the strict conditions of the EU's Birds Directive ([7]). If this is not the case, the Commission may have to continue the enforcement action.

([1]) BirdLife Malta press releases from 9 April 2013, 13 April 2013 and 15 April 2013: http://www.birdlifemalta.org/media/press/hunting/.
([2]) L.N. 122 and 123 of 2013 published in the supplement to Malta Government Gazette No 19.062 of 28 March 2013.
([3]) Directive 147/2009/EC.
([4]) Administrative Law Enforcement.
([5]) C-76/08 Commission v Malta.
([6]) Legal Notice 221 of 2010, as amended by Legal Notices 83 and 113 of 2011, and 122 of 2013.
([7]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004290/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Erosione delle coste del Gargano

Imponenti mareggiate hanno eroso recentemente le dune delle coste del Gargano, in provincia di Foggia. Soltanto tramite la realizzazione di una barriera in blocchi di pietra si è evitata la distruzione di una pista ciclabile e del lungomare della frazione di Foce Varano.

Gli esperti non sono riusciti a stabilire con precisione la motivazione del fenomeno naturale. Potrebbe trattarsi di una variazione delle correnti sotto costa e della inconsueta violenza dei fenomeni atmosferici. Le amministrazioni comunali di Rodi e Cagnano Varano, nel frattempo, mostrano preoccupazione per la pericolosità dell'erosione e hanno chiesto un intervento da parte della Regione Puglia.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza del fenomeno erosivo lungo le coste del Gargano?

2. Quali ulteriori iniziative intende assumere al fine di tutelare i cittadini dei centri garganici e preservare l'ambiente?

3. È possibile ricorrere a specifici fondi dell'UE per arginare i danni ambientali con la costruzione di frangiflutti?

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

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza delle pressioni ambientali cui è sottoposta la costa adriatica, incluse le coste del Gargano.

2. La Commissione ha già preso provvedimenti con l'adozione, nel 2002, della raccomandazione relativa all'attuazione della gestione integrata delle zone costiere in Europa (ICZM) ([1]) che ha successivamente promosso, nonché con la ratifica, nel 2010, del protocollo ICZM alla convenzione di Barcellona per il Mar Mediterraneo ([2]). Entrambi gli strumenti asseriscono che l'erosione delle coste è una minaccia importante da prendere in considerazione nella gestione integrata delle zone costiere.

Nel 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta ([3]) di direttiva che istituisce un quadro per la pianificazione dello spazio marittimo e la gestione integrata delle zone costiere. La proposta prescrive agli Stati membri di sviluppare strategie di gestione integrata delle coste che tengano conto delle pressioni sulle risorse costiere, ivi compresa l'erosione delle coste. Inoltre, il 16 aprile 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una strategia che promuove azioni di adattamento ai cambiamenti climatici, nella quale l'erosione costiera è considerata un importante fattore di rischio legato a tali cambiamenti. È tuttavia responsabilità degli Stati membri attuare queste misure.

3. I progetti potrebbero beneficiare del sostegno finanziario dei fondi strutturali. Il programma per la Puglia, cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, prevede uno stanziamento di 60 milioni di EUR per la «prevenzione dei rischi naturali per il periodo in corso». Per quanto riguarda il periodo 2014-2020, questi progetti potrebbero beneficiare della priorità di investimento 6 (b) del FESR ([4]), legata all'obiettivo tematico 6 ([5]). In linea con il principio della gestione concorrente, le autorità nazionali sono responsabili della selezione e dell'attuazione dei progetti. La Commissione suggerisce all'onorevole deputato di contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione ([6]).

([1]) Raccomandazione 2002/413/CE.
([2]) Decisione 2009/89/CE del Consiglio.
([3]) COM(2013)133 def.
([4]) «Promuovendo l'efficienza energetica e l'uso dell'energia rinnovabile nelle piccole e medie imprese».
([5]) «Promuovere l'adattamento al cambiamento climatico, la gestione e la prevenzione dei rischi».
([6]) Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia, 145, 70126 BARI, adgfesr@regione.puglia.it.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004290/13
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Erosion of the Gargano coastline

Heavy sea storms recently eroded the dunes along the coast of Gargano, in the province of Foggia. The destruction of a bicycle path and of the promenade in the hamlet of Foce Varano was only prevented by the construction of a boulder barrier.

Experts have been unable to establish the exact cause of the natural phenomenon. It could be due to a change in the inshore currents and to unusually violent weather conditions. Meanwhile, the local authorities of Rodi and Cagnano Varano are voicing concern about the erosion hazard, and have called for the Apulia region to act.

1. Is the Commission aware of the erosion along the Gargano coast?

2. What further action does it intend to take in order to protect Gargano's citizens and preserve the environment?

3. Can specific EU funds be used to reduce environmental damage through the construction of breakwaters?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the environmental pressures on the Adriatic Sea Coast, including the coast of Gargano.

2. The Commission has already taken action, including the adoption of the recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management ([1]) (ICZM) in 2002 and its subsequent promotion, and the ratification of ICZM Protocol ([2]) to the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean in 2010. Both instruments refer to coastal erosion as an important threat to be considered for the integrated management of coastal areas.

In 2013 the Commission adopted a proposal ([3]) for a directive establishing a Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Management. The proposal requires Member States to develop integrated coastal management strategies that should consider the pressures on coastal resources, including coastal erosion. In addition, the Commission adopted on 16 April 2013 a strategy to advance action on adaptation to climate change, which recognises coastal erosion as an important climate change related risk. It is, however, for Member States, to implement these measures.

3. The projects could be eligible for financial support from the Structural Funds. The programme for Puglia, which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, provides for an allocation of EUR 60 million for 'prevention of natural risk_for the current period'. As regards the 2014-2020 period, these projects could be potentially eligible under investment priority 6(b) of the ERDF ([4]), related to Thematic Objective No 6 ([5]). In line with the shared management principle, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority ([6]).

([1]) Recommendation 2002/413/EC.
([2]) Council 2009/89/EC.
([3]) COM(2013)133 final.
([4]) 'Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems'.
([5]) 'Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management.'
([6]) Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia: Viale Japigia, n. 145. 70126 BARI. adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004291/13
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(16. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Rajoittaako Apple kilpailua Euroopassa?

Applen tuotteiden hinnat asettuvat kaupoissa usein tarkkaan sille tasolle, jonka Apple ilmoittaa verkkosivuillaan. Jälleenmyyjien kesken ei Applen laitteiden hinnoilla ole Euroopan unionin jäsenmaissa juurikaan kilpailua. Hintaeroja ei esiinny myöskään eri EU-maiden välillä.

Kauppojen välistä hintakilpailua ei juuri ole, sillä Applen vähittäiskauppiailta perimät hinnat Applen tuotteista eivät jätä paljoa alennusvaraa.

Joidenkin eurooppalaisten kauppiaiden ja operaattoreiden mukaan Apple myös tosiasiallisesti määrää laitteiden kuluttajahinnat ja tukahduttaa kilpailua.

Hintakilpailun puute ei välttämättä johdu laittomasta hintakartellista, mutta määrähinnoittelu on laitonta.

1. Onko komissio tutkinut epäilyjä, joiden mukaan Apple määrää eurooppalaisille kauppiaille kuluttajille myytävien tuotteiden alimmat myyntihinnat?

2. Aikooko komissio aloittaa kilpailunrajoitustutkinnan, joka koskee kuluttajille kaupoissa myytävien tuotteiden hinnoittelua?

3. Komissio selvittää parhaillaan, rajoittavatko Applen eurooppalaisille operaattoreille asettamat sopimusehdot kilpailua. Aikooko komissio aloittaa tapauksessa kilpailunrajoitustutkinnan, joka koskee Applen operaattoreille asettamia sopimusehtoja?

Joaquín Almunian komission puolesta antama vastaus
(6. kesäkuuta 2013)

Komissio seuraa älypuhelinten jakelumarkkinoita tiiviisti ja tarkastelee parhaillaan Applen älypuhelinten jakelukäytäntöjä. Komissiolla ei ole tällä hetkellä tiedossaan viitteitä siitä, että Apple määrittäisi vähittäiskaupassa myytäville iPhone-puhelimille vähimmäishinnat. Vaikuttaa siltä, että iPhone-puhelinten suhteellisen yhdenmukainen hinnoittelu kaikkialla ETA-alueella johtuu niiden suhteellisen korkeasta tukkuhinnasta eikä niinkään siitä, että Apple määrittelisi vähimmäishintoja.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004291/13
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Is Apple restricting competition in Europe?

Shop prices for Apple's products are often the same as those on Apple's own website. There is hardly any competition among retailers in the Member States of the European Union with regard to the prices of Apple devices, nor are there any differences in prices between different countries in the EU.

There is barely any price competition between shops, because the prices charged for Apple products by its retail outlets do not leave much room for discounts.

Some European traders and operators are suggesting that Apple actually fixes the consumer prices of its equipment and is stifling competition.

The absence of price competition is not necessarily due to the actions of an illegal price-fixing cartel, but price-fixing itself is illegal.

1. Has the Commission investigated suspicions that Apple is dictating minimum retail prices for its products to European retailers?

2. Does the Commission intend to launch an investigation into the restriction of competition with respect to the prices of products sold to consumers in shops?

3. The Commission is currently looking into the question of whether the contractual terms and conditions imposed on Apple's European operators effectively restrict competition. Does the Commission intend to launch an investigation into the restriction of competition in this case, which concerns the contractual terms and conditions imposed on Apple's operators?

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

The Commission is monitoring the market for the distribution of smartphones closely and is currently examining Apple's smartphone distribution practices. The Commission has at this stage no indication of minimum retail prices for iPhones being fixed by Apple. It appears that the relatively uniform pricing of the iPhone throughout the EEA is due to the relatively high wholesale price of the iPhone rather than to the setting of minimum retail prices by Apple.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-004292/13
till kommissionen
Marita Ulvskog (S&D)
(16 april 2013)

Angående: Standard för ridhjälmar

De grundkrav för säkerhet som skyddsutrustning (däribland ridhjälmar) ska uppfylla fastställs i direktiv 89/686/EEG. Det faller på kommissionen att uppnå de säkerhetskrav som fastställs i direktivet. Standarden för ridhjälmar som tagits fram för att uppnå dessa säkerhetskrav heter EN1384 och är framtagen av Europeiska standardiseringskommittén (CEN).

Kommissionen hade vetskap om att EN1384 inte var tillräckligt säker redan år 1999 när de i ett mandat (M/281) till CEN ställde kravet på dem att revidera EN1384.

Kommissionen har också gett CEN anslag för att utveckla en högre säkerhet för ridhjälmar. Detta skedde i arbetsgrupp 5 i den tekniska kommittén 158 och arbetet planerades vara avslutat senast den 30 april 2003.

Den nya standarden som togs framkallades EN 14572 – Ridhjälmar med extra hög skyddsförmåga. Men inga nya hjälmar har certifierats enligt den nya säkrare standarden. Kunskapen om att hjälmarna inte producerats fick kommissionen att dra tillbaka riktlinjerna för EN 14572 till fördel för fortsatt produktion av EN1384.

Det har nu passerat femton år sedan bristerna med EN1384 belystes. Kommissionen fortsätter låta dessa hjälmar säljas. Detta sätter europeiska medborgare i fara. Konsumenter blir förda bakom ljuset då de tror att de köper säkra hjälmar.

Mot denna bakgrund vill vi fråga kommissionen:

1. Hur kommer det sig att trots kunskap så har kommissionen inte vidtagit åtgärder för säkrare ridhjälmar?

2. När kommer kommissionen att påbörja framtagandet av en säker standard som lever upp till europeiska skyddsdirektiv?

Svar från Antonio Tajani på kommissionens vägnar
(17 maj 2013)

Harmoniserade standarder utarbetas inte av kommissionen, utan av Europeiska standardiseringskommittén ([1]) på begäran av kommissionen. När bristerna i standarden för ridhjälmar EN 1384 påtalades i en framställning till Europaparlamentet 1998 utfärdade kommissionen uppdrag M/281 med en begäran om att CEN skulle förbättra standarden. Efter detta beslutade CEN att inte ändra standarden EN 1384, utan att utarbeta en ny standard för hjälmar med extra hög skyddsförmåga. Inga invändningar gjordes mot denna standard och hänvisningar till standarden offentliggjordes därför i Europeiska unionens officiella tidning ([2]).

Under 2008 informerade framställaren kommissionen om att inga hjälmar tillverkades enligt den nya standarden. Det uppdrag som kommissionen utfärdade ledde därför inte till något bättre skydd för ryttarna. Kommissionen beställde en oberoende undersökning, i vilken det konstaterades att standarden med extra hög skyddsförmåga inte var genomförbar och det bekräftades att den befintliga allmänna standarden skulle förbättras. Kommissionen bad CEN att dra tillbaka standarden med extra hög skyddsförmåga och begärde på nytt en ändring av standarden EN 1384.

Standarden med extra hög skyddsförmåga har nu dragits tillbaka och arbetet med att ändra standarden EN 1384 har inletts. Kommissionen anser dock att arbetet framskrider alltför långsamt. Den befintliga standarden, som utgjorde en väsentlig förbättring av skyddet för ryttare när den antogs, är nu föråldrad och kan inte längre anses ge den skyddsnivå som krävs enligt direktivet om personlig skyddsutrustning ([3]). Kommissionen har därför framfört en formell invändning mot standarden EN 1384 i syfte att dra tillbaka hänvisningen till den i Europeiska unionen officiella tidning. Ärendet lämnades till arbetsgruppen för personlig skyddsutrustning i april 2013. Yttranden kommer att inkomma inom de närmaste tre månaderna.

([1]) CEN.
([2]) EUT.
([3]) Direktiv 89/686/EEG.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004292/13
to the Commission
Marita Ulvskog (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Standards for horse-riding helmets

The basic safety requirements which must be met by protective equipment (including horse-riding helmets) are laid down in Directive 89/686/EEC. It is up to the Commission to ensure compliance with the safety requirements laid down in the directive. The standard for horse-riding helmets which has been drawn up to satisfy these requirements is known as EN 1384 and was developed by the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN).

The Commission already knew in 1999 that EN 1384 was not safe enough, and it was in that year that the Commission issued a mandate (M/281) to the CEN calling on it to revise EN 1384.

The Commission has also given CEN funding to improve the safety of horse-riding helmets. It did so in Working Group 5 of Technical Committee 158, and it was planned that the work should be completed, at the latest, by 30 April 2003.

The new standard which was compiled was given the title 'EN 14572 — High Performance Helmets'. But no helmets have been certified under the new, safer standard. When it found that no helmets had been produced, the Commission withdrew the guidelines for EN 14572 in favour of continued production of EN 1384.

15 years have now passed since the shortcomings of EN 1384 were identified. The Commission continues to allow these helmets to be sold. This places European citizens at risk. Consumers are led up the garden path in the belief that they are buying safe helmets.

1. Why, despite its knowledge of the situation, has the Commission not taken measures to make horse-riding helmets safer?

2. When will the Commission begin work on the preparation of a safe standard which complies with the requirements of the European directive on protective equipment?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 May 2013)

Harmonised standards are not made by the Commission but by the European Committee for Standardisation ([1]) on the basis of requests from the Commission. When a petition to the European Parliament drew attention to the inadequacy of the standard for horse-riding helmets EN 1384 in 1998, the Commission issued mandate M/281 asking CEN to improve the standard. In response, CEN decided not to revise standard EN 1384 but to develop a new standard for 'high performance' helmets. No objection was made to this standard and its reference was therefore published in the Official Journal of the EU ([2]).

In 2008, the petitioner informed the Commission that no helmets were being manufactured to the new standard. The Commission mandate had thus failed to improve the protection afforded to horse riders. The Commission ordered an independent enquiry which concluded that the 'high performance' standard was not practicable and confirmed that the existing general purpose standard should be improved. It asked CEN to withdraw the 'high performance' standard and reiterated its request to revise EN 1384.

The 'high performance' standard has now been withdrawn and work has started on revision of EN 1384. However the Commission considers that the work is progressing too slowly. The existing standard, which represented a significant improvement of the protection of horse riders when it was adopted, is now out of date and can no longer be considered to afford the level of protection required by the directive on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ([3]). The Commission has therefore launched a formal objection against EN 1384 in order to withdraw its reference from the OJEU. This matter was brought to the Working Group on PPE in April 2013. Opinions will be received within the next three months.

([1]) CEN.
([2]) OJEU.
([3]) Directive 89/686/EEC.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004293/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(16 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οικονομική κρίση και υγεία

Οικονομική κρίση, ανεργία, ανασφάλεια, βίαιη απώλεια εισοδήματος έχουν επιπτώσεις στην υγεία των πολιτών ([1]). Όσοι/ες αντιμετωπίζουν σοβαρά προβλήματα επιβίωσης διατρέχουν διπλάσιο κίνδυνο πρόωρου θανάτου ή αυξημένης νοσηρότητας εξαιτίας προβλημάτων που δρουν αθροιστικά ([2]). Η ανεργία οδηγεί σε ψυχικές διαταραχές, καρδιαγγειακά νοσήματα ([3]), αύξηση φαινομένων εθισμού-εξάρτησης από ουσίες, καπνίσματος, θνησιμότητας και επιδείνωση της υγείας εξαιτίας κακής διατροφής. Μεγάλα τμήματα της κοινωνίας οδηγούνται σε φτώχεια, υψηλή νοσηρότητα και ταυτόχρονα κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό ενώ καταγράφεται αύξηση αυτοκτονιών. Μαζί με τα εισοδήματα πλήττονται και τα δημόσια συστήματα υγείας, εντείνεται η ανισοτιμία στις συνθήκες κοινωνικής προστασίας της υγείας, επιδεινώνονται οι συνθήκες υγιεινής κι ασφάλειας. Μεγάλες κοινωνικές ομάδες (άνεργοι, άστεγοι, συνταξιούχοι, ΑΜΕΑ, ορφανά παιδιά, άτομα με σοβαρές ασθένειες, πρόσφυγες κ.ά.) στερούνται πρόσβασης σε κοινωνικές πολιτικές και συστήματα υγείας. Στα δημόσια νοσοκομεία μειώνεται η οικονομική στήριξη και το προσωπικό, ενώ δέχονται μεγαλύτερο αριθμό ασθενών με σοβαρότερες ασθένειες. Ορισμένα, όπως το Γενικό Νοσοκομείο Πατησίων, που εξυπηρετεί περιοχή 1 000 000 κατοίκων, μένουν χωρίς γιατρούς σε βασικούς τομείς ([4]).

Παρόλα αυτά δεν υπάρχει ολοκληρωμένη αξιολόγηση για την επίδραση της οικονομικής κρίσης και των πολιτικών προσαρμογής στην υγεία και τις υπηρεσίες υγείας στις χώρες της κρίσης. Η Ελλάδα είχε διαχρονικά δυσλειτουργίες και στρεβλώσεις του συστήματος δημόσιας υγείας. Αντί για εξορθολογισμό δαπανών και αναβάθμιση υπηρεσιών, η αλληλεπίδραση οικονομικού σοκ, λιτότητας και ασθενών κοινωνικών δικτύων προστασίας κλιμακώνει την κρίση στον τομέα της υγείας ([5]).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σκοπεύει να ζητήσει ανεξάρτητη έρευνα για τις επιπτώσεις της κρίσης και των πολιτικών λιτότητας στην υγεία και στις υπηρεσίες υγείας σε Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία και Ισπανία;

— Πώς προτίθεται να βοηθήσει τα κράτη μέλη που βιώνουν την κρίση να πετύχουν τον στόχο του Πολυετούς Προγράμματος Δράσης της ΕΕ στον τομέα της υγείας 2014-2020 για πρόσβαση ΟΛΩΝ των πολιτών στις υπηρεσίες υγείας;

— Ποιους τρόπους βελτίωσης της υγείας και της αποτελεσματικότητας των υπηρεσιών υγείας με στόχο και τη βελτίωση των δημοσιονομικών της χώρας, προτείνει ο εκπρόσωπός της στην Τρόικα;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί τα στοιχεία που συγκεντρώνει η Eurostat για την υγεία και έχει αναθέσει την εξέταση των δημοσιευμένων εκθέσεων για τον αντίκτυπο της κρίσης στην υγεία, η οποία αναμένεται να ολοκληρωθεί το 2014. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή εκτέλεσε μερικές διερευνητικές αποστολές σε κράτη μέλη.

Η πρόταση της Επιτροπής για το πρόγραμμα για την υγεία την περίοδο 2014-2020 αποσκοπεί, μεταξύ άλλων, στην υποστήριξη της βιωσιμότητας των συστημάτων υγείας. Οι δράσεις που προτείνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή μέσα σε αυτό το πλαίσιο αναμένεται να αντιμετωπίσουν απευθείας τα ζητήματα που έθιξε ο κύριος βουλευτής.

([1]) www.vima-asklipiou.gr 11ος τόμος, 1ο τεύχος, Ιαν-Μαρτ 2012.
([2]) Η Υγεία στη Δίνη της Οικονομικής κρίσης.
([3]) http://gr.voanews.com/content/greece-crisis-health/1620450.html
([4]) http://www.chrysogelos.gr/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1637:hospital-patision&Itemid=67&lang=el
([5]) http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)60102-6/fulltext#article_upsell, http://www.ecogreens-gr.org/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4290:2013-03-19-14-04-06&catid=10:health&Itemid=25

Ο κύριος βουλευτής μπορεί να βρει σχετικές πληροφορίες στην κοινή έκθεση του 2010 για τα συστήματα υγείας που εκπονήθηκε από τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής (Γενική Διεύθυνση Οικονομικών και Χρηματοδοτικών Υποθέσεων) και την Επιτροπή Οικονομικής Πολιτικής το 2010 ([6]). Η παρούσα έκθεση παρουσιάζει τις προκλήσεις πολιτικής στις οποίες καλούνται να αντεπεξέλθουν τα κράτη μέλη, ορισμένες εκ των οποιων στοχεύουν ειδικά στην αξιοποίηση δυνητικών οφελών αποδοτικότητας. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, οι εν λόγω προκλήσεις επικεντρώνονται στο πώς μπορούν να καταστούν τα συστήματα υγείας πιο αποτελεσματικά με μικρότερο κόστος βελτιώνοντας τον τρόπο παροχής υγειονομικής περίθαλψης, καθώς και τον τρόπο με τον οποίο λαμβάνονται οι αποφάσεις για τις επιστροφές χρημάτων. Η έκθεση απευθύνει επίσης σαφή έκκληση για την προώθηση της υγείας και την πρόληψη των ασθενειών, καθώς και για την αποτελεσματική χρήση των πηγών πληροφόρησης για θέματα υγείας.

([6]) Βλέπε http://europa.eu/epc/pdf/joint_healthcare_report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004293/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Economic crisis and health

The economic crisis, unemployment, insecurity and cruel loss of income have repercussions on people's health ([1]). Anyone facing serious problems of survival incurs the double risk of premature death or increased morbidity due to cumulative problems ([2]). Unemployment leads to mental disorders, cardiovascular disease ([3]), increased substance addiction and dependency, smoking, mortality and the deterioration of health due to malnutrition. Large sections of society are driven to poverty, experiencing high morbidity and social exclusion, and increases in the number of suicides have been recorded. Along with incomes, public health systems are affected, with rising inequality in conditions for the social protection of health, and a deterioration of health and safety conditions. Large groups within society (the unemployed, homeless, pensioners, people with special needs, orphans, persons with serious illnesses, refugees, etc.) are denied access to social policies and health systems. In state hospitals, funding and staff numbers fall, whilst the number of patients with more serious illnesses rises. Some hospitals, like the General Hospital of Patissia, which serves an area with 1 000 000 inhabitants, are left without doctors in basic sectors ([4]).

In spite of all this, no integrated assessment has been made of the impact of the economic crisis and adjustment policies on health and health services in the crisis-hit countries. Greece already had chronic malfunctions and distortions in its public health system. Instead of rationalising expenditure and upgrading services, the combination of financial shock, austerity and weak social protection networks is escalating the crisis in the health sector ([5]).

Will the Commission answer the following:

— Does it intend to demand independent research into the impact of the crisis and austerity policies on health and health services in Greece, Portugal and Spain?

— How does it intend to help the crisis-hit Member States achieve the aim of the multiannual programme of EU action in the field of health for the period 2014-2020 in terms of access for ALL citizens to health services?

— What methods does the Commission representative to the Troika propose for improving health and the efficiency of health services at the same time as improving national budgets?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The Commission monitors health data collected by Eurostat and has commissioned a review of published reports on the health impact of the crisis, which is expected to be completed during 2014. In addition, it has carried out a number of fact finding missions to Member States.

The Commission's proposal for the Health Programme 2014-2020 aims '*inter alia*' at supporting the sustainability of health systems. The actions proposed by the European Commission within this context are expected to address directly the issues raised by the Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member can find relevant information in the 2010 Joint Report on Health Systems prepared by the Commission services (Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs) and the Economic Policy Committee in 2010 ([6]). This report presents policy challenges to be addressed by Member States, some of which specifically aim to tap into potential efficiency gains. More precisely, these challenges focus on how to make health systems more cost-effective by addressing the way healthcare is delivered, as well as how reimbursement decisions are taken. The report includes a clear call for health promotion and disease prevention as well as effective use of health information resources.

([1]) www.vima-asklipiou.gr, volume 11, issue 1, Jan-March 2012.
([2]) Health in the Maelstrom of the Economic Crisis.
([3]) http://gr.voanews.com/content/greece-crisis-health/1620450.html
([4]) http://www.chrysogelos.gr/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1637:hospital-patision&Itemid=67&lang=el
([5]) http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)60102-6/fulltext#article_upsell, http://www.ecogreens-gr.org/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4290:2013-03-19-14-04-06&catid=10:health&Itemid=25
([6]) See http://europa.eu/epc/pdf/joint_healthcare_report_en.pdf

(An t-eagrán Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-004294/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE) agus Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(16 Aibreán 2013)

Ábhar: Ag fáil réidh le táillí fánaíochta san Eoraip

Cuirtear seirbhísí fánaíochta ar fáil faoi mhargadh léirscaoilte do ghutháin phóca ina bhfuil sé faoi na comhlachtaí teileachumarsáide iad féin táillí fánaíochta a shocrú agus a ghearradh sna Ballstáit éagsúla.

Faoin Rialachán (AE) Uimh. 531/2012 'maidir le fánaíocht a dhéanamh ar líonraí poiblí cumarsáide soghluaiste' tá laghduithe le teacht ar an uaschostas gur féidir a ghearradh ar sheirbhísí fánaíochta san AE agus na laghduithe sin le cur i bhfeidhm faoi na blianta 2012 agus 2014. Tá sásra i gceist leis an Rialachán freisin lena mbeidh ar an gCoimisiún athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar fheidhmiú an Rialacháin agus é sin a chur faoi bhráid Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus na Comhairle faoin mbliain 2016.

An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún a mhíniú conas atá sé i gceist aige córas fánaíochta comhtháite comhchuibhithe a chur i bhfeidhm san AE agus, ag an am céanna, a chinntiú go mbeidh iomaíocht chothromasach ann i margadh na nguthán póca?

Tá éirithe ag an Rialachán seo agus ag rialacháin eile an AE uaschostas na dtáillí fánaíochta a laghdú, ach céard atá déanta nó á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún chun deireadh iomlán a chur le táillí fánaíochta san Eoraip?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Kroes thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(28 Bealtaine 2013)

Sa Chlár Oibre Digiteach don Eoraip, tá sprioc leagtha amach go mbeidh an difríocht idir taraifí fánaíochta agus taraifí náisiúnta ag laghdú i dtreo is nach mbeidh tada de dhifríocht eatarthu. Tá an Coimisiún an-tiomanta don chuspóir seo a bhaint amach trí dhálaí iomaíocha margaidh a atreisiú.

Tá cosaint do thomhaltóirí sa Rialachán Fánaíochta nua, i bhfoirm uasteorainneacha praghais a bheidh ag laghdú agus a choinneofar go dtí Meitheamh 2017. Cé go ndéantar a áirithiú le huasteorainneacha praghais nach ngearrtar praghsanna iomarcacha ar chustaiméirí, tugadh isteach roinnt bearta struchtúracha leis an rialachán nua, amhail seirbhísí fánaíochta a dhíol ar leithligh agus oibleagáidí rochtana mórdhíola. Tá sé mar aidhm ag na bearta seo, in éineacht le muirir mhórdhíola atá ag laghdú, iomaíocht a fheabhsú sa mhargadh fánaíochta agus ba cheart go laghdófaí praghsanna na n-úsáideoirí deiridh a thuilleadh mar thoradh orthu, le bheith faoi bhun na n-uasteorainneacha praghais a fheidhmíonn mar líontán sábhála. Tá sé mar aidhm ag an gcur chuige seo aghaidh a thabhairt ar fhadhb na fánaíochta ar bhealach marthanach, trí dhálaí a chruthú do mhargadh iomaíoch fánaíochta.

D'fhonn na saincheisteanna seo a threorú chun cinn agus cur chun feidhme comhsheasmhach comhuaineach a áirithiú ar fud an Aontais, ghlac an Coimisiún rialacha mionsonraithe teicniúla in 2012 agus bhunaigh sé, i gcomhar le Comhlacht na Rialtóirí Eorpacha um Chumarsáid Leictreonach (BEREC), córas um chomhar do na rannpháirtithe sa mhargadh agus na geallsealbhóirí ábhartha. Déanann an Coimisiún dlúthfhaireachán ar chomhlíonadh na rialacha fánaíochta, i gcomhar le BEREC, agus ní bheidh aon drogall air dul i mbun gnímh a thuilleadh más gá.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004294/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE) and Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Ending roaming charges in Europe

Roaming services are available under the liberalised market for mobile phones where it is up to the telecommunications companies themselves to set and charge roaming fees and in different Member States.

Under the European Regulation 'on roaming on public mobile communications networks within the Union (EU) No 531/2012' reductions are to be made on the maximum cost that can be charged on roaming services in the EU and those reductions shall be applied by 2012 and 2014. The regulation contains a mechanism by which the Commission shall revise the application of the regulation and submit it to the European Parliament and the Council by 2016.

Could the Commission explain how it intends to implement a harmonised integrated roaming system in the EU and, at the same time, to assure equitable competition in the mobile phone market?

This regulation and other EU regulations have succeeded in reducing the high cost of roaming charges, but what has been done or is being done by the Commission in order to completely eliminate roaming charges in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Digital Agenda for Europe sets the target for the difference between roaming and national tariffs to approach zero. The Commission is strongly determined to pursue this objective by reinforcing competitive market conditions.

The new Roaming Regulation contains a safeguard for consumers in the form of decreasing price caps that are maintained until June 2017. While price caps ensure that consumers are not charged excessive prices, the new regulation introduced a number of structural measures, such as separate sale of roaming services and wholesale access obligations. These measures, coupled with the decreasing wholesale charges, aim at enhancing competition in the roaming market and should lead to further reductions in end-user prices below the proposed safety-net price caps. This approach aims to address the roaming problem in a durable way, by creating the conditions for a competitive roaming market.

In order to drive these issues forward and to ensure consistent and simultaneous implementation across the Union, the Commission has adopted detailed technical rules in 2012 and established, together with BEREC, a cooperation platform for market players and relevant stakeholders. The Commission monitors closely compliance with the roaming rules, together with BEREC and will not hesitate to take further action if necessary.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004295/13
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Dementia care

In a recent study carried out by the Alzheimer's Society in the UK, 70% of respondents said that they fear the prospect of moving into a care home in the future, and 53% reported that their biggest concern about a relative going into care would be abuse.

The ageing population is a challenge faced by countries across the EU, and we must ensure that people can feel secure and truly cared-for in care homes. The study also found that 80% of care-home residents suffer from dementia or other significant memory problems, so we must also ensure that we have the right expertise to deal with these medical conditions.

What action is currently being taken at EU level to address the problems of ageing populations, Alzheimer's and dementia, and standards of care? What more can be done in terms of European cooperation on these issues, utilising the Health Programme budget?

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

Under the European Innovation Partnership for Active and Healthy Ageing, stakeholders have put forward over 500 commitments to contribute to the target of increasing the average healthy lifespan in the EU by two years by 2020. This will be realised through developing and up-scaling innovative solutions in three areas: prevention and health promotion, care and cure, and active and independent living of elderly people.

With a focus on improving the care for people living with dementias, the Commission has co-financed from the EU-Health Programme the Joint Action 'ALzheimer Cooperative Valuation in Europe (ALCOVE)' ([1]), which involved 19 Member States from 2010 to 2013. The Joint Action was part of a 'European initiative on Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias' ([2]) from 2009. The synthesis report resulting from the Joint Action was published in March 2013 and includes recommendations for improving care for people with dementia.

The Commission has also implemented the pilot project on preventing elder abuse allowing it to fund action for better monitoring and prevention of elder abuse including a quality framework translated into 11 languages ([3]).

Funds from the EU-Health Programme to support measures in this field continue to be available. For example, the call for 2013 ([4]) under this programme included an invitation to submit proposals to set up a 'Joint Action addressing chronic diseases and promoting healthy ageing across the life cycle'. The proposals received are at present being evaluated.

([1]) www.alcove-project.eu/.
([2]) ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_information/dissemination/documents/com2009_380_en.pdf
([3]) www.wedo-partnership.eu/.
([4]) ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004296/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Grave compromissione del biotopo del lago del Frassino a Peschiera del Garda (Verona), area tutelata quale SIC e ZPS all'interno di Rete Natura 2000

A Peschiera del Garda (VR) è ubicato il lago morenico del Frassino, lungo 770 m e largo 380 m, biotopo di fondamentale importanza tutelato all'interno di Rete Natura 2000 quale SIC e ZPS ai sensi delle direttive «Habitat» 92/43/CEE e «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE ([1]).

Trattasi, infatti, di un'area umida di straordinario valore naturale floristico (con presenza di arbusti paludicoli e canneti, nonché di un bosco planiziale con antichi pioppi e salici) e faunistico (vi dimora la rara specie della rana di Lataste «Rana Latastei»; singolarmente ricca, in particolare, è l'avifauna locale, comprensiva di moltissime specie di uccelli che nidificano sulle sponde, a esempio il moriglione «Aythya ferina"e la moretta» Aythya fuligula ([2]).

Il sito, tuttavia — come riferito dall'associazione ambientalista Legambiente di Verona ([3]) — attualmente è interessato da una serie di vicende che stanno portando alla progressiva distruzione del biotopo stesso.

Riassumendo i fatti più gravi, innanzitutto l'area è a rischio di eccessiva cementificazione e antropizzazione, essendo in atto la costruzione di un complesso residenziale di 11.000 m^3 sulla sponda est del lago e di una struttura turisticoricettiva sulla sponda ovest. La società che sta realizzando quest'ultima, inoltre, ha effettuato drastici interventi di falciatura/potatura della flora autoctona con successiva piantumazione di specie ornamentali alloctone quali, a esempio, l'alloro e il bambù. Infine, all'inizio del mese di marzo l'area ha subito una serie di gravi incendi di probabile origine dolosa ([4]).

Tali vicende hanno portato alla distruzione in alcuni punti della quasi totalità della flora autoctona spontanea attorno al lago, con evidenti gravissime conseguenze sulla fauna ivi presente.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione sopra descritta di grave compromissione in atto di tale biotopo facente parte di Rete Natura 2000;

2. quali iniziative intende intraprendere al fine di verificare il rispetto della normativa comunitaria di settore da parte delle competenti autorità onde evitare ulteriori danni?

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

La Commissione non è al corrente delle specifiche questioni riferite dall'onorevole deputato. Il lago del Frassino è effettivamente uno degli oltre 26 000 siti selezionati dagli Stati membri e protetti ai sensi delle direttive «Uccelli» ([5]) e «Habitat» ([6]) (siti Natura 2000).

Questa normativa non vieta lo sviluppo di attività umane nei siti Natura 2000, purché esse siano compatibili con gli obiettivi di conservazione dei siti stessi.

([1]) SIC — ZPS IT3210003.
([2]) L'area, inoltre, è stata proclamata «patrimonio dell'umanità» da parte dell'UNESCO nel 2011 (decisione 35 COM B.35) in ragione della presenza di vestigia di palafitte preistoriche, con conseguente assunzione da parte dell'Italia di precisi vincoli di tutela.
([3]) Cfr. comunicato stampa in argomento presente nel sito della Legambiente di Verona di cui al link http://goo.gl/y3sSz.
([4]) Cfr. articolo de «L'Arena» di Verona presente a pag. n. 3 della rassegna stampa di cui al link http://goo.gl/TLS1E.
([5]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 30 novembre 2009, concernente la conservazione degli uccelli selvatici (GU L 20 del 26.1.2010).
([6]) Direttiva 92/43/CEE del Consiglio, del 21 maggio 1992, relativa alla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche (GU L 206 del 22.7.1992).

È compito delle autorità competenti degli Stati membri assicurare che le attività umane non provochino il degrado degli habitat dei siti e una perturbazione significativa delle specie per cui le zone sono state designate. Gli Stati membri devono inoltre garantire che qualsiasi piano o progetto suscettibile di incidere in modo significativo sui siti Natura 2000 sia oggetto di valutazione, a norma dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva «Habitat». In caso di conclusioni negative della valutazione dell'incidenza e in mancanza di soluzioni alternative, un progetto può essere autorizzato per motivi imperativi di rilevante interesse pubblico, a norma dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 4, della suddetta direttiva, purché si adottino misure compensative adeguate.

Alla luce delle informazioni disponibili, la Commissione non ravvisa una violazione delle direttive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004296/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Serious adverse effects on the biotope of Lake Frassino in Peschiera del Garda (Verona), an SCI and SPA area protected as part of the Natura 2000 network

Lake Frassino, 770 metres long and 380 metres wide, is a glacial lake located in Peschiera del Garda (province of Verona). It is a biotope of fundamental importance, protected as a site of Community importance (SCI) and special protection area (SPA) within the Natura 2000 network, in accordance with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) ([1]).

It is, in fact, a wetland of extraordinary natural floral value (containing marsh shrubs and reed beds, as well as a lowland forest with ancient poplars and willow trees) and faunal value (home to the rare species of Italian agile frog, *Rana latastei*); the local bird population is particularly rich, including many bird species which nest on the lake shores, for example, the common pochard, *Aythya ferina*, and the tufted duck, *Aythya fuligula* ([2]).

However, as reported by the Verona branch of the environmental association Legambiente ([3]), the area is currently being affected by various situations which are gradually destroying the biotope.

To summarise the most critical facts, firstly, the area is at risk of excessive concreting and anthropisation, since construction of an 11 000 m^3 residential complex on the eastern shore of the lake, and tourist accommodation on the western shore, is under way. Moreover, the company building the latter has carried out drastic cutting/pruning of the indigenous flora, subsequently planting non-indigenous ornamental species such as laurel and bamboo. Lastly, at the beginning of March, there were several major fires in the area, probably started deliberately ([4]).

In some parts, these situations have destroyed almost all the spontaneous indigenous flora around the lake, which clearly has severe consequences for the local fauna.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above state of affairs which is seriously affecting this biotope, part of the Natura 2000 network?

2. What action will it take to ensure that the competent authorities comply with EU legislation in this sector in order to prevent further damage?

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

The Commission was not aware of the specific issues mentioned by the Honourable Member. Lake Frassino is indeed one of the over 26 000 sites selected by Member States and protected under the Birds ([5]) and Habitats ([6]) Directives (Natura 2000 sites).

Such legislation does not prevent human activities or developments in Natura 2000 sites, as long as they are compatible with the conservation objectives of the sites themselves.

([1]) SCI — SPA IT3210003.
([2]) Furthermore, the area was designated a 'world heritage' site by Unesco in 2011 (Decision 35COMB35) owing to the presence of remains of prehistoric pile dwellings, with Italy consequently assuming specific obligations to protect it.
([3]) See the relevant press release on the website of the Verona branch of Legambiente: http://goo.gl/y3sSz.
([4]) See the article from the Verona newspaper L'Arena on page 3 of the press review: http://goo.gl/TLS1E.
([5]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([6]) Council Directive 92/43//EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

It is up to the relevant authorities in the Member States to ensure that human activities do not cause the deterioration of the sites' habitats or any significant disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated. Furthermore Member States shall ensure that any plan or project likely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites are subject to an assessment under Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive. In case of a negative assessment and in the absence of alternative solutions, the project can be authorised only for imperative reasons of overriding public interest under Article 6.4 and if adequate compensatory measures are adopted.

On the basis of available information, the Commission does not identify a breach of the directives.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004297/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sottrazione di minori e mandato di arresto internazionale

Il Mediatore del Parlamento europeo per i casi di sottrazione internazionale di minori riceve richieste di aiuto concernenti casi in cui il genitore che ha originariamente sottratto il minore viene sottoposto a mandato di arresto internazionale dall'autorità giudiziaria del Paese membro cui è stato segnalato l'allontanamento da parte dell'altro genitore. In alcuni Stati membri, la procedura che porta all'emissione del mandato di arresto internazionale viene espletata in contumacia e «inaudita altera parte» dall'autorità giudiziaria, che notifica la documentazione all'ultimo indirizzo conosciuto sul suo territorio nazionale. In tal caso, spesso il genitore che ha sottratto il minore non è a conoscenza della procedura in corso e quindi non prende parte al procedimento. Ne risulta che, al momento in cui la sottrazione viene meno, il genitore che ha originariamente commesso la sottrazione viene di fatto a trovarsi nella posizione di non poter avere più alcun contatto con il proprio figlio a causa del mandato di arresto internazionale pendente a suo carico, che ne determinerebbe l'arresto immediato al momento di una sua visita. In alcuni Stati membri, le autorità giudiziarie non provvedono a notificare all'imputato il procedimento che lo riguarda al nuovo indirizzo. Tali procedure sembrerebbero non essere uniformi in tutti gli Stati membri.

La mancata notifica degli atti del procedimento a un indirizzo non più valido e la prosecuzione in contumacia del procedimento ai fini del mandato di arresto internazionale sembrerebbero essere in questi casi in contrasto con l'articolo 47 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali. D'altra parte, al momento in cui la sottrazione viene meno, il perdurare del mandato di arresto internazionale a carico del genitore che ha originariamente commesso la sottrazione sembrerebbe essere in contrasto con l'articolo 24, paragrafi 2 e 3, della Carta dei diritti fondamentali.

Al fine di un ravvicinamento delle disposizioni legislative degli Stati membri e alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, non ritiene la Commissione che sia necessario proporre iniziative legislative:

1) ai sensi dell'articolo 82, paragrafo 2, lettera b), per definire norme minime volte a tutelare i diritti della persona nella procedura penale, in linea con quanto previsto dall'articolo 47 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali;

2) ai sensi dell'articolo 82, paragrafo 2, lettera c), per definire norme minime volte a tutelare i diritti del minore vittima, in linea con quanto previsto dall'articolo 24, paragrafi 2 e 3, della Carta dei diritti fondamentali?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

La Commissione ha rafforzato sia i diritti procedurali degli indagati, definendo disposizioni specifiche per il procedimento di esecuzione del mandato di arresto europeo (MAE), sia la protezione delle vittime nei procedimenti penali. Sono già state adottate due direttive ([1]) ed è stato concordato il testo di una direttiva relativa al diritto di accesso a un difensore nel procedimento penale. Sono in corso anche i lavori relativi alle garanzie procedurali per i minori e le persone vulnerabili, all'assistenza legale e alla presunzione di innocenza.

La decisione di promuovere un'azione penale in materia di sottrazione dei minori è una questione di diritto interno. Qualora siano soddisfatti i criteri di emissione del MAE, gli Stati membri possono utilizzarlo per avviare un procedimento penale. Mentre un indagato beneficia di tutte le garanzie procedurali disposte nelle misure di cui sopra, la Corte di giustizia delle Comunità europee ha confermato che, come nel caso dei mandati d'arresto nazionali, gli Stati membri non sono tenuti ad avvisare un indagato dell'emissione di un MAE ([2]).

Nell'ottobre del 2012, è stata adottata una direttiva sui diritti, l'assistenza e la protezione delle vittime di reato ([3]). Essa richiede esplicitamente che tutte le autorità competenti adottino un approccio rispettoso delle esigenze del minore, che consideri innanzitutto l'interesse superiore del minore. Essa prevede, inoltre, diritti procedurali specifici, sostegno e misure di protezione per le vittime minorenni nei procedimenti penali.

([1]) Le direttive sul diritto all'interpretazione e alla traduzione (direttiva 2010/64/UE, del 20 ottobre 2010, GU L 280 del 26.10.2010, pag. 1) e sul diritto all'informazione nei procedimenti penali (direttiva 2012/13/UE del 22 maggio 2012, GU L 142 dell'1.6.2012, pag. 1).
([2]) Caso C-396/11 Radu (sentenza 29 gennaio 2013).
([3]) Direttiva 2012/29/UE del 25 ottobre 2012 (GU L 315 del 14.11.2012).

L'avvio di un procedimento penale può, in talune circostanze, portare ad un rifiuto di riportare indietro il minore. Molte autorità centrali sconsigliano alle istituzioni di ricorrere a tali procedimenti. La *Central Authority Practice Guide*, in conformità alla convenzione dell'Aia del 1980, stabilisce che l'impatto di un'azione penale per sottrazione di minori sulla possibilità di ottenere il ritorno del minore dovrebbe essere considerato dalle autorità giudiziarie per avviare, sospendere o ritirare le accuse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004297/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Child abduction and international arrest warrants

The European Parliament Mediator for International Parental Child Abduction receives requests for help with cases where the parent who originally abducted the child is subject to an international arrest warrant issued by the legal authority of the Member State to which the other parent reported the abduction. In some Member States, the procedure which leads to the issue of an international arrest warrant is carried out *in absentia* and *ex parte* by the legal authority, which serves the papers at the last known address on national territory. In this case, the parent who abducted the child is often not aware of the procedure which is under way and therefore does not participate in the proceedings. Consequently, when the abduction ends, in practice the parent who originally abducted the child is unable to have any further contact with their child due to the outstanding international arrest warrant in their name, which would result in their immediate arrest if they visited the child. In certain Member States, the legal authorities do not notify the accused of the proceedings against them at their new address. These procedures do not appear to be uniform in all the Member States.

The failure to serve the papers relating to the proceedings at an address that is no longer valid and the execution *in absentia* of the international arrest warrant proceedings appear, in these cases, to run counter to Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Moreover, once the abduction is over, the continued validity of the international arrest warrant for the parent who originally abducted the child appears to runs counter to Article 24(2) and (3) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

In order to approximate the laws of the Member States and in light of the above, does the Commission not consider it necessary to propose legislative initiatives:

1. pursuant to Article 82(2)(b), so as to define minimum standards to safeguard a person's rights during the criminal procedure, in accordance with Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights;

2. pursuant to Article 82(2)(c), so as to define minimum standards to safeguard the rights of the child victim, in accordance with Article 24(2) and (3) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2013)

The Commission has strengthened both the procedural rights of suspects, with specific provisions for European arrest warrant (EAW) proceedings, and the protection of victims in criminal proceedings. Two Directives have already been adopted ([1]) and the text of a directive on the right of access to a lawyer in criminal proceedings is agreed. Work is ongoing on safeguards for children and vulnerable persons, legal aid and the presumption of innocence.

The decision to institute criminal proceedings, i.e. for child abduction is a matter for national law. Where the criteria for issuing an EAW are met, Member States can use it to pursue a criminal case. While a suspect benefits from all the procedural safeguards in the above measures, the ECJ has confirmed that, as with domestic arrest warrants, Member States are not obliged to give a suspect notice of the issuing of an EAW ([2]).

A Directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime ([3]) was adopted in October 2012. It explicitly requires that all competent authorities take a child-sensitive approach with the best interests of the child as a primary concern. It includes specific procedural rights, support and protection measures for child victims in criminal proceedings.

The institution of criminal proceedings may, in certain cases, lead to a refusal to return the child. Many Central Authorities discourage the institution of such proceedings. The Central Authority Practice Guide under the 1980 Hague Convention states that the impact of a criminal prosecution for child abduction on the possibility of achieving the child's return is a matter which should be capable of being taken into account in the exercise of any discretion that the prosecuting authorities have to initiate, suspend or withdraw charges.

([1]) Directives on the right to interpretation and translation (Directive 2010/64/EU of 20 October 2010, OJ L 280, 26.10.2010, p. 1) and on the right to information in criminal proceedings (Directive 2012/13/EU of 22 May 2012, OJ L 142, 1.6.2012, p. 1).
([2]) Case C-396/11 Radu (Judgment 29 January 2013).
([3]) Directive 2012/29/EU of 25 October 2012, OJ L 315 14.11.20012.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004302/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Mise en œuvre des «Guiding Principles on Human Rights Impact Assessments of Trade and Investment Agreements»

1. La Commission compte-t-elle mettre en œuvre le document d'orientation préparé par le rapporteur de l'Organisation des Nations unies sur le droit à l'alimentation, intitulé «Guiding Principles on Human Rights Impact Assessments of Trade and Investment Agreements» (principes directeurs des Nations unies applicables aux études de l'impact des accords de commerce et d'investissement sur les Droits de l'homme), qui invite à procéder à des évaluations des répercussions sur les droits humains lors de la conclusion d'accords commerciaux et d'investissement, afin de s'assurer que ces derniers satisfont bien aux obligations souscrites en vertu des instruments internationaux relatifs aux Droits de l'homme?

2. Quels éléments compte-t-elle mettre en avant dans cette stratégie?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(30 mai 2013)

1. Avant de proposer de nouvelles initiatives, la Commission européenne procède à une analyse d'impact. Un autre instrument à sa disposition est l'évaluation de l'impact du commerce sur le développement durable réalisée au cours d'une négociation commerciale. Ces deux instruments sont fondamentaux dans la formulation de politiques commerciales étayées sur des données probantes. La Commission utilise une approche intégrée afin de pouvoir présenter dans un document unique une analyse équilibrée des avantages et des coûts de l'ensemble des incidences sur la situation économique, sociale et environnementale ainsi que sur les Droits de l'homme. Dans le cadre de cette approche, et en conformité avec le Plan d'action de l'UE en faveur des Droits de l'homme et de la démocratie ([1]), toutes les évaluations d'impact des accords sur le commerce et l'investissement comportent un volet consacré aux Droits de l'homme, par souci de cohérence avec les obligations inscrites dans les instruments internationaux en la matière. La méthodologie utilisée est décrite dans les Orientations opérationnelles sur la prise en compte des droits fondamentaux dans les analyses d'impact de la Commission ([2]).

2. Conformément à ces Orientations (et au document d'orientation rédigé par le rapporteur des Nations unies sur le droit à l'alimentation), la Commission recense les Droits de l'homme (tels qu'ils sont définis dans les conventions applicables des Nations unies) qui pourraient être spécialement lésés par des mesures particulières prévues dans un accord commercial; elle analyse jusqu'à quel point lesdites mesures particulières peuvent améliorer ou compromettre l'exercice des droits en question ou renforcer ou affaiblir la capacité des pays partenaires à s'acquitter de leurs obligations en matière de Droits de l'homme ou à progressivement en prendre conscience.

([1]) Plan d'action de l'UE en faveur des Droits de l'homme et de la démocratie, Conseil de l'UE 11855/12, 25 juin 2012.
([2]) Orientations opérationnelles sur la prise en compte des droits fondamentaux dans les analyses d'impact de la Commission, SEC(2011) 567 final, 6 mai 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/key_docs/docs/sec_2011_0567_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004302/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the 'Guiding principles on human rights impact assessments of trade and investment agreements'

1. Will the Commission implement the guidance document drafted by the UN Rapporteur on the right to food, entitled 'Guiding principles on human rights impact assessments of trade and investment agreements', which calls for the human rights impact of trade and investment agreements to be assessed in order to ensure that those agreements are consistent with obligations under international human rights instruments?

2. Which points will it emphasise in this strategy?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

1. The European Commission carries out an impact assessment before proposing new initiatives. Another instrument is the trade sustainability impact assessment carried out during a trade negotiation. Both are instrumental in the formulation of sound, evidence-based trade policies. The Commission uses an integrated approach to allow all relevant economic, social, environmental, and human rights impacts in terms of benefits and costs to be analysed and presented together in one single document in a balanced outcome. Under this approach, and in line with the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy ([1]), all impact assessments concerning trade and investment agreements study the potential human rights impact of those agreements, for consistency with obligations under international human rights instruments. The methodology used is developed in the Operational Guidance on taking account of Fundamental Rights in Commission Impact Assessments ([2]).

2. In line with such Guidance (and with the guidance document drafted by the UN Rapporteur on the right to food), the Commission identifies the specific human rights (as set out in relevant UN Conventions) liable to be affected by particular measures considered in a trade agreement; analyses the extent to which the particular measures may enhance or impair the enjoyment of the relevant rights; and/or may strengthen or weaken the ability of partner countries to fulfil or progressively realise their human rights obligations.

([1]) EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, CEU 11855/12, 25 June 2012.
([2]) Operational Guidance on taking account of Fundamental Rights in Commission Impact Assessments, SEC(2011) 567 final, 6 May 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/key_docs/docs/sec_2011_0567_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004304/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Proposition de l'ONU concernant des normes environnementales applicables aux produits agricoles

Suite à la demande formulée par le rapporteur spécial de l'ONU sur l'accès à l'alimentation que soit mis en place un système d'incitations positives, que propose concrètement la Commission pour encourager l'importation dans l'Union de produits agricoles répondant à des normes définies en matière environnementale, sociale et de Droits de l'homme, notamment en garantissant des revenus équitables pour les producteurs et des salaires justes pour les travailleurs agricoles?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(7 juin 2013)

La mise en place et l'application de réglementations environnementales et sociales sont en premier lieu du ressort des autorités du pays concerné. Les systèmes de certification volontaires qui tiennent compte des normes environnementales et sociales ainsi que des droits de l'Homme peuvent bénéficier aux producteurs et aux consommateurs, en offrant une incitation commerciale au respect des normes. En 2010, la Commission a élaboré des lignes directrices sur les meilleures pratiques afin d'aider à améliorer la transparence, la crédibilité et l'efficacité des systèmes de certification volontaires pour les produits agricoles et les denrées alimentaires ([1]), et de réduire la charge administrative et financière pour les agriculteurs et les producteurs.

Dans le cadre de plusieurs programmes, la Commission soutient le renforcement des capacités des administrations des pays en développement afin de permettre une meilleure gestion des réglementations environnementales et sociales. De plus, la Commission soutient les programmes de renforcement des capacités visant à permettre aux producteurs de satisfaire aux normes officielles et à celles appliquées dans le cadre de programmes volontaires ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:341:0005:0011:fr:PDF

([2]) La Phase 2 du programme PIP-COLACP (http://pip.coleacp.org/en/pip/17400-objectives-pip-phase-2) et le programme StandardsMap (http://www.standardsmap.org/) sont des exemples de programmes qui permettent de renforcer les capacités pour répondre aux exigences du marché, y compris les normes environnementales et sociales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004304/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: UN proposal on environmental standards applicable to agricultural products

In response to the call by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food to put in place a system of positive incentives, what exactly does the Commission propose in order to encourage the import into the EU of agricultural products that comply with specified environmental, social and human rights standards, in particular by ensuring fair incomes for producers and fair wages for agricultural workers?

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

Setting and enforcing social and environmental regulations is in the first place a matter for the authorities in the country concerned. Voluntary certification schemes that address environmental and social standards and human rights can bring benefits to producers and consumers by providing a market incentive for adherence to the standards. In 2010, the Commission developed best practice guidelines to help improve the transparency, credibility and effectiveness of voluntary certification schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs ([1]), and to reduce the administrative and financial burden on farmers and producers.

Through various programmes, the Commission supports the capacity-building of developing country administrations to be able to manage better social and environmental regulation. In addition, the Commission supports capacity-building schemes for producers to be able to meet official standards and those applied under voluntary schemes ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:341:0005:0011:en:PDF

([2]) Examples of schemes that provide capacity building to meet market requirements including environmental and social standards include PIP-COLACP Programme Phase 2 (http://pip.coleacp.org/en/pip/17400-objectives-pip-phase-2) and StandardsMap (and http://www.standardsmap.org/).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004305/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Ulteriori campagne denigratorie nei confronti dei lavoratori italiani transfrontalieri in Svizzera

Come già segnalato precedentemente alla Commissione e al Consiglio, la sezione ticinese del partito politico svizzero dell'Unione Democratica di Centro (UDC) continua a fare propaganda gettando discredito sui lavoratori transfrontalieri italiani.

Considerato che:

— la Regione Lombardia, dove risiedono quasi tutti questi lavoratori, ha istituito un'apposita commissione in seno al proprio Consiglio Regionale per affrontare i problemi dei lavoratori transfrontalieri (vedasi il punto 7 dell'ordine del giorno della seduta del 9 aprile u.s.);

— tra la Confederazione Elvetica e diversi Stati membri dell'Unione europea sono in corso negoziati su diversi settori in virtù dell'accordo bilaterale Svizzera-UE;

— la libertà di movimento dei lavoratori deve essere salvaguardata come elemento competitivo irrinunciabile, mentre il bacino elettorale dell'UDC nel Canton Ticino risulta ancora, dalla tornata elettorale del 7 aprile u.s., corposo a conferma di quanto tali accuse siano radicate;

— già in altre occasioni (interrogazioni E-8144/2010, E-011025/2010, E-010902/2010, E-000312/2011, P-000920/2012 solo per citarne alcune) la Commissione ha ritenuto tali fenomeni «iniziative individuali, sia pur deplorevoli», mentre il Consiglio si è definito «preoccupato» (E-000311/2011),

può la Commissione, per quanto di sua competenza, precisare:

— cosa intende essa fare per ripristinare le condizioni competitive di libertà e equità stante che tali campagne pubblicitarie, fomentando i pregiudizi nei confronti dei lavoratori italiani, hanno un impatto sulla concorrenza fra questi e i lavoratori locali;

— ritiene che tali tentativi, già altre volte portati all'attenzione delle istituzioni europee, debbano essere tenuti in considerazione in sede di negoziazioni bilaterali;

— in che modo intende tutelare questi cittadini italiani che, oltre a sostenere dei costi per trasferirsi quotidianamente in Svizzera, devono subire anche angherie e frustrazioni alla luce del sole?

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

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei fatti citati dall'onorevole parlamentare e rimanda alle risposte alle interrogazioni E-011025/2010 e E-010902/2010 ([1]).

La Commissione rimane a disposizione dell'onorevole parlamentare qualora intenda trasmettere informazioni supplementari.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004305/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Further campaigns in Switzerland to denigrate cross-border workers from Italy

As has already been brought to the notice of the Commission and the Council, the Ticino branch of the Swiss People's Party (UDC) is continuing its propaganda campaign against cross-border workers from Italy.

The regional authorities in Lombardy, which is where almost all of the workers live, have set up a special committee to address the problems faced by cross-border workers (see item 7 of the agenda for the regional council meeting of 9 April 2013).

Negotiations are currently being conducted in a number of areas between various Member States and Switzerland under the Switzerland-EU bilateral agreement.

Freedom of movement for workers is of essential importance to fair competition and must therefore be preserved. In this connection, the results of the elections of 7 April 2013 clearly show that the views espoused by the Ticino branch of the UDC continue to have a broad constituency in the canton.

In replies to earlier questions (including E-8144/2010, E-011025/2010, E-010902/2010, E-000312/2011 and P-000920/2012) the Commission has taken the view that, although these incidents are deplorable, the responsibility lies with private individuals, while the Council has said that it is 'concerned' (E-000311/2011).

Given the above, will the Commission say:

— how it intends to ensure that a free and fair competitive environment is re-established, given that, by stoking prejudice against Italian workers, these advertising campaigns are affecting their ability to compete with local workers?

— whether these incidents, which have already been brought to the attention of the European institutions, should be raised during bilateral negotiations with Switzerland?

— how it intends to protect these Italian citizens who, in addition to bearing the cost of travelling to work in Switzerland each day, are openly targeted once they get there?

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

The Commission is not aware of the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member and refers to previous replies to questions E-011025/2010 and E-010902/2010 ([1]).

The Commission is at the disposal of the Honourable Member if she wishes to transmit additional information.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html?tabType=wq#sidesForm.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-004306/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(16 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διοργάνωση συνεδρίου εκπαιδευτικών στα κατεχόμενα

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Συνδικαλιστική Επιτροπή Εκπαιδευτικών ETUCE πραγματοποιεί στις 17-18 Μαΐου 2013 διεθνές συνέδριο στην κατεχόμενη Αμμόχωστο με θέμα «Peace education in schools: The role of teachers in promoting peace through awareness raising and information on conflict prevention and conflict resolution in divided societies». Σημειώνεται πως το ξενοδοχείο SALAMIS BAY, στο οποίο θα πραγματοποιηθεί το συνέδριο, είναι ιδιοκτησία ελληνοκύπριου πρόσφυγα.

Η διοργάνωση του εν λόγω συνεδρίου στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη της Κύπρου παραβιάζει το διεθνές δίκαιο και τα ψηφίσματα του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας του ΟΗΕ, ενώ αποτελεί έμμεση αναγνώριση του παράνομου καθεστώτος και της τουρκικής εισβολής.

Παράλληλα, για τη μεταφορά των συνέδρων στην Κύπρο θα χρησιμοποιηθεί το παράνομο αεροδρόμιο «Ερτσάν», γεγονός που παραβιάζει τις συνθήκες του Διεθνή Οργανισμού Πολιτικής Αεροπορίας και του Eurocontrol.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Θα ασκήσει επιρροή προς την ETUCE, ώστε να αποφευχθεί η διεξαγωγή του συνεδρίου στα κατεχόμενα;

— Καταδικάζει τη διεξαγωγή του συνεδρίου στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη της Κύπρου;

— Έχει δοθεί ποτέ οποιαδήποτε χρηματοδότηση από την Επιτροπή στην ETUCE; Εάν έχει δοθεί, σκοπεύει να θέσει τέλος στην χρηματοδότηση της ETUCE, η οποία παραβιάζει σειρά κανονισμών και ψηφισμάτων που υποστηρίζονται από την ΕΕ;

— Σκοπεύει να αποθαρρύνει τέτοιες ανεπίτρεπτες δραστηριότητες από οποιοδήποτε οργανισμό που συνδέεται με τα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Το συνέδριο αυτό, στο οποίο αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου, αποτελεί πρωτοβουλία της ευρωπαϊκής οργάνωσης εργαζομένων, που εξ ορισμού είναι εντελώς ανεξάρτητη από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και από κάθε άλλη δημόσια αρχή. Σύμφωνα με τους βασικούς κανόνες εργασίας της ΔΟΕ, τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και το άρθρο 152 της ΣΛΕΕ, η Επιτροπή οφείλει να σέβεται την ανεξαρτησία και την αυτονομία οργανώσεων των κοινωνικών εταίρων και απέχει από κάθε παρέμβαση στις δραστηριότητές τους.

Η Επιτροπή δεν χορηγεί επιχειρησιακή χρηματοδότηση στην Ευρωπαϊκή Συνδικαλιστική Επιτροπή Εκπαιδευτικών (ETUCE), ή χρηματοδότηση γι' αυτήν τη συγκεκριμένη εκδήλωση. Στο παρελθόν, η ETUCE έλαβε επανειλημμένως ενωσιακή χρηματοδότηση σχετική με συγκεκριμένα προγράμματα.

Τα ζητήματα που ανακινεί το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου υπογραμμίζουν μια ακόμη φορά τη σημασία που έχει η συνολική διευθέτηση του κυπριακού προβλήματος.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004306/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Organisation of a teachers' conference in the occupied territories of Cyprus

On 17-18 May 2013 the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) is holding an international conference in occupied Ammochostos on 'Peace education in schools: The role of teachers in promoting peace through awareness raising and information on conflict prevention and conflict resolution in divided societies'. It should be noted that the SALAMIS BAY Hotel, where the conference is taking place, is the property of a Greek Cypriot refugee.

The organisation of this conference in the occupied part of Cyprus constitutes a breach of international law and UN Security Council resolutions and also constitutes implicit recognition of the illegal regime and the Turkish invasion.

Furthermore, delegates will be flying to Ercan airport, an illegal airport, which violates the International Civil Aviation Organisation and Eurocontrol agreements.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Will it bring pressure to bear on the ETUCE with a view to ensuring that this conference is not held in the occupied territories?

— Does it condemn the holding of the conference in the occupied part of Cyprus?

— Has it ever given any funding to the ETUCE? If so, will it cease doing so given that the ETUCE is infringing a number of regulations and resolutions supported by the EU?

— Does it intend to discourage such unauthorised activities by any organisation associated with the EU institutions?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

This conference referred to by the Honourable Member is an initiative of a European workers' organisation, which is by definition totally independent from the European Commission and any other public authority. In accordance with Core Labour Standards of the ILO, with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and with Article 152 TFEU, the Commission must respect the independence and autonomy of social partner organisations and shall refrain from any interference in their activities.

The Commission does not provide operational funding to the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), or funding for this particular event. ETUCE has in the past, on several occasions, benefited from specific project-related EU funding.

The issues raised by the Honourable Members once again emphasise the importance of reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004307/13
al Consiglio
Lara Comi (PPE)
(16 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Ulteriori campagne denigratorie nei confronti dei lavoratori italiani transfrontalieri in Svizzera

Come già segnalato precedentemente alla Commissione e al Consiglio, la sezione ticinese del partito politico svizzero dell'Unione Democratica di Centro (UDC) continua a fare propaganda gettando discredito sui lavoratori transfrontalieri italiani.

Considerato che:

— la Regione Lombardia, dove risiedono quasi tutti questi lavoratori, ha istituito un'apposita commissione in seno al proprio Consiglio Regionale per affrontare i problemi dei lavoratori transfrontalieri (vedasi il punto 7 dell'ordine del giorno della seduta del 9 aprile u.s.);

— tra la Confederazione Elvetica e diversi Stati membri dell'Unione europea sono in corso negoziati su diversi settori in virtù dell'accordo bilaterale Svizzera — UE;

— la libertà di movimento dei lavoratori deve essere salvaguardata come elemento competitivo irrinunciabile, mentre il bacino elettorale dell'UDC nel Canton Ticino risulta ancora, dalla tornata elettorale del 7 aprile u.s., corposo a conferma di quanto tali accuse siano radicate;

— già in altre occasioni (interrogazioni E-8144/2010, E-011025/2010, E-010902/2010, E-000312/2011, P-000920/2012 solo per citarne alcune) la Commissione ha ritenuto tali fenomeni «iniziative individuali, sia pur deplorevoli», mentre il Consiglio si è definito «preoccupato» (E-000311/2011),

può il Consiglio, per quanto di sua competenza, precisare:

— cosa intendono fare esso e la Commissione per ripristinare le condizioni competitive di libertà e equità stante che tali campagne pubblicitarie, fomentando i pregiudizi nei confronti dei lavoratori italiani, hanno un impatto sulla concorrenza fra questi e i lavoratori locali;

— ritiene che tali tentativi, già altre volte portati all'attenzione delle istituzioni europee, debbano essere tenuti in considerazione in sede di negoziazioni bilaterali;

— in che modo intende tutelare questi cittadini italiani che, oltre a sostenere dei costi per trasferirsi quotidianamente in Svizzera, devono subire anche angherie e frustrazioni alla luce del sole?

Risposta
(17 giugno 2013)

Il Consiglio non ha discusso il problema specifico, tuttavia per quanto riguarda il funzionamento dell'accordo sulla libera circolazione delle persone tra l'UE e la Confederazione svizzera e le relazioni UE-Svizzera in generale, esso tiene a richiamare l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sulle conclusioni del Consiglio del 20 dicembre 2012 sulle relazioni dell'UE con i paesi dell'EFTA ([1]), in cui ha manifestato qualche preoccupazione per quanto riguarda il funzionamento dell'accordo sulla libera circolazione delle persone tra l'UE e la Confederazione svizzera. Il Consiglio ha osservato con rammarico che la Svizzera ha adottato alcune misure che non sono compatibili con la lettera e lo spirito dell'accordo sulla libera circolazione delle persone e che ne compromettono l'attuazione.

([1]) Doc. 17151/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004307/13
to the Council
Lara Comi (PPE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Further campaigns in Switzerland to denigrate cross-border workers from Italy

As has already been brought to the notice of the Commission and the Council, the Ticino branch of the Swiss People's Party (UDC) is continuing its propaganda campaign against cross-border workers from Italy.

The regional authorities in Lombardy, which is where almost all of the workers live, have set up a special committee to address the problems faced by cross-border workers (see item 7 of the agenda for the regional council meeting of 9 April 2013).

Negotiations are currently being conducted in a number of areas between various Member States and Switzerland under the Switzerland-EU bilateral agreement.

Freedom of movement for workers is of essential importance to fair competition and must therefore be preserved. In this connection, the results of the elections of 7 April 2013 clearly show that the views espoused by the Ticino branch of the UDC continue to have a broad constituency in the canton.

In replies to earlier questions (including E-8144/2010, E-011025/2010, E-010902/2010, E-000312/2011 and P-000920/2012) the Commission has taken the view that, although these incidents are deplorable, the responsibility lies with private individuals, while the Council has said that it is 'concerned' (E-000311/2011).

Given the above, will the Council say:

— how, with the Commission's assistance, it intends to ensure that a free and fair competitive environment is re-established, given that, by stoking prejudice against Italian workers, these advertising campaigns are affecting their ability to compete with local workers?

— whether these incidents, which have already been brought to the attention of the European institutions, should be raised during bilateral negotiations with Switzerland?

— how it intends to protect these Italian citizens who, in addition to bearing the cost of travelling to work in Switzerland each day, are openly targeted once they get there?

Reply
(17 June 2013)

The Council has not discussed this specific issue, but with regard to the functioning of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between the EU and the Swiss Confederation and EU-Swiss relations in general, it would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the Council conclusions of 20 December 2012 on EU relations with EFTA States ([1]), in which it expressed a number of concerns regarding the functioning of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between the EU and the Swiss Confederation. The Council noted with regret that Switzerland had taken a number of measures, which are not compatible with the provisions and the spirit of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons and which undermine its implementation.

([1]) Doc. 17151/12.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004308/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Des jeunes Européens les armes à la main en Syrie

De nombreuses familles s'inquiètent de voir leurs enfants partir combattre en Syrie. Parmi ceux-ci, il y a des convertis, des idéalistes souvent manipulés et enrôlés dans des causes plus radicales, d'autres encore au passé lourd et suivis, voire poursuivis, par la justice et enfin ceux qui veulent soutenir l'opposition classique.

En Belgique, ils sont déjà une centaine à avoir pris les armes, ils seraient au moins un millier au niveau européen.

1. Quelles sont les mesures prises par l'Europe pour contrôler ce flux de futurs jeunes combattants de l'Europe vers la Syrie?

2. Sur internet, des équipes s'occupent-elles spécifiquement des sites prônant l'émergence de phénomènes comme le terrorisme isolé ou propageant des messages poussant nos jeunes à prendre les armes en Syrie?

3. L'Europe compte-t-elle mettre en place un numéro vert ou une adresse électronique pour soutenir les familles des enfants partis au combat?

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

La Commission est très préoccupée par la menace que pourraient faire peser sur la sécurité de l'UE les citoyens européens qui rentrent chez eux après être partis combattre en Syrie.

Elle a pris à cet égard plusieurs initiatives avec l'aide du Réseau européen de sensibilisation à la radicalisation (RSR). Des groupes de travail du RSR ont participé à des actions visant à prévenir et à dissuader les départs en Syrie comme combattants étrangers, ainsi qu'à aider les États membres face à la menace que pourraient poser ces combattants une fois rentrés. Les mesures à prendre consistent notamment à nouer des contacts avec les communautés à risque, y compris les diasporas, à diffuser des contre-discours, à mener des actions de réinsertion associant les acteurs locaux, les communautés et les familles, à former de manière appropriée les forces de police en première ligne, ainsi qu'à sensibiliser les professionnels de la santé. Les États membres doivent également utiliser les instruments existants, tels que le système d'information Schengen de deuxième génération, pour mieux suivre les mouvements des combattants étrangers.

Les sites web diffusant des contenus radicaux sont surveillés par les autorités des États membres. Il n'est pas prévu pour l'instant de mettre en place une ligne d'assistance téléphonique ou une adresse électronique à l'échelle de l'UE.

Le Conseil (JAI) s'est penché sur cette question le 7 juin 2013, en se fondant sur un rapport élaboré par le coordinateur de la lutte contre le terrorisme de l'UE. Ce document présente les mesures que l'UE et les États membres pourraient prendre dans le domaine de la surveillance, de la législation, de la diplomatie, de la communication et du travail avec les communautés locales. La Commission a accepté de soumettre, d'ici à la fin de l'année, une analyse des risques pour déterminer les menaces que font peser les combattants étrangers sur la sécurité de l'UE et les mesures qui pourraient être prises pour atténuer ces risques.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004308/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Young Europeans taking up arms in Syria

There are many anxious families because their children have gone to fight in Syria. Some of these children are converts and idealists who have often been manipulated and signed up to more radical movements, whereas others have a chequered past and are being watched or pursued by the law, and others wish to support the traditional opposition.

Some 100 Belgians have already taken up arms, and the figure for Europeans as a whole is alleged to be at least 1 000.

1. What measures has Europe taken to monitor this flow of future young fighters from Europe to Syria?

2. Are there any teams dealing specifically with websites which promote trends such as lone terrorism or which spread messages encouraging our young people to take up arms in Syria?

3. Is Europe planning to set up a hotline or e-mail address to support the families of children who have gone to fight?

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

The Commission is deeply concerned by the possible threat to EU security of EU citizens travelling to Syria as foreign fighters and returning to Europe.

Different initiatives have been intiated by the Commission with the support of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). Working groups of the RAN have been involved in supporting action aiming at preventing and discouraging people departing from Europe to Syria as foreign fighters, and offering assistance to Member States on the possible threat posed by returnees. Specific actions identified include reaching out to the communities at risk including to diasporas, construct counter messages and rehabilitation actions involving local actors, communities and families; appropriate training to frontline police, and increasing awareness of the health sectors. Member States should also make use of existing instruments to better monitor the movements of foreign fighters, such as the Second Generation of the Schengen Information System.

Websites spreading radical content are monitored by Member States' authorities. There are currently no plans to set up a related hotline or an e-mail address at the EU level.

The issue was discussed at the Council (JHA) on 7 June 2013, based on a paper prepared by the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator, outlining possible actions by the EU and Member States in the fields of monitoring, legislation, diplomacy, work with local communities and communication. The Commission has agreed to present, by the end of the year, a risk analysis exercise to identify the major security risks for the EU from foreign fighters and possible mitigation measures.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004309/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Commerce et investissement comme moteur de développement des PVD

1. La Commission compte-telle développer une politique européenne des investissements internationaux qui assure la protection adéquate des investissements, renforce la sécurité juridique et traduit la capacité des États à produire des normes et des règles communes, tout en prenant en considération les besoins sociaux, économiques et environnementaux particuliers, tels que ceux définis notamment dans le cadre de la politique d'investissement pour un développement durable de la Cnuced?

2. Quand la Commission va-t-elle produire des données ventilées sur les investissements directs étrangers (IDE) de l'Union vers les pays en développement et les pays les moins avancés, tout en tenant compte des catégories d'investissements suivantes: fusions et acquisitions, redistributions des actifs au sein des entreprises, investissements spéculatifs et investissements verts?

3. Quelles solutions concrètes la Commission propose-t-elle afin de renforcer son soutien à une intégration régionale plus rapide et plus approfondie entre les pays en développement, en vue de développer les marchés régionaux et de créer des chaînes de valeurs régionales?

4. À cette fin, comment la Commission compte-t-elle promouvoir l'intégration régionale dans ses accords commerciaux bilatéraux et régionaux?

5. La Commission envisage-t-elle la simplification et l'harmonisation des règles d'origine, ainsi que des moyens permettant d'en faciliter l'utilisation par les petits exportateurs?

6. Quand la Commission présentera-t-elle un rapport sur les conséquences du changement de régime sur les pays bénéficiaires, et en particulier du retrait des préférences pour les pays concernés, conformément aux dispositions de l'article 40 du nouveau règlement?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(5 juin 2013)

Depuis l'entrée en vigueur du traité de Lisbonne, la Commission poursuit une politique européenne d'investissement, dans laquelle s'inscrit la communication «Vers une politique européenne globale en matière d'investissements internationaux». Son objectif est de garantir que les investisseurs étrangers dans l'UE bénéficient d'une protection fondée sur les meilleures pratiques appliquées par les États membres dans leurs traités bilatéraux d'investissement. Les accords d'investissement de l'UE sont élaborés de façon à être cohérents par rapport aux autres politiques de l'UE.

Les statistiques concernant les investissements directs étrangers sont recueillies chaque année conformément au règlement relatif à la balance des paiements, en vertu duquel les États membres doivent fournir des données ventilées par pays partenaire, avec une classification générique par instrument, notamment le capital social, les titres de créances et les bénéfices réinvestis. Les éléments d'information plus précis mentionnés par l'auteur de la question ne figurent pas au nombre de ces exigences. Eurostat envisage néanmoins de lancer une collecte volontaire de données sur les fusions et acquisitions en 2013.

L'UE est l'un des principaux fournisseurs d'aide au développement en matière d'intégration régionale. De plus, les accords commerciaux de l'UE contribuent à l'intégration régionale et aident les pays en développement à s'intégrer aux chaînes de valeurs mondiales.

L'UE a simplifié et assoupli ses règles d'origine pour les pays en développement au moyen du système de préférences généralisées. Un assouplissement supplémentaire est prévu pour les pays les moins avancés. Cette démarche est à présent appliquée également lors des négociations sur les accords de libre-échange et pour les règles d'origine de la Convention paneuroméditerranéenne.

La Commission présentera, d'ici au 1er janvier 2016, un rapport sur les conséquences du nouveau système de préférences généralisées. En outre, un rapport sera remis au Parlement et au Conseil, le 21 novembre 2017 au plus tard, concernant l'application du système et l'éventuelle nécessité de l'adapter.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004309/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Trade and investment as a driving force for the development of developing countries

1. Is the Commission planning to develop a European international investment policy which will ensure adequate protection for investments, boost legal certainty and reflect the Member States' capacity to establish common standards and rules, while taking account of individual social, economic and environmental needs, in particular those defined in UNCTAD's Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development?

2. When will the Commission produce disaggregated data on foreign direct investment (FDI) from the EU to developing countries and least-advanced countries, incorporating the following categories of investment: mergers and acquisitions, redistribution of assets within companies, speculative investments and green investments?

3. What specific solutions is the Commission proposing to boost its support for more rapid and deeper regional integration between developing countries, with a view to developing regional markets and creating regional value chains?

4. With this in mind, how does the Commission intend to promote regional integration in its bilateral and regional trade agreements?

5. Is the Commission planning to simplify and harmonise rules of origin and the arrangements which make it easier for small exporters to benefit from them?

6. When will the Commission present a report, in line with Article 40 of the new regulation, on the consequences for beneficiary countries of a change in the scheme, and in particular of a withdrawal of preferences?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2013)

The Commission has been developing an EU investment policy since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, including the communication 'Towards a comprehensive European international investment policy'. It aims to ensure that EU investors abroad enjoy protection based on Member States' best practices in their Bilateral Investment Treaties. EU investment agreements are designed to be consistent with other EU policies.

Statistics on Foreign Direct Investment are collected annually following the Balance of Payments Regulation whereby Members States must deliver data broken down by partner country and with a generic breakdown by instrument that includes equity, debt instruments and reinvested earnings. These data requirements do not include the more detailed categories mentioned in the question. However, Eurostat is considering launching a voluntary collection of data on mergers and acquisitions during 2013.

The EU is one of the biggest providers of development assistance to support regional integration. Moreover, EU trade agreements contribute to regional integration and help developing countries integrate into global value chains.

The EU has simplified and relaxed its rules of origin for developing countries under the Generalized Scheme of Preferences. Further relaxation for Least Developed Countries is provided for. This approach is now used also in the negotiations on Free Trade Agreements and in the revision of the rules of origin of the Pan Euro Med Convention.

The Commission will present, by 1 January 2016, a report on the effects of the new Generalised Scheme of Preferences. By 21 November 2017, a report will be addressed to Parliament and the Council on the application of the scheme and on the possible need to review it.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004310/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(16 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φεστιβάλ στην Καρπασία

Η χερσόνησος της Καρπασίας αποτελεί έναν από τους περιβαλλοντικούς θησαυρούς της Μεσογείου. Η παραλία της «Χρυσής Αμμουδιάς» χαρακτηρίζεται ως προστατευόμενη ζώνη, και αποτελεί μέρος του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικτύου Natura 2000.

Στις 26 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013 προγραμματίζεται να γίνει στην εν λόγω παραλία τριήμερο μουσικό φεστιβάλ, στο οποίο αναμένεται να παραστούν περισσότεροι από 80 000 θεατές.

Το λεγόμενο «Υπουργείο Τουρισμού» του ψευδοκράτους ενέκρινε την πραγματοποίηση του φεστιβάλ και προσπαθεί να το αναγάγει ως το πιο μεγάλο μουσικό φεστιβάλ στην Μεσόγειο, αδιαφορώντας για τυχόν οικολογική καταστροφή της περιοχής.

Υπογραμμίζω ότι εάν πραγματοποιηθεί το φεστιβάλ στη «Χρυσή Αμμουδιά», θα έχει καταστροφικές συνέπειες για το περιβάλλον. Ως εκ τούτου, επιβάλλεται να γίνουν άμεσες ενέργειες από όλες τις πλευρές με στόχο την ακύρωση του τριήμερου φεστιβάλ ούτως ώστε να προστατευθεί η περιοχή.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Γνωρίζει για την πραγματοποίηση του φεστιβάλ;

— Συμμερίζεται την άποψη ότι η περιοχή διατρέχει μεγάλο περιβαλλοντικό κίνδυνο;

— Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει η Επιτροπή για να αποφευχθεί η πραγματοποίηση του φεστιβάλ;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(31 Μαΐου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-002937/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004310/13
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Festival in Karpasia

The Karpasian peninsula is one of the Mediterranean's environmental treasures. The 'Golden Beach' is a protected area, forming part of the Natura 2000 European network.

On 26 September 2013, a three-day music festival is planned at the beach, with an audience of over 80 000 people expected.

The pseudo-state's so-called 'Ministry of Culture' has given its approval for the festival to go ahead, and is attempting to promote it as the biggest music festival in the Mediterranean, ignoring any possible ecological destruction to the region.

I would like to emphasise that if the festival goes ahead at 'Golden Beach', it will have catastrophic consequences for the environment. As a result, it is imperative that action be taken immediately by all sides, with a view to cancelling the three-day festival and protecting the region.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Whether it is aware that this festival is going ahead?

— Does it share the view that there is a major environmental risk to the area?

— What measures is the Commission intending to take to avoid the festival being staged?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-002937/2013 ([1]).

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004311/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(16 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κούρεμα καταθέσεων

Με ποιο σκεπτικό υποστηρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι και οι καταθέτες πέραν των 100 000 ευρώ, και δεν εννοώ τους εκατομμυριούχους, αλλά απλούς ανθρώπους μεροκαματιάρηδες που αποταμιεύουν μια ολόκληρη ζωή για να δημιουργήσουν ένα απόθεμα 200 000 ή 300 000 ευρώ για τα γηρατειά τους ή για να βοηθήσουν τα παιδιά τους να σπουδάσουν ή για έκτακτες ανάγκες, οφείλουν να συμμετάσχουν στη διάσωση των τραπεζών; Δεν είναι το κούρεμα αυτού του αποθεματικού καθαρή ληστεία και παραβίαση του ανθρωπίνου δικαιώματος της κατοχής ιδιωτικής περιουσίας;

Αν η απάντηση είναι ότι επειδή ο πολίτης αυτός επέλεξε μια επισφαλή τράπεζα άρα πρέπει να πληρώσει, η επόμενη ερώτηση είναι πώς η Επιτροπή ρεαλιστικά αναμένει από τον πολίτη να γνωρίζει ποιες είναι οι επισφαλείς τράπεζες, όταν η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα ως Εποπτεύουσα Αρχή, όχι μόνο δεν ενημερώνει τους πολίτες περί τούτου, αλλά αντιθέτως τις συγκαλύπτει αφού τις τροφοδοτεί αντικαταστατικά με «Emergency Liquidity Assistance», ακόμα κι όταν αυτές δεν είναι φερέγγυες!

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

Οι κυπριακές αρχές ενέκριναν μέτρα σύμφωνα με τα οποία οι ανασφάλιστες καταθέσεις στην Τράπεζα Κύπρου χρησιμοποιήθηκαν για να ανακεφαλαιοποιηθούν οι τράπεζες καταθέσεων, ενώ οι ανασφάλιστες καταθέσεις στη Λαϊκή Τράπεζα Κύπρου αντιμετωπίστηκαν με τη συνήθη διαδικασία αφερεγγυότητας. Σε ουδεμία των ως άνω διαδικασιών εθίγησαν ασφαλισμένες καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004311/13
to the Commission
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE/NGL)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Haircuts on savings

What is the reasoning behind the Commission's view that savers with more than EUR 100 000 — and that does not mean millionaires, but simple, hardworking people who save their whole lives to build up a fund of EUR 200 000 or EUR 300 000 for their old age, to help their children study, or for emergencies — have an obligation to participate in bailing out the banks? Does the haircut imposed on these savings not amount to daylight robbery and violation of the human right to ownership of private property?

If the answer to this is that a citizen must pay if he or she has chosen a risky bank, the next question is how can the Commission realistically expects citizens to know which banks are risky when the European Central Bank, as the supervisory authority, not only fails to inform people about this, but, on the contrary, covers the banks, since it replenishes them with 'Emergency Liquidity Assistance', even when they are not solvent.

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

The Cypriot authorities adopted measures according to which uninsured deposits within Bank of Cyprus have been used to recapitalise the deposit holders' bank, whilst uninsured deposits within Cyprus Popular Bank went through the normal insolvency procedure. In neither operation were insured deposits below EUR 100 000 touched.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004312/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Estrategia Europa 2020

«Uno de cada cuatro trayectos del AVE solo tiene un pasajero al día». Ese era el impactante titular de una noticia sobre el balance del funcionamiento de las líneas ferroviarias de alta velocidad (AVE) en el Reino de España. Según datos facilitados por Renfe, en 48 rutas de las 206 para las que la operadora ofreció horarios y vendió billetes, viajaron un viajero o menos por día. Más aún, diez de ellas fueron utilizadas por menos de diez pasajeros a lo largo de los 12 meses ([1]). La cifra de 48 rutas infrautilizadas se eleva hasta 88 si ponemos el listón un poco más alto y contabilizamos la relaciones que tuvieron cinco o menos de cinco pasajeros al día en 2012. Únicamente dieciséis trayectos cuentan con más de 100 000 pasajeros a lo largo del año y, entre ellos, solo dos superaron el millón de viajeros en el ejercicio. Estas rutas son Barcelona-Madrid (con 1 309 862 pasajeros) y Madrid-Barcelona (1 304 697 pasajeros). Sólo los Fondos Estructurales —cerca de 140 mil millones de euros en 25 años— han financiado cerca del 50 % de las grandes obras públicas, por ejemplo las líneas de Alta Velocidad como el AVE Madrid-Sevilla, aeropuertos y carreteras ([2]).

¿Cree la Comisión que los 70 mil millones de euros europeos ejecutados en infraestructuras en el Reino de España están bien invertidos, siguiendo criterios de eficiencia y retorno económico?

Una de las iniciativas emblemáticas de la Estrategia Europa 2020 es que Europa utilice eficazmente sus recursos. La inversión española más importante en 2013 es la ejecución de la obra del AVE Madrid-Galicia. ¿Cree la Comisión que el Reino de España está en la línea europea del cumplimiento de la Estrategia 2020, para garantizar el crecimiento y el empleo, generando grandes oportunidades económicas, mejorando la productividad e incrementando la competitividad?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2013)

1. La inversión en infraestructuras de transporte en España ha sido ampliamente cofinanciada por la Unión Europea en el marco de su política de cohesión. España ha mejorado notablemente sus sistemas de transporte en términos de accesibilidad y conectividad entre sus regiones y con el resto de Europa. Se han logrado importantes avances en los distintos modos de transporte: red de autopistas ([3]), red ferroviaria ([4]), red ferroviaria de alta velocidad, puertos y aeropuertos. No solamente habría que evaluar esa inversión en términos de eficiencia y rentabilidad económica, sino también en términos de cohesión territorial (uno de los objetivos clave del Tratado de la UE).

El AVE Madrid-Galicia constituye un proyecto de envergadura que forma parte del programa para 2007-2013 que financia en Galicia el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional. Sin embargo, hasta la fecha la Comisión no ha recibido la correspondiente solicitud. Todo gran proyecto está sujeto a un sólido análisis de sus costes y beneficios como condición para su cofinanciación.

2. Durante el período 2014-2020 la Comisión se ha propuesto seguir una nueva política por lo que se refiere al uso de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos con el fin de modular dicho uso en función de las prioridades de la estrategia Europa 2020 y potenciar el crecimiento sostenible, el empleo y la competitividad. Dado que ya se han subsanado las graves carencias en infraestructuras, a partir de ahora habrá que limitar relativamente toda futura inversión en el sector del transporte y centrarla en la racionalización del sistema actual. Los principales objetivos serán la potenciación del transporte multimodal, la realización de los enlaces pendientes y el fomento del transporte urbano limpio con el fin de mejorar la productividad y de incrementar de la competitividad.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/economia/Renfe-AVE-Tardienta-Puente_Genil_0_121438139.html
([2]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20100612/espana-recibido-europa-anos-mas-dinero-que-toda-europa-con-plan-marshall/335058.shtml
([3]) La red de autopistas ha pasado de los 4 976 km de 1990 a los 14 021 km de 2009. EU Transport in figures, Statistical Pocketbook 2012 [«Cuaderno estadístico 2012. El transporte de la UE en cifras»].
([4]) La red ferroviaria en funcionamiento ha pasado de los 14 539 km de 1990 a los 15 837 km de 2010. EU Transport in figures, Statistical Pocketbook 2012 [«Cuaderno estadístico 2012. El transporte de la UE en cifras»].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004312/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Europe 2020 strategy

'One in every four trips by AVE (high-speed train) has only one passenger a day'. That was the striking headline of an article on the state of high-speed rail (AVE) in Spain. According to data provided by the rail operator Renfe, 48 routes of the 206 for which the operator offered timetables and sold tickets had one passenger per day or no passengers at all. Even worse, 10 of them were used by fewer than 12 passengers over the 12-month period ([1]). The figure of 48 under-used routes rises to 88 if we place the bar a little higher and include connections with five or fewer than five passengers per day in 2012. Only 16 routes carried over 100 000 passengers in the course of the year and, of these, only two exceeded a million travellers during the year. Those two routes are Barcelona-Madrid (with 1 309 862 passengers) and Madrid-Barcelona (1 304 697 passengers). The Structural Funds alone — to the tune of approximately EUR 140 billion over 25 years — have financed around 50% of major public works, such as high-speed lines including the Madrid-Seville AVE, airports and roads. ([2])

Does the Commission believe that the EUR 70 billion spent by Europe on infrastructure in Spain has been a good investment, in terms of efficiency and economic return?

One of the flagship initiatives in the Europe 2020 strategy is for Europe to make efficient use of its resources. The largest amount of Spanish investment in 2013 is for the implementation of the Madrid-Galicia AVE works. Does the Commission believe that Spain is in line with the rest of Europe in fulfilling the Europe 2020 strategy, in order to deliver growth and jobs, by creating major economic opportunities, improving productivity and increasing competitiveness?

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

1. In the framework of EU cohesion policy, transport infrastructure investments in Spain have been widely co-financed by the European Union. Spain has clearly improved its transport systems in terms of accessibility and connectivity with its regions and with the rest of Europe. Significant achievements have been made in the different transport modes: network of motorways ([3]); railway lines ([4]); high-speed railway lines, airports and ports. These investments should not only be assessed in terms of efficiency and economic return, but also in terms of territorial cohesion (a key objective of the EU Treaty).

The Madrid-Galicia AVE is included as a major project in the 2007-2013 Galicia European Regional Development Fund programme. Nevertheless, the application has not been sent to the Commission so far. All major projects are subject to a sound cost-benefit analysis as a condition for co-financing.

2. For the 2014-2020 period, the Commission has proposed a new approach to the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds with a strong alignment with Europe 2020 priorities in order to contribute to sustainable growth, employment and competitiveness. Since major infrastructure gaps have already been addressed, future transport investments should be relatively limited and focused on rationalisation of the existing transport system. The main objectives will be the development of multimodal transport, key missing links and clean urban transport with the objective of improving productivity and increasing competitiveness.

([1]) http://www.eldiario.es/economia/Renfe-AVE-Tardienta-Puente_Genil_0_121438139.html
([2]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20100612/espana-recibido-europa-anos-mas-dinero-que-toda-europa-con-plan-marshall/335058.shtml.
([3]) The length of motorways increased from 4 976 km in 1990 to 14 021 km in 2009. EU Transport in figures, Statistical Pocketbook 2012.
([4]) The length of railways lines in use increased from 14 539 km in 1990 to 15 837 km in 2010. EU Transport in figures, Statistical Pocketbook 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004314/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(16 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Cambio en la normativa de la D.O. Roncal

El 29 de septiembre de 2012, el Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea *(DO C 294 de 29.9.2012) publicó un documento relativo a la denominación de origen protegida Roncal. Esta D.O., existente en la Comunidad Foral de Navarra (España), fue modificada con arreglo al artículo 6, apartado 2, del Reglamento (CE) n° 510/2006 del Consejo de la UE para permitir la introducción de la leche de la oveja de raza foránea «Assaf».*

Este tipo de oveja no posee ningún vínculo con el territorio donde se produce este queso, sino que se trata de una especie de producción intensiva que permite un abaratamiento de los costes de producción. El queso tradicional producido en el Valle de Roncal, está vinculado a las razas Latxa y Rasa, adaptadas a las condiciones ecológicas del terreno *gracias a su uso histórico. Se tratan de especies vinculadas a la actividad del pastoreo, lo que ha permitido vincular la producción tradicional de este queso con la conservación del territorio, manteniendo los usos tradicionales de su paisaje y su ecosistema. La raza Assaf, además de tratarse de una raza foránea, se trata de un tipo de oveja vinculada a la explotación intensiva, con un manejo estabulado y una alimentación basada en el concentrado energético, por tanto esta especie incumple los requisitos de alimentación animal del pliego de condiciones de la denominación de origen.*

Las razas Latxa y Rasa resultan menos rentables para los ganaderos, pero con la autorización del uso de otras ovejas, se las somete al riesgo de ser sustituidas por especies más rentables y así poner en riesgo el vínculo tradicional entre estas razas, el territorio y el producto. La raza Assaf es capaz de producir más del doble de litros de leche por cabeza de ganado y supone un importante ahorro para las explotaciones*, en detrimento del sistema de producción pastoril tradicionalmente ligado a este queso. Sin embargo, esta raza no tiene ningún vínculo con la historia, con el medio natural, ni con el sistema de producción del valle de Roncal, por tanto los argumentos presentados en la solicitud aceptada por la Comisión son falsos.*

¿Ha considerado la Comisión el sistema de alimentación de la raza Assaf, a la hora de aprobar la modificación propuesta sobre la D.O. Roncal?

¿Considera que la introducción de una especie con alimentación intensiva incumple las condiciones de la D.O Roncal?

¿Considera que la sustitución con leche de especies de producción intensiva en este queso podría suponer competencia desleal con otras D.O. de otros países que compitan en el mismo segmento de mercado?

¿Estima pertinente reconsiderar la modificación ante la falsedad de los argumentos expuestos para la introducción de la raza Assaf en la D.O. Roncal?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2013)

Invito a Su Señoría a consultar la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta E-003713/2013 ([1]).

Puedo añadir que la oposición recibida por la Comisión y mencionada en dicha respuesta ha sido considerada admisible y transmitida a las autoridades españolas.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004314/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Change to the rules on the designation of origin 'Roncal'

On 29 September 2012, the *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJ C 294, 29.9.2012) published a document on the protected designation of origin 'Roncal'. This designation of origin, which exists in the Autonomous Community of Navarre (Spain), was amended pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 to permit the inclusion of milk from ewes of the Assaf breed, which comes from outside the area.

This type of ewe has no connection whatsoever with the region where the cheese is produced, but is an intensive production species which makes it possible to lower production costs. The traditional cheese produced in the Valle de Roncal is connected to the Latxa and Rasa breeds, which have adapted to the ecological conditions of the region through their historic use. These species are linked to the activity of grazing, which has made it possible to establish a tie between the traditional production of the cheese and the conservation of the region, retaining the traditional uses of its countryside and ecosystem. The Assaf breed, as well as being a breed from outside the area, is a type of ewe linked to intensive farming, with the animals being kept indoors and fed on a concentrated form of energy, and thus this species does not meet the animal feeding requirements of the specifications for the designation of origin.

The Latxa and Rasa breeds are less profitable for livestock farmers, but permitting the use of other ewes puts them at risk of being replaced by more profitable species, thus jeopardising the traditional link between these breeds, the region and the product. The Assaf breed is capable of producing more than twice as many litres of milk per head of flock, generating significant savings for farms at the expense of the pastoral production system traditionally linked to this cheese. However, this breed does not have any connection with the history, natural environment or production system of the Valle de Roncal, and therefore the arguments put forward in the application granted by the Commission are erroneous.

Did the Commission consider the feeding system for the Assaf breed when approving the proposed amendment to the designation of origin 'Roncal'?

Does it believe that the introduction of a species fed using an intensive system meets the conditions of the designation of origin 'Roncal'?

Does it believe that replacing milk with milk from intensive production species in this cheese could lead to unfair competition with other designations of origin from other countries competing in the same market sector?

Does it think that the amendment should be reviewed, given the erroneous nature of the arguments put forward for the introduction of the Assaf breed into the designation of origin 'Roncal'?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the Commission's answer to Question E-003713/2013 ([1]).

Please note that the opposition received by the Commission, mentioned therein, was deemed admissible and forwarded to the Spanish authorities.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004315/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 avril 2013)

Objet: Intégration des migrants

L'immigration qualifiée constitue une approche importante pour résoudre ce double problème — recul de la population en âge de travailler et pénurie de main-d'œuvre. Les citoyens européens l'ont compris, et les sondages de l'Eurobaromètre montrent que 70 % d'entre eux considèrent l'immigration comme étant nécessaire pour l'économie européenne.

1. La Commission va-t-elle, comme le lui recommande le Parlement, mettre en place un groupe interservices pour l'intégration, qui soit consacré aux thèmes de l'intégration, de l'immigration (économique) et de l'intégration sur le marché du travail, et qui comprenne toutes les directions générales concernées, le Service européen pour l'action extérieure ainsi que les parties prenantes concernées?

2. La Commission envisage-t-elle de prendre des mesures pour renforcer considérablement la position juridique et sociale des femmes, et ce afin d'empêcher les discriminations dans l'ensemble des domaines d'action politiques et de tirer parti de la contribution potentielle des femmes notamment au développement économique et social?

3. Que pense la Commission sur la possibilité d'introduire un système européen commun d'entrée, fondé sur des critères transparents et conforme à l'idée du cadre européen des certifications en matière d'accumulation et de transfert de crédits, auquel les États membres pourraient participer sur une base volontaire? Un tel système devrait pouvoir être adapté aux conditions du marché du travail afin de faciliter la venue d'une main-d'œuvre qualifiée attendue de toute urgence.

4. La Commission compte-t-elle établir un cadre juridique garantissant aux femmes immigrantes le droit de détenir leur propre passeport et leur propre permis de séjour et permettant de tenir pour criminellement responsable toute personne qui leur soustrait ces documents?

5. Que compte faire la Commission pour résoudre la question de la coordination de la sécurité sociale pour les ressortissants de pays tiers, et en particulier à maintenir leurs droits lorsqu'ils quittent l'Union ou y reviennent, et à accompagner la politique migratoire de l'Union de mesures adéquates concernant les droits de sécurité sociale acquis par les migrants concernés?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(19 juin 2013)

Vu le caractère transversal des questions d'intégration, la Commission s'assure qu'elles soient prises en compte dans les autres politiques concernées. Cette coordination est assurée par le recours à différents moyens, notamment la participation à des groupes interservices.

La Commission est consciente de la dimension hommes-femmes que comportent les politiques d'immigration et d'intégration et s'efforce, dans différents domaines d'action, de régler les problèmes particuliers auxquels font face les femmes migrantes.

En vue d'attirer les migrants hautement qualifiés, la Commission a lancé la carte bleue ([1]), qui est en cours de mise en œuvre par les États membres et que la Commission évalue actuellement. La Commission ne prévoit aucune initiative à court terme pour l'instauration d'un système fondé sur des critères.

Dans le cadre de tous les instruments relatifs à la migration légale, chacun bénéficie d'un droit de séjour indépendant. Il existe toutefois une exception, la directive «regroupement familial» ([2]), en vertu de laquelle le bénéficiaire du regroupement dépend initialement du statut juridique du regroupant mais cette dépendance doit cesser au plus tard après cinq ans de résidence ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2009/50/CE du 25 mai 2009 établissant les conditions d'entrée et de séjour des ressortissants de pays tiers aux fins d'un emploi hautement qualifié.
([2]) Directive 2003/86/CE relative au droit au regroupement familial pour les ressortissants de pays tiers résidant sur le territoire des États membres.
([3]) Voir l'article 15 de la directive 2003/86/CE. De plus, conformément à l'article 15, paragraphe 3, en cas de veuvage, de divorce, de séparation ou de décès d'ascendants ou de descendants directs au premier degré, un titre de séjour autonome peut être délivré, au besoin sur demande, aux personnes entrées au titre du regroupement familial. Les États membres arrêtent également des dispositions garantissant l'octroi d'un titre de séjour autonome en cas de situation particulièrement difficile.

En ce qui concerne les victimes de la traite des êtres humains dépourvues de documents d'identité, la directive 2011/36/EC ([4]) et la stratégie intégrée de l'UE ([5]) reconnaissent que la traite des êtres humains a une dimension liée au sexe et que les femmes constituent un groupe vulnérable ([6]).

La Commission a déjà mis en place un mécanisme d'échange, entre États membres, d'informations et de pratiques en matière de conclusion d'accords bilatéraux concernant la sécurité sociale. Bien qu'elle ne soit pas en mesure d'imposer une conduite ou de donner des instructions aux États membres qui concluent des accords bilatéraux, la Commission peut encourager la coopération et l'échange des bonnes pratiques, recueillir et publier des informations sur les accords bilatéraux, la législation et les mesures adoptées au niveau national concernant le paiement des pensions dans les pays tiers ([7]).

([4]) Directive 2011/36/UE concernant la prévention de la traite des êtres humains et la lutte contre ce phénomène ainsi que la protection des victimes et remplaçant la décision-cadre 2002/629/JAI du Conseil.

([5]) La stratégie de l'UE en vue de l'éradication de la traite des êtres humains pour la période 2012-2016, COM(2012)286 final.

([6]) En outre, les victimes de la traite des êtres humains coopérant avec les autorités compétentes sont susceptibles de recevoir un titre de séjour, conformément aux conditions prévues par la directive 2004/81/CE.

([7]) COM(2012)0153.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004315/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 April 2013)

Subject: Integration of migrants

Skilled immigration is a key means of addressing the dual problem of a shrinking workforce and a shortage of manpower. EU citizens understand this, and Eurobarometer surveys show that 70% of them believe that immigration is an economic necessity for the EU.

1. Does the Commission intend to act on Parliament's recommendation and set up a cross-departmental integration group to tackle the issues of integration, (labour) migration and integration into the labour market, involving all the relevant directorates-general and the European External Action Service, as well as the relevant stakeholders?

2. Does it intend to take steps to significantly strengthen the legal and social position of women, with a view to preventing discrimination in all policy areas and harnessing women's potential to contribute to economic and social development in particular?

3. How feasible does it think it would be to introduce a common European entry system, based on transparent criteria and in line with the European Qualifications Framework approach of accumulating and transferring credits, which would be open to the Member States on a voluntary basis? It would need to be possible to adjust such a system to labour-market conditions so as to make it easier to attract urgently needed skilled workers.

4. Does it intend to establish a legal framework guaranteeing immigrant women the right to keep their own passports and residence permits and making it a criminal offence to take those documents away from them?

5. How does it intend to address the issue of social security coordination for third-country nationals, with particular regard to the retention of rights when leaving or re-entering the EU, and to ensure that appropriate action is taken in connection with the EU's migration policy to address the acquired social security rights of migrants?

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

Given its cross-cutting nature, the Commission ensures that integration issues are mainstreamed throughout other relevant policies. This coordination is ensured through different means, including participating in Interservice Groups.

The Commission is aware of the gender dimension of immigration and integration policies and addresses the specific challenges faced by migrant women in different policy areas.

In view of attracting high qualified migrants the Commission has introduced the Blue Card ([1]), still in phase of implementation by the Member States and evaluation by the Commission. On the introduction of a criteria-based system the Commission does not foresee any policy initiative in the short term.

Under all legal migration instruments each person has an independent residence right except for the Family Reunification Directive ([2]) where the initial dependence of the reunited person on the legal status of the sponsor has to cease not later than after five years of residence ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2009/50/EC of 25 May 2009 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly-qualified employment.
([2]) Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification of third-country nationals living in the European. Union.
([3]) See art. 15 of Directive 2003/86/EC. In addition, according to Article 15(3), in the event of widowhood, divorce, separation, or death of first-degree relatives in the direct ascending or descending line, an autonomous residence permit may be issued, upon application, if required, to persons who have entered by virtue of family reunification. Member States shall also lay down provisions ensuring the granting of an autonomous residence permit in the event of particularly difficult circumstances.

For those who are deprived of identity documents as victims of trafficking, Directive 2011/36/EC ([4]) and the integrated EU Strategy ([5]) acknowledge the gender specific nature of trafficking in human beings and recognise women as a vulnerable group ([6]).

The Commission has already established a mechanism of exchange between Member States of information and practice in concluding bilateral agreements on social security. Whereas the Commission is not in a position to impose guidance or instructions for Member States entering into bilateral agreement, it can promote cooperation and exchange of best practices, gather and publish information about bilateral agreements, legislation and measures at national level concerning the payment of pensions in third countries ([7]).

([4]) Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA.

([5]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012) 286 final.

([6]) In addition, victims of trafficking who cooperate with the competent authorities can be granted a residence permit, in accordance with conditions set by Directive 2004/81/EC.

([7]) COM(2012) 0153.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004316/13
an die Kommission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(17. April 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelsabkommen der EU mit Südkorea

Seit über einem Jahr ist das Freihandelsabkommen der EU mit Südkorea in Kraft.

1. Welche Erkenntnisse hat die Kommission über nach wie vor bestehende nichttarifäre Handelshemmnisse in Südkorea?

2. Welche weiteren Probleme mit der Umsetzung des Abkommens sind der Kommission bekannt und wie reagiert die Kommission auf diese Probleme?

3. Ist die Kommission über die beabsichtigte Einführung von Zertifizierungen für importierte Kfz-Ersatzteile in Südkorea informiert, wie bewertet sie diese und wie wird die Kommission reagieren?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(3. Juni 2013)

Im Rahmen der Marktzugangsstrategie erhält die Kommission von den Industrieverbänden und den Mitgliedstaaten regelmäßig Informationen zu Fragen, die den Marktzugang betreffen. Beiträge gehen der Kommission über den Beratenden Ausschuss für den Marktzugang, die sektorspezifischen Arbeitsgruppen für Marktzugang (z. B. Kraftfahrzeuge, Reifen und Teile, Chemikalien und Arzneimittel), die im Rahmen des Beratenden Ausschusses für den Marktzugang in Brüssel zusammentreten, sowie über die EU-Delegation in Seoul zu. Infolgedessen verfügt die Kommission über Informationen zu einer Reihe von Handelshemmnissen in verschiedenen Sektoren.

Bei jeder Handelsübereinkunft können die darin enthaltenen Bestimmungen je nach den Interessen der jeweiligen Handelspartner unterschiedlich ausgelegt werden. Im Falle des Freihandelsabkommens zwischen der EU und Südkorea war die Kommission in dieser Hinsicht mit einigen Schwierigkeiten konfrontiert (z. B. bei Kfz-Ersatzteilen). Außerdem erkannte sie, dass in einigen Bereichen noch Verbesserungen möglich waren (z. B. Bestimmung über die unmittelbare Beförderung). Mit den institutionellen Bestimmungen des Freihandelsabkommens wurden ein Handelsausschuss sowie zahlreiche Sonderausschüsse und Arbeitsgruppen der beiden Vertragsparteien eingesetzt, die die Durchführung des Abkommens überwachen sollen. Darüber hinaus erörtert die Kommission diese Fragen in Abstimmung mit der EU-Delegation in Seoul regelmäßig mit ihren südkoreanischen Amtskollegen.

Die Kommission ist sich des Problems der Zertifizierung von Kfz-Ersatzteilen bewusst und hat Südkorea ihre Besorgnis bereits mehrfach schriftlich dargelegt. Am 20. März 2013 führte die Kommission im Einklang mit Anhang 2-C Artikel 9 des Freihandelsabkommens informelle Gespräche mit dem Ministerium für Land, Transport und Meeresangelegenheiten in Südkorea. Sie wird die Angelegenheit auch künftig auf bilateraler Ebene mit Südkorea verfolgen, unter anderem auf der nächsten Sitzung der mit dem Freihandelsabkommen eingesetzten Arbeitsgruppe für Kraftfahrzeuge und Teile davon.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004316/13
to the Commission
Bernd Lange (S&D)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: EU free trade agreement with South Korea

The EU free trade agreement with South Korea has been in force for more than a year.

1. What information does the Commission have concerning any non-tariff barriers to trade that still exist in South Korea?

2. What additional problems with the agreement's implementation is the Commission aware of and what is it doing about them?

3. Is the Commission aware of the intention to introduce certification for imported spare parts for vehicles in South Korea, what is its view of this and how will it respond?

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

Under the Market Access Strategy, information on market access issues is provided to the Commission regularly, by industry associations and Member States. The Commission receives input via the Market Access Advisory Committee (MAAC), via the sectorial Market Access Working Groups (e.g. automobiles, tyres and parts, chemicals and pharmaceuticals) which meet under the MAAC, in Brussels, as well as via the EU Delegation in Seoul. As a result, the Commission has information relating to a number of barriers to trade in different sectors.

As with any trade agreement, there are potentially different interpretations of provisions therein, depending on the interests of the trading parties concerned. The Commission has faced some difficulties in this regard in the case of the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) (e.g. car parts) and also identified areas for further improvements (e.g. the direct transport provision). The institutional provisions of the FTA established a Trade Committee and a significant number of specialised committees and working groups between the two parties to monitor the implementation of the agreement. In addition, the Commission raises these issues regularly with its South Korean counterparts, in coordination with the EU delegation in Seoul.

The Commission is aware of the issue of certification of car parts and has written to South Korea raising its concerns on several occasions. On 20 March 2013 the Commission held informal consultations under Article 9 of Annex 2-C of the FTA, with the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs in South Korea, and will continue to pursue the issue bilaterally with South Korea, *inter alia* during the next meeting of the Working Group on Motor Vehicles and Parts under the FTA.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004324/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(17 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Licitación del servicio municipal de limpieza y residuos del Ayuntamiento de Alicante

El Ayuntamiento de Alicante está tramitando la licitación de la gestión del servicio público de limpieza viaria y de recogida, tratamiento, valorización y eliminación de residuos domésticos. El valor estimado del contrato para los doce años de duración máxima es de 435 millones de euros, IVA incluido. El anuncio de licitación del servicio únicamente se ha publicado en el Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de Alicante de fecha 19 de febrero de 2013, no habiéndose insertado anuncio alguno en el Diario Oficial de la Unión Europea y, por tanto, incumpliendo la Directiva 2004/18/CE.

De dicho proceso de licitación ha resultado que únicamente se ha presentado una oferta por parte de la empresa que actualmente gestiona dicho servicio, aunque fuera de contrato desde el pasado mes de octubre, la mercantil INUSA (Ingeniería Urbana S.A.). La falta de publicidad de dicha licitación podría ser una de las causas de que únicamente se haya recibido una oferta para gestionar este importante servicio municipal.

La contrata incluye la gestión del centro de tratamiento de residuos urbanos de Alicante, situado en la partida rural de Fontcalent, que contó con una ayuda de los Fondos de Cohesión europeos de un 80 % de los 17 millones de euros de su coste total. La gestión de los residuos en dicho centro por parte de INUSA ha sido denunciada en los últimos años por diversos colectivos, y el pasado mes de diciembre se registraron ante la Comisión de Peticiones del Parlamento Europeo en torno a 1 500 quejas en las que se denunciaba la pésima gestión de unos residuos que son masivamente eliminados mediante enterramiento y que sólo son recuperados en un ínfimo porcentaje, generando problemas de malos olores y vertidos de lixiviados.

Los datos oficiales de 2011 son elocuentes: de 135 000 toneladas tratadas se han destinado a vertedero 105 000 (78 %) y tan sólo se han recuperado un total de 1 507 toneladas de diversos materiales, un ridículo 1,1 %. Pese a ello, los criterios para adjudicar la gestión del servicio no contemplan ningún objetivo de minimización de los derechos o de recogida selectiva en origen de la materia orgánica, una recogida selectiva que continúa sin implantarse en la ciudad de Alicante pese a lo dispuesto en la normativa comunitaria.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la situación arriba descrita? ¿Considera la Comisión que la licitación del servicio público antes mencionado cumple lo dispuesto en la Directiva 2004/18/CE? ¿Considera la Comisión que los criterios para adjudicar el contrato cumplen la Directiva 2008/98/CE? ¿Qué medidas adoptará la Comisión para garantizar la aplicación de la normativa europea en este caso?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión considera que los hechos planteados por Su Señoría merecen una mayor atención. Por consiguiente, la Comisión se propone poner en marcha una investigación para proceder a una evaluación de hecho y de derecho y, en caso necesario, adoptará las medidas adecuadas.

En relación con las obligaciones establecidas en la Directiva 2008/98/CE sobre los residuos, el artículo 4, apartado 1, dispone que los Estados miembros apliquen la jerarquía de residuos y, por lo tanto, la adopción de medidas para fomentar las opciones de gestión de residuos que arrojen los mejores resultados medioambientales globales. Esto se reflejará en los planes de gestión de residuos y los programas de prevención de residuos pertinentes, que deben someterse a consulta pública. La Comisión está analizando los planes de gestión de residuos de los Estados miembros que realizan una gestión de residuos deficiente. De conformidad con el artículo 11, junto con el artículo 10, apartado 2, de la citada Directiva, los residuos de papel, metales, plástico y vidrio como mínimo deberán recogerse por separado de aquí a 2015, si ello resulta viable técnica, medioambiental y económicamente.

La Comisión no ha cofinanciado la licitación de los servicios de limpieza y residuos del ayuntamiento de Alicante. Por lo tanto, la empresa INUSA ([1]) no ha recibido ninguna financiación del FEDER ([2]) o del Fondo de Cohesión. La Comisión cofinanció al amparo del Fondo de Cohesión el contrato de obras públicas del centro de tratamiento de residuos urbanos de Alicante en la zona rural de Fontcalent durante el período entre 2000 y 2006. El ayuntamiento de Alicante era el responsable de la gestión de las obras de construcción. La empresa encargada de las obras fueron UTE: Intersa Levante, S.A., y OBRUM: Urbanismo y Construcciones, S.L. La Comisión cofinanció este proyecto por un importe de 11 521 079 euros. El contrato público de obras no incluía ninguna condición relativa a la gestión del centro.

([1]) Ingeniería urbana S.A.
([2]) Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004324/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Tendering of the municipality of Alicante's municipal cleaning and waste services

The municipality of Alicante is running a tender procedure for the management of the public street cleaning service and for collection, treatment, recovery and disposal of household waste. The estimated value of the contract over its maximum duration of 12 years is EUR 435 million, including VAT. The notice of invitation to tender for the service was only published in the Official Journal of the Province of Alicante on 19 February 2013, and no notice was inserted in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. This omission is in contravention of Directive 2004/18/EC.

Only one tender was submitted as a result of the tendering process, by the enterprise which is currently managing the service, although it has been operating outside of any contract since last October. This company is INUSA (Ingeniería Urbana S.A.). The lack of publicity for the tendering process could be one reason why only one tender has been received for the management of this major municipal service.

The contract includes the management of the Alicante urban waste treatment centre, located in the rural area of Fontcalent, which received aid from the European Cohesion Fund amounting to around 80% of the total cost of EUR 17 million. In recent years various groups have complained about INUSA's management of waste in the centre, and in December 2012 around 1 500 complaints were registered by the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions. These alleged that the waste was managed extremely badly, the vast majority being disposed of through landfill, with only a very low percentage being recovered, giving rise to problems of bad odours and leachate discharges.

Official data from 2011 speak volumes: of 135 000 tonnes processed, 105 000 tonnes (78%) were sent to landfill, and only 1 507 tonnes in total of various materials were recovered, amounting to an absurd 1.1%. Despite this, the criteria for awarding the contract for management of the service do not include any objective for minimising duties or the selective collection at source of organic matter. Selective collection has still not been established in the city of Alicante, in spite of the provisions of EC law.

Is the Commission aware of the situation described above? Does the Commission consider that the way the public service was put out to tender complies with Directive 2004/18/EC? Does the Commission consider that the criteria for awarding the contract comply with Directive 2008/98/EC? What measures will the Commission take to ensure that European legislation is applied in this case?

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

The Commission considers that the facts raised by the Honourable Member deserve further attention. Therefore, the Commission intends to launch an investigation to make a factual and legal assessment and, if necessary, take appropriate actions.

Concerning the obligations under Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, Article 4(1) requests Member States (MS) to apply the waste hierarchy, thus taking measures to encourage the waste management options that deliver the best overall environmental outcome. This shall be reflected in the relevant waste management plans and waste prevention programmes which are subject to public consultation. The Commission is in the process of analysing the waste management plans in MS with poor waste management performance. Pursuant to Article 11 combined with Article 10(2) of the cited Directive, by 2015 waste — at least, paper, metal, plastic and glass — shall be collected separately if technically, environmentally and economically practicable.

The Commission has not co-financed the tender of the municipality of Alicante's municipal cleaning and waste services. Hence, the company INUSA ([1]) has not received any funding from the ERDF ([2]) and/or the European Cohesion Fund. The Commission co-financed the works public contract of the Alicante urban waste treatment centre in the rural area of Fontcalent by the Cohesion Fund during the period 2000-2006. The municipality of Alicante was responsible for the management of the construction works. The company responsible for the construction works was UTE: INTERSA LEVANTE SA, y OBRUM, URBANISMO Y CONSTRUCCIONES SL. The Commission co-financed this project with EUR 11.521.079. The works public contract did not include any conditions with regard to the management of the centre.

([1]) Ingeniería Urbana S.A.
([2]) European Regional Development Fund.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004325/13
an die Kommission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(17. April 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Wettbewerbs- und Kartellrecht

Ein Bürger hat sich mit folgendem Problem an uns gewandt: Ein deutscher Großhändler vertreibt Produkte einer dänischen Firma im europäischen Binnenmarkt. Die Firma wollte zunächst den Vertrieb durch diesen Großhändler auf Deutschland und Österreich beschränkt sehen und suchte sich eigene Großhändler in den anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Parallel dazu vertrieb der deutsche Großhändler die Produktpalette auch über Partner-Großhändler in den Benelux-Staaten und Italien.

Ist es mit dem EU-Wettbewerbs- und Kartellrecht vereinbar, dass die dänische Firma dem deutschen Großhändler untersagen kann, ihre Produkte außerhalb von Deutschland und Österreich über andere Großhändler zu vertreiben?

Inwieweit kann sich der deutsche Großhändler auf die EU-Gesetzgebung, z. B. Art. 101 AEUV, berufen und die Produkte der dänischen Firma über eigene Partner in EU-Mitgliedstaaten außerhalb Deutschlands und Österreichs vertreiben?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2013)

Zunächst möchte die Kommission dem Herrn Abgeordneten erläutern, dass gemäß Artikel 101 AEUV Anbieter den Vertrieb durch Großhändler an Abnehmer in anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten generell nicht beschränken sollten.

Es gibt jedoch eine Reihe von Ausnahmen von diesem Grundsatz. Erstens kann beispielsweise gemäß Artikel 4 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 330/2010 der Kommission ([1]) ein Anbieter mit einem selektiven Vertriebssystem den aktiven Verkauf durch einen Großhändler an Abnehmer in anderen Mitgliedstaaten untersagen. Zweitens kann der Anbieter, wenn er ein selektives Vertriebssystem hat, einem Großhändler verwehren, an Groß- oder Einzelhändler zu verkaufen, die nicht selbst Mitglieder dieses Systems sind, einschließlich Groß- oder Einzelhändler in anderen Mitgliedstaaten. Drittens kann es in Einzelfällen gerechtfertigt sein, dass ein Anbieter, der in der gesamten EU nach und nach ein neues Produkt einführen möchte, Ausfuhren in Mitgliedstaaten unterbindet, in denen das Produkt noch nicht eingeführt ist ([2]).

Leider geht aus den übermittelten Informationen nicht hervor, ob die Beschränkungen, die der von Ihnen genannten Person auferlegt wurden, einen Verstoß gegen das Wettbewerbsrecht der EU darstellen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 330/2010 der Kommission vom 20. April 2010 über die Anwendung von Artikel 101 Absatz 3 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union auf Gruppen von vertikalen Vereinbarungen und abgestimmten Verhaltensweisen (ABl. L 102 vom 23.4.2010, S. 1).

([2]) Leitlinien für vertikale Beschränkungen, Randnr. 61 (ABl. C 130 vom 19.5.2010, S. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004325/13
to the Commission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: EU competition and antitrust law

A citizen has come to us with the following problem. A German wholesaler sells products produced by a Danish company on the European internal market. The company initially wanted to see sales via this wholesaler restricted to Germany and Austria and looked for its own wholesalers in the other EU Member States. At the same time, the German wholesaler also marketed this range of products via partner wholesalers in the Benelux countries and Italy.

Is it compatible with EU competition and antitrust law for the Danish company to refuse to allow the German wholesaler to sell its products outside of Germany and Austria via other wholesalers?

To what extent can the German wholesaler invoke EC law, e.g. Article 101 TFEU, and sell the Danish company's products via its own partners in EU Member States other than Germany and Austria?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission would begin by explaining to the Honourable Member that, in application of Article 101 of the Treaty, suppliers should generally not restrict wholesalers from selling to buyers in other EU Member States.

However, there are a number of exceptions to this principle. For instance, firstly, pursuant to Article 4 of Commission Regulation 330/2010 ([1]), a supplier that operates an exclusive distribution system may prevent a wholesaler from selling actively to buyers in other Member States. Secondly, if a supplier operates a selective distribution system, it may prevent a wholesaler from selling to wholesalers or retailers that are not themselves members of that system, including wholesalers or retailers in other Member States. Thirdly, a supplier that wishes to phase-in the launch of a new product across the EU may be justified on an individual basis in preventing exports to Member States in which the product has not yet been launched ([2]).

Unfortunately, on the basis of the information provided, it is not possible to tell if the restrictions imposed on your constituent breach the EU competition rules.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 330/2010 of 20 April 2010 on the application of Article 101(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to categories of vertical agreements and concerted practices — OJ L 102/1, 23.4.2010.

([2]) Paragraph 61, Guidelines on Vertical Restraints — OJ C 130/01, 19.5.2010.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004326/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(17 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Εκτέλεση ομήρων στην Νιγηρία

Στις 18 Φεβρουαρίου 2013 ένοπλοι τρομοκράτες επιτέθηκαν σε κατασκευαστική εταιρία στη Νιγηρία και απήγαγαν 7 ξένους εργαζόμενους από την Ελλάδα, την Βρετανία, την Ιταλία και τον Λίβανο, ενώ σκότωσαν τον φρουρό ασφαλείας της εταιρίας.

Τα Υπουργεία Εξωτερικών των χωρών απ' όπου κατάγονται οι 7 όμηροι προέβησαν αμέσως στη σύσταση Ειδικής Ομάδας με εξειδικευμένα στελέχη για τον εντοπισμό των ομήρων. Η οργάνωση Ansar al-Muslimeen, ευρέως γνωστή ως Ansaru, η οποία ανέλαβε την ευθύνη για την απαγωγή των εργαζομένων, δεν επικοινώνησε, ούτε διατύπωσε αιτήματα για απελευθέρωση των ομήρων.

Στις 9 Μαρτίου η τρομοκρατική οργάνωση Ansaru έδωσε στη δημοσιότητα φωτογραφίες από κάποια πτώματα και ανακοίνωσε μέσω οπτικογραφικού υλικού ότι εκτέλεσε τους 7 ομήρους ως αντίποινα για μια επιχείρηση απελευθέρωσής τους από νιγηριανές και βρετανικές αρχές.

Πρόκειται για εν ψυχρώ δολοφονίες, οι οποίες καταδικάζονται όχι μόνο από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, αλλά από όλους τους διεθνείς οργανισμούς.

— Ποια μέτρα προτίθεσθε να λάβετε ώστε να διερευνηθεί η υπόθεση απαγωγής και δολοφονίας των 7 εργαζομένων;

— Πώς θα αντιδράσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση σε αυτό το τραγικό γεγονός; Θα προβεί σε συγκεκριμένες ενέργειες σε συνεργασία με τα Υπουργεία Εξωτερικών της Βρετανίας, της Ελλάδας και της Ιταλίας;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Ιουνίου 2013)

1. Η έρευνα για την απαγωγή και τη δολοφονία των επτά εργαζομένων είναι ευθύνη της κυβέρνησης της Νιγηρίας. Ωστόσο, η ΕΕ συνεργάζεται με την κυβέρνηση της Νιγηρίας ώστε να καταπολεμηθεί ο σημερινός κύκλος βίας και τρομοκρατίας μέσω συνεχούς πολιτικού διαλόγου σχετικά με τις προσεγγίσεις των προβλημάτων, καθώς και στοχευμένων παρεμβάσεων και αναπτυξιακής συνεργασίας στη βόρεια Νιγηρία που αποσκοπούν στη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής του πληθυσμού της περιοχής.

2. Το εν λόγω γεγονός υπογραμμίζει περαιτέρω την ανάγκη για ενίσχυση της στήριξης της κυβέρνησης και του λαού της Νιγηρίας με σκοπό την καταπολέμηση της τρομοκρατίας. Αποστολή της ΕΕ μετέβη στη Νιγηρία στα τέλη του 2012 για να εξετάσει ειδικές μορφές στήριξης των αρχών της Νιγηρίας στη δημιουργία περιβάλλοντος διαρκούς ασφαλείας (αντιτρομοκρατική υποστήριξη) και την αντιμετώπιση των παραγόντων που οδηγούν στη ριζοσπαστικοποίηση. Ο στόχος της ΕΕ είναι να βοηθήσει τις αρχές της Νιγηρίας να εξασφαλίσουν ειρήνη, ασφάλεια, σταθερότητα και ανάπτυξη, καθώς και σεβασμό του κράτους δικαίου και των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων.

3. Η ΕΥΕΔ συνεργάζεται στενά με όλα τα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των Υπουργείων Εξωτερικών του ΗΒ, της Ελλάδας και της Ιταλίας. Δεδομένου ότι οι υποθέσεις ομηρίας χαρακτηρίζονται από ιδιαίτερη ευαισθησία, η ΕΥΕΔ θα μπορούσε να διεξαγάγει ειδικές δράσεις με τα εμπλεκόμενα κράτη μέλη μόνο κατόπιν αιτήματός τους και με την απαραίτητη διακριτικότητα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004326/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Execution of hostages in Nigeria

On 18 February 2013, armed terrorists attacked a construction company in Nigeria, abducting seven foreign workers from Greece, the UK, Italy and Lebanon, and killing the company's security guard.

The Foreign Ministries of the seven hostages' respective countries immediately established a special team of experts to find them. The Ansar al-Muslimeen group, widely known as Ansaru, which took responsibility for the abduction of the employees, neither communicated nor expressed demands concerning the release of the hostages.

On 9 March, the Ansaru terrorist organisation released photographs of a number of dead bodies, and announced, through an audiovisual release, that it had executed the seven hostages in retaliation for moves by the Nigerian and British authorities to free them.

These are cold-blooded murders, and they have been condemned not only by the European Union, but also by all international organisations.

— What measures does the Vice-President/ High Representative intend to take to investigate the abduction and murder of the seven workers?

— How will the European Union respond to this tragic event?

— Will it take specific actions in cooperation with the Foreign Ministries of the UK, Greece and Italy?

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

1. The investigation of the abduction and murder of the seven workers is the responsibility of the government of Nigeria. However, the EU is working with the government of Nigeria to combat the current cycle of violence and terrorism through continuous political dialogue on approaches to the problems, as well as targeted interventions and development cooperation in northern Nigeria aiming at improving the lives of the people in the region.

2. The event further underlines the need to strengthen the support to the government and people of Nigeria to combat terrorism. An EU mission was in Nigeria end of 2012 to examine specific forms of supporting the Nigerian authorities in creating durable security (counter-terrorism support) and dealing with factors conducive to radicalisation. The EU's objective is to assist the Nigerian authorities in ensuring peace, security, stability and development, and respect for the rule of law and human rights.

3. The EEAS cooperates closely with all member states including the Foreign Ministries of the UK, Greece and Italy. As hostage taking cases are very sensitive the EEAS would only conduct specific actions with the involved Member States upon their request and with the necessary discretion.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004327/13
to the Council
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Premature disclosure of inside information on the Cyprus bailout

Is the Council aware of allegations that, by disclosing confidential information, President Anastasiades of Cyprus helped his relatives avoid losses (thereby increasing losses of other account holders and increasing risks borne by EU taxpayers in financing the bailout) by withdrawing millions of euro from accounts in Cyprus days before capital controls were introduced, and that there are widely held suspicions of inappropriate disclosure of confidential information relating to discussions of and decisions reached by the eurozone? In the light of such concerns, does the Council intend to:

1. examine and investigate whether transfers of monies from bank accounts in Cyprus, in the twelve months before the introduction of capital controls, were prompted, influenced or otherwise made more likely by any premature, erroneous or otherwise improper or unauthorised disclosure of information;

2. examine and investigate whether loan write-offs by the Bank of Cyprus or Laiki Bank, in the twelve months before the introduction of capital controls, were premature, erroneous or otherwise improper;

3. examine and investigate whether withdrawals of deposits by or on behalf of German banks at Cypriot banks were suspiciously large in proportion to withdrawals by other depositors;

4. make a statement to the Parliament on the above matters prior to and at the conclusion of such examination and investigation;

5. make a statement on when and by whom it was first made aware that a Cypriot bailout needed to be considered and, consequently, what contingency plans were prepared by whom and when;

6. make a statement to the Parliament on the Council's role in discussions both within the troika, and with the Cypriot government (whether directly, via the troika or otherwise) concerning the Cypriot bailout;

7. make a statement to the Parliament on any other related issues that led to, or arise from, the situation in Cyprus, and if not, why not?

Reply
(24 June 2013)

The Council has not discussed the issue of allegations of premature disclosure of information concerning the Cyprus bailout.

On 25 March 2013 the Eurogroup reached an agreement with the Cypriot authorities on the key elements necessary for a future macroeconomic adjustment programme. The agreement between the euro area Member States and Cyprus was based on a joint proposal of the three Troika institutions: the Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Furthermore, on 25 April 2013 the Council adopted a decision addressed to Cyprus on specific measures to restore financial stability and sustainable growth. This decision requires Cyprus to rigorously implement a macroeconomic adjustment programme in order to facilitate the return of the Cypriot economy to the path of sustainable growth and to fiscal and financial stability.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004329/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αποκατάσταση και θεσμική ενδυνάμωση του κοινωνικού διαλόγου στα κράτη μέλη που αντιμετωπίζουν τις σοβαρότερες οικονομικές και κοινωνικές απειλές

Ο κοινωνικός διάλογος αποτελεί «στοιχείο κλειδί» του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Μοντέλου και συνιστά βασική προϋπόθεση για την επιτυχή έκβαση των μεταρρυθμιστικών εγχειρημάτων. Αυτόν τον ισχυρισμό επιβεβαίωσε σε πρόσφατη ομιλία του στο πλαίσιο της ετήσιας έκθεσης για τις εργασιακές σχέσεις στην Ευρώπη ο Επίτροπος Απασχόλησης και Κοινωνικών Υποθέσεων Laszlo Andor. Ταυτόχρονα, μεταξύ άλλων, ο Επίτροπος επισήμανε ότι ο κοινωνικός διάλογος βρίσκεται υπό σοβαρή απειλή στην Ευρώπη, υποστηρίζοντας ότι οι χώρες που διαθέτουν ισχυρό πλέγμα εργασιακών σχέσεων και κοινωνικού διαλόγου αντιμετωπίζουν λιγότερες ή ηπιότερες οικονομικές και κοινωνικές δυσχέρειες. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, και με δεδομένη τη συμμετοχή της στο Μεικτό Μηχανισμό Στήριξης των κρατών μελών με σοβαρά δημοσιονομικά προβλήματα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποιες χώρες παρατηρείται σημαντική αποδυνάμωση του κοινωνικού διαλόγου;

— Σκοπεύει να προχωρήσει στην έκδοση σχετικών συστάσεων για τη θωράκιση και ενίσχυση του κοινωνικού διαλόγου προς τα κράτη μέλη στα οποία θεωρεί ότι αυτός έχει εξασθενήσει;

— Προτίθεται να αναλάβει συγκεκριμένες πρωτοβουλίες για την ενδυνάμωση του κοινωνικού διαλόγου στα κράτη μέλη που έχουν υπαχθεί στο Μηχανισμό Στήριξης, μέσα και από αναθεωρήσεις όρων των Μνημονίων Δανεισμού που υπονομεύουν τη συγκεκριμένη κοινωνική διαδικασία;

— Ποιες δράσεις προσανατολίζεται να υιοθετήσει για την ενίσχυση του κοινωνικού διαλόγου σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, καθώς η «κοινωνική συγκατάθεση» στις μεταρρυθμίσεις καθίσταται αναγκαία συνθήκη τόσο για την εφαρμογή τους, όσο και για την απαραίτητη διαφύλαξη του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Κεκτημένου στο σύνολο της ΕΕ;

— Εκτιμά ότι στις χώρες που πραγματοποιήθηκαν μεταρρυθμίσεις μονομερώς και χωρίς επαρκή κοινωνικό διάλογο, το κόστος της δημοσιονομικής κρίσης μοιράστηκε δυσανάλογα στους οικονομικά και εισοδηματικά ασθενέστερους;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2013)

Στον απόηχο της κρίσης, ο κοινωνικός διάλογος βρίσκεται υπό πίεση σε όλη την ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένων πολλών χωρών όπου εφαρμόζονται τα πλέον αυστηρά προγράμματα δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης ([1]). Σε ορισμένες χώρες όπου ο κοινωνικός διάλογος ήταν λιγότερο αποτελεσματικός υπήρξαν προσφυγές στη ΔΟΕ και στο Συμβούλιο της Ευρώπης εναντίον ορισμένων μέτρων που ελήφθησαν από τις κυβερνήσεις των εν λόγω χωρών.

Το άρθρο 151 της ΣΛΕΕ ([2]) ορίζει ότι ο κοινωνικός διάλογος αποτελεί έναν από τους στόχους της ΕΕ και των κρατών μελών. Στις συστάσεις της, η Επιτροπή τονίζει τακτικά τη σημασία του κοινωνικού διαλόγου, την αυτονομία των κοινωνικών εταίρων και το σεβασμό της για την υφιστάμενη κατάσταση των χωρών και τις πρακτικές τους. Το κύριο μήνυμα είναι ότι ο κοινωνικός διάλογος μπορεί να αποτελέσει βασικό εργαλείο για τη διαχείριση των συγκρούσεων και την εύρεση λύσεων σε δύσκολες καταστάσεις.

Η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τον διμερή κοινωνικό διάλογο σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, τόσο σε διατομεακό όσο και σε τομεακό επίπεδο. Επιπλέον, λαμβάνει μέτρα για τη μεγαλύτερη συμμετοχή των κοινωνικών εταίρων της ΕΕ στη διακυβέρνηση της ΕΕ και της ΟΝΕ. Θα περιλαμβάνει προτάσεις για το σκοπό αυτό σε ανακοίνωση σχετικά με την κοινωνική διάσταση της ΟΝΕ. Ύστερα από πρόσκληση του προέδρου της Επιτροπής, οι ευρωπαίοι κοινωνικοί εταίροι συναντήθηκαν με την Επιτροπή σε αυτό το πλαίσιο στις 2 Μαΐου 2013.

([1]) Για λεπτομερέστερη ανάλυση βλέπε το έγγραφο εργασίας των υπηρεσιών της Επιτροπής με τίτλο «Εργασιακές Σχέσεις στην Ευρώπη 2012» SWD(2013)126 τελικό.

([2]) Συνθήκη για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Σε χώρες όπου εφαρμόζεται πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής, η Επιτροπή, ενεργώντας εξ ονόματος των κρατών μελών της ευρωζώνης, συνέστησε να γίνουν μεταρρυθμίσεις που αφορούν την αγορά εργασίας, σε διαβούλευση με τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους και σε συγκεκριμένες περιπτώσεις, να καταβληθούν καταρχάς προσπάθειες για επίτευξη τριμερών συμφωνιών. Επιδίωξε επίσης τα μέτρα πολιτικής να μην πλήττουν τις πλέον ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες, ακόμη και αν είναι αναπόφευκτες διάφορες προσαρμογές για την αντιμετώπιση των ανισορροπιών στην οικονομία ([3]).

([3]) Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα προγράμματα οικονομικής προσαρμογής, βλέπε το πρόγραμμα, τα έγγραφα και τις εκθέσεις http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004329/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Restoration and institutional strengthening of the social dialogue in Member States facing the most serious economic and social threats

The social dialogue is a key element of the European Social Model, and is the basic precondition for the successful outcome of reform moves. This was confirmed in a recent speech by the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Laszlo Andor, within the framework of the annual report on employment relations in Europe. At the same time, the Commissioner pointed out that social dialogue is under serious threat in Europe, arguing that the countries that enjoy a strong network of labour relations and social dialogue are facing fewer or milder economic and social difficulties. Within this network, and given its participation in the joint support mechanism for Member States with serious financial problems, will the Commission say:

— In which countries has a weakening of the social dialogue been observed?

— If it aims to proceed with issuing relevant recommendations to protect and strengthen social dialogue in Member States where it believes this social dialogue has been weakened?

— If it intends to take specific initiatives to strengthen social dialogue in Member States included in the Support Mechanism, and also through reviewing the terms of the loan memoranda which undermine a specific social process?

— Which actions does it favour adopting for strengthening social dialogue at EU level, since social consensus is a necessary condition for reforms, both for their implementation and for the necessary safeguarding of the Community *acquis* throughout the EU?

— Does it consider that with regards to countries where reforms took place unilaterally and without sufficient social dialogue, the cost of the financial crisis was borne disproportionately by those weaker in terms of funds and income?

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

In the wake of the crisis, social dialogue has been under strain throughout the EU, including in many of the countries that implement the most challenging programmes of fiscal consolidation ([1]). In some countries where social dialogue was less effective, some measures taken by the national governments were appealed against ILO and Council of Europe.

Article 151 TFEU ([2]) lays down that social dialogue is one of the objectives of the EU and the Member States. In its recommendations the Commission regularly stresses the importance of social dialogue, the autonomy of social partners, and its respect for national circumstances and practices. A key message is that social dialogue can be key to managing conflict and finding agreed solutions in difficult circumstances.

The Commission supports bipartite social dialogue at European level, at both cross-industry and sectoral level. It is also taking steps to further involve EU social partners in the governance of the EU and of the EMU. It will include proposals to this end in a communication on the social dimension of the EMU. On the invitation of the President of the Commission, the European social partners met with the College in this context on 2 May 2013.

In countries with an economic adjustment programme, the Commission, acting on behalf of the euro area Member States, has recommended to carry out labour market reforms in consultation with social partners, and in specific cases by first attempting to reach tripartite agreements. It has also sought that the policy measures spare as much as possible the most vulnerable, even if adjustments are unavoidable to overcome deep-rooted imbalances in the economy ([3]).

([1]) For a detailed analysis see the Commission's Staff Working Document 'Industrial Relations in Europe 2012' SWD(2013)126 final.
([2]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
([3]) For more information on the economic adjustment programmes, see the programme papers and reports http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004330/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Reserved contracts

Persons with disabilities often face complex barriers to finding or keeping work, but with the right support they can realise their potential in a wide range of jobs.

Since 2004, Article 19 of Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts has granted Member States the right to reserve participation in tender processes solely to supported businesses and factories. This means that no other provider may tender. Under Article 19, the threshold for a supported business is that at least 50% of the employees should be registered as having a disability.

Can the Commission provide information on how Member States have used Article 19 since it entered into force? Is a national breakdown available on the number and value of reserved contracts issued?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

With the exception of a few Member States (Estonia, Latvia, Portugal and Sweden) all Member States have transposed the possibility to reserve contracts to sheltered workshops as foreseen in Article 19 of Directive 2004/18/EC into their national law.

A breakdown by Member State of the number of tenders advertised as reserved contracts (under Article 19 of Directive 2004/18/EC or the similar provisions of Article 28 of Directive 2004/17/EC and Article 14 of Directive 2009/81/EC) since 2006 is given in the table below.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Belgium	7	1	16	15	10	11	8	68
Bulgaria		11	12	2	3	1	4	33
Czech Republic	1	8	2	19	10	15	27	82
Denmark	1		1			2	71	75
Germany	8	2	15	15	14	7	14	75
Ireland	4	1	1	1	2		1	10
Greece	4	2	6	2	16	4	5	39
Spain	1	2	35	602	237	12	16	905
France	56	82	159	144	205	217	242	1 105
Italy	12	13	18	18	37	53	43	194
Cyprus			1	2	1			4
Lithuania	1	1	3	1	13	11	4	34
Luxembourg	4							4
Hungary	3	1	5	3	3	2	13	30
Netherlands	33	18	26	16	18	21	12	144
Austria	1	1	2	6	2	1	19	32
Poland	6		1	4	11	37	71	130
Romania			3	1	2	1	6	13
Slovenia	1	3	3	56	34	30	91	218
Slovakia		1			1	2	2	6
Finland							1	1
United Kingdom	374	140	10	14	11	14	7	570
Total	517	287	319	921	630	441	657	3 772

These figures are based on the data submitted by contracting authorities to the Publications Office in notices for publication in the Tenders Electronic Database (TED). The Commission cannot vouch for their reliability. Data for 2004 and 2005 and reliable data on the overall value of these contracts are not available.

It would seem likely from the evidence available that these contracts would amount to several hundred million euro per year.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004332/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Problematiche relative all'applicazione della direttiva 94/62/CE sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio

Un'associazione italiana che raccoglie i produttori di plastiche tradizionali segnala la scelta, operata dal nostro legislatore con la Legge 24 marzo 2012, n. 28, di riservare la commerciabilità di «shopper» ai soli prodotti biodegradabili mediante compostaggio (conformi alla norma armonizzata UNI EN 13432/2002), escludendo ogni altro possibile procedimento. In materia di recupero d'imballaggi, la direttiva 94/62/CE ha definito forme e caratteristiche che devono essere rispettate dai prodotti perché possano risultare conformi all'esigenza di rispetto dell'ambiente e tra queste il compostaggio è solo una tra le possibilità di recupero dei rifiuti da imballaggio.

Tale direttiva, all'articolo 7, nell'imporre agli Stati l'introduzione di sistemi di restituzione e/o raccolta degli imballaggi usati e dei rifiuti da imballaggio nonché di reimpiego e recupero, stabilisce che questi sistemi debbano essere concepiti in modo da non ostacolare gli scambi o da creare distorsioni nella concorrenza. All'articolo 18 invece dispone che: «gli Stati non possono ostacolare l'immissione sul mercato nel loro territorio di imballaggi conformi alle disposizioni della presente direttiva».

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti?

2. Non ritiene che la disciplina italiana, riservando la commercializzazione degli «shopper» ai soli prodotti compostabili e ponendo fuori commercio ogni altro tipo di «sacchetto da asporto», pregiudichi gli interessi del mercato, andando contro il disposto degli articoli 7 e 18 della direttiva 94/62/CE?

3. Come intende intervenire a tutela delle aziende che in Italia lavorano in questo settore e che, per via dell'entrata in vigore del disposto legislativo italiano, sono, di fatto, poste fuori dal mercato?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei fatti menzionati nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare. La legislazione italiana è oggetto di una procedura di infrazione. Nel quadro di tale procedura, la Commissione sta attualmente valutando la compatibilità della legislazione italiana con la legislazione e le politiche dell'UE in questo settore, ivi compresa la direttiva 94/62/CE sugli imballaggi e i rifiuti di imballaggio ([1]).

([1]) GU L 365 del 31.12.1994.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004332/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Problems with the application of Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste

An Italian association of manufacturers of traditional plastics has highlighted the decision taken by the Italian legislature, under Law No 28 of 24 March 2012, to restrict the marketing of carrier bags solely to products that biodegrade when composted (in accordance with harmonised standard UNI EN 13432/2002), ruling out any other possible procedure. With regard to the recovery of packaging, Directive 94/62/EC laid down forms and characteristics that products must comply with in order to meet the need to respect the environment; among these, composting is only one of the possibilities for recovering packaging waste.

In requiring Member States to introduce systems for the return and/or collection of used packaging and packaging waste and systems for reuse and recovery, Article 7 of the directive states that these systems must be designed so as to avoid barriers to trade or distortions of competition. Article 18, on the other hand, lays down that: 'Member States shall not impede the placing on the market of their territory of packaging which satisfies the provisions of this directive'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the facts set out above?

2. Does it not consider that, by restricting the marketing of carrier bags to compostable products only, and by outlawing the sale of any other type of carrier bag, the Italian law is adversely affecting the interests of the market, in conflict with the provisions of Articles 7 and 18 of Directive 94/62/EC?

3. How does it intend to protect firms in Italy operating in this sector which are, through the entry into force of the Italian legislation, in practice excluded from the market?

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

The Commisison is aware of the facts set out in the question of the Honourable Member. The Italian legislation is subject of an infringement procedure. In the framework of this procedure, the Commission is currently assessing the compatibility of the Italian legislation with EU legislation and policy in this area, including Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004333/13
alla Commissione
Francesco De Angelis (S&D)
(17 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Futuro della siderurgia e tutela dell'occupazione

Con riferimento alla risposta all'interrogazione del 15 marzo 2012 relativa alla situazione dello stabilimento siderurgico *ILVA* di Patrica (FR), può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali azioni urgenti intende adottare per far fronte ai forti squilibri nella preparazione e gestione delle ristrutturazioni aziendali?

2. Quali misure immediate prevede di adottare al fine di assicurare che le tutele previste nell'ambito degli ammortizzatori sociali siano estese ai giovani lavoratori, quali sono gli operatori dell'*ILVA* di Patrica e di molte altre realtà industriali dell'area, soggette a drastici processi di ristrutturazione?

3. Quali misure intende adottare per salvaguardare migliaia di posti di lavoro oggi in pericolo nell'UE, visto che, dopo l'estinzione del trattato Ceca, rientra tra i compiti della Commissione anche il trattamento delle conseguenze economiche e sociali dell'evoluzione dell'industria siderurgica?

4. Come intende procedere in relazione alle numerose e gravi crisi industriali (tra gli altri, *Vdc Technologies, Gruppo Siderpali e Marangoni* ad Anagni, *Sistema Compositi* di Paliano e *Cogeme* di Patrica) che, nell'area del Basso Lazio, stanno interessando uno dei siti produttivi più importanti del Paese?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

1. La Commissione ha svolto un'opera notevole nel campo dell'anticipazione dei processi di ristrutturazione aziendale e della loro gestione socialmente responsabile. In seguito alla pubblicazione del suo Libro verde nel gennaio 2012 ([1]) e all'adozione, in data 15 gennaio 2013, da parte del Parlamento europeo della relazione Cercas ([2]), la Commissione intende presentare una comunicazione relativa alla definizione di un quadro di qualità in questo campo: costituirà il quadro degli atti normativi e delle iniziative dell'UE in corso e illustrerà le migliori pratiche che tutte le parti interessate dovranno applicare.

2. Per quanto la Commissione solleciti tutte le parti interessate a fare in modo che tutti i lavoratori colpiti da processi di ristrutturazione siano sostenuti nei loro sforzi volti a un rapido reinserimento nel mercato del lavoro, la copertura dei regimi di protezione sociale è materia di competenza delle autorità nazionali.

Quanto ai punti 3 e 4, la Commissione è a conoscenza delle gravi situazioni di crisi industriale che interessano molte regioni d'Europa, comprese il Lazio, ed ovviamente riconosce l'importanza strategica che l'industria siderurgica riveste per l'UE in termini di competitività e di posti di lavoro. È per questo motivo che nel luglio del 2012 la Commissione ha convocato una tavola rotonda di alto livello sul futuro dell'industria siderurgica europea che nel febbraio 2013 ha adottato una serie di raccomandazioni politiche.

È sulla base di tali raccomandazioni che la Commissione sta elaborando un piano d'azione per la competitività dell'industria siderurgica dell'UE, la cui adozione è prevista nel mese di giugno 2013: verrà introdotta una strategia di intervento per tutta l'UE e verrà stabilita una serie di azioni per affrontare le sfide attuali e future, nella prospettiva di mantenere in Europa un settore siderurgico dinamico, competitivo e sostenibile.

([1]) V. le risposte e una sintesi accessibili dal link http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([2]) A7-0390/2012 / P7_TA-PROV(2013)0005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004333/13
to the Commission
Francesco De Angelis (S&D)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Future of the steel industry and protection of jobs

With reference to the answer to the question of 15 March 2012 on the situation of the ILVA steel works in Patrica (province of Frosinone), can the Commission answer the following:

1. What urgent action does it intend to take to address the significant imbalances in the preparation and management of corporate restructuring?

2. What immediate steps does it intend to take to ensure that the protection provided for by social safety nets is extended to the young workers who constitute the workforce of ILVA in Patrica and many other industrial facilities in the area which are undergoing drastic restructuring?

3. Given that, following the expiry of the ECSC Treaty, the Commission also has the duty to address the economic and social consequences of developments in the steel industry, what steps does it intend to take to safeguard the thousands of jobs now under threat in the EU?

4. What action does it intend to take in relation to the countless severe industrial crises (including at Vdc Technologies, Gruppo Siderpali and Marangoni in Anagni, Sistema Compositi in Paliano and Cogeme in Patrica) which are affecting the lower Lazio area, one of Italy's most important manufacturing sites?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

1. The Commission carried out important work in the field of anticipation and socially responsible management of corporate 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 propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework in this field that will frame the current EU legislation and initiatives and will present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders.

2. Although the Commission urges all the concerned stakeholders to ensure that every worker affected by restructuring is supported in his efforts to re-enter quickly the labour market, coverage of social protection systems is under the responsibility of national authorities.

3 and 4. The Commission is aware of the severe industrial crises in many parts of Europe including Lazio. The Commission is clearly committed to the strategic importance of the steel industry for the EU in terms of competitiveness and jobs. This is why it convened in July 2012 a High-Level Roundtable on the future of the European steel industry that adopted in February 2013 a set of policy recommendations.

Following the recommendations of the Roundtable, the Commission is preparing an Action Plan for the competitiveness of the EU steel industry, to be adopted in June 2013, that will set up an EU-wide policy strategy and a number of actions that will meet the current and future challenges with a view to keeping a dynamic, competitive and sustainable steel sector in Europe.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en
([2]) A7-0390/2012 / P7_TA-PROV(2013)0005.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004334/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(17. April 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzmittel für „Amazon"

Hat die Kommission Kenntnis darüber, ob und in welcher Höhe Finanzmittel der Europäischen Union von den Mitgliedstaaten Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und Italien eingesetzt wurden, um dadurch Ansiedlungen des US-Versandhändlers „Amazon" in diesen Ländern zu unterstützen?

Was ist der Kommission über damit verbundene Auflagen zur Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen bzw. zur Standort- und Arbeitsplatzgarantie bekannt?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2013)

Den Informationen der betreffenden Mitgliedstaaten zufolge hat Amazon keine Unterstützung im Rahmen der Kohäsionspolitik erhalten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004334/13
to the Commission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Financial resources for 'Amazon'

Does the Commission know whether and how much in the way of European Union financial resources have been used by the Member States Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy to support the establishment of the US mail order company 'Amazon' in these countries?

What does the Commission know about any associated conditions concerning the creation of jobs or concerning a location and jobs guarantee?

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

Based on information received from the Member States concerned, no support has been provided to Amazon from cohesion policy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004335/13
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Airline fuel surcharges

The Commission is asked to give its legal opinion on the following situation in regard to airline fuel surcharges:

If a passenger cancels his/her flight, the airline refuses to refund the surcharge, even though the cancelled seat is often resold and the fuel surcharge is charged again.

The majority of airlines, including British Airways, include a fuel surcharge in the original price of a ticket. Other airlines, such as Aer Lingus, add on a fuel surcharge during the booking process. The variable fuel surcharge, which may rise, fall or be removed in line with changes in fuels prices, results in fluctuating costs for the transport industry.

Could the Commission indicate the relevant legislation which deals with fuel surcharge costs on airlines?

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

The Commission is aware of the practice of fuel surcharges applied by several airlines as part of the final price of air ticket and that its level varies.

Air carrier-imposed surcharges under IATA codes YR and YQ (fees for fuel and/or insurance) may be added to the price of the ticket and those are usually non-refundable, depending on the type of the ticket. Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 ([1]) contains price transparency provisions which clearly indicates in its Article 23(1) that airlines have the right to collect fuel surcharge. They shall communicate the amount of fuel surcharge in a clear, transparent and unambiguous way at the start of and throughout any booking process. Based on the regulation and in line with IATA guidelines and agreements, airlines are free to set air fares for their services as long as the rules of the regulation are respected and thus, application of YR and YQ surcharges are not unlawful. Therefore, depending on the airline marketing policy to qualify for a refund of the fee, airlines may require that the associated ticket purchased was a refundable ticket.

Directive No 2005/29/EC ([2]) contains provisions whether a commercial practice applied by commercial partners shall be considered unfair.

Since the Member States are in charge of the enforcement of these provisions, under the control of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, it is therefore up to the Member States to determine whether the fuel surcharge is displayed according to the regulation and if its level is misleading for passengers and take appropriate action may it be found unlawful.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community, OJ L 293, 31.10.2008, p. 3-20.

([2]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, OJ L 149, 11.06.2005, p.22-39.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004336/13
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Implementation of MIFID I

The MIFID I legislation is designed, amongst other objectives, to introduce rules governing conflicts of interest relating to the sale of investment products. In June 2012 the UK regulator, the Financial Services Authority (FSA), found that 90% of interest rate swap agreements (IRSA) sold to SMEs had been mis-sold. However, it has concluded that loans (such as tailored business loans) with interest rate hedging products (IRHPs) embedded, as opposed to sold separately, are not covered by MIFID I legislation.

Does the Commission consider the mis-selling of loans in which IRHPs have been embedded and not sold separately to be covered by the conflict-of-interest rules introduced in the MIFID I legislation? If so, does it consider the UK to have fully implemented MIFID I?

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

Directive 2004/39/EC ([1]) (MiFID) applies to the provision of investment services and activities in relation to financial instruments. The list of financial instruments covered under MiFID is set up in Annex I, Section C of MiFID. Loans are not financial instruments under MiFID. A mechanism to calculate interests that uses an embedded hedging product does not change the nature of the loan and therefore does not turn the loan into a financial instrument.

([1]) OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1-44.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004337/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Propuneri legislative privind etichetarea alimentelor și calendarul acestora

În urma testelor ADN realizate după „scandalul" cărnii de cal, Comisia a anunțat că mai puțin de 5 % dintre produsele vândute drept carne de vită în Uniunea Europeană conțin carne de cal — așadar, un produs din 20 a fost etichetat greșit, cu intenție de fraudă. De asemenea, testele realizate în mod aleatoriu au arătat că în 0,5 % dintre carcasele de cal a fost descoperită fenilbutazonă.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. dacă are intenția de a propune noi măsuri de natură legislativă în privința etichetării alimentelor;

2. dacă aceste eventuale propuneri ar putea include etichetarea obligatorie a produselor prelucrate;

3. care va fi calendarul acestor eventuale propuneri;

4. dacă testele ADN efectuate până în prezent ar putea face obiectul unei propuneri legislative în vederea generalizării și permanentizării acestora.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(24 mai 2013)

1-3. Indicarea obligatorie pe etichetă a originii nu este un instrument de prevenire a fraudelor din partea operatorilor răuvoitori. Prezentul scandal s-ar fi putut produce chiar dacă indicarea pe etichetă a originii ar fi fost obligatorie pentru produsele alimentare în cauză. Practicile de natură să inducă în eroare pot fi eliminate prin punerea în aplicare în mod corespunzător a legislației UE, în principal prin desfășurarea unor controale oficiale periodice de către autoritățile naționale competente, pe baza unei analize adecvate a riscurilor, precum și prin impunerea de sancțiuni disuasive și eficace, în conformitate cu Regulamentul (CE) nr. 882/2004 privind controalele oficiale ([1]).

Propunerea Comisiei privind controalele oficiale, adoptată la data de 6 mai, vizează, de asemenea, consolidarea suplimentară a sistemului existent, inclusiv a dispozițiilor referitoare la sancțiuni.

În ceea ce privește legislația existentă în materie de etichetare, măsurile de revizuire și de monitorizare prevăzute de aceasta, Comisia îl invită pe distinsul deputat să consulte răspunsurile sale la întrebările scrise E-2408/2013 și E-2548/2013. ([2])

4. Recomandarea 2013/99 a instituit un „plan de control coordonat", adică un plan al controalelor efectuate simultan și în aceleași condiții în toate statele membre, ca răspuns la necesitatea de a soluționa problema, care pare a se manifesta pe scară largă, a prezenței cărnii de cabaline nedeclarate în produsele din carne de bovine. Punerea în aplicare a respectivului plan de control coordonat a fost finalizată, iar rapoartele relevante au fost publicate. Aceasta nu înseamnă că acum vor fi suspendate controalele privind prezența ADN-ului de cal în alte produse, întrucât statele membre includ, în mod progresiv, testele ADN în planurile de control naționale„normale", prin care se asigură respectarea tuturor normelor lanțului agroalimentar (inclusiv cerințele de etichetare) pe teritoriul lor. În plus, într-o etapă ulterioară pot fi necesare măsuri și teste coordonate suplimentare.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 882/2004 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 29 aprilie 2004 privind controalele oficiale efectuate pentru a asigura verificarea conformității cu legislația privind hrana pentru animale și produsele alimentare și cu normele de sănătate animală și de bunăstare a animalelor (JO L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004337/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Legislative proposals on food labelling and the relevant timetable

As a result of the DNA tests carried out after the horsemeat 'scandal', the Commission announced that less than 5% of the products sold as beef in the European Union contained horsemeat. This means that one product in 20 was wrongly labelled with fraudulent intent. In addition, the tests carried out randomly highlighted that phenylbutazone was discovered in 0.5% of the horse carcasses.

Can the Commission specify the following:

1. Does it intend to propose new legislative measures on food labelling?

2. Could prospective proposals include compulsory labelling for processed products?

3. What will the timetable be for these prospective proposals?

4. Could the DNA tests carried out so far be included in a legislative proposal, with the aim of making them a general, permanent feature?

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

1-3. Mandatory origin labelling is not a tool to prevent fraud by malicious operators. The present scandal could have occurred even if origin labelling was mandatory for the foods in question. Deceptive practices can be eliminated by appropriate enforcement of EU legislation mainly by means of regular official controls by national competent authorities based on appropriate risk analysis and the imposition of effective dissuasive sanctions, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls ([1]).

The Commission proposal on official controls, adopted on the 6 May, is also aiming at further strengthening the existing system, including the provisions on sanctions.

As regards the existing labelling legislation, its review and the follow-up actions, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-2408/2013 and E-2548/2013 ([2]).

4. Recommendation 2013/99 established a 'coordinated control plan', that is a plan of controls carried out simultaneously and with the same modalities in all Member States as a response to the need to tackle the seemingly widespread issue of the presence of undeclared horse meat in beef products. The implementation of that coordinated control plan has been finalised and reports from it published. This does not mean that controls on the undeclared presence of horse DNA in other products will now be discontinued, as Member States are progressively including DNA tests in their 'normal' national control plans, through which they ensure that all agri-food chain rules (including labelling requirements) are complied with across their territory. Moreover, further coordinated action and tests may be called for at a later stage.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004338/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Agenda de discuții cu Turcia cu privire la condițiile de export de animale vii

România a solicitat în mod repetat, în cadrul dialogului bilateral cu Turcia, deblocarea exporturilor de animale vii din speciile ovine și bovine, precum și ridicarea măsurii de interzicere a tranzitului rutier cu carne românească de ovine și bovine destinată țărilor arabe.

Această solicitare nu a fost până în prezent primită favorabil.

În iunie 2012, am adresat o întrebare cu aceeași temă Comisiei, care a arătat că „este pe deplin conștientă de dificultățile cu care se confruntă exportatorii din UE și acest subiect se află în prezent pe agenda de discuții cu Turcia. Comisia consideră că unele condiții de import impuse în prezent de Turcia sunt nejustificate și dorește obținerea unor condiții armonizate pentru toate statele membre ale UE care doresc să exporte în Turcia".

Comisia este rugată să aducă precizări cu privire la evoluția în cursul anului trecut și a primelor luni ale acestui an a „agendei de discuții" cu Turcia cu privire la această problemă. De asemenea, Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă va aborda acest subiect în cadrul comitetului vamal și în comisia de aderare.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(11 iunie 2013)

Cu toate că Turcia a instituit condiții veterinare de export pentru statele membre ale UE, exporturile de bovine vii din statele membre ale UE au scăzut dramatic începând din decembrie 2012, ca urmare a faptului că Ministerul Economiei a încetat să transmită documentele de import necesare. Exporturile de ovine vii au scăzut de asemenea în mod semnificativ față de anul trecut.

Comisia și-a exprimat preocupările în acest sens în mai multe rânduri, cel mai recent în cursul reuniunii Comitetului de asociere din aprilie 2013. Condițiile veterinare de export au fost de asemenea discutate în cadrul reuniunilor tehnice din noiembrie 2012 și ianuarie 2013. Comisia a propus Turciei o nouă reuniune tehnică în iunie 2013, în vederea continuării discuției cu privire la anumite condiții care par inutile sau nejustificate.

Comisia continuă să depună eforturi pentru a asigura continuarea exporturilor din UE către Turcia. Discuțiile pe această temă sunt însă foarte dificile. După cum s-a menționat în răspunsul la întrebarea scrisă E-004402/2012 ([1]), Turcia permite tranzitul pe teritoriul său numai pentru animalele și produsele de origine animală care respectă condițiile sale de import. Din păcate, deoarece pentru România nu s-a prezentat niciun dosar la OIE privind clasificarea ESB, Turcia va continua să aplice regula sa care interzice tranzitul de bovine vii prin România.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004338/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Agenda for discussions with Turkey regarding the export conditions for live animals

As part of its bilateral dialogue with Turkey, Romania has repeatedly requested the removal of the ban on exporting live sheep and cattle, as well as the lifting of the measure banning the transit by road of Romanian sheepmeat and beef, travelling to Arab countries.

This request has not received a positive response so far.

In June 2012 I submitted a question on the same subject to the Commission, which indicated that it 'is fully aware of the difficulties encountered by EU exporters and discussions with Turkey are ongoing on this issue. The Commission considers that some current Turkish import conditions are not justified and aims to obtain harmonised conditions for all EU Member States wishing to export to Turkey'.

Can the Commission give details about the progress made during last year and the initial months of this year on the 'agenda for discussions' with Turkey on this issue? Can the Commission also clarify whether it will raise this subject as part of the Customs Committee and in the accession committee?

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

Although Turkey has established veterinary export conditions for EU Member States, exports of live cattle from EU Member States have dramatically dropped since December 2012 as the Ministry for Economy stopped delivering the necessary import documents. Exports of live sheep are also significantly decreasing compared to last year.

The Commission has raised its concerns at several occasions and most recently during the Association Committee meeting in April 2013. Veterinary export conditions were also discussed during technical meetings in November 2012 and January 2013. The Commission has proposed a new technical meeting in June 2013 to Turkey with a view to further discussion of certain conditions that seem unnecessary or unjustified.

The Commission persists in its efforts to ensure the continuation of EU exports to Turkey. However these discussions are very difficult. As mentioned in the reply to Written Question E-004402/2012 ([1]), Turkey only allows transit through its territory of animals and animal products that comply with its import conditions. Unfortunately, since no Romanian file was presented to the OIE for BSE classification, Turkey will continue to apply its rule prohibiting the transit of live cattle through Romania.

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004339/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Ucraina interzice importurile de carne din anumite țări europene

Autoritățile din Ucraina au anunțat interdicția de import a produselor de carne de vită și rumegătoare mici din Regatul Unit, Țările de Jos, Germania, Franța, Italia, Luxemburg, Austria, Spania și Belgia, motivul fiind descoperirea în aceste state a unor vite afectate de o boală cauzată de virusul Schmallenberg. Interdicția urmează să se aplice, de asemenea, în cazul materialului genetic bovin.

În contextul unor interdicții tot mai frecvente cu privire la importuri impuse de Ucraina, Comisia este rugată să își exprime punctul de vedere privind recenta decizie și să precizeze dacă consideră că aceste interdicții sunt întemeiate.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2013)

Comisia a menținut contacte strânse cu autoritățile competente din Ucraina de la introducerea măsurilor restrictive referitoare la virusul Schmallenberg pentru importurile de animale vii și de material genetic (spermă și embrioni) din UE.

Cu numeroase ocazii, Comisia a reiterat afirmația că orice restricție impusă exporturilor din UE, ca urmare a prezenței virusului Schmallenberg, este inacceptabilă în temeiul Acordului privind aplicarea măsurilor sanitare și fitosanitare, cu excepția cazului în care țara care a impus o astfel de măsură poate demonstra că este indemnă de virus și de alte virusuri din serogrupul „Simbu" și că aplică o abordare nediscriminatorie coerentă față de alți parteneri comerciali.

Comisia a solicitat autorităților competente din Ucraina să elimine măsurile stricte în vigoare și să urmeze recomandările din fișa tehnică descriptivă a Organizației Mondiale pentru Sănătatea Animalelor (OIE) cu privire la virusul Schmallenberg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004339/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Ukraine bans meat imports from certain European countries

The Ukrainian authorities have announced a ban on importing meat products from cattle and small ruminants from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Austria, Spain and Belgium, as a result of some cattle in these states being found to be affected by a disease caused by the Schmallenberg virus. This ban is also to apply to genetic material from cattle.

In light of the increasingly frequent import bans imposed by Ukraine, can the Commission give its view on the recent decision and state whether it regards these bans as being justified?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The Commission has been in close contact with the Ukrainian competent authorities since the restrictive measures related to Schmallenberg virus were introduced for imported live animals and genetic material (semen and embryos) from the EU.

On numerous occasions the Commission reiterated that any restriction imposed on EU exports, as a result of the occurrence of the Schmallenberg virus, is unacceptable under the Sanitary and phytosanitary agreement, unless the country which imposed such a measure can demonstrate that it is free from the virus and the other viruses of the 'Simbu' serogroup and that it applies a consistent non-discriminatory approach vis-à-vis other trading partners.

The Commission asked the Ukrainian competent authorities to lift the rigorous measures in place and to follow the World Organisation for Animal health (OIE) technical factsheet recommendations for the Schmallenberg virus.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004340/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Condiționarea ajutorului pe cap de animal în România

În România, crescătorii de animale (ovine, bovine, caprine) care vor să beneficieze de subvenția pe cap de animal trebuie să depună o declarație pe propria răspundere că nu au datorii către statul român. În anii 2009-2010, în urma unor controale, a rezultat că unii fermieri aveau datorii la bugetul de stat, iar declarațiile date de aceștia nu corespundeau adevărului.

Comisia este rugată să precizeze dacă subvenția agricolă poate sau nu să fie condiționată de existența unor datorii la bugetul de stat.

Răspuns dat de dl. Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(12 iunie 2013)

În România, în 2009, ajutorul pentru sectorul creșterii animalelor a fost disponibil numai sub formă de plăți directe naționale complementare, așa cum a fost autorizat de Comisie, iar începând din anul 2010 acesta a fost oferit și sub formă de ajutor specific în conformitate cu articolul 68 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 73/2009 ([1]). Comisia nu a fost notificată cu privire la o eventuală condiție referitoare la absența de datorii restante la bugetul de stat, nici în cadrul plăților directe naționale complementare, nici în cadrul ajutorului specific. În conformitate cu hotărârea Curții de Justiție a Uniunii Europene în cauza C-115/10, emisă la 9 iunie 2011 ([2]), legislația UE interzice impunerea unei condiții pentru acordarea plăților directe naționale complementare care nu a fost autorizată de Comisie.

Cu toate acestea, statele membre au posibilitatea ca, în condițiile specifice stabilite de Curtea de Justiție a Uniunii Europene ([3]) să compenseze sumele care le sunt datorate și neachitate cu plățile agricole. Principiile stabilite în această hotărâre ar trebui să fie, de asemenea, luate în considerare atunci când se face compensarea plăților directe naționale complementare.

([1]) JO L 30, 31.1.2009.
([2]) Cauza C-115/10 Bábolna.
([3]) Cauza C-132/95 Bent Jensen/ Korn— og Foderstofkompagniet A/S.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004340/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Placing conditions on livestock aid in Romania

In Romania, livestock farmers (with sheep, cattle, goats) who will be eligible for livestock aid need to submit a declaration at their own liability, confirming that they have no debts outstanding to the Romanian State. Some checks carried out in the period 2009-2010 revealed that some farmers did have debts outstanding to the state budget, and that the statements they submitted were untruthful.

Can the Commission clarify whether or not granting agricultural subsidies can be conditional upon having debts outstanding to the state budget?

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

Aid to the livestock sector in Romania was in 2009 only available as complementary national direct payments (CNDPs) as authorised by the Commission and from 2010 also as specific support according to Article 68 of Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1]). The Commission was not notified of any condition related to the absence of outstanding debts to the state budget neither in the framework of the CNDPs nor in the context of the specific support. According to the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C-115/10 delivered on 9 June 2011 ([2]), EC law prohibits the imposition of a condition for granting CNDPs that has not been authorised by the Commission.

However, Member States have the possibility under the specific conditions set out by the Court of Justice of the European Union ([3]) to set-off agricultural payments against outstanding debts to the Member State. The principles laid down in this judgment should also be taken into account when setting-off CNDPs.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.
([2]) Case C-115/10 Bábolna.
([3]) Case C-132/95 Bent Jensen and Korn- og Foderstofkompagniet A/S.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004341/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Stadiul analizei solicitării României cu privire la aplicarea unei scheme temporare de ajutor de stat

Potrivit autorităților române, aplicarea schemei temporare de ajutor de stat prin subvenționarea ratei accizei pentru motorina utilizată în agricultură (21 de euro/1 000 litri și în 2013 și 2014, în limitele prevăzute pentru fiecare sector) nu este posibilă pentru că se așteaptă încă aprobarea acestei propuneri de către Comisia Europeană.

Comisia este rugată să informeze Parlamentul când a fost înaintată solicitarea Guvernului României și care este stadiul analizei acestei solicitări. De asemenea, Comisia este rugată să precizeze ce alte state UE au solicitat aprobarea unor ajutoare similare și care este valoarea acestora.

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

În conformitate cu orientările comunitare privind ajutoarele de stat în sectorul agricol și forestier pentru perioada 2007-2013 ([1]), ajutorul pentru o reducere a accizelor poate fi declarat compatibil cu Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene. Rata redusă a accizei poate fi aplicată pentru carburanții utilizați în producția primară de produse agricole fără diferențieri în funcție de activitatea agricolă sau subsector.

În temeiul unei scheme aprobate anterior, autoritățile române au acordat ajutor printr-o rată redusă a accizei (21 de euro/1 000 litri) până la 31 decembrie 2012. După expirarea acestei scheme, autoritățile române au notificat Comisiei o nouă schemă de ajutor de stat la data de 12 martie 2013. Acesta se află în prezent în curs de examinare în temeiul normelor relevante privind ajutorul de stat care prevăd o perioadă de două luni pentru o decizie în cazul unei notificări complete.

Alte state membre (de exemplu, SA.35018 — Polonia, SA.33107 — Letonia, SA.32982 — Bulgaria) au introdus, de asemenea, scheme similare pentru sectorul agricol ([2]). Bugetul acestor măsuri este calculat ca venituri nepercepute de stat prin aplicarea unei rate de impozitare redusă.

([1]) JO C 319, 27.12.2006.
([2]) Textul deciziei în versiunea sau versiunile lingvistice autentice, din care au fost eliminate toate informațiile confidențiale, este disponibil pe site-ul: http://ec.europa.eu/community_law/state_aids/state_aids_texts_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004341/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Stage of examination of Romania's application for implementing a temporary state aid scheme

According to the Romanian authorities, the temporary state aid scheme based on subsidising the rate of duty on diesel used in agriculture (EUR 21/1 000 litres in both 2013 and 2014, within the limits stipulated for each sector) cannot be implemented because approval is still pending for this proposal from the Commission.

Can the Commission tell Parliament when the Romanian Government submitted the application and what stage the examination of this application is at? Can the Commission also state which other EU Member States have requested approval of similar aid and what its value is?

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

Under the Community Guidelines for State Aid in the agricultural and forestry sector 2007 to 2013 ([1]), aid for an excise duty reduction can be declared compatible with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The reduced rate of the excise duty can be applied for fuel used in the primary production of agricultural products with no differentiation according to the agricultural activity or subsector.

Under a previously approved scheme, the Romanian authorities granted aid as a reduced excise duty (EUR 21/1 000 litres) until 31 December 2012. After the expiry of this scheme, the Romanian authorities have notified to the Commission a new state aid scheme on 12 March 2013. This is now under examination under the relevant state aid rules which forsee a two month period for a decision in case of a complete notification.

Other Member States (e.g. SA.35018 — Poland, SA.33107 — Latvia, SA.32982 — Bulgaria) also introduced similar schemes for the agricultural sector. ([2]) The budget of these measures is calculated as a revenue forgone for the state by applying the reduced tax.

([1]) OJ C 319, 27.12.2006.
([2]) The authentic text(s) of the decision, from which all confidential information has been removed, can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/community_law/state_aids/state_aids_texts_en.htm

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-004342/13
komissiolle
Sampo Terho (EFD)
(17. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Palvelusopimusasetuksen yleisen säännön soveltaminen jäsenmaassa

Palvelusopimusasetuksen (Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus (EY) N:o 1370/2007) hyväksymisvaiheessa Suomen eduskunta linjasi, että subventoitujen seutu- ja kaupunkilippujen asia ratkaistaan asetuksen voimaan tullessa asetuksen yleisellä säännöllä. Suomen joukkoliikennelain perusteella yleinen sääntö on annettava valtioneuvoston asetuksella. Liikenne- ja viestintäministeriö on ilmoittanut, että Suomessa ei sovelleta asetuksen yleistä sääntöä.

Onko liikenne- ja viestintäministeriöllä palvelusopimusasetukseen perustuva oikeus rajoittaa toimivaltaisten viranomaisten oikeutta käyttää asetuksen yleistä sääntöä ja onko Suomen joukkoliikennelaki mahdollisesti ristiriidassa palvelusopimusasetuksen kanssa, kun joukkoliikenteen toimivaltaiset viranomaiset eivät saa Suomessa itsenäisesti päättää yleisen säännön käytöstä?

Siim Kallasin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(14. toukokuuta 2013)

Asetuksen (EY) N:o 1370/2007 3 artiklan 1 kohdan mukaisesti korvausten maksaminen ja/tai yksinoikeuden myöntäminen julkisen palvelun velvoitteiden täyttämiseksi edellyttää, että toimivaltainen viranomainen on tehnyt julkisen liikenteen harjoittajan kanssa julkista palveluhankintaa koskevan sopimuksen. Saman asetuksen 3 artiklan 2 kohdassa sallitaan poikkeus tähän periaatteeseen: julkisen palvelun velvoitteista, joiden tarkoituksena on vahvistaa enimmäishinnat, voidaan myös antaa yleisiä sääntöjä. Asetuksessa (EY) N:o 1370/2007 ei täsmennetä, millä hallinnollisella tasolla tällaisia yleisiä sääntöjä olisi vahvistettava. Näin ollen jäsenvaltiot päättävät siitä itse. Yleisistä säännöistä riippumatta toimivaltaisilla viranomaisilla on 3 artiklan 2 kohdan mukaan oikeus sisällyttää julkisia palveluhankintoja koskeviin sopimuksiin julkisen palvelun velvoitteita, joilla vahvistetaan enimmäishintoja.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004342/13
to the Commission
Sampo Terho (EFD)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Regulation on public passenger transport services

When the regulation on public passenger transport services by rail and by road (Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council) was being adopted, the Finnish Parliament took the position that, once the regulation came into force, the issue of subsidised regional and urban tickets should be resolved by means of a general rule as provided for in the regulation. Pursuant to Finland's Public Transport Law, a general rule must be adopted by Government Decree. The Ministry of Transport and Communications has announced that no general rule as referred to in the regulation is to be applied in Finland.

Does the Ministry of Transport and Communications have the right, under the regulation on public passenger transport services, to limit the power of the competent authorities to introduce a general rule under the regulation, and might Finland's Public Transport Law breach the regulation on public passenger transport services if the competent public transport authorities in Finland are not permitted to decide independently to introduce a general rule?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2013)

Pursuant to Article 3(1) of Regulation 1370/2007 payment of compensation and/or the granting of an exclusive right for the discharge of public service obligations requires the award of a public service contract by a competent authority to a public transport operator. Article 3(2) of that regulation allows for a derogation from this principle saying that public service obligations which aim at establishing maximum tariffs may also be the subject of general rules. Regulation 1370/2007 does not specify at what administrative level such general rules should be established. This is therefore a matter for Member States to decide upon. Independently of the question of general rules, Article 3(2) grants competent authorities the right to integrate public service obligations establishing maximum tariffs into public service contracts.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004343/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE) and Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: The control of bovine tuberculosis in the United Kingdom — follow up on Written Question E-010251/2012

In light of Commissioner Borg's response to Written Question E-010251/2012, which specified that the EU is providing substantial technical and financial support to the United Kingdom's bovine tuberculosis (BTB) eradication programme (EUR 31 200 000 for the 2012 programme and EUR 31 800 000 for the 2013 programme), could the Commission provide a breakdown of what this money has been spent on or what it will be spent on in the future?

In particular, could the Commission also indicate whether

1. any support, financial or otherwise, has or will be provided by the EU to assist the United Kingdom's pilot badger culls scheduled to take place this year;

2. any support, financial or otherwise, has or will be provided by the EU to assist the United Kingdom in developing an oral BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guérin) vaccine for badgers or improving the use of the injectable BCG vaccine, in order to reduce the transmission of TB from badgers to cattle?

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

The Commission provided financial support for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

The measures co-funded by the Union are only for the costs (with ceilings) of carrying out tuberculin and laboratory tests and the compensation to owners for the value of their animal slaughtered, which are also the costs for which the co-funding request was made.

The eligible amounts for the years 2010 and 2011 have already been paid, respectively EUR 27 000 000 and EUR 26 500 000. For these 2 years, the Union co-funded the costs of 16 776 807 tuberculin tests, 77 808 gamma interferon tests and 79 681 slaughtered animals (usually cleared for the food chain after veterinary certification).

The Commission received the claim for the year 2012 (maximum EU co-funding of EUR 31 200 000) at the end of April and have not been paid yet. The claim for the year 2013 (maximum EU co-funding of EUR 31 800 000) will be received at the end of April 2014.

For the year 2014 a request for co-funding was submitted at the end of April and is still under evaluation.

No support is currently foreseen in order to assist the UK's pilot badger culls scheduled to take place this year.

In the period of 1.10.2008 to 30.6.2012, the EU funded a project on 'strategies for the eradication of bovine tuberculosis' (acronym: TB-STEP ([1])), with an EU contribution of EUR 2.89 million, which included activities on the oral BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guérin) vaccine for badgers.

([1]) http://www.vigilanciasanitaria.es/tb-step/index.php

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004344/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(17 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κοινός μηχανισμός εγγύησης των καταθέσεων στην Ευρωζώνη

Το κυπριακό bail in (διάσωση εκ των έσω) των κυπριακών τραπεζών, αναδεικνύει την ανάγκη για μια ισχυρή τραπεζική ένωση. Η ενιαία αγορά της Ευρωζώνης, όμως, παραμένει ελλιπής χωρίς τη δημιουργία ενός κοινού, μηχανισμού εγγύησης των καταθέσεων της Ευρωζώνης.

Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να συμπεριλάβει ένα κοινό σύστημα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων στην επικείμενη οδηγία σχετικά με το Πλαίσιο για την Ανάκαμψη και την Εξυγίανση των Πιστωτικών Ιδρυμάτων και Επιχειρήσεων Επενδύσεων, που προβλέπεται για τον Ιούνιο;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η προσεχής οδηγία για την ανάκαμψη και την εξυγίανση των τραπεζών (BRR) που βρίσκεται σήμερα στο στάδιο της έγκρισης από το Συμβούλιο και το Κοινοβούλιο, θα διασαφηνίσει τους κανόνες που εφαρμόζονται για την επίλυση των προβληματικών τραπεζών. Η δυνατότητα δημιουργίας πανευρωπαϊκού συστήματος εγγύησης των καταθέσεων δεν εξετάζεται στο πλαίσιο αυτών των διαπραγματεύσεων στην εν λόγω πρόταση οδηγίας. Τα συστήματα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων (ΣΕΚ) θα εξακολουθήσουν να διέπονται από την οδηγία ΣΕΚ.

Η Επιτροπή προτίθεται να υποβάλει πρόταση για τη σύσταση ενιαίου μηχανισμού εξυγίανσης μέχρι το καλοκαίρι.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004344/13
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Joint deposit guarantee system in the eurozone

The Cypriot bank 'bail in' (rescue from within) highlights the need for a strong banking union. However, the euro area single market remains incomplete without the establishment of a joint deposit guarantee system in the euro area.

Does the Commission intend to include a joint deposit guarantee system in the forthcoming Directive establishing a framework for the recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms, which is scheduled for June?

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

The forthcoming Directive on Bank Recovery and Resolution (BRR) which is currently in the process of being adopted by the Council and Parliament, will clarify the rules applicable to the resolution of ailing banks. The possibility of creating a pan-European Deposit Guarantee System is not being considered in the context of these negotiations on the BRR proposal. Deposit Guarantee Schemes (DGS) will continue to be regulated by the DGS Directive.

The Commission intends to put forward a proposal for a Single Resolution Mechanism by the Summer.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004345/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Possible use of torture in the case of Hoang Van Ngai

Hoang Van Ngai (also known as Vam Ngaij Vaj) was arrested on 15 March 2013 and died two days later, on 17 March 2013, while in police custody at Gia Nghia town police station, Dak Nong Province, Vietnam. After his death, the police claimed that an autopsy confirmed that the victim had committed suicide by putting his hand into an electric socket. However, photographs taken shortly after the death, as well as the statements of those who saw the body at that time, including his brother who was also held at the Gia Nghia town police station in an adjacent cell at the time of the incident, suggest that Ngai was severely beaten while in police custody. The cause of death remains unclear and the possible use of torture is suspected. The victim's family members have submitted a letter of petition to the Chief of Police in Dak Nong Province, but no further explanation has been received.

At of the time of writing, no further investigation has been made by the Vietnamese authorities.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this case?

How does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take action to investigate the possible use of torture in this case?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the case, which has been subject of exchanges between the EU Delegation and like-minded embassies in Hanoi. The EU Political Counsellors raised this case, sought clarification on what actually happened and called for an urgent independent and transparent enquiry when meeting local authorities (the Head of the Religious Affairs Committee of the Province) during the 22-24 April visit to the Dank Nong Province.

The Head of the Religious Affairs Committee of the Province, took note of the query and committed to transmitting it to the relevant authorities. No further information is available at this stage but the EU will continue to closely monitor developments regarding this case together with like-minded partners with the Vietnamese authorities in particular regarding the allegations of torture and the setting-up of an official inquiry into the circumstances of Mr Hoang Van Ngai's death.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004346/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(17 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Interventi lobbistici propesticidi

L'11.4.2013 il CEO (Corporate Europe Observatory) ha denunciato con un dettagliato rapporto una brutale aggressione lobbistica perpetrata da due giganti dell'industria delle biotecnologie — Syngenta e Bayer — finalizzata ad impedire l'interdizione temporanea (2 anni) nell'UE dell'utilizzo di tre tipologie di pesticidi neonicotinoidi, prodotti killer delle api.

L'attività lobbistica è giunta al punto di tentare di far modificare lo stesso comunicato stampa dell'EFSA (Autorità europea per la sicurezza degli alimenti), cui la società Syngenta era riuscita ad aver accesso ancor prima della sua pubblicazione.

Detta società, produttrice di pesticidi, aveva infatti redatto una lettera con cui, in tono piuttosto aggressivo, esigeva la modifica del comunicato dell'autorità in questione, facendo addirittura balenare la minaccia di azioni legali contro l'EFSA e la sua direttrice, come da documentazione pubblicata nel rapporto succitato.

Sulla base di questa puntuale ricostruzione dei fatti, come intende agire la Commissione per garantire che le procedure di valutazione, discussione e approvazione delle direttive — in particolar modo quando ineriscono a temi sensibili quale la salute dei consumatori e la vita degli animali — non sia inquinata da simili tentativi di distorsione dei dati scientifici e fattuali?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

Il sistema di sicurezza alimentare dell'UE è stato ristrutturato nel 2002 ed è stata istituita un'agenzia indipendente, l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA), con il compito di fornire pareri scientifici indipendenti. Nel caso menzionato dall'onorevole deputato, le conclusioni scientifiche dell'EFSA sui neonicotinoidi sono state adottate e pubblicate conformemente alle rigorose regole di indipendenza e trasparenza che disciplinano il funzionamento dell'Agenzia.

La Commissione ritiene che le regole in vigore abbiano assicurato un processo scientifico indipendente in seno all'EFSA nonché una comunicazione indipendente dei risultati dei suoi lavori. Si noti inoltre che il livello elevato di trasparenza del funzionamento dell'EFSA permette un sistematico scrutinio pubblico dei suoi lavori e ha portato, a partire dalla sua costituzione nel 2002, ad un costante miglioramento delle sue regole in tema di indipendenza e trasparenza.

L'adozione di misure sull'uso dei neonicotinoidi che prendono le mosse dalle conclusioni dell'EFSA avverrà nel rispetto dell'ampia panoplia di regole che assicurano l'indipendenza del processo decisionale delle istituzioni unionali interessate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004346/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (EFD)
(17 April 2013)

Subject: Lobbying in support of pesticides

On 11 April 2013, the Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) published a report detailing the brutal lobbying tactics of two biotechnology industry giants — Syngenta and Bayer — in an attempt to block the temporary two-year EU ban on the use of three kinds of neonicotinoid pesticides, products which kill bees.

Their lobbying activity has gone as far as trying to secure changes to the press release issued by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which Syngenta was able to access prior to its publication.

In fact the latter company, a pesticides manufacturer, wrote a letter in which, in a rather aggressive tone, it demanded the press release of the authority in question to be changed, even making legal threats against EFSA and its director, as set out in the documentation published in the above report.

Based on this accurate reconstruction of events, what action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the procedures to evaluate, discuss and adopt directives — in particular those relating to sensitive subjects such as consumer health and animal life — are not tainted by similar attempts to distort scientific and factual data?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The EU food safety system was restructured in 2002 and an independent agency, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), was established to provide independent scientific advice. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, EFSA's scientific conclusions on neonicotinoids were adopted and published in accordance with the strict rules of independence and transparency governing the Agency's functioning.

The Commission considers that the rules in place have ensured an independent scientific process in EFSA as well as an independent communication of the results of its work. It should also be pointed out that the high level of transparency of EFSA's functioning allows for systematic public scrutiny of its work and has led to a continuous improvement of its rules on independence and transparency since its creation in 2002.

The adoption of any measure concerning the use of neonicotinoids on the basis of EFSA's conclusions will be taken within the comprehensive set of rules ensuring the independence of the decision-making process of the EU institutions concerned.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004347/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Protección de Derechos fundamentales de Oswaldo Payá y Harol Cepeda

Este diputado se congratula de que el Servicio Exterior de Acción Europea defienda «el Estado de Derecho y unos procedimientos judiciales correctos y transparentes» tal como se responde a mi pregunta E-1456-13. Me preocuparía lo contrario cuando toda actuación de dicho Servicio ha de basarse en los principios que se citan en el artículo 21 del Tratado de la Unión Europea. De ahí que también aplauda las acciones de ese Servicio «comprometido con los derechos humanos» y «la colaboración con las Naciones Unidas», tal como subraya en su propia página web.

Existe una petición de muchos ciudadanos para que se realice una investigación independiente, que se ha presentado en las sedes de las NU de Nueva York y Ginebra.

Como considero que ese Servicio cuenta con los medios adecuados, me gustaría obtener respuesta a las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Colaborará con las Naciones Unidas para impulsar una investigación transparente dirigida por una autoridad internacional?

2. ¿No cree que, en el contenido esencial de los derechos fundamentales y de la dignidad de la persona, está el derecho a saber con garantías los detalles de la muerte de dos hombres que defendieron de manera pacífica la libertad en Cuba, uno de ellos titular del premio Sájarov?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2013)

1. Según la información de que disponemos, las Naciones Unidas no han anunciado la puesta en marcha de ninguna investigación sobre el trágico accidente en que falleció el ganador del Premio Sájarov, el Sr. Oswaldo Payá. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta no cuenta con mecanismos para iniciar tal investigación, pero estará pendiente de cualquier novedad que se produzca en este sentido.

2. La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta reitera lo expresado en su respuesta a la pregunta E-1456/2013, formulada por Su Señoría, en la que defiende el Estado de Derecho y unos procedimientos judiciales correctos y transparentes en todos los casos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004347/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Protection of the Fundamental Rights of Oswaldo Payá and Harol Cepeda

This Member welcomes the European External Service Action's defence of 'the rule of law and fair and transparent judicial proceedings' as stated in the answer to my Question E-1456-13. I would be concerned if this were otherwise, given that all the actions of this Service must follow the principles contained in Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union. I therefore also welcome this Service's actions 'committed to human rights' and its 'collaboration with the United Nations', as stressed on its own website.

A petition signed by many citizens to conduct an independent investigation has been presented at the UN's headquarters in New York and Geneva.

As I believe that this Service has the appropriate means, I would like answers to the following questions:

1. Will it collaborate with the United Nations to instigate a transparent investigation, carried out by an international authority?

2. Does it not believe that, as an essential part of people's fundamental rights and their human dignity, there is a guaranteed right to know the details of the deaths of two men who peacefully defended liberty in Cuba, one of them a holder of the Sakharov prize?

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

1. According to the information available, the UN has not made any announcement about launching an investigation on the tragic accident that killed Sakharov Prize holder O. Paya. The HR/VP does not have mechanisms at its disposal to launch such an investigation but will continue to monitor closely the situation.

2. The HR/VP reiterates its reply to Question E-1456/2013 that it stands for the rule of law and adequate and transparent legal procedures in all cases.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004348/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Participaciones preferentes en Bankia

El 20 de julio de 2012 se produce la firma del Memorando de Entendimiento sobre condiciones de política sectorial financiera entre la Unión Europea y España. En dicho memorando se prevé la creación de normas para garantizar la responsabilidad subordinada. Esta responsabilidad subordinada supone garantizar el derecho de los acreedores sobre los fondos que posean las entidades financieras españolas, *así como sobre los fondos de cierto tipo de clientes que hayan asumido riesgo subsidiario con la entidad. Entre estos clientes se encuentran los titulares de participaciones preferentes de Bankia.*

Este banco co*mercializó participaciones recabando millones de euros para las ampliaciones de capital. Todas estas operaciones que durante años permiten la expansión del sistema financiero español se llevaron a cabo bajo un supuesto fraude de ley (art. 6 y 7 del CC) al conocer y no hacer cumplir la normativa vigente recogida en la Directiva 2004/39/CE, de 21 de abril de 2004, que especifica los derechos del consumidor de este tipo de productos financieros, así como la normativa de la Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores que regula la adquisición de este tipo de productos. Para poder comercializarlos, las entidades financieras debían ofrecer grandes cantidades de información sobre los productos financieros, así como advertir con exactitud de los riesgos a los que se exponen los clientes. En ningún caso se cumplieron estos requisitos mínimos dispuestos por la normativa, informando de manera errónea, ocultando información y estafando a clientes para comercializar todos estos complejos productos financieros entre personas sin preparación específica.*

En *el Derecho civil de España el «vicio de consentimiento» es suficiente para invalidar cualquier contrato (art. 1265 del CC). En el caso de estas participaciones preferentes, no cumplir con la normativa existente supondría un vicio de consentimiento que invalidaría los contratos.*

¿Es consciente la Comisión de la posible invalidez, según la normativa española, de buena parte de las participaciones preferentes de Bankia que se verían afectadas por el Mem*orando de Entendimiento citado? En caso de invalidez de origen de estas participaciones preferentes, ¿cómo pretende hacer cumplir la Comisión el Memorando de Entendimiento sin afectar a los fondos de estos miles de pequeños ahorradores estafados? En estos casos, ¿en qué medida ha vigilado la Comisión el cumplimiento de los requisitos para los clientes del anexo II de la Directiva 2004/39/CE del Parlamento y el Consejo, transpuesta en la legislación española en la ley 47/2007, pero nunca puesta en la práctica por las autoridades españolas?*

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de las acusaciones de ventas abusivas de algunas de las acciones preferentes en Bankia u otras entidades financieras españolas. El Memorándum de Acuerdo de 23 de julio de 2012, que desarrolla con detalle una Decisión del Consejo y que firmaron la Comisión Europea, en nombre del MEE, y las autoridades españolas, prevé que España proponga una legislación específica para limitar la venta por parte de las entidades bancarias de instrumentos de deuda subordinada a clientes minoristas no cualificados y a mejorar sustancialmente el proceso de venta a los clientes minoristas de cualquiera de los instrumentos no cubiertos por el Fondo de Garantía de Depósitos. En lo que se refiere a las acusaciones concretas, la Comisión cree que compete a las autoridades y el poder judicial españoles entender en estos asuntos y ponerles remedio, si se considera justificado.

El artículo 19 de la Directiva 2004/39/CE ([1]) contempla las normas de conducta que deben cumplir los proveedores de servicios financieros, entre las cuales se cuenta la obligación de llevar a cabo una prueba de idoneidad o adecuación a sus inversores. Las obligaciones dispuestas en el artículo 19 se aplican plenamente a los clientes minoristas y se adaptan cuando se trata de clientes profesionales. No obstante, la clasificación como cliente minorista o profesional, de conformidad con el anexo II de la Directiva 2004/39/CE, impone la evaluación de las circunstancias individuales de cada cliente y entra en el ámbito de la competencia primaria de las autoridades y los tribunales nacionales.

([1]) DO L 145 de 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004348/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Preferred shares in Bankia

The Memorandum of Understanding on Financial-Sector Policy Conditionality was signed by the European Union and Spain on 20 July 2012. The memorandum provides for rules to be established to guarantee subordinated liability. Subordinated liability means creditors' rights over funds held by Spain's financial institutions, and over the funds of customers of a particular kind who have accepted a subsidiary risk with the institution, are protected. These customers include holders of Bankia preferred shares.

This bank marketed shares raising millions of euros to expand its capital. All these transactions which for years enabled Spain's financial system to expand were carried out under what is alleged to be fraud in law (Articles 6 and 7 of the Civil Code), as legislation in force stemming from Directive 2004/39/EC of 21 April 2004, which lays down the rights of consumers of financial products of this kind, and the rules of the Spanish Securities and Exchange Commission concerning the purchase of products of this kind were known but not complied with. In marketing these financial products, financial institutions should have provided a great deal of information about them and warned their customers of the precise risks they would be running. These minimum legal requirements were never met; information was wrong or even concealed, tricking people who did not have any training in finance in order to sell these complex financial products.

Spain's civil law allows any contract to be invalidated on the simple grounds of 'vicio de consentimiento', or 'imperfect consent' (Article 1265 of the Civil Code). In the case of these preferred shares, failure to comply with existing legislation would presuppose imperfect consent which would invalidate the contracts.

Is the Commission aware that a large number of Bankia's preferred shares — which would be affected by the aforementioned Memorandum of Understanding — may well be invalid under Spanish law? Should these preferred shares prove to be invalid, how will the Commission enforce the memorandum of understanding without affecting the funds of the thousands of small savers who were tricked in this way? In these cases, to what extent did the Commission monitor compliance with the client requirements set out in Annex II to Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, transposed into Spanish legislation by Law No 47/2007, but never implemented by the Spanish authorities?

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

The Commission is aware of allegations of mis-selling of some of the preferred shares in Bankia or other Spanish financial institutions. The Memorandum of Understanding of 23 July 2012, which is a detailed declension of a Council decision, signed by the European Commission, on behalf of the ESM, and the Spanish authorities foresees for Spain to 'Propose specific legislation to limit the sale by banks of subordinate debt instruments to non-qualified retail clients and to substantially improve the process for the sale of any instruments not covered by the deposit guarantee fund to retail clients'. As regards the specific allegations, it is in the view of the Commission the competence of the Spanish authorities and judiciary to address these cases and remedy them where deemed justified.

Article 19 of Directive 2004/39/EC ([1]) contains the conduct of business obligations to be complied with by financial services providers among which the obligation to perform a suitability or an appropriateness test to their investors. The article 19 obligations are fully applied when retail clients are involved and are adapted in the case of professional clients. However, the classification as retail or professional client, in accordance with Annex II to Directive 2004/39/EC, requires the assessment of individual circumstances for each client and falls under the primary competence of national authorities and courts.

([1]) OJ L 145, 30.4.2004.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004349/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Muerte de Samba Martine en un CIE español

El pasado 19 de diciembre de 2011 murió en el Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros de Aluche, en Madrid, la ciudadana congoleña Samba Martine. Su defunción, según la información presentada en el informe del defensor del pueblo sobre su actividad durante 2012, fue debida a una falta de comunicación entre instituciones que provocó que no se le administrase tratamiento adecuado siendo portadora del Virus de Inmunodeficiencia Humana (VIH).

La inmigrante retenida en Aluche había sido diagnosticada como portadora del virus VIH en el Centro de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes de Melilla, pero fue trasladada al CIE de Aluche en Madrid sin que hubiera habida la más mínima comunicación de su estado de salud al nuevo centro. Esto provocó que en Aluche se le diagnosticaran diferentes enfermedades y fuese tratada por los médicos del centro de diferentes diagnósticos al desconocer la infección de VIH de la retenida, teniendo como consecuencia su muerte.

Los Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros en España están obligados a cumplir con un tratamiento adecuado a los derechos humanos y el derecho internacional humanitario en el tratamiento a las personas en procedimiento de expulsión. Así como quedan obligados por la Directiva 2008/115/CE a nivel Europeo a proveer «atención sanitaria de urgencia y tratamiento básico de enfermedades».

El citado caso de Samba Martine demuestra que la descoordinación entre el CIE de Aluche y el CETI de Melilla fue la causa de un error de diagnóstico que supuso que no se le administrase un tratamiento básico de su enfermedad, provocando indirectamente su muerte. Este caso se suma a la muerte de Idrissa Dialo y de otros tantos inmigrantes que han perdido la vida en los CIE españoles, dando indicios de una sistemática violación de los derechos humanos y de la citada Directiva. En su respuesta a mi pregunta E-000333/2012 aseguraba carecer de información suficiente sobre los CIE españoles.

¿Ha recopilado la Comisión información suficiente para abrir un expediente a España por las claras infracciones sobre las condiciones de internamiento recogidas en la Directiva 2008/115/CE?, ¿está llevando a cabo una investigación específica sobre el tema en este país?, ¿Cuantas muertes más considera necesarias la Comisión para abrir un expediente de infracción a España?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de julio de 2013)

Como ya se indicó en la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta E-000333/2012, la evaluación de deficiencias e incidentes específicos que se produzcan en centros de internamiento nacionales es, en primer lugar, competencia de las autoridades y los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales.

En la actualidad, la Comisión está comprobando que se han incorporado correctamente a los ordenamientos jurídicos nacionales de los Estados miembros las disposiciones de la Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno y no ha detectado ninguna deficiencia en lo que respecta a la transposición en España de su artículo 16, apartado 3, que contempla el derecho al tratamiento básico de las enfermedades en los centros de internamiento. Sigue en curso un estudio sobre la aplicación práctica de la Directiva sobre el retorno en los Estados miembros y la Comisión informará de sus conclusiones en una próxima comunicación sobre la política de retorno (incluido un primer informe de aplicación de la Directiva sobre el retorno), que está prevista para diciembre de 2013. Este estudio constituirá también la base documental para incoar, en caso necesario, procedimientos de infracción relativos a la situación en los centros de internamiento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004349/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Death of Samba Martine in an immigrant detention centre in Spain

On 19 December 2011, a Congolese citizen, Samba Martine, died at the Aluche immigrant detention centre in Madrid. According to the Spanish Ombudsman's 2012 annual report, her death was due to a lack of communication between institutions which meant that she was not given the right treatment as someone with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

The immigrant held at Aluche had been diagnosed as HIV-positive at the Melilla temporary detention centre for immigrants but was transferred to the Aluche immigrant detention centre in Madrid without the latter centre being given any information whatsoever about her health status. This meant that at Aluche she was diagnosed with different illnesses and the centre's doctors treated her on the basis of the different diagnoses without realising that she was HIV-positive, which consequently led to her death.

Immigrant detention centres in Spain must treat those in the process of being deported in a way that respects their human rights and international humanitarian law. Under Directive 2008/115/EC, they must provide 'emergency healthcare and essential treatment of illness'.

The case of Samba Martine shows that the lack of coordination between the Aluche immigrant detention centre and the Melilla temporary detention centre for immigrants led to a diagnostic error which meant that she was not given the essential treatment for her illness, which indirectly caused her death. In addition to this case, there is the case of Idrissa Diallo and many other immigrants who have lost their lives in immigrant detention centres in Spain, suggesting that human rights and the aforementioned directive are being systematically violated. In its answer to my Question E-000333/2012, the Commission confirmed that it did not have enough information on immigrant detention centres in Spain.

Has the Commission collected enough information to bring infringement proceedings against Spain for its clear breaches of the detention conditions set out in Directive 2008/115/EC? Is it carrying out a specific investigation into this issue in Spain? How many more deaths must there be before the Commission brings infringement proceedings against Spain?

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

As already highlighted in the Commission's answer to Question E-000333/2012, the assessment of individual incidents and shortcomings which take place in national detention centres is a matter primarily for the national authorities and courts concerned.

The Commission is currently in the process of checking the correct legal transposition of the provisions of the Return Directive 2008/115/EC by Member States and could not identify, in this context, any shortcoming as regards the transposition of its Article 16(3), providing for a right to essential treatment of illness in detention centres, by Spain. A study relating to the practical application of the Return Directive in Member States is currently still ongoing and the Commission will report on its findings in an upcoming Communication on Return Policy (including a first application report of the Return Directive), scheduled for December 2013. This study will also serve as a factual basis for launching — if necessary — infringement procedures relating to situations in detention centres.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004350/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Anexión de rebeldes sirios a Al Qaeda

Recientemente han sido numerosos los vídeos y las pruebas documentadas sobre el terror que la «oposición» Siria está llevando a cabo en el país. No solo combates con los militares, sino atentados contra civiles y múltiples formas de asesinato y de terrorismo que en nada respetan los derechos humanos o el Derecho internacional humanitario.

El Gobierno sirio esta ejerciendo la represión violenta contra su propio pueblo de una manera deplorable, pero la «oposición democrática» comenzó su «primavera» con atentados terroristas. Hemos visto en numerosas ocasiones cómo estas fuerzas rebeldes, compuestas por yihadistas procedentes de todo el mundo árabe, asesinan cruelmente en la más absoluta impunidad. Recientemente hemos podido confirmar todas las sospechas sobre esta oposición, calificada de «democrática» por la Señora Ashton, cuando el frente Al Nursa se ha fusionado con la rama iraquí de Al Qaeda.

Pese a haber existido violencia por parte de ambos bandos, los rebeldes no han sido un modelo de respeto a los derechos humanos, habiéndose reforzado con la entrada de milicianos extranjeros. Sin embargo, los diferentes Gobiernos de los Estados miembros no hacen nada más que mostrar su apoyo a estas milicias y condenar el régimen de Bashar al Assad sin mencionar la actitud ni procedencia de los rebeldes sirios. Prácticamente se garantiza que no serán perseguidos ni juzgados, ofreciendo como el ejemplo con el caso de la muerte de Gadafi y tantos otros en Libia. También se brindan continuas muestras de apoyo político y económico, llegando incluso a dar entrenamiento militar, repitiendo el ejemplo de la formación del ejército talibán en Afganistán en los años 80. La Unión Europea ha sido responsable de motivar la participación en el conflicto de éstos milicianos de Al Qaeda, debido a sus objetivos geopolíticos con respecto al actual Gobierno de Siria. Pese al terrible papel que está desempeñando el Gobierno sirio, esta forma de diplomacia internacional está arrojando por los suelos las conquistas que los diferentes cuerpos del Derecho internacional han conseguido para evitar la impunidad y perseguir a los criminales de guerra.

¿Considera la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de la UE que la oposición rebelde en Siria como el «único representante legítimo»? ¿Piensa retirar su apoyo a éstos rebeldes? ¿Asumirá responsabilidades por haber apoyado la creación de una nueva rama de Al Qaeda? ¿Cómo piensa hacer perseguir, de una manera efectiva, los crímenes contra la humanidad cometidos tanto por el Gobierno de Bashar al Assad como por estos rebeldes en Siria?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta ha condenado reiteradamente todos aquellos actos perpetrados en Siria que atentan contra los derechos humanos y el Derecho humanitario internacional. La UE ha declarado en repetidas ocasiones que todos los responsables de crímenes de lesa humanidad y crímenes de guerra deberán responder ante la ley. En este sentido, la UE ha apoyado la labor realizada por la comisión de investigación independiente sobre la situación en Siria y ha recibido con agrado el informe actualizado presentado por la misma.

La UE apoya a la coalición de la oposición siria, a la que considera representante legítima del pueblo sirio. En numerosas ocasiones, los líderes de esta coalición han rechazado y condenado todas las formas de terrorismo e ideologías extremistas, la última vez en Estambul con la firma de una declaración en la reunión del Grupo de amigos del pueblo sirio. Dicha coalición ya ha expresado con anterioridad su deseo de que Siria sea un país civil, democrático y plural. Asimismo, cabe puntualizar que entre las filas del Consejo Militar Sirio, que actúa en el marco de la coalición de la oposición, no se encuentran miembros del Frente Al Nusra.

La UE no apoya a ningún grupo radical o extremista. Por el contrario, está intensificando su apoyo a la oposición moderada y abogando, como único camino posible, por negociaciones encaminadas a una resolución política del conflicto sirio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004350/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syrian rebels becoming part of al-Qaeda

There have recently been many videos and documented evidence of the campaign of terror that the Syrian 'opposition' is waging in the country. They are not just fighting the military, but they are attacking civilians and carrying out many killings and terrorist acts with a total disregard for human rights and international humanitarian law.

The Syrian Government is violently repressing its own people in an appalling way, but the 'democratic opposition' started its 'spring' with terrorist attacks. We have often seen how these rebel forces, made up of jihadists from across the Arab world, carry out brutal murders with complete impunity. All the suspicions about this opposition, considered to be 'democratic' by Baroness Ashton, were recently confirmed when the al-Nusra Front merged with the Iraqi arm of al-Qaeda.

Despite acts of violence having been carried out by both sides, the rebels have not been a model of respect for human rights, their ranks having been swelled by foreign mercenaries. However, all the Member State governments have done is show support for these militias and condemn Bashar al-Assad's regime, without mentioning the approach of the Syrian rebels or where they come from. It is all but guaranteed that they will not be prosecuted or brought to justice, if we take the death of Gaddafi and so many others in Libya as an example. They are also constantly being offered political and economic support, and even military training, just as the Taliban army in Afghanistan was trained during the 1980s. The EU, due to its geopolitical objectives with respect to the current Syrian Government, has been responsible for encouraging these al-Qaeda mercenaries to join in the conflict. Despite the atrocities committed by the Syrian Government, this kind of international diplomacy is destroying the victories that the various bodies of international law have achieved in prosecuting war criminals and ensuring they face punishment.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider the rebel opposition in Syria to be the 'only legitimate representative'? Will she withdraw her support for these rebels? Will she accept responsibility for supporting the creation of a new arm of al-Qaeda? How will she ensure that the crimes against humanity committed not only by Bashar al-Assad's government, but also by the Syrian rebels, are effectively prosecuted?

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

The HR/VP has repeatedly condemned all acts in Syria that violate human rights and international humanitarian law. The EU has repeated stated that all those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes must be held accountable. In that, the EU has supported the work of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the situation in Syria and welcomed its updated report.

The EU supports the Syrian Opposition Coalition (SOC) whom it considers as legitimate representatives of the Syrian people. The SOC leadership on many occassions rejected and condemned all forms of terrorism and any extremist ideology, most recently in a declaration signed at the meeting of the Friends of Syrian people in Istanbul. The SOC has earlier on expressed its wish for a civil, democratic and pluralistic Syria. It should be noted that the Syrian Military Council (SMC), which operates within the framework of the SOC does not contain the al-Nusra Front among its members.

The EU does not support radical and extremists groups. Istead it is stepping up support to the moderate opposition and advocating that negociations for a political settlement of the Syrian conflict is the only way forward.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004351/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Mantenimiento artificial de los precios del alquiler en España

La situación de emergencia habitacional que está sufriendo la población española desde el inicio de la crisis financiera no solo atañe a los casos de ejecuciones hipotecarias de familias que no pueden pagar sus obligaciones financieras. Existen también muchos otros casos de alquileres que no pueden ser pagados debido al fuerte impacto de la crisis en los ingresos de los españoles y el mantenimiento artificial de los precios de los alquileres.

Los precios de los alquileres en España apenas se han visto afectados desde el inicio de la crisis y esto supone una importantísima dificultad para los ciudadanos españoles que han quedado desempleados para poder pagar su vivienda. Esta condición de mantenimientos de precios del alquiler y expulsión de ciudadanos de sus casas supone un irracional ataque contra el derecho a la vivienda que figura en la Constitución española, pero más allá de esto puede suponer un caso de incumplimiento de las reglas del mercado europeo.

Uno de estos casos es el de las viviendas de Fuente Lucha, en Alcobendas (España), donde se están produciendo desahucios de personas que viven en régimen de alquiler en Viviendas de Protección Oficial (VPO). Estas VPO fueron adquiridas por sus inquilinos en unas condiciones económicas que resultaban favorables antes del inicio de la crisis, pero estos precios fijos para el acceso a la vivienda social se han convertido en una herramienta para el mantenimiento artificial de precios altos para el beneficio de las empresas privadas que gestionan dichos alquileres. La empresa que gestiona los alquileres de Fuente Lucha está desahuciando a inquilinos que no pueden alcanzar a pagar el alquiler debido a su precaria situación económica con impagos de dos meses, lo que supone terminar con la supuesta función social de estas VPO.

¿Está estudiando la Comisión las razones por las que los precios de la vivienda en alquiler no han descendido en España desde el inicio de la crisis, considerando el grave impacto económico de la crisis? ¿Considera la Comisión que el alquiler de este tipo de Viviendas de Protección Oficial, fijado con precios sociales antes de la crisis, ha perdido su carácter social al haber mantenido dichos precios, conllevando prácticas de competencia desleal por parte de las empresas que gestionan dichos alquileres sociales?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión supervisa la evolución de los mercados de la vivienda y de las hipotecas en todos los Estados miembros en el marco del procedimiento de desequilibrio macroeconómico (PDM) ([1]). En este contexto, la Comisión analiza también las repercusiones del segmento del alquiler en el mercado de la vivienda, que contrarresta haciendo que disminuya la presión sobre los precios de la vivienda y promueve la movilidad laboral.

Durante las décadas pasadas las tasas de propiedad aumentaron en España bajo la fuerte influencia de las medidas destinadas a incentivar la compra frente al alquiler (como beneficios fiscales y facilidades de financiación), lo que generó un reducido segmento de alquileres privados (el menor de la zona del euro). Además, el mercado de los alquileres sociales (o de propiedad pública) es relativamente reducido, ya que la vivienda protegida se ha destinado tradicionalmente sobre todo a la ocupación por los propietarios.

En el actual contexto económico, varios factores cíclicos —la escasez del crédito, el aumento del desempleo y las expectativas de caída de los precios de la vivienda— están afectando negativamente a la demanda de vivienda en propiedad. Un mercado de alquiler bien desarrollado y eficiente, que proporcione una alternativa viable a la propiedad, puede desempeñar un papel equilibrador al moderar las dinámicas del mercado de la vivienda. Esto sucede especialmente en la medida en que proporciona una plataforma asequible para los jóvenes y los hogares de renta baja.

([1]) Véase, por ejemplo, el anexo estadístico del informe sobre el mecanismo de alerta, disponible en: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/documents/alert_mechanism_report_2013_stannex_en.pdf
Véase también Assessing the dynamics of house prices in the euro area, disponible en: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/qr_euro_area/2012/pdf/qrea4_focus_en.pdf

En su *Examen exhaustivo sobre España* ([2]) de 2013 la Comisión ha señalado la necesidad de reformar el sector del alquiler español para que desempeñe ese papel equilibrador en el mercado de la vivienda. Esta valoración apoya la recomendación específica para España en relación con el mercado de la vivienda formulada en el marco del semestre europeo de 2012, «Disminuir el sesgo que provoca el sistema tributario hacia el endeudamiento y el acceso a la propiedad de la vivienda (en detrimento del alquiler)».

([2]) Publicado en: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp134_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004351/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Artificial maintenance of property rental prices in Spain

The emergency in the housing situation affecting Spain's population since the start of the financial crisis not only involves cases of mortgage foreclosures on families who cannot pay their financial obligations, there are also a large number of cases where rent cannot be paid due to the significant impact of the crisis on Spanish people's incomes and to rental prices being artificially maintained.

Property rental prices in Spain have seen hardly any change since the start of the crisis, making it extremely difficult for Spanish citizens who have become unemployed to pay for their housing. This situation — of maintaining rental prices and evicting citizens from their homes — represents an irrational attack on the right to housing enshrined in the Spanish Constitution, but, beyond that, it may represent a breach of European market rules.

One such case is that of housing in the Fuente Lucha district in Alcobendas (Spain), where people renting Officially Protected Housing (VPO) are being evicted. Tenants acquired these VPO homes under what were, before the start of the crisis, favourable economic conditions. However, these fixed prices for access to subsidised housing have become a tool for keeping prices artificially high, benefitting the private companies that manage the rentals. The company that manages the rental accommodation in Fuente Lucha is evicting tenants who cannot afford to pay rent due to their precarious economic situation, once they are two months in arrears. This represents an end to the supposed social function of this VPO housing.

Is the Commission analysing why property rental prices have not fallen in Spain since the beginning of the crisis, given the serious economic impact of this crisis? Does the Commission consider that rental of this type of Officially Protected Housing, fixed with social prices before the crisis began, has now lost its social character due to these prices being maintained, leading to unfair competitive practices by the companies that manage such rentals?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission monitors developments in housing and mortgage markets for all Member States within the framework of the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) ([1]). In this context, the Commission also analyses the implications of the rental segment as it is an integral part of the housing market, acting as a counteracting force that diminishes the pressure on house prices and fosters labour mobility.

Over the past decades ownership rates have increased in Spain, heavily affected by the incentives in favour of buying vs. renting (taxation benefits, easing of financing conditions), yielding a reduced private rental segment (the smallest in the euro area). On top of this, the social (or publicly owned) rental market is relatively thin as protected housing has traditionally been provided mainly for owner-occupation.

In the current economic context, several cyclical factors — credit tightening, higher unemployment, and expectations of house price falls — are affecting negatively the demand for home ownership. A well-developed and efficient rental market providing a viable alternative to ownership could play a balancing role by smoothing housing market dynamics. This is especially the case when it proves to be an affordable platform for young and low-income households.

In its 2013 *In-depth Review for Spain* ([2]), the Commission has identified the need for a reform of the Spanish rental sector in order for it to play its balancing role in the housing market. This assessment supports the country-specific recommendation on the housing market in the framework of the 2012 European Semester, 'Ensure less tax-induced bias towards indebtedness and homeownership' (as opposed to renting).

([1]) See for example the Statistical Annex of the Alert Mechanism Report, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/documents/alert_mechanism_report_2013_stannex_en.pdf; see also 'Assessing the dynamics of house prices in the euro area,' available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/qr_euro_area/2012/pdf/qrea4_focus_en.pdf

([2]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp134_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004352/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Prácticas esclavistas en Argentina por parte del grupo Inditex

El pasado mes de marzo, las autoridades argentinas clausuraron en la ciudad de Buenos Aires tres talleres de confección que destinaba sus mercaderías a la cadena Zara, perteneciente al grupo empresarial Inditex. Dicho taller aprovechaba la situación de inseguridad de inmigrantes para someter, tanto a niños como a adultos, a jornadas laborales de trece horas y condiciones higiénicas denigrantes.

Resulta que el grupo empresarial español Inditex es bien conocido en el vecino país de Brasil por el empleo de trabajo esclavo en los talleres que subcontrata. Como denuncié en mi pasada pregunta E-010106/2012, las autoridades brasileñas clausuraron por el mismo motivo numerosos talleres que producían para las diferentes marcas de este grupo. Inditex se está convirtiendo en uno de los grupos más exitosos del sector textil en todo el mundo y su propietario en una de las personas más ricas. Este escandaloso proceso de acumulación de riqueza está dándose gracias el empleo de mano de obra en condiciones contrarias a los convenios del la OIT, entendiéndose que no es una práctica inusual, sino en una práctica sistemática en todos los talleres subcontratados por la empresa.

En la respuesta que la Comisión dio a mi anterior pregunta se limita a recalcar que la responsabilidad social corporativa es un mecanismo de adhesión voluntaria, que la empresa cumple a su antojo, y a indicar que trataría el tema con Brasil, pero no pronunció ningún tipo de acción en contra del citado grupo empresarial que por supuesto continúa empleando éstas prácticas. Tal falta de atención a las denuncias sobre Inditex ha provocado que continúen sus prácticas esclavistas. Siendo uno de los grupos que más crece en el sector textil, considero más que justificada una investigación del empleo sistemático de éste tipo de condiciones laborales para adquirir ventaja en el mercado.

¿Considera la Comisión que este nuevo caso puede suponer prueba suficiente para demostrar el empleo sistemático del trabajo esclavo por parte de Inditex? ¿Iniciará la Comisión una investigación sobre dicho empleo sistemático de estas prácticas por parte del grupo Inditex? ¿Demuestra este caso que su respaldo a los instrumentos de responsabilidad social en empresas, expresada en su COM(2011)0681, es de una efectividad nula al carecer de instrumentos legales vinculantes que obliguen a las empresas? ¿Piensa legislar para dotarse de instrumentos legales que permitan un control efectivo de éste tipo de prácticas por parte de empresas europeas?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión conoce las alegaciones realizadas contra Inditex que menciona Su Señoría.

La UE está promoviendo la ratificación y aplicación efectiva de normas laborales internacionales, entre ellas los convenios fundamentales de la OIT sobre la abolición del trabajo forzoso y sobre la erradicación del trabajo infantil. Las empresas tienen la obligación de respetar la legislación de los países en los que operan. Brasil y Argentina han ratificado estos convenios y parece que han adoptado las medidas necesarias a fin de garantizar su cumplimiento en los casos comunicados. Los órganos de control de la OIT no han comunicado ningún incumplimiento a este respecto.

Por otro lado, procede señalar que Inditex ha celebrado con los sindicatos un acuerdo mundial para el respeto y la promoción del trabajo digno y los derechos laborales ([1]).

En cuanto a la responsabilidad social de las empresas (RSE) de ámbito internacional, la Comisión se remite a su respuesta a la pregunta 10106/2012 ([2]) de Su Señoría y, además, señala que algunos principios y orientaciones sobre la RSE reconocidos internacionalmente, como las orientaciones de la OIT y de la OCDE ([3]), tienen una función de investigación que la Comisión apoya. Los Principios Rectores sobre las empresas y los derechos humanos de las Naciones Unidas y las Líneas Directrices de la OCDE también contienen disposiciones y recomendaciones para que las empresas sean debidamente diligentes con respecto a sus cadenas de suministro.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=978&langId=en&agreementId=99
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) La Declaración tripartita de la OIT sobre las empresas multinacionales y las Líneas directrices de la OCDE para empresas multinacionales.

Aunque la Comisión considera que la RSE es en gran parte voluntaria, su Comunicación de 2011 sobre la responsabilidad social de las empresas menciona una serie de ámbitos relacionados que son objeto de propuestas legislativas. Entre estas figuran una reciente propuesta para obligar a la revelación de datos no financieros y una propuesta de revisión de las Directivas sobre contratación pública.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004352/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Slave labour practices by the Inditex group in Argentina

In March this year, the Argentine authorities closed down in the city of Buenos Aires three clothing workshops that supplied goods to the Zara chain, part of the Inditex group of companies. The workshops were taking advantage of the insecure position of immigrants to subject them — both children and adults — to thirteen-hour workdays and appalling conditions of hygiene.

It transpires that the Spanish group of companies, Inditex, is well known in the neighbouring country of Brazil for its use of slave labour in the workshops to which it farms work out. As I reported in a previous question of mine E-010106/2012, the Brazilian authorities, for the same reason, closed down many workshops manufacturing for different brands of this group. Inditex is becoming one of the word's most successful groups in the textile sector, and its owner one of the world's richest people. This outrageous process of accumulating wealth exists thanks to the use of labour in conditions that contravene ILO conventions, on the understanding that it is not an uncommon practice, but a systematic practice in all workshops subcontracted by the company.

The Commission's response to my previous question merely stressed that corporate social responsibility is a voluntary mechanism, which companies comply with as they wish, and indicated that it would discuss the issue with Brazil, but failed to announce any action to be taken against the aforementioned group of companies, which, of course, continue to use these practices. Such failure to respond to complaints about Inditex means that they can continue to employ slave labour practices. As one of the fastest growing groups in the textile sector, I believe an investigation into its systematic use of this type of labour conditions, in order to gain market advantage, to be more than justified.

Does the Commission consider this new case to represent sufficient proof of the systematic use of slave labour by Inditex? Will the Commission initiate an investigation into the systematic use of these practices by the Inditex group? Does this case demonstrate that the Commission's endorsement of corporate social responsibility instruments, expressed in COM(2011)0681, is ineffective, as there are no binding legal instruments to compel companies? Does it intend to legislate to provide itself with legal instruments for effective control of this type of practice by European companies?

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

The Commission is aware of the allegations made against Inditex, to which the Honourable Member refers.

The EU is promoting the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards, including the ILO fundamental conventions on the abolishment of forced labour and eradication of child labour. Companies have the obligation to respect the legislation of the countries in which they operate. Brazil and Argentina have ratified these conventions and it appears that they have taken the necessary measures to ensure compliance with them in the reported cases. The ILO supervisory bodies do not report any failure in this regard.

It should further be noted that Inditex has concluded a Global agreement for implementation of fundamental labour rights and decent work with trade unions ([1]).

When it comes to International Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the Commission refers to its reply to question 10106/2012 ([2]) by Mr Willy Meyer and in addition points out that some internationally recognised CSR guidelines and principles such as the ILO and the OECD guidelines ([3]) have an investigative function that the Commission supports. The UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights and the OECD Guidelines also contain provisions and recommendations for enterprises to conduct due diligence in their supply chains.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=978&langId=en&agreementId=99
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) The ILO Tripartite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

While the Commission believes that CSR is largely voluntary, its 2011 Communication on Corporate Social Responsibility mentions a number of related areas which are the subject of legislative proposals. These include a recent proposal to oblige non-financial disclosure, and a proposal to revise the public procurement Directives.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004353/13
al Consejo
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Tratado de las Naciones Unidas sobre el comercio de armas

El pasado 2 de abril de 2013, la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas aprobó el Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas, que regula el intercambio global de todo tipo de bienes y equipamiento militar. El Tratado especifica en su artículo 6 las condiciones bajo las que se prohíbe el comercio, y en el artículo 7 obliga a los Estados exportadores a evaluar la situación del Estado importador y denegar la autorización en caso de determinados riesgos para la paz y los derechos humanos.

Este Tratado afecta sin duda a la exportación de armas que se producen en la Unión Europea, una de las zonas con mayor producción armamentística del mundo. En la UE, la exportación de armas se controla en los Estados miembros que conceden las licencias de exportación en cada caso, y la información sobre todas las licencias de exportación concedidas es recopilada y publicada en el Informe Anual sobre el Comercio de Armas, que se elabora desde que se aprobara la Posición Común del Consejo 2008/944/PESC. En este informe se detalla el destino de todas las exportaciones, poniendo en evidencia que algunas de estas pueden no ajustarse a la nueva normativa aprobada en las Naciones Unidas. Según el último informe publicado sobre el año 2011, la UE exportó cantidades récord a países como Arabia Saudí, por unos 4 200 millones de euros, Marruecos, por unos 330 millones, Israel, por 157, etc. Estas exportaciones a países que son una clara amenaza para la paz deberían detenerse tras el acuerdo alcanzado.

Según el nuevo Tratado, los Estados están obligados a evaluar de manera objetiva y por igual a todos los importadores para comprobar que no incumplen los requisitos fijados en el artículo 7, entre ellos «contribuir a la paz y seguridad o menoscabarlas», «cometer o facilitar una violación grave de los derechos humanos y del Derecho internacional humanitario». Esto debería detener los flujos de armas a determinados países como los anteriormente citados y muchos otros, pero carecemos de garantías de transparencia en la metodología de evaluación que utilizarán los Estados miembros para determinar si se deben anular licencias de exportación a determinados países, especialmente si suponen cifras millonarias.

¿Cuál será la metodología empleada por los Estados miembros en estas evaluaciones estipuladas en el artículo 7 del citado Tratado? ¿Plantea el Consejo desarrollar una metodología común? ¿Se están concediendo licencias de exportación a países que pueden incumplir o claramente incumplen el Tratado, como Arabia Saudí, Israel o Marruecos? ¿En qué medida la exportación de armas puede «contribuir a la paz»?

Respuesta
(9 de julio de 2013)

El principio fundamental consagrado en el Tratado sobre el comercio de armas es que la regulación del comercio de armas, y en particular la decisión de autorizar o denegar una licencia de exportación de armas, es responsabilidad nacional de los Estados Partes. Los Estados Partes —entre los que estarán todos los Estados miembros de la UE— están obligados a llevar a cabo las evaluaciones de riesgos previstas en el artículo 7, pero el Tratado no prescribe ninguna metodología específica de evaluación. Los Estados miembros examinarán, en el marco del Grupo PESC correspondiente, el impacto de las obligaciones derivadas del Tratado sobre la aplicación de la Posición Común 2008/944/PESC del Consejo.

Al evaluar las solicitudes de certificados de exportación, los Estados miembros están obligados por las normas comunes que rigen el control de las exportaciones de tecnología y equipos militares según lo establecido en la Posición Común 2008/944/PESC del Consejo, de 8 de diciembre de 2008. Dicha Posición Común se acordó a fin de establecer normas comunes rigurosas y promover la convergencia en el ámbito de las exportaciones de tecnología y equipos militares en el marco de la Política Exterior y de Seguridad Común. Con arreglo al artículo 4.2 de la Posición Común 2008/944/PESC, la decisión de autorizar o denegar licencias de exportación de armas sigue siendo responsabilidad nacional de cada Estado miembro. Ya en la actualidad, la Guía del usuario que acompaña a la Posición Común fija nuevas orientaciones para la interpretación de los criterios establecidos en la Posición Común, incluidos el respeto del derecho internacional humanitario y la preservación de la paz, la seguridad y la estabilidad.

Otro principio fundamental, tanto de la Posición Común 2008/944/PESC del Consejo como del Tratado, es la evaluación de las solicitudes de licencia de exportación caso por caso, teniendo en cuenta una evaluación diferenciada de los criterios para cada solicitud de licencia individual con respecto a la tecnología militar o el artículo en cuestión y el usuario final específico, y no sólo el país de destino final en su totalidad.

En sus conclusiones de noviembre de 2012, el Consejo afirma que las disposiciones de la posición común, así como los instrumentos que esta prevé, seguirán sirviendo adecuadamente a los objetivos establecidos en 2008 y facilitando una base sólida para la coordinación de las políticas de exportación de armas de los Estados miembros. El Consejo reconoce también que se pueden lograr más progresos en la aplicación de la posición común y a fin de maximizar la convergencia entre los Estados miembros en el ámbito de las exportaciones de armas convencionales. Con este fin, el Consejo está desarrollando nuevas orientaciones en la aplicación e interpretación de los criterios de exportación de la posición común.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004353/13
to the Council
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: United Nations Arms Trade Treaty

On 2 April 2013, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Arms Trade Treaty, regulating international trade in all kinds of military material and equipment. Article 6 of the Treaty specifies the conditions under which trade is prohibited, and Article 7 requires exporting States to assess the situation of the importing State and to deny authorisation in the case of determined risks to peace and human rights.

This Treaty will certainly affect arms exports that take place in the European Union, which is one of the world's biggest producers of arms. In the EU, Member States control arms exports, granting export licences in each case, and the Annual Report on Arms Trade, which has been prepared since adoption of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, complies and publishes information on all export licences granted. This report provides details of the destination of all exports, highlighting that some exports may not conform to the new rules approved in the United Nations. According to the latest report published in 2011, the EU exported record quantities to countries such as Saudi Arabia (around EUR 4.2 billion), Morocco (some EUR 330 million), Israel (EUR 157 million), etc. These exports to countries that are clearly a threat to peace should stop as a result of the agreement reached.

Under the new Treaty, States are obliged to assess all importers, in an objective and non-discriminatory manner, to verify that they are not in breach of the requirements established in Article 7, which include 'would contribute to or undermine peace and security' and 'commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law'. This should stop the flow of arms to certain countries, including those mentioned above and many others, but we have no guarantees of transparency in the evaluation methodology that Member States will use to determine whether to cancel export licences to certain countries, especially if enormous sums of money are involved.

What methodology will Member States use in the evaluations required by Article 7 of the Treaty? Is the Council considering the possibility of developing a common methodology? Are export licences being granted to countries that may fail to comply with, or clearly violate, the Treaty, such as Saudi Arabia, Israel and Morocco? To what extent can arms exports 'contribute to peace'?

Reply
(9 July 2013)

The core principle enshrined in the ATT is that regulating the arms trade, and notably the decision to authorise or deny an arms export licence, remain the national responsibility of the State parties. State parties — which will include all EU Member States — are required to carry out the risk assessments provided for in Article 7 but the ATT does not prescribe any specific evaluation methodology. Member States will discuss, in the framework of the corresponding CFSP Working Group, the impact of the obligations arising from the ATT on the implementation of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP.

When assessing requests for export licences, Member States are bound by the common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment as set out by Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008. This Common Position was agreed in order to set high common standards and to promote convergence in the field of exports of military technology and equipment within the framework of Common Foreign and Security Policy. Under Article 4 (2) of the Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, the decision on whether to authorise or deny arms export licences remains the national responsibility of each Member States. Already today, the User's Guide accompanying the Common Position provides further guidance for the interpretation of the criteria outlined in the Common Position, including the respect for international humanitarian law and the preservation of regional peace, security and stability.

Another core principle, both in the Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP as well as in the ATT is the assessment of export license applications on a case-by-case basis, allowing for a differentiated assessment of the criteria for each individual license application with respect to the military technology or goods in question and the specific end user, and not only the country of final destination as a whole.

In its conclusions of November 2012, the Council concludes that the provisions of the Common Position, and the instruments it provides for, continue to properly serve the objectives set in 2008 and to provide a solid basis for the coordination of Member States' arms export policies. The Council also recognises that further progress is achievable in the implementation of the Common Position and in order to maximise convergence among Member States in the field of exports of conventional arms. To this end, the Council is developing further guidance in the application and interpretation of the export criteria of the Common Position.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004354/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Impacto de la crisis en los campamentos saharauis

La reducción de los fondos que los Estados miembros dedican a proyectos de cooperación internacional, con el pretexto de las restricciones financieras que la crisis les impone, está produciendo una gravísima situación de desabastecimiento en los campamentos de refugiados saharauis.

El Ministro de Cooperación del Frente Polisario, Brahim Mojtar, ha expuesto en unas recientes declaraciones: «el impacto de la crisis económica está siendo muy grave en los campamentos de refugiados saharauis. Tenemos un déficit de 29 000 toneladas de alimentos que no sabemos de dónde van a venir». Este déficit de alimentos en los campamentos de refugiados saharauis produce una situación grave de inseguridad alimentaria para una población aproximada de 200 000 personas que, al haber sido expulsados de su tierra, carecen de la posibilidad de producir tales cantidades.

Según Mojtar, el Programa Mundial de Alimentos estimó en 37,5 millones de dólares la cantidad necesaria para cubrir el volumen de alimentos necesarios para la población de los campamentos; el Plan ACNUR tan solo ha sido capaz de recaudar 6 millones de dólares. Este gravísimo desfase entre las necesidades y las recaudaciones está comenzando a agravar las condiciones de salud de la población saharaui, elevando drásticamente los índices de anemia entre los niños menores de 5 años y las mujeres embarazadas, así como produciendo «la carencia total de medicamentos para enfermos crónicos» en palabras del ministro. Ante esta situación de emergencia resulta indispensable movilizar fondos adicionales para poder evitar una situación de crisis alimentaria en los campamentos saharauis.

¿Puede facilitar la Comisión información sobre las cifras de ayuda económica que el programa ECHO prevé para ayuda alimentaria a los campamentos del refugiados del Sahara Occidental?

¿Considera la Comisión que dicha cifra se adecua a las actuales necesidades alimentarias y sanitarias de los campamentos saharauis, habida cuenta de la importante falta de recursos expuesta?

¿Piensa la Comisión movilizar fondos adicionales para poder evitar una grave situación de emergencia alimentaria en los campamentos saharauis?

Respuesta de la Sra. Georgieva en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión debatió el 23 de abril de 2013 la declaración del ministro saharaui de Cooperación sobre las penurias de alimentos con el Presidente de la Media Luna Roja saharaui, el cual reconoció que había habido un malentendido en la agencia de presa argelina que había difundido la información a este respecto.

El Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA) confirmó a la Comisión que el programa vigente de ayuda alimentaria en favor de los refugiados saharauis que viven en los cinco campos del sudoeste de Argelia está muy bien financiado: ya están confirmados 22 millones de dólares de los 35 millones de dólares necesarios (el 62,8 %), además de un importe adicional previsto de 7,5 millones de dólares, con lo que la financiación confirmada y las contribuciones previstas alcanzan el 84 % de la financiación total necesaria para el programa de ayuda alimentaria del PMA. Este porcentaje ya es muy bueno, teniendo en cuenta que el programa solo ha llegado al 22 % de su duración.

La ayuda humanitaria de la UE a la prolongada situación de los refugiados saharauis asciende actualmente a diez millones de euros anuales, importe que se ha mantenido estable en los últimos años. De este importe, la financiación humanitaria de la UE para ayuda alimentaria en 2013 en beneficio de los refugiados asciende a 7 millones de euros, divididos entre el PMA para proporcionar una cesta básica de alimentos deshidratados (4 millones de euros), y Oxfam Solidarités de Bélgica, para un programa de alimentos frescos (3 millones de euros), que ofrece frutas y hortalizas a los 90 000 refugiados saharauis más vulnerables.

La encuesta sobre el estado nutricional realizada por el ACNUR y el PMA a finales de 2012 confirma una mejora del estado nutricional de los refugiados saharauis en los campos. Aunque la inseguridad alimentaria sigue estando por encima de las normas internacionales, está disminuyendo el raquitismo y la anemia en los niños de entre seis meses y cinco años y los indicadores del consumo de alimentos también han mejorado respecto a 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004354/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Impact of the crisis on the Sahrawi camps

The reduction in funding assigned by Member States to international cooperation projects, under the pretext of the financial constraints imposed by the crisis, is leading to a situation of serious shortages in the Sahrawi refugee camps.

The Minister of Cooperation for the Polisario Front, Brahim Mojtar, has explained in recent statements: 'the economic crisis is having a very serious impact in the Sahrawi refugee camps. We have a 29 000 tonne food deficit and we do not know where it will come from'. This food shortage in the Sahrawi refugee camps has led to a serious situation of food insecurity for a population of approximately 200 000 people who, having been expelled from their land, have no opportunity to produce such quantities.

According to Mojtar, the World Food Programme estimated the amount required to cover the volume of food needed for the population of the camps at USD 37.5 million; the UNHCR Plan has only been able to raise USD 6 million. This serious gap between needs and revenues is starting to aggravate the health conditions of the Sahrawi population, dramatically raising anaemia rates among children under five years and pregnant women, as well as producing, in the minister's words, 'a total lack of medicaments for the chronically ill'. In this situation of emergency, it is essential to mobilise additional funds to avert a food crisis in the Sahrawi camps.

Can the Commission furnish information on the economic aid figures for food aid to refugee camps in Western Sahara provided for by the ECHO programme?

Does the Commission consider that this figure responds to the current nutritional and health needs of the Sahrawi camps, given the significant lack of resources already explained?

Does the Commission intend to mobilise additional funds to avert a major food emergency in the Sahrawi camps?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

The statement made by the Sahrawi Minister of Cooperation about food shortages was discussed by the Commission with the President of the Sahrawi Red Crescent on 23 April 2013. He agreed that 'there was a misunderstanding from the Algerian press agency' that relayed information on the topic.

The World Food Programme (WFP) confirmed to the Commission that the current food aid programme in favour of the Sahrawi refugees living in the 5 camps in southwest Algeria is very well funded: USD 22 million out of the USD 35 million needed is already confirmed (i.e. 62.8%), and an additional USD 7.5 million is forecast, bringing the confirmed funding and the forecasted contributions to 84% of the total funding needed for WFP's food aid programme. This rate is already very good, considering that the programme is only at 22% of its life-span.

The EU humanitarian contribution to the protracted Sahrawi refugee situation currently stands at EUR10 million per year, an amount that has been stable in recent years. On this amount, EU humanitarian funding for food assistance in 2013 for the refugees amounts to EUR7 million, split between WFP for the provision of a basic dry food basket (EUR4 million) and Oxfam Solidarités Belgium for a fresh food programme (EUR3 million) providing fruit and vegetables to the most vulnerable 90 000 Sahrawi refugees.

The nutritional survey carried out by UNHCR and WFP at the end of 2012 actually confirms an improvement of the nutritional status of Sahrawi refugees in the camps. While food insecurity levels remain above international standards, stunting and anaemia among children from 6 months to 5 year old is decreasing, and the food consumption score also shows an improvement over 2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004355/13
an die Kommission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Nutzung flexibler Kooperationsmechanismen gemäß der Richtlinie 2009/28/EC

In dem von der Kommission am 27. März 2013 vorgelegten Fortschrittsbericht über die Entwicklung erneuerbarer Energien in der EU wird der Stand der Umsetzung grenzüberschreitender Kooperationsmechanismen nach Artikel 6 bis 8 der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG nur peripher angesprochen; der Stand der Umsetzung von Projekten mit Drittstaaten gemäß Artikel 9 wird überhaupt nicht angesprochen.

Kann die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund der anstehenden Veröffentlichung der Leitlinien zu Kooperationsmechanismen folgende Fragen zum Stand der Umsetzung und zur Zukunft grenzüberschreitender Kooperationsmechanismen im Rahmen der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG beantworten:

1. Welche Gründe sieht die Kommission dafür, dass die grenzüberschreitenden Kooperationsmechanismen bisher annähernd ungenutzt bleiben? Ist davon auszugehen, dass bis 2020 eine höhere Nutzung der Fördermechanismen eintritt?

2. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um die Nutzung der flexiblen Kooperationsmechanismen zu fördern? Welche Maßnahmen sind aus Sicht der Kommission dafür denkbar?

3. Wie ist der Stand der Umsetzung des von der Kommission unterstützten Pilotprojekts zum Export von in Marokko erzeugtem Solarstrom nach Europa? Welche Hürden gibt es? Was steht einer Vereinbarung der beteiligten Regierungen im Rahmen der Richtlinie 2009/28/EC im Weg?

4. In welcher Form werden die Kooperationsmechanismen im Rahmen des Mittelmeersolarplans berücksichtigt, der im Dezember 2013 durch den Ministerrat der Union für das Mittelmeer verabschiedet werden soll?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2013)

1. Die Mitgliedstaaten haben eine Reihe von Hindernissen ermittelt, die ihr derzeitiges Zögern bei der Anwendung der Kooperationsmechanismen im Rahmen der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG erklären. Als Hinderungsgrund nennen viele Mitgliedstaaten insbesondere die wahrgenommene technische und regulatorische Komplexität sowie die vermeintliche Unsicherheit der zugrunde liegenden Kosten-Nutzen-Annahmen. Zudem verweisen sie auf die Schwierigkeit, die Vorteile der Zusammenarbeit einer breiten Öffentlichkeit zu vermitteln, und äußern Bedenken wegen Überschneidungen mit nationalen Förderregelungen. Nach Einschätzungen der Kommission dürften die Kooperationsmechanismen künftig stärker genutzt werden, da die Mitgliedstaaten ihre Anstrengungen zur Erreichung der verbindlichen 2020-Ziele verstärken müssen und Kosteneffizienzaspekte dabei immer wichtiger werden.

2. Um die Anwendung der Kooperationsmechanismen zu erleichtern, plant die Kommission, in Kürze einen Leitfaden für die Mitgliedstaaten zu veröffentlichen, in dem sie die genannten Herausforderungen behandelt und Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten aufzeigt, mit denen diese Herausforderungen bewältigt werden können.

3. Das wichtigste Hindernis für die Durchführung eines Pilot-Kooperationsprojekts mit Marokko gemäß Artikel 9 der Richtlinie 2009/28/EG besteht darin, dass sich die interessierten Mitgliedstaaten bisher nicht auf einen entsprechenden regulatorischen und finanziellen Rahmen einigen konnten. Die Kommission kann zu den laufenden Gesprächen zwischen Mitgliedstaaten nicht Stellung nehmen.

4. Im Mittelmeersolarplan, der von den Energieministern der Union für den Mittelmeerraum im Dezember 2013 verabschiedet werden soll, wird dazu aufgefordert, den regionalen Handel von Strom aus erneuerbaren Energiequellen zu fördern. Dabei wird auch die Anwendung des Kooperationsmechanismus gemäß Artikel 9 erwähnt und empfohlen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004355/13
to the Commission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Use of flexible cooperation mechanisms according to Directive 2009/28/EC

The progress report on the development of renewable energies in the EU, presented by the Commission on 27 March 2013, only makes peripheral mention of the status of the implementation of cross-border cooperation mechanisms according to Articles 6 to 8 of Directive 2009/28/EC; the status of the implementation of projects involving third countries according to Article 9 is not mentioned at all.

In the context of the forthcoming publication of the directive on Cooperation Mechanisms, can the Commission answer the following questions in relation to the status of implementation and the future of cross-border cooperation mechanisms within the framework of Directive 2009/28/EC:

1. In the Commission's view, why is it that cross-border cooperation mechanisms remain almost unused to date? Is it to be expected that there will be a higher level of use of support mechanisms by 2020?

2. Is the Commission planning measures to promote the use of flexible cooperation mechanisms? What associated measures can be envisaged from the Commission's perspective?

3. What progress has been achieved in implementing the pilot project supported by the Commission concerning the export of solar energy generated in Morocco to Europe? What hurdles exist? What are the obstacles to an agreement between the participating governments within the framework of Directive 2009/28/EC?

4. In what way are the cooperation mechanisms taken into account within the framework of the Mediterranean Solar Plan, which is to be agreed for the Mediterranean Region by the Council of Ministers of the European Union in December 2013?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

1. Member States have identified a number of barriers explaining their current reluctance to make use of the cooperation mechanisms under Directive 2009/28/EC. Frequently mentioned issues and challenges include *inter alia*: the perceived technical and regulatory complexity, perceived uncertainty of underlying cost-benefit assumptions, communicating the advantages of cooperation to the general public as well as concerns over interferences with national support schemes. The Commission expects that greater use of cooperation mechanisms will be made in the future, as national trajectories towards the mandatory 2020 targets become steeper and cost-efficiency concerns become more prominent.

2. The Commission is planning to publish a guidance document for Member States shortly addressing these challenges and exploring design options to solve them, in order to facilitate the implementation of cooperation mechanisms.

3. The central barrier to the implementation of a pilot cooperation project under Article 9 of Directive 2009/28/EC with Morocco is that interested Member States have so far not been able to agree upon a regulatory and financing framework to that effect. The Commission is not in a position to comment upon these ongoing discussions between Member States.

4. The Mediterranean Solar Master Plan, which is due for adoption at the UfM Energy Ministerial Council in December 2013, calls for the promotion of regional trade of renewable electricity. In this context, the Master Plan brings up and recommends, *inter alia*, the implementation of the Article 9 cooperation mechanism.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004356/13
to the Commission
Gay Mitchell (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Regulation 883/2004 and access to non-contributory benefits for EU migrants

1. What measures does the Commission have in place to ensure that Member States comply with Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 when determining which is the competent State in which the EU citizen, or family member of an EU citizen, has established his or her habitual residence for the purposes of claiming a special non-contributory benefit?

2. Does the Commission have any plans to collect and analyse data on nationality and residence in relation to benefit claims in each of the Member States in order to assess whether marginalised EU citizens who are economically inactive but retain a right-to-reside are able to avail of special non-contributory benefits in their Member State of residence?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

It is settled case-law that, in order to establish whether a person is habitually resident in a Member State, an overall assessment must be made of the relevant facts with a view to determining the person's centre of interests: this test is reflected in Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 ([1]). National courts carry out the overall assessment of the facts in an individual's case and the Commission intervenes only where a Member State's legislation is at variance with the case-law.

The Commission has commanded a study of the impact of the entitlement of non-active EU mobile citizens to special non-contributory cash benefits and residence-based healthcare benefits. The results will be available in autumn 2013.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 284, 30.10.2009.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004357/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(18. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Palestiinalaishallinnon saaman EU-rahoituksen läpinäkyvyys

EU:n myöntämä rahoitus yksityisille palestiinalaisille poliittisille järjestöille on mittavaa. Kuitenkaan talousavun myöntämisperusteet ja varojen käyttöön liittyvät yksityiskohdat eivät ole vapaasti saatavana. On olemassa viitteitä, että varoja on käytetty tavalla, joka ei vastaa EU:n tarkoitusperiä eikä palvele rauhaan tähtäävän toiminnan tavoitteita. Varoja on ohjattu poliittisille järjestöille, jotka toimivat aktiivisesti arabien ja israelilaisten välisessä konfliktissa. Tämän kaltainen toiminta ei ole omiaan parantamaan niitä lähtökohtia, joiden pohjalta pysyvä ratkaisu ristiriitoihin voisi löytyä. On lopulta epäselvää, onko varat käytetty EU:n tarkoittamalla tavalla.

Komissio on aiemmin esittänyt salailun perusteeksi yleisen turvallisuuden. Mitä näyttöä komissiolla on siitä, että tällainen salailu toimii toivotulla tavalla ja on edelleen tarpeen? Miten komissio varmistaa, että sen myöntämiä varoja ei käytetä asiattomalla tavalla, kun esimerkiksi median toimintaa asian valvojana vaikeuttaa salailu? Kuinka EU-kansalaisten oikeus saada tietoa EU:n hallinnosta toteutuu palestiinalaishallinnolle myönnetyn rahoituksen kohdalla?

Štefan Fülen komission puolesta antama vastaus
(30. toukokuuta 2013)

EU:n Palestiinalle myöntämää rahoitusta koskevat tiedot eivät ole salaisia. Eurooppalaisen naapuruuden ja kumppanuuden välineen (ENPI) hallintokomitea, joka koostuu kaikkien EU-maiden edustajista, hyväksyy kaiken palestiinalaishallinnolle ja muille edunsaajille välineestä myönnettävän rahoitustuen. Tärkeimpiä muita edunsaajia ovat YK:n Lähi-idässä olevien palestiinalaispakolaisten avustus- ja työelin (UNRWA) ja Palestiinan vapautusjärjestön (PLO) Itä-Jerusalemin rahoituksesta vastaava toimisto. Yksityiskohtaisia tietoja rahoituksesta on saatavana Itä-Jerusalemissa sijaitsevan EU:n edustuston sekä Brysselissä toimivan komission kehitys- ja yhteistyöpääosaston verkkosivuilta. ([1])

Kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjen toteuttamille hankkeille myönnetään rahoitusta julkisten ehdotuspyyntöjen perusteella. Ehdotuspyyntöjä koskevat ohjeet on julkaistu edellä mainituilla verkkosivustoilla. Myös näiden ehdotuspyyntöjen tulokset ja valittujen hankkeiden tiedot ovat julkisia. Rahoitusta voidaan myöntää vain toimiin, jotka täsmennetään ehdotusten yksityiskohtaisissa talousarvioissa. Kaikilta edunsaajilta vaaditaan toimintaa ja rahoitusta koskevat väliraportit sekä riippumattoman tilintarkastajan antama lopullinen menotarkastusraportti. EU teettää myös säännöllisesti hankkeiden ja toimien tulosperusteista seurantaa ja arviointeja ulkopuolisilla toimeksisaajilla.

Komissio pyytää arvoisaa parlamentin jäsentä tutustumaan myös vastauksiin, jotka se on antanut aiempiin kysymyksiin E-003077/2013, E-003303/2013, E-003330/2013 ja P-003198/2013 ([2]).

([1]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=134082&userlanguage=en; http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/funding_opportunities/grants/index_en.htm

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004357/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Transparency of EU funding received by the Palestinian Authority

EU funding of individual Palestinian political organisations is substantial. However, information about the basis on which financial assistance is provided is not freely accessible; nor are details of the use made of the funding. There are indications that funds have been used in a way which does not accord with the EU's purposes and does not pursue objectives geared to promoting peace. Funding has been provided to political organisations actively involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Such activity is not likely to improve the preconditions for a lasting settlement to the disputes. Lastly, it is not clear whether the funding has been used in the way intended by the EU.

The Commission has previously stated that the reason for secrecy was general security. What evidence does the Commission have that such secrecy is functioning in the intended manner and remains necessary? How does the Commission ensure that the funds it provides are not used in the wrong way, given that, for example, secrecy makes it harder for the media to carry out monitoring? How is EU citizens' right to be informed about EU administration respected with regard to the funding granted to the Palestinian Authority?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

There is no secrecy surrounding the attribution of EU funds for Palestine. Allocations to the Palestinian Authority and other beneficiaries (in particular the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and the Office of the President of the Palestine Liberation Organisation for funding for East Jerusalem) from the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument are approved by the Management Committee, consisting of representatives of all Member States. Details of such funding are available on the websites of the EU Representative Office in East Jerusalem and of the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation in Brussels ([1]).

Insofar as funding of projects implemented by civil society organisations is concerned, funds are awarded on the basis of public calls for proposals, the guidelines for which are published in the two websites referred to above. The results of the calls are published, together with information on the projects selected. Only activities foreseen in the detailed budgets of these proposals are eligible for funding. All beneficiaries are required to submit interim narrative and financial reports, together with a final expenditure verification report from an independent auditor. The EU also regularly carries out results-oriented monitoring and evaluations of such projects and activities through external contractors.

The Commission also refers the Honourable Member to its replies to previous questions E-003077/2013, E-003303/2013, E-003330/2013 and P-003198/2013 ([2]).

([1]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=134082&userlanguage=en, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/israel/funding_opportunities/grants/index_en.htm

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-004358/13
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(18 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Memorandum w sprawie budowy drugiej nitki gazociągu Jamał-Europa

5 kwietnia br. szef koncernu Gazprom i prezes spółki EuRoPol Gaz podpisali w Petersburgu memorandum w sprawie budowy drugiej nitki gazociągu Jamał-Europa.

Dokument przewiduje realizację projektu nazwanego Jamał-Europa II przez terytorium Polski w kierunku Słowacji i Węgier o przepustowości nie mniejszej niż 15 miliardów metrów sześciennych gazu rocznie.

Rosjanie powołują się na umowę z 1993 r., określającą zasady realizacji gazociągu jamalskiego, który transportuje gaz z terytorium Rosji przez Polskę do Niemiec. Plany zakładają, że Jamał-Europa II będzie miał zasadniczo inny kształt – ma być gazociągiem biegnącym z Białorusi przez Polskę na Słowację.

Czy projekt ten był przedstawiany w ostatnim czasie Komisarzowi ds. Energii?

Czy w opinii Komisji realizuje on postulaty dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu do państw członkowskich?

Czy Komisja wymieniała opinie w tej sprawie ze stroną polską?

Czy Komisja dopuszcza zwolnienie tej infrastruktury z wymogów niezależnego operatorstwa, zgodnie z zasadami III pakietu energetycznego?

Czy przywołanie umowy z 1993 r. dotyczącej realizacji gazociągu jamalskiego ma znaczenie prawne dla obowiązywania III pakietu energetycznego wobec tej inwestycji, w przypadku gdyby była ona zrealizowana?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(22 maja 2013 r.)

Projekt nie został przedstawiony ani komisarzowi ds. energii, ani Komisji. Ponieważ projekt nie został przedstawiony i nie są znane żadne jego szczegóły, Komisja nie może zajmować stanowiska odnośnie do spełnienia przez niego wymogów w zakresie dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu do państw członkowskich. Analogicznie, w odniesieniu do przedmiotowego projektu nie złożono wniosku w sprawie zwolnienia z wymogów niezależnego operatorstwa zgodnie z zasadami tzw. trzeciego pakietu energetycznego ([1]). Trzeci pakiet energetyczny ma zastosowanie do wszystkich sieci przesyłowych i dystrybucyjnych w UE, w tym do gazociągów Jamał.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/legislation/legislation_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004358/13
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Memorandum on construction of a second branch of the Yamal-Europe pipeline

On 5 April the CEO of Gazprom and the Managing Director of the EuRoPol Gaz joint venture signed a memorandum of understanding in Saint Petersburg on the construction of a second branch of the Yamal-Europe pipeline

This document outlines the implementation of the so-called 'Yamal-Europe II' project, running through Poland to Slovakia and Hungary, which would have a capacity of no less than 15 billion cubic metres of gas per year.

The Russians cite the 1993 agreement setting out the framework for construction of the Yamal gas pipeline, which transports gas from Russia through Poland to Germany. According to the plans, Yamal-Europe II would have a very different shape, running from Belarus through Poland to Slovakia.

Has this project recently been presented to the Energy Commissioner?

Does the Commission believe it fulfils the requirements of diversifying gas supplies to the Member States?

Has the Commission exchanged opinions with Poland on this matter?

Is the Commission permitting an exemption for this project from the independent operator requirements under the third energy package?

Does the citing of the 1993 agreement on the implementation of the Yamal pipeline have any legal significance as regards the application of the third energy package to the project, if it is to be carried out?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2013)

The project has been presented neither to the Commissioner for energy nor to the Commission. Since the project has not been presented and no details of the project are known, the Commission cannot pronounce itself on whether the project fulfils requirements of diversifying gas supplies to the Member States or not. Equally, no exemption from the independent operator requirements under the so called Third Energy Package ([1]) has been requested in respect of this project. The Third Energy Package applies to all transmission and distribution networks in the EU, including the Yamal pipelines.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/legislation/legislation_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004359/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Racismo y xenofobia

El artículo 67, apartado 3, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea dice que: «La Unión se esforzará por garantizar un nivel elevado de seguridad mediante medidas de prevención de la delincuencia, el racismo y la xenofobia y de lucha en contra de ellos, medidas de coordinación y cooperación entre autoridades policiales y judiciales y otras autoridades competentes, así como mediante el reconocimiento mutuo de las resoluciones judiciales en materia penal y, si es necesario, mediante la aproximación de las legislaciones penales».

En relación con el artículo anteriormente citado, en el pasado Pleno de marzo del Parlamento Europeo en Estrasburgo, los diputados europeos reclamaron que se reforzara la legislación comunitaria para combatir el racismo y la xenofobia en Europa en una resolución consensuada por todos los grupos políticos y adoptada a mano alzada por una amplia mayoría.

Por este motivo, ¿qué medidas pretende tomar la Comisión para combatir formas y expresiones de racismo y xenofobia en la Unión Europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2013)

Como indicó la Comisión en la sesión plenaria del Parlamento Europeo de 12 de marzo de 2013, la Comisión está evaluando las notificaciones de los Estados miembros sobre las medidas nacionales de incorporación de la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo y presentará su evaluación sobre la aplicación por los Estados miembros de este texto legislativo de la UE a finales de 2013. Por lo tanto, aún es pronto para evaluar en qué medida se ha aplicado este instrumento, así como la posibilidad y el modo de revisarlo. La Comisión también recuerda que no está autorizada a incoar procedimientos de infracción sobre la base de la Decisión marco hasta el 1 de diciembre de 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004359/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Racism and xenophobia

Article 67(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union says that: 'The Union shall endeavour to ensure a high level of security through measures to prevent and combat crime, racism and xenophobia, and through measures for coordination and cooperation between police and judicial authorities and other competent authorities, as well as through the mutual recognition of judgments in criminal matters and, if necessary, through the approximation of criminal laws.'

In connection with that article, MEPs called, at the European Parliament's March plenary session in Strasbourg, for EU legislation to be strengthened to combat racism and xenophobia in Europe in a resolution supported by all the political groups and adopted by a show of hands by a large majority.

What steps does the Commission therefore intend to take to combat forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia in the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

As it has been stated by the Commission at the Plenary of the European Parliament on 12 March 2013, the Commission is currently assessing the Member States' notifications on national measures transposing Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA and it will present its assessment on Member States' compliance with this EC law at the end of 2013. Therefore, it is still premature to assess how this instrument has been applied and whether and how it would need to be revised. The Commission also recalls that it is not authorised to launch infringement proceedings on the basis of the framework Decision until 1 December 2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004360/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Paro juvenil

La crisis económica está afectando de una manera más severa a los jóvenes europeos: hay cinco millones de jóvenes desempleados en la EU y 7,5 millones de jóvenes que ni trabajan ni estudian.

En España la tasa de paro juvenil (menores de 25 años) se situó en el 55,13 % en 2012 —es decir, 6,57 puntos más que en 2011—, lo que hace que el número de jóvenes desempleados se sitúe en 930 200 personas.

Además de la crisis, hay otros motivos que influyen directamente en el paro juvenil, como desajustes en el mercado laboral, insuficiencia de conocimientos y capacitación, movilidad geográfica limitada o precariedad en el empleo.

Aunque la educación y las políticas de empleo son competencia de los Estados miembros, ¿qué medidas está tomando la Comisión para ayudar a facilitar la entrada de los jóvenes en el mercado laboral?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

El 5 de diciembre de 2012, la Comisión adoptó el paquete *Promover el empleo juvenil* ([1]). En él propone una Recomendación del Consejo sobre el establecimiento de una Garantía Juvenil, en la que se llama a los Estados miembros a velar por que todos los menores de 25 años reciban una buena oferta de empleo, educación continua, formación de aprendiz o periodo de prácticas en un plazo de cuatro meses tras acabar la educación formal o quedar desempleados. El Consejo adoptó la Recomendación el 22 de abril de 2013 ([2]). La Comisión efectuará un seguimiento de su aplicación, fomentará el intercambio de buenas prácticas y garantizará que los fondos de la UE puedan utilizarse plenamente para financiar la Garantía Juvenil.

El paquete de empleo juvenil destaca también la necesidad de una mayor oferta de periodos de prácticas y de aprendizaje, de calidad para facilitar la transición de los jóvenes de la escuela al trabajo. Para ello, la Comisión presentará en 2013 una propuesta de marco de calidad para los periodos de prácticas, y creará una Alianza Europea para la Formación de Aprendices en julio de 2013, como ya anunció en el paquete de empleo juvenil y en la Comunicación *Un nuevo concepto de educación*, de 21 de noviembre de 2012 ([3]).

Asimismo, el paquete de empleo juvenil indicará la manera de facilitar la movilidad laboral de la juventud en el interior de la Unión, que aumentará sus oportunidades de encontrar trabajo y abordará la inadecuación de las cualificaciones al mercado laboral.

La Iniciativa de Empleo Juvenil, de 6 000 millones de euros, adoptada por la Comisión el 12 de marzo de 2013, seguirá estimulando las medidas de apoyo establecidas en el paquete de empleo juvenil, y en particular la Garantía Juvenil. Reforzará el ya muy importante apoyo de los Fondos Estructurales de la UE, y en particular el apoyo las a regiones con altas tasas de desempleo.

Por último, el 29 de mayo se adoptaron varias recomendaciones específicas por país en el contexto del Semestre Europeo, para ayudar a los Estados miembros a emprender las reformas estructurales necesarias que faciliten el empleo juvenil.

([1]) Paquete de empleo juvenil, COM(2012) 727-728-729, de 5 de diciembre de 2012.
([2]) Véase http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/es/13/st07/st07123.es13.pdf
([3]) COM(2012) 669 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004360/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment

The economic crisis is having a particularly severe impact on Europe's young people: there are 5 million unemployed young people in the EU and 7.5 million young people who are neither working nor studying.

In Spain the youth unemployment rate (for those under 25) was 55.13% in 2012, which is 6.57 percentage points higher than in 2011, meaning that there were 930 200 young people without employment.

In addition to the crisis, there are other factors with a direct effect on youth unemployment, such as mismatches in terms of the labour market, a lack of knowledge and skills, restricted geographical mobility and job insecurity.

Although education and employment policies are a matter for the Member States, what measures is the Commission taking to help facilitate the entry of young people into the labour market?

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

On 5 December 2012, the Commission adopted the Youth Employment Package ([1]). It proposed a Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee, calling on Member States to ensure that all young people up to 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. The Council adopted the recommendation on 22 April 2013 ([2]). The Commission will monitor its implementation, promote the exchange of good practices and ensure that EU funding can be fully utilised for setting up Youth Guarantee schemes.

The YEP also stressed the need for a higher supply of quality traineeships and apprenticeships to facilitate school-to-work-transition of young people. For this purpose, the Commission will table a proposal for a Quality Framework for Traineeships in 2013 and launch a European Alliance for Apprenticeships in July 2013, as announced both in the YEP and in the communication on 'Rethinking Education' of 21 November 2012 ([3]).

Furthermore, the YEP outlined ways to facilitate intra-EU labour mobility for young people, which will both increase their job opportunities and address skills mismatches on the labour market.

The EUR 6 billion YEI ([4]) adopted by the Commission on 12 March 2013 will further boost support measures set out in the YEP, in particular the Youth Guarantee. This will build on the already very significant support provided by the EU structural funds and particularly support regions with high youth unemployment.

Last, a number of country-specific recommendations in the context of the European Semester as adopted on 29 May help Member States to take necessary structural reforms to facilitate youth employment.

([1]) Youth Employment Package — COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 05.12.2012.
([2]) For the text, see http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st07/st07123.en13.pdf
([3]) COM(2012) 669 final.
([4]) Youth Employment Initiative.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004361/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Tráfico de estupefacientes

Los grupos latinoamericanos de delincuencia organizada se dedican a actividades delictivas como el tráfico de estupefacientes y de seres humanos, la falsificación de documentos y de billetes de euros, la extorsión, el secuestro, el tráfico de armas y el blanqueo de dinero, que afectan a los Estados miembros de la UE. El ámbito en el que las actividades de estos grupos es más importante es el del tráfico de cocaína. Los grupos latinoamericanos de delincuencia organizada dominan la oferta de droga en el mercado europeo y se han establecido en varios Estados miembros de la UE para organizar y facilitar sus operaciones.

En concreto, son los grupos delictivos colombianos los que dominan la importación a gran escala de cocaína en la EU.

La cocaína se transporta desde los países productores de droga de América Latina a la UE por mar y por aire.

Debido a que la ruta de contrabando a través de la Península Ibérica es demasiado arriesgada en este momento y a que la ruta alternativa a través de África ha sido el blanco de las autoridades, los cárteles se han visto obligados a trasladar sus operaciones al norte de Inglaterra, por lo que el puerto de Liverpool se está convirtiendo en un centro neurálgico del tráfico de cocaína.

¿Qué medidas está adoptando la Comisión para controlar las nuevas rutas que utilizan en los Estados miembros los productores de droga de América Latina?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión no emprende medidas operativas de carácter policial, pero respalda la cooperación de las autoridades de los Estados miembros en la lucha contra la delincuencia organizada y el tráfico de drogas, concretamente mediante la financiación de la cooperación operativa transfronteriza, al amparo del programa «Prevención y lucha contra la delincuencia» ([1]) (ISEC). Por ejemplo, se proporciona financiación, al amparo del ISEC, al Centro de Análisis y Operaciones contra el Tráfico Marítimo de Estupefacientes (MAOC-N), una plataforma regional contra el tráfico de cocaína en el litoral atlántico. Desde su puesta en marcha por siete Estados miembros de la UE en 2007, el MAOC-N ha incautado 65 toneladas de cocaína y 50 toneladas de cannabis.

Además, el Programa de la ruta de la cocaína ([2]), que se puso en marcha en 2009 en el marco del programa financiero de la UE Instrumento de Estabilidad ([3]), apoya la lucha contra el tráfico de drogas en las «ruta de la cocaína» (de Latinoamérica y el Caribe a Europa a través de África Occidental). Desde 2009, se han comprometido en torno a 30 millones de euros para apoyar la capacitación contra el tráfico en alrededor de 36 países situados a lo largo de la ruta de la cocaína.

Las agencias pertinentes de la UE, en particular Europol, Eurojust y Frontex, desempeñan un importante papel en la coordinación y apoyo a la cooperación transfronteriza en la lucha contra la droga. El ciclo estratégico de la UE en materia de delincuencia organizada y formas graves de delincuencia internacional, el marco de la cooperación policial a escala de la UE en este ámbito, da la máxima prioridad a la lucha contra el tráfico de drogas. El informe publicado recientemente sobre el mercado de los estupefacientes en la EU ([4]) facilita información más detallada sobre el tráfico en lo referente a las distintas sustancias, los cambios en las rutas y las respuestas a nivel internacional y de la UE.

([1]) Decisión del Consejo, de 12 de febrero de 2007, por la que se establece para el período 2007-2013 el programa específico Prevención y lucha contra la delincuencia, integrado en el programa general Seguridad y defensa de las libertades (2007/125/JHA) (DO L 58 de 24.2.2007, p. 7).

([2]) http://corms.esteri.it/index.php?log_user=0

([3]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1717/2006 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 15 de noviembre de 2006, por el que se establece un Instrumento de Estabilidad (DO L 327 de 24.11.2006, p. 1).

([4]) Véase para más información el Informe sobre el mercado de los estupefacientes: análisis estratégico del Observatorio Europeo de las Drogas y las Toxicomanías, Luxemburgo, Oficina de Publicaciones de la Unión Europea, 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004361/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Drug trafficking

Latin American organised crime groups are involved in criminal activities such as trafficking in human beings and drugs, forgery of documents and euro banknotes, extortion, kidnapping, arms trafficking and money laundering, and these adversely affect EU Member States. The predominant sphere of activity for these groups is cocaine trafficking. Latin American organised crime groups dominate the drug supply on the European market and have established themselves in various EU Member States to organise and support their operations.

Specifically, Colombian criminal groups dominate the large-scale import of cocaine into the EU.

Cocaine is transported from the drug-producing countries of Latin America to the EU by sea and air.

Since the smuggling route across the Iberian peninsula is too risky at the moment and the alternative route across Africa has been targeted by the authorities, the cartels have been forced to move their operations to the north of England, and the port of Liverpool is becoming a nerve centre for cocaine trafficking.

What measures is the Commission taking to control the new routes used in the Member States by drug producers from Latin America?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission does not undertake operational law enforcement measures. The Commission supports the cooperation of Member States' authorities in combating organised crime and drug trafficking, in particular, e.g., by funding cross-border operational cooperation, under the EU financial programme, Prevention of and fight against crime ([1]) (ISEC). For instance, under ISEC funding is provided to the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre — Narcotics (MAOC-N), a regional platform targeting the trafficking of cocaine along the Atlantic. Since its launch by seven EU Member States in 2007, MAOC-N seized 65 tonnes of cocaine and 50 tonnes of cannabis.

In addition, the Cocaine Route Programme ([2]), which was launched in 2009 under the EU financial programme Instrument for Stability ([3]), supports the fight against drug trafficking along the 'cocaine route' (from Latin America and the Caribbean to Europe via West Africa). Since 2009, around EUR 30 million have been committed to support capacity building against trafficking in around 36 countries along the cocaine route.

The relevant EU agencies, in particular Europol, Eurojust or Frontex, play an important role in coordinating and supporting cross-border anti-drug cooperation. The EU policy cycle for organised and *serious international* crime, the framework for law enforcement cooperation at EU level in this area, puts combating drug trafficking on its list of priorities, The recently published EU Drugs Market Report ([4]) provides more detailed information on trafficking activities as regards different substances, changing routes for trafficking and the responses at EU and international level.

([1]) Council Decision of 12 February 2007 establishing for the period 2007 to 2013, as part of General Programme on Security and Safeguarding Liberties, the Specific Programme 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime' (2007/125/JHA). OJ L 58, 24.2.2007, p. 7.

([2]) http://corms.esteri.it/index.php?log_user=0

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an Instrument for Stability, OJ L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 1.

([4]) See in more detail European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, Europol, EU Drugs Market Report, A Strategic Analysis, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004362/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Fiscalía Europea

El artículo 86, apartado 1, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE (TFUE) prevé la posibilidad de crear una Fiscalía Europea. La figura del fiscal europeo investigaría en una primera fase los fraudes y especulaciones contra el euro y en una segunda fase también podría realizar investigaciones e incoar procedimientos penales en relación con delitos transfronterizos como el tráfico de personas, el narcotráfico o el terrorismo.

Debido al creciente número de delitos y la relación existente entre diferentes grupos de delincuencia organizada en Europa, es necesario volver a plantearse la importancia de la lucha contra la delincuencia grave de dimensión transfronteriza mediante la creación de la Fiscalía Europea. Si bien dicho artículo no constituye un mandato ni una obligación sino un instrumento previsto en el TFUE, ¿podría indicar la Comisión si ha previsto la creación de una Fiscalía Europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de junio de 2013)

La creación de la Fiscalía Europea está incluida en el programa de trabajo de la Comisión para 2013 como una cuestión de importancia estratégica y el Presidente Barroso confirmó, en su Discurso sobre el Estado de la Unión de 2012 ante el Parlamento Europeo, que la Comisión presentará una propuesta en 2013.

Como se prevé en el Tratado (artículo 86 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea) la Fiscalía Europea será competente para investigar, perseguir y hacer que se juzguen los delitos contra los intereses financieros de la Unión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004362/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: European Public Prosecutor's Office

Article 86(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) laid down the possibility of creating a European Public Prosecutor's Office. The European public prosecution body would initially investigate fraud and speculation against the euro, and might subsequently also carry out investigations and bring criminal proceedings in relation to cross-border crimes such as trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking or terrorism.

As a result of the growing number of crimes and the links between different organised crime groups in Europe, we must focus once again on the importance of combating serious cross-border crime by setting up a European Public Prosecutor's Office. Although the article cited does not constitute a mandate or a duty but an instrument laid down in the TFEU, could the Commission indicate if it is planning to establish a European Public Prosecutor's Office?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2013)

The establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) is included in the Commission Work Programme for 2013 as a matter of strategic importance and President Barroso has confirmed in his 2012 State of the Union speech before the European Parliament that the Commission will deliver a proposal in 2013.

As foreseen by the Treaty (Article 86 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) the EPPO will be competent to investigate, prosecute and bring to judgment offences against the financial interests of the Union.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004364/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Europol — Fiscalía Europea

El artículo 86, apartado 2, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea relaciona de la siguiente manera Europol con la futura figura de la Fiscalía Europea: «La Fiscalía Europea, en su caso en colaboración con Europol, será competente para descubrir a los autores y cómplices de infracciones que perjudiquen a los intereses financieros de la Unión definidos en el reglamento contemplado en el apartado 1, y para incoar un procedimiento penal y solicitar la apertura de juicio contra ellos. Ejercerá ante los órganos jurisdiccionales competentes de los Estados miembros la acción penal relativa a dichas infracciones».

Nos encontramos a la espera de que la Comisión proponga poner en marcha la creación de la Fiscalía Europea, pero en cambio sí ha presentado ya el proyecto de Reglamento que establece la Oficina Europea de Policía (Europol). En dicha propuesta de Reglamento la Comisión establece de manera genérica en su capítulo VI las relaciones con los socios.

Debido a la importancia que tiene en la actualidad la lucha contra el crimen organizado y los delitos que afecten a los intereses financieros de la Unión debería crearse con la mayor brevedad la figura de la Fiscalía Europea. En este caso, ¿debería verse contemplada específicamente la relación entre Europol y la Fiscalía Europea en el texto de ambas figuras? ¿O la Comisión sólo la contemplará dentro de la redacción de la Fiscalía Europea? ¿O será suficiente con la redacción del Capítulo VI del Reglamento Europol?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

En su discurso sobre el Estado de la Unión de 2012 ante el Parlamento Europeo, el presidente Barroso anunció que la Comisión presentará una propuesta de creación de la Fiscalía Europea en 2013. Las competencias de la Fiscalía Europea se limitarán a las infracciones que perjudiquen a los intereses financieros de la Unión. Las competencias de Europol abarcan una gama mucho más amplia de delitos. No obstante, de conformidad con el artículo 86 del TFUE, será necesario que la Fiscalía Europea colabore con Europol. Por tanto, en la propuesta de creación de la Fiscalía Europea deberá mencionarse la cooperación entre ambas organizaciones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004364/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Europol — European Public Prosecutor's Office

Article 86(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union defines the relationship between Europol and the future European Public Prosecutor's Office as follows: 'The European Public Prosecutor's Office shall be responsible for investigating, prosecuting and bringing to judgment, where appropriate in liaison with Europol, the perpetrators of, and accomplices in, offences against the Union's financial interests, as determined by the regulation provided for in paragraph 1. It shall exercise the functions of prosecutor in the competent courts of the Member States in relation to such offences.'

While we are still waiting for the Commission to propose setting up the European Public Prosecutor's Office, it has instead presented the proposal for a regulation establishing the European Police Office (Europol). In Chapter VI of that proposal for a regulation, the Commission defines relations with partners in a generic manner.

Given the current importance of the fight against organised crime and offences affecting the Union's financial interests, the European Public Prosecutor's Office should be established as soon as possible. In that case, should the relationship between Europol and the European Public Prosecutor's Office be covered specifically in the text for both entities? Will the Commission only deal with it in the text for the European Public Prosecutor's Office? Or will Chapter VI of the Europol regulation be sufficient?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

President Barroso has announced in his 2012 State of the Union address to the European Parliament that the Commission will come forward with a proposal to establish the European Public Prosecutor's Office in 2013. The competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office will be limited to crimes affecting the Union's financial interests. Europol's competence covers a much wider range of crimes. Nevertheless, there will be a need for the European Public Prosecutor's Office to work together with Europol, in line with Article 86 TFEU. The cooperation between the two organisations will therefore be mentioned in the proposal to establish the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004365/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Centro Europeo de Cibercrimen EC[3]

El 11 de Enero de 2013 se inauguró en la sede de Europol, en La Haya, el Centro Europeo de Cibercrimen. Dentro de los objetivos del centro están los de perseguir todo tipo de delitos en la red, así como crear un entorno más seguro en Internet y en las operaciones electrónicas.

Los expertos en seguridad en la red del Centro también intentarán poner coto a los 1 500 millones de euros que se defraudan cada año a los ciudadanos europeos, principalmente a través de compras por Internet.

Debido al creciente uso de las nuevas tecnologías, ¿cuánto dotará la Comisión de presupuesto al Centro Europeo de Cibercrimen EC[3] para que puedan contratar más personas y así hacer más efectiva la lucha contra el crimen organizado en la red?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2013)

El Centro Europeo de Ciberdelincuencia (EC[3]) de Europol aspira a ser el centro de referencia europeo en la lucha contra la delincuencia informática y a ayudar a los Estados miembros a eliminar y desarticular más redes de delincuencia informática. Debe crear herramientas para los investigadores y ofrecer servicios de evaluación de las amenazas, así como ofrecer formación más específica. Dada la importancia de una respuesta eficaz a la delincuencia informática, Europol solicitó un incremento de su presupuesto de 2014 para el EC[3]. La Comisión, en su preparación del proyecto de presupuesto de la UE de 2014, ha examinado cuidadosamente esta solicitud junto con otras peticiones concurrentes de mayores recursos, inclusive de otras agencias.

De cara al período posterior a 2014, la solicitud de incrementar los recursos del EC[3] se recoge en la ficha de financiación legislativa presentada como parte de la propuesta de la Comisión de un nuevo Reglamento de Europol ([1]). El número definitivo de puestos para Europol, incluido el EC[3], y su presupuesto global dependen del examen interno por la Comisión de las necesidades de recursos de las agencias descentralizadas y de las negociaciones sobre el MFP, con especial atención a la evaluación de las necesidades reales en el contexto de las solicitudes concurrentes de unos recursos presupuestarios muy limitados, asimismo con vistas a respetar la reducción en un 5 % del personal de esos organismos.

([1]) COM(2013) 173 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004365/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: European Cybercrime Centre EC3

On 11 January 2013 the European Cybercrime Centre was opened at Europol's headquarters in The Hague. The centre's aims include prosecuting all forms of cybercrime, as well as making the Internet a safer place and electronic transactions more secure.

The Centre's network security experts will also try to stop EU citizens being defrauded of EUR 1.5 billion each year, mainly through online shopping.

In view of the increasing use of new technologies, how much funding will the Commission give the European Cybercrime Centre EC3 so that it can employ more people and more effectively fight organised cybercrime?

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

The European Cybercrime Centre (EC^3) within Europol aims to be the European focal point in the fight against cybercrime, helping Member States dismantle and disrupt more cybercrime networks. It should develop tools for cybercrime investigators, and provide specialised threat assessments, as well as offer more focused training. Given the importance of an effective response to cybercrime Europol requested an increase in its 2014 budget for EC^3. The Commission, in its preparation of the EU Draft Budget 2014, has examined carefully this request alongside other competing requests for increased resources including from other agencies.

For the period after 2014, the request for increased resources for EC^3 is reflected in the legislative financial *fiche* submitted as part of the Commission's proposal for a new Europol Regulation ([1]). The final number of posts for Europol including EC^3 and its overall budget are subject to the outcome of both an internal Commission review of the resource needs of decentralised agencies and the MFF negotiations, with special regard to an assessment of real needs in the context of competing demands for very limited budget resources, and in view of respecting the 5% staffing cut in agencies.

([1]) COM(2013) 173 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004366/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Europol

El 27 de marzo de 2013 la Sra. Malmström presentó en el Parlamento Europeo la propuesta de Reglamento por la que se crea la Oficina Europea de Policía. Este Reglamento sustituirá a la Decisión 2009/371/JAI del Consejo, de 6 de abril de 2009.

A su vez, el artículo 26, apartado 1, de dicha Decisión establece que «El Consejo, por mayoría cualificada y previa consulta del Parlamento Europeo determinará la lista de terceros Estados y organizaciones contemplada en el artículo 23, apartado 1, con los que Europol celebrará acuerdos». En la actualidad, se quiere modificar la Decisión 2009/935/JAI en lo que respecta a la lista de terceros Estados y organizaciones con los que Europol celebrará acuerdos, para incluir a Brasil, Georgia, México y los Emiratos Árabes Unidos.

Dado que se sustituirá la Decisión 2009/371/JAI del Consejo, ¿es necesario que el Parlamento Europeo espere a la aprobación del Reglamento que la sustituirá para realizar la consulta sobre la modificación de acuerdos para incluir a Brasil, Georgia, México y los Emiratos Árabes Unidos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmströmon en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

A la espera de la adopción de la propuesta de Reglamento Europol ([1]), las disposiciones aplicables, en particular, el artículo 26, de la Decisión del Consejo por la que se establece la Oficina Europea de Policía (Europol) ([2]) se aplican a la situación a la que se refiere la pregunta de Su Señoría.

([1]) Propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo relativo a la Agencia de la Unión Europea para la cooperación y la formación en funciones coercitivas (Europol) y por el que se derogan las Decisiones 2009/371/JAI y 2005/681/JAI, COM(2013) 173 final, 27.3. 2013.
([2]) 2009/371/JAI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004366/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Europol

On 27 March 2013, Commissioner Malmström presented in Parliament the proposal for a regulation establishing the European Police Office (Europol). This regulation will replace Council Decision 2009/371/JAI of 6 April 2009.

Article 26(1) of that decision lays down that '[t]he Council, acting by qualified majority after consulting the European Parliament, shall … determine, in a list, the third States and organisations referred to in Article 23(1) with which Europol shall conclude agreements.' It is currently intended to amend Decision 2009/935/JAI as regards the list of third States and organisations with which Europol shall conclude agreements, to include Brazil, Georgia, Mexico and the United Arab Emirates.

Given that Council Decision 2009/371/JAI will be replaced, does Parliament need to wait for the regulation which will replace it to be adopted before going ahead with the consultation on amending agreements to include Brazil, Georgia, Mexico and the United Arab Emirates?

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

Pending the adoption of the proposed Europol Regulation ([1]), the relevant provisions, in particular Article 26, of the Council Decision establishing the European Police Office (Europol) ([2]) apply to the situation to which the Honourable Member's question refers.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation and Training (Europol) and repealing Decisions 2009/371/JHA and 2005/681/JHA, COM(2013) 173 final, 27.3. 2013.
([2]) 2009/371/JHA.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004367/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha contra el tráfico de drogas

En la actualidad las organizaciones delictivas cuyo propósito principal era el de promover y controlar las operaciones de narcotráfico también están implicadas en delitos contra la propiedad, incluyendo robo a mano armada, fraude, trata de seres humanos, falsificación de documentos y billetes en euros, extorsión, secuestro, tráfico de armas y blanqueo de dinero.

La trata de seres humanos ya está contemplada en la Directiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 2011, que regula la prevención y la lucha contra la trata de seres humanos y la protección de las víctimas.

Dado que los verdaderos éxitos en la lucha contra el tráfico de drogas solo se lograrán con una actividad conjunta de los Estados miembros, ¿qué medidas conjuntas tiene pensado tomar la Comisión para reducir eficazmente esta actividad? ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión elaborar una directiva que la regule, como en el caso de la trata de seres humanos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión participa activamente en el ciclo de actuación de la UE contra la delincuencia organizada y las formas graves de delincuencia internacional, en el que se enmarca actualmente la cooperación policial. El nuevo ciclo mantiene como frente de acción prioritario el narcotráfico, si bien con arreglo a una nueva formulación que permite tener en cuenta la evolución del escenario delictivo.

La Comisión introdujo y elaboró un nuevo tipo de informe sobre las drogas, a saber «EU drug markets report: A strategic analysis» [informe sobre los mercados de drogas en la EU: análisis estratégico], publicado a iniciativa de la comisaria Malmström en enero de 2013 ([1]). Su finalidad es fusionar el planteamiento empírico del Observatorio Europeo de las Drogas y las Toxicomanías (OEDT) con el enfoque basado en la función de inteligencia de Europol, colmando así una laguna a nivel de la UE.

Además, de cara a una mayor desarticulación es preciso también mejorar el mapa de información prefronteriza de la UE (mediante la implantación del sistema europeo de vigilancia de fronteras externas) y el papel de nodo de intercambio de información que desempeña Europol, reforzando a un tiempo su obligación de rendir cuentas, en consonancia con el Tratado de Lisboa.

([1]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint-publications/drug-markets

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004367/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Combating drug trafficking

At the moment criminal organisations, whose main aim is to promote and control drug trafficking operations, are also involved in crimes against property, including armed robbery, fraud, trafficking in human beings, forgery of documents and euro banknotes, extortion, kidnapping, arms trafficking and money laundering.

Trafficking in human beings is already covered by 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.

Since true success in combating drug trafficking will only be achieved if the Member States work together, what joint measures does the Commission intend to take to effectively reduce such activity? Does the Commission intend to draft a directive governing the issue of trafficking in human beings?

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

The Commission is actively participating to the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious transnational crime within which police cooperation is now framed. The new Cycle retains a drug trafficking priority albeit in a new formulation so as to take account of the evolution of the criminal scene.

The Commission initiated and framed a new type of drug report 'EU drug markets report: A strategic analysis' released by the Commissioner Malmström in January 2013 ([1]). It aims to merge the evidence based approach of the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) with the intelligence perspective of Europol thus filling a gap at EU level.

Beyond, better disruption also requires enhancing the EU pre-border intelligence picture (through the setting up of the European external border surveillance system) and Europol's role as the EU information exchange hub while also strengthening its accountability in line with the Lisbon Treaty.

([1]) http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint-publications/drug-markets.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004368/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Integración de los nacionales de terceros países

La fuerte crisis que atravesamos empuja cada vez a más ciudadanos europeos a hacer las maletas y buscar una oportunidad laboral fuera de nuestras fronteras. Del mismo modo, otros ciudadanos de terceros países buscan mejores condiciones dentro de nuestras fronteras que aquellas a las que se enfrentan en sus propios países de origen. Por ello debemos tener una actitud de integración recíproca con dichos ciudadanos.

El artículo 79, apartado 4, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea establece que: «El Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo podrán establecer, con arreglo al procedimiento legislativo ordinario, medidas para fomentar y apoyar la acción de los Estados miembros destinada a propiciar la integración de los nacionales de terceros países que residan legalmente en su territorio, con exclusión de toda armonización de las disposiciones legales y reglamentarias de los Estados miembros».

¿Qué medidas está tomando la Comisión para favorecer la integración de los nacionales de terceros países?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión apoya las políticas nacionales y locales de integración de los nacionales de terceros países mediante la coordinación de estrategias, el intercambio de conocimientos y la asistencia financiera. En la Agenda Europea para la Integración de Nacionales de Terceros Países ([1]) figuran las prioridades actuales de la Comisión y el documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión ([2]) que lleva asociado incluye una lista de las iniciativas pertinentes de la UE. Con arreglo a este marco de actuación se ha establecido una serie de medidas y mecanismos:

— los Puntos de Contacto Nacionales para la Integración, una red de expertos de organismos oficiales responsables de la integración política coordinada por la Comisión, que tiene por objeto fomentar el intercambio de información y buenas prácticas entre los Estados miembros y reforzar la coordinación de las políticas de integración nacionales y de la UE;

— el Fondo Europeo para la Integración de Nacionales de Terceros Países (825 millones EUR para el período 2007-2013);

— un Manual sobre la integración para responsables de la formulación de políticas y profesionales;

— la Página Web Europea sobre la integración;

— el Foro Europeo sobre la Integración;

— módulos europeos para la integración de inmigrantes e indicadores de integración de inmigrantes.

Instrumentos clave para la migración legal, como la Directiva 2003/86/CE, sobre el derecho a la reagrupación familiar, o la Directiva 2003/109/CE, relativa al estatuto de los nacionales de terceros países residentes de larga duración, también prevén medidas y derechos que contribuyen a la integración de los nacionales de terceros países y que abarcan desde los derechos de igualdad de trato en una amplia serie de ámbitos hasta los derechos de acceso al mercado laboral de los Estados miembros o a ejercer sus posibilidades de movilidad dentro de la UE.

La Comisión sigue perfeccionando estas herramientas y realizando sus prioridades en activa colaboración con las partes interesadas pertinentes. Los informes anuales relativos a la inmigración y el asilo proporcionan una evaluación periódica de los avances logrados.

([1]) COM(2011) 455 final.
([2]) SEC(2011) 957.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004368/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Integration of third-country nationals

The severe crisis we are experiencing is leading to increasing numbers of European citizens packing their bags and leaving to seek a job outside the EU. In the same way, other citizens from third countries are seeking better conditions inside our borders than those they face in their own countries of origin. We must therefore adopt a policy of mutual integration with these citizens.

Article 79(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that: 'The European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, may establish measures to provide incentives and support for the action of Member States with a view to promoting the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in their territories, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States.'

What steps is the Commission taking to promote the integration of third-country nationals?

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

The Commission supports national and local policies on integration of third-country nationals with policy coordination, exchange of knowledge and financial support. The European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals ([1]) outlines the current priorities of the Commission and the associated Staff Working Paper ([2]) contains a list of relevant EU initiatives. In accordance with this policy framework, a series of measures and mechanisms have been put in place:

— The National Contact Points on Integration, a network of government experts in charge of integration policy coordinated by the Commission, which aims to foster exchange of information and good practice between Member States and to strengthen coordination of national and EU integration policies;

— The European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (EUR 825 m for 2007-2013);

— A Handbook on integration for policy-makers and practitioners;

— The European Web Site on Integration;

— The European Integration Forum;

— European Modules for migrant integration as well as Indicators of immigrant integration.

Key instruments for legal migration, like the Family Reunification Directive (2003/86/EC) or the Long-Term Residents Directive (2003/109/EC) also foresee measures and rights that help integrating third-country nationals. They range from equal treatment rights in a series of areas, to rights to access the labour market of the Member States or make use of intra-EU mobility possibilities.

The Commission continues to develop these tools and to implement its priorities in active cooperation with relevant stakeholders. The annual reports on Immigration and Asylum provide a regular assessment of progress made.

([1]) COM(2011) 455 final.
([2]) SEC(2011) 957.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004369/13
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE), Andreas Schwab (PPE) und Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Umsetzung der Zahlungsverzugsrichtlinie

Mit der 2011 verabschiedeten Neufassung der Zahlungsverzugsrichtlinie (2011/07/EU) soll der Zahlungsverzug im Binnenmarkt bekämpft und ein besseres rechtliches und wirtschaftliches Umfeld für mehr Zahlungsdisziplin im Geschäftsleben geschaffen werden.

In Artikel 12 Absatz 3 der Richtlinie 2011/07/EU wird festgelegt, dass die Mitgliedstaaten bei der Umsetzung der Richtlinie Vorschriften beibehalten oder erlassen können, die für den Gläubiger günstiger sind als die zur Erfüllung der Richtlinie notwendigen Maßnahmen. In Artikel 3 Absatz 5 der Richtlinie 2011/07/EU wird festgelegt, dass die Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen sollen, dass vertraglich festgelegte Zahlungsvereinbarungen 60 Kalendertage nicht überschreiten dürfen, solange nicht eine anderweitige Vereinbarung getroffen wurde, die den Gläubiger nicht grob benachteiligt.

In der Bundesrepublik Deutschland gelten bereits jetzt folgende Regelungen für den Zahlungsverzug im Geschäftsverkehr: In §271 Absatz 1 des Deutschen Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuchs (BGB) wird festgelegt, dass ein Gläubiger die Zahlung „sofort verlangen" kann, solange vertraglich nichts anderes vereinbart wurde („Ist eine Zeit für die Leistung weder bestimmt noch aus den Umständen zu entnehmen, so kann der Gläubiger die Leistung sofort verlangen, der Schuldner sie sofort bewirken" (§271 (1) BGB). In § 307 BGB wird festgelegt, dass Bestimmungen in Allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen unwirksam sind, wenn sie einen Vertragspartner des Verwenders unangemessen benachteiligen.

Sieht die Kommission durch die in §271 in Verbindung mit §307 BGB festgelegten Rechtsvorschriften Artikel 3 Absatz 5 der Richtlinie 2011/07/EU als umgesetzt an?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2013)

Die Frist für die Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2011/7/EU zur Bekämpfung von Zahlungsverzug im Geschäftsverkehr ist am 16. März 2013 abgelaufen. Allerdings hat Deutschland der Kommission seine Umsetzungsmaßnahmen bislang nicht offiziell mitgeteilt. Die Kommission wird, sobald ihr die deutschen Umsetzungsmaßnahmen bekannt gegeben werden, im Rahmen einer rechtlichen Analyse prüfen, ob die Maßnahmen mit der Richtlinie im Einklang stehen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004369/13
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE), Andreas Schwab (PPE) and Heide Rühle (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the Late Payments Directive

The recast of the Late Payments Directive agreed in 2011 (2011/07/EU) is intended to combat late payments in the internal market and to establish a legal and economic environment that will promote greater payment discipline in business life.

Article 12(3) of Directive 2011/07/EU states that, when implementing the directive, Member States may maintain or bring into force provisions which are more favourable to the creditor than the provisions necessary to comply with this directive. Article 3(5) of Directive 2011/07/EU states that Member States must ensure that payment agreements fixed in the contract do not exceed 60 calendar days, unless otherwise agreed in the contract and provided this is not grossly unfair to the creditor.

The following provisions already apply to late payments in commercial transactions in the Federal Republic of Germany: Section 271(1) of the German Civil Code (BGB) states that a creditor can demand 'immediate payment' provided there has been no agreement to the contrary ('Where no time for performance has been specified or is evident from the circumstances, the obligee may demand performance immediately, and the obligor may effect it immediately' (Section 271(1) BGB). Section 307 BGB states that provisions in standard business terms are ineffective if they unreasonably disadvantage the other party to the contract with the user.

Does the Commission consider that Article 3(5) of Directive 2011/07/EU is implemented through the legal provisions defined in Section 271 in conjunction with Section 307 BGB?

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

The deadline for transposing Directive 2011/7/EU on combating late payment in commercial transactions was 16 March 2013. However, to date, Germany has not officially notified their transposing measures to the Commission. Once it receives the German transposing measures, the Commission will undertake a legal analysis to verify whether the national measures are in conformity with the directive.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004370/13
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: EU commitments to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

In April 2012, Commissioner Piebalgs attended the High Level Meeting of the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) partnership, where he outlined the commitments the EU has made to improving access to safe water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene.

Since these commitments were made:

1. How much funding has been disbursed, and how many people have been reached by water and sanitation projects, through the MDG Initiative ([1]), providing additional funding for projects targeting the most off-track Millennium Development Goals (including sanitation)?

2. How many people have gained access to safe water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene as a result of the EU-ACP Water Facility?

3. What actions has the Commission taken to step up cooperation efforts on water and sanitation with the governments of partner countries, other donors, the water industry, NGOs and other stakeholders, in order to deliver more effective development assistance?

4. In the new Action Plan of the Africa-EU MDG Partnership, access to water and sanitation is a priority concern. How has the Commission aligned its support with this priority?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

1. In 2013, all of the MDG ([2]) Initiative funding related to Water (EUR 266 million out of EUR 1 billion) has been committed in 19 ACP countries. Contracting and first disbursements will start in 2013.The number of people to be reached by the MDG initiative cannot be estimated to date.

2. It is expected that through the EU-ACP Water Facility, 17.8 million people will gain access to safe drinking water, 6.3 million to improved sanitation facilities and 17.5 million to improved hygiene and education programmes.

3. To deliver more effective development assistance in the field of Water and Sanitation, the Commission has supported the EU Water initiative which aims at increasing the political commitment on water, improving governance & water management, promotes cooperation on river basins and identifies more sustainable financing for water related activities. Furthermore, the Commission launched the Water Facility in 2004, in order to provide funding for Water and sanitation basic infrastructure and hygiene promotion (EUR 712 million under the 9th and 10th EDF, financing 297 interventions).

4. The objectives on water and sanitation have indeed been recognised as a priority area under the 2nd JAES ([3]) Action Plan agreed in 2010, mainly as part of the MDG Partnership, but also in relation with infrastructure. The ongoing dialogue between African (represented by AMCOW ([4])) and EU Partners constitutes an important framework to align policies and strategies and increase coordination and aid effectiveness, following a multi-stakeholder approach. Support being provided on water and sanitation with resources from the Water Facility and MDG Initiative responds to the priority under the 2nd JAES Action Plan.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millenium-development-goals/mdg_initiative_en.htm
([2]) Millennium Development Goals.
([3]) Joint Africa-EU Strategy.
([4]) African Ministers' Council on Water.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004371/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Droits humains en Ukraine

Les autorités ukrainiennes doivent tirer parti du climat politique actuel afin de mettre un terme au recours massif de la police à la torture et à d'autres formes de mauvais traitements, en créant un organe véritablement indépendant, impartial et efficace qui serait chargé d'enquêter sur les plaintes déposées contre des policiers.

Les passages à tabac et les actes de torture continuent sans faiblir en Ukraine, en dépit de l'adoption d'un nouveau Code de procédure pénale par le gouvernement à la fin de l'année dernière. Aucune mesure concrète n'a été prise afin d'instaurer un mécanisme indépendant visant à obliger la police à rendre des comptes, ce qui, dans les faits, permet à celle-ci d'échapper aux sanctions malgré l'ampleur choquante des mauvais traitements infligés aux détenus.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission face à ces exactions allant à l'encontre des positions des institutions européennes?

2. Que fait la Commission pour que les autorités ukrainiennes mettent un terme au recours massif de la police à la torture et à d'autres formes de mauvais traitements, en créant, par exemple, un organe véritablement indépendant, impartial et efficace qui serait chargé d'enquêter sur les plaintes déposées contre des policiers?

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

Le respect des Droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales reste un élément essentiel de l'approche suivie par l'UE pour resserrer les liens politiques et approfondir l'intégration économique entre l'UE et l'Ukraine. L'objectif est de garantir un cadre législatif complet, conforme aux normes européennes, et la bonne mise en œuvre des mesures de réforme adoptées.

Dans ce but, l'UE entretient un dialogue permanent avec les autorités ukrainiennes, au niveau tant opérationnel que politique. Dans le cadre de ce dialogue, elle procède à des évaluations et émet des recommandations sur les mesures à prendre pour remédier au décalage entre les mesures préconisées dans les conclusions du Conseil «Affaires étrangères» du 10 décembre 2012 ([1]) et les actions de suivi entreprises par l'Ukraine. Des allégations de torture et de mauvais traitements infligés par la police sont constamment évoquées lors des consultations bilatérales (par exemple, dans le cadre du sous-comité UE-Ukraine «Justice, liberté et sécurité»).

Parmi les mesures que l'Ukraine est fortement invitée à prendre, figure aussi l'octroi des ressources nécessaires pour mettre en œuvre efficacement le mécanisme national de prévention de la torture, conformément au «protocole facultatif à la Convention des Nations unies contre la torture et autres peines ou traitements cruels, inhumains ou dégradants».

La mise en place rapide d'un bureau national d'enquête, qui jouerait le rôle de police judiciaire chargée d'enquêter sur les crimes commis par les fonctionnaires (y compris la police et le parquet), constitue une autre priorité lors des discussions entre l'UE et les autorités ukrainiennes.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/134136.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004371/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Human rights in Ukraine

The Ukrainian authorities should take advantage of the current political climate to put an end to the widespread use of torture and other forms of ill-treatment by the police, by establishing a truly independent, impartial and efficient body which would be responsible for investigating complaints against police officers.

Beatings and acts of torture continue unabated in Ukraine, despite the government's adoption of a new Criminal Procedure Code at the end of last year. No concrete steps have been taken to create an independent mechanism to hold police officers accountable, which effectively protects them from punishment in spite of the appalling scale of ill-treatment suffered by prisoners.

1. What is the Commission's response to these abuses, which stand in conflict with the positions of the European institutions?

2. What is the Commission doing to ensure that the Ukrainian authorities put an end to the widespread use of torture and other forms of ill-treatment by the police, for example by establishing a truly independent, impartial and efficient body which would be responsible for investigating complaints against police officers?

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

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms remain key to the EU's approach in building a closer political association and a deeper economic integration between the EU and Ukraine. The aim is to ensure a comprehensive legislative framework in line with the European standards and an adequate implementation of the reform measures taken.

To this end, the EU has a permanent dialogue with the Ukrainian authorities, both at operational and political level, providing assessements and reccommendations on where the gaps between the 10 December 2012 Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions and Ukraine's ([1]) follow up actions need to be filled. Cases of alleged torture and ill-treatment by the police are constantly raised in the bilateral consultations, (e.g. the EU-Ukraine Justice, Freedom and Security Subcommittee).

Among the measures Ukraine is vigurously asked to take is also the allocation of the necessary resources to implement effectively the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture in accordance with the 'Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment'.

The early establishment of a National Bureau of Investigation, which should act as a judicial police investigating crimes committed by civil servants (including police and prosecution), represents another priority in discussions between the EU and the Ukrainian authorities.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/134136.pdf .

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004372/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Proposition sur l'agence ferroviaire européenne

1. Quand la Commission compte-t-elle soumettre sa proposition concernant l'Agence ferroviaire européenne afin d'améliorer le rôle de celle-ci, notamment en lui confiant de nouvelles tâches concernant l'émission des autorisations de véhicules et des certificats de sécurité et en renforçant le contrôle qu'elle exerce sur les règles nationales de sécurité ferroviaire et sur les autorités ferroviaires nationales dont la coopération reste encore insuffisante à l'échelle européenne?

2. Où en est-elle dans la mise en place des outils nécessaires pour favoriser la création d'un véritable espace ferroviaire unique européen, qui soit concurrentiel?

3. Le Parlement européen estime que l'Agence ferroviaire européenne n'est pas dotée de moyens financiers et de ressources humaines suffisants. Quelle est la position de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2013)

1. Le 30 janvier 2013, la Commission a adopté le quatrième paquet ferroviaire, qui comporte six propositions législatives ([1]). L'une d'entre elles est la proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif à l'Agence de l'Union européenne pour les chemins de fer et abrogeant le règlement (CE) n° 881/2004 ([2]), qui prévoit un élargissement des tâches de l'Agence dans le domaine de l'autorisation des véhicules ferroviaires et de la certification des entreprises ferroviaires.

2. Depuis l'adoption du premier paquet ferroviaire en 2001, la Commission a pris plusieurs initiatives législatives et non législatives visant à soutenir la création d'un espace ferroviaire unique européen véritable et concurrentiel. La dernière en date est le quatrième paquet ferroviaire, qui s'articule autour de trois volets essentiels: 1) la diminution des coûts supportés par les fabricants et les entreprises ferroviaires en matière d'autorisation des véhicules ferroviaires et de certification des entreprises ferroviaires, 2) l'ouverture des marchés nationaux aux services de transport de voyageurs et 3) le renforcement de l'indépendance des gestionnaires d'infrastructures.

3. Les ressources financières et humaines de l'Agence ferroviaire européenne sont soumises à la procédure budgétaire annuelle et sont décidées en dernier lieu par le Parlement européen et le Conseil. Leur niveau a augmenté progressivement depuis 2005 conformément au tableau des effectifs de l'Agence. Toutefois, en raison des nouvelles contraintes budgétaires, l'Agence a consenti des efforts supplémentaires en termes d'efficacité et commencé à établir des priorités dans l'accomplissement de ses tâches. Toutes les agences contribuent à la réduction de 5 % du personnel applicable dans toutes les institutions pour la période 2013-2017.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/packages/2013_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0027:FIN:FR:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004372/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Proposal on the European Railway Agency

1. When is the Commission planning to submit its proposal on the European Railway Agency with a view to enhancing the role of the latter, in particular by giving it new tasks of issuing vehicle authorisations and safety certificates and strengthening its supervision of national railway rules and over national railway authorities, which do not yet cooperate sufficiently at European level?

2. What progress has the Commission made with introducing the tools necessary to support the creation of a true and competitive Single European Railway Area?

3. Parliament believes that the European Railway Agency has insufficient financial and human resources. What is the Commission's position?

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

1. The Commission adopted on 30th January 2013 the 4th Railway Package consisting of six legislative proposals ([1]). One of these proposals is the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Railways and repealing Regulation (EC) No 881/2004 ([2]), which includes an extension of the tasks of this Agency in the field of authorisation of railway vehicles and certification of railway undertakings.

2. Since the adoption of the first railway package in 2001, the Commission has taken several legislative and non-legislative initiatives to support the creation of a real and competitive Single European Railway Area. The last one, the Fourth Railway Package, focuses on three key areas: (1) cutting the costs of manufacturers and rail companies in relation to auhorisation of vehicles and certification of railway underatkings, (2) opening the domestic markets for passenger services and (3) strengthening the independence of infrastructure managers.

3. The financial and human resources of the European Railway Agency are subject to the annual budgetary procedure and are ultimately decided by the European Parliament and the Council. The level of resources has increased progressively since 2005 in accordance with the establishment plan of the Agency. However, due to the new budgetary constraints, the Agency has made additional efforts in terms of its efficiency and started to prioritise its tasks. All agencies are participating to the 5% reduction of staff in all institutions over the period 2013-2017.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/packages/2013_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0027:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004373/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Budget des autorités européennes de surveillance

La Commission compte-t-elle évaluer la possibilité de présenter une proposition visant à faire en sorte que les budgets des autorités européennes de surveillance soient financés en totalité par le budget de l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2013)

Les actes législatifs instituant le Système européen de surveillance financière (SESF) ([1]) prévoient que la Commission réexamine le fonctionnement des autorités européennes de surveillance (AES) d'ici janvier 2014. Conformément à l'article 81 des règlements instituant les autorités européennes de surveillance, la Commission va publier un rapport général sur l'expérience tirée du fonctionnement de ces autorités et des procédures fixées dans ces règlements. Ce rapport sera transmis au Parlement européen et au Conseil, assorti de propositions, le cas échéant.

Les travaux préparatoires ont déjà commencé. En particulier, les services de la Commission ont lancé le 26 avril 2013 une consultation publique sur le SESF qui sera clôturée le 19 juillet; par ailleurs, une audition publique sur la question de la supervision financière est organisée le 24 mai 2013. En outre, les AES transmettent régulièrement des données à la Commission via un groupe de contact qui comprend des représentants des AES et de la Commission.

La question du financement et des ressources des AES fait partie de celles traitées dans le cadre du réexamen. La Commission procédera à une analyse approfondie des contributions reçues, fera rapport sur ces questions et, le cas échéant, proposera des mesures législatives de suivi.

([1]) Conformément à l'article 81 des règlements (UE) n° 1093/2010, 1094/2010 et 1095/2010 du 24 novembre 2010 instituant les autorités européennes de surveillance (Autorité bancaire européenne (ABE), Autorité européenne des assurances et des pensions professionnelles (AEAPP) et Autorité européenne des marchés financiers (AEMF)).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004373/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Budget of the European Supervisory Authorities

Is the Commission planning to assess the possibility of tabling a proposal which would ensure that the budgets of the European Supervisory Authorities are funded entirely from the EU budget?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The legislative acts establishing the European System of Financial Supervision (ESFS) ([1]) provide for a review by the Commission of the European Supervisory Authorities (ESAs) by January 2014. According to Article 81 of the regulations establishing the ESAs the Commission shall publish a general report on the experience acquired as a result of the operation of the Authorities and procedures laid down in these Regulations. This report shall be forwarded to the European Parliament and to the Council, together with any accompanying proposals, as appropriate.

Preparatory work has already started. In particular, the Commission services have launched a public consultation on the ESFS on 26 April 2013, which is open until 19 July, and a public hearing on the issue of financial supervision is organised on 24 May 2013. In addition the ESAs provide regular data inputs to the Commission in the framework of a contact group encompassing representatives from the ESAs and the Commission.

Financing and resources of the ESAs is one of the issues addressed in the course of the review. The Commission will examine in-depth the relevant input received, will report on these issues, and where appropriate, propose legislative follow-up.

([1]) Pursuant to Article 81 of Regulations (1093/2010), (1094/2010) and (1095/2010) of 24 November 2010 establishing European Supervisory Authorities (European Banking Authority, EBA), (European Insurance and Occupational Pension Authority, EIOPA), (European Securities and Markets Authority, ESMA).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004374/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Morte sospetta del leader cristiano della «Chiesa Evangelica del Vietnam del Sud»

Il 17 Marzo scorso, Hoang Van Ngai, leader della «Chiesa Evangelica del Vietnam del Sud», legalmente riconosciuta nel paese, è deceduto mentre era sotto custodia delle forze di polizia. La versione ufficiale rilasciata dalle forze dell'ordine, sulle cause della morte, è stata quella del suicidio per mezzo di elettrocuzione; il fratello di Ngai, detenuto nella vicina cella, ha testimoniato che alle 3.00 del mattino del 17 ha udito chiari rumori di pestaggio provenire dalla cella del congiunto, dichiarazioni queste avvalorate dalla famiglia e innumerevoli testimoni che hanno visto il corpo che presentava estese ferite.

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti?

Come sta agendo la Commissione per tutelare i diritti umani e le comunità cristiane in Vietnam?

Qual è la posizione della Delegazione europea ad Hanoi circa i fatti sopra descritti?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza del caso, che è stato oggetto di scambi di vedute tra la delegazione dell'UE e ambasciate allineate sulle stesse posizioni ad Hanoi. I consiglieri politici dell'UE hanno sollevato la questione nel corso della visita effettuata alla provincia di Dank Nong dal 22 al 24 aprile scorso, durante la quale si sono incontrati con le autorità locali (in particolare il capo della commissione per gli affari religiosi della provincia), alle quali hanno chiesto che sia fatta piena luce sul reale svolgimento dei fatti e che venga condotta senza indugio un'indagine indipendente e trasparente su questo episodio.

Il capo della commissione per gli affari religiosi della provincia ha preso atto della richiesta e si è impegnato a trasmetterla alle autorità competenti. Al momento non si hanno ulteriori notizie. L'UE continuerà a seguire attentamente gli sviluppi del caso, insieme ai suoi partner che condividono posizioni affini, intervenendo presso le autorità vietnamite in particolare riguardo al presunto ricorso alla tortura e all'istruzione di un'indagine ufficiale sulle circostanze della morte di Hoang Van Ngai.

In merito all'azione della Commissione per la difesa dei diritti umani e la tutela delle comunità cristiane in Vietnam, l'intensificato dialogo sui diritti umani instaurato nel quadro dell'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione firmato nel giugno scorso rappresenta lo strumento precipuo per affrontare simili preoccupazioni. La libertà di religione e di credo era all'ordine del giorno dell'ultima sessione tenutasi nell'ottobre 2012 e molto probabilmente vi figurerà ancora nella prossima sessione che si terrà più avanti nel corso di quest'anno. L'UE solleva la questione dei diritti umani anche in occasione di riunioni bilaterali con le autorità vietnamite. Essa continuerà a promuovere il rispetto dei diritti umani, tra cui la libertà di religione e di credo, in Vietnam attraverso strumenti quali il nuovo dialogo intensificato, dichiarazioni pubbliche e mosse diplomatiche, nonché interagendo con associazioni e progetti in difesa dei diritti umani come quelli finanziati dallo Strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004374/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Suspicious death of the Christian leader of the 'Evangelical Church of South Vietnam'

On 17 March, Hoang Van Ngai, leader of the 'Evangelical Church of South Vietnam', legally recognised in the country, died while in police custody. The official version of the cause of death, provided by the police, is suicide by electrocution; Ngai's brother, held in the adjacent cell, has testified that at 3.00 a.m. on 17 March, he heard distinct sounds of beating coming from his brother's cell. This statement was corroborated by the family and countless witnesses who saw the body, which bore extensive signs of injury.

Is the Commission aware of the facts described above?

What action is the Commission taking to safeguard human rights and the Christian communities in Vietnam?

What is the position of the Delegation of the European Union to Hanoi concerning the facts described above?

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

The Commission is aware of the case, which has been subject of exchanges between the EU Delegation and like-minded embassies in Hanoi. EU Political Counsellors raised this case, sought clarification on what actually happened and called for an urgent independent and transparent enquiry when meeting local authorities (the Head of the Religious Affairs Committee of the Province) during the 22-24 April visit to the Dank Nong Province.

The Head of the Religious Affairs Committee of the Province took note of the query and committed to transmitting it to the relevant authorities. No further information is available at this stage. The EU will continue to closely monitor developments regarding this case, together with like-minded partners, with the Vietnamese authorities in particular regarding the allegations of torture and the setting-up of an official inquiry into the circumstances of Mr Hoang Van Ngai's death.

As regards Commission action to safeguard human rights and Christian Communities in Vietnam the enhanced Dialogue on Human Rights established under the partnership and cooperation agreement signed last June is the primary instrument to address issues of concern. The last session was held in October 2012. Freedom of Religion and Belief was on the agenda and it can be expected that it will be again in the next session later this year. The EU also raises human rights concerns in its bilateral meetings with the Vietnamese authorities. The EU will continue to promote respect for human rights including Freedom of Religion and Belief in Vietnam, through the new enhanced dialogue, public statements and demarches, interaction with human rights defenders and projects such as those funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004375/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Misure di sostegno per i pescatori della laguna di Venezia

Lo scorso 28 agosto 2012, negli allevamenti di vongole della laguna di Venezia si è verificata una massiccia moria dei molluschi che ha creato una vera e propria emergenza economica e sociale. I pescatori delle aree della laguna centrale e le loro famiglie (circa 200) si sono infatti pesantemente indebitati, mettendo a rischio le loro stesse abitazioni, per ottenere dalle banche le fideiussioni necessarie all'acquisto di concessioni per l'esercizio dell'acquacultura ormai inservibili.

Può la Commissione dire:

1. se è a conoscenza del gravissimo stato di crisi del settore della pesca lagunare veneziana e di tutto il suo indotto così importante per l'economia locale;

2. se ha intenzione di promuovere iniziative atte a salvaguardare questa particolare tipologia di pesca;

3. se ha intenzione di promuovere la creazione di strumenti di microcredito per permettere ai lavoratori della laguna veneta di pagare i canoni di concessione?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione di emergenza sopravvenuta nella laguna di Venezia il 28 agosto 2012. Secondo gli allevatori, la morte delle vongole potrebbe essere collegata ai lavori per le infrastrutture di dighe del sistema MOSE. Sembra che l'Italia non abbia segnalato il caso mediante il sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi (RASFF).

Ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 1198/2006 del Consiglio (relativo al Fondo europeo per la pesca ([1])), gli Stati membri possono decidere di concedere un sostegno per compensare i molluschicoltori per la sospensione temporanea della raccolta dei molluschi allevati. L'indennità può essere concessa nel caso in cui la contaminazione dei molluschi dovuta alla proliferazione di plancton tossico o alla presenza di plancton contenente biotossine determini, per motivi sanitari, la sospensione della raccolta per più di quattro mesi consecutivi o qualora la perdita dovuta alla sospensione della raccolta superi il 35 % del fatturato annuo dell'impresa interessata, calcolato sulla base del fatturato medio dell'impresa nei tre anni precedenti.

La proposta della Commissione relativa al Fondo europeo per gli affari marittimi e la pesca ([2]), prevede la possibilità di salvaguardare le entrate dei produttori acquicoli tramite un contributo a un'assicurazione degli stock acquicoli che copra le perdite dovute a calamità naturali, condizioni climatiche avverse, improvvisi cambiamenti della qualità delle acque, malattie nel settore acquicolo o distruzione di impianti di produzione.

I canoni di concessione sono considerati costi operativi e non sono inclusi nell'ambito dei Fondi europei. Le informazioni sulle possibilità di accesso ai microcrediti per quanto riguarda gli altri aspetti del settore delle PMI sono disponibili sullo specifico portale UE ([3]).

Spetta allo Stato membro interessato (al livello amministrativo opportuno) prevedere eventuali azioni correttive.

([1]) GU L 223 del 15.8.2006.
([2]) COM(2011)807 def.
([3]) http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-support/access-to-finance/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004375/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Support measures for fishermen in the Venetian Lagoon

On 28 August 2012, vast quantities of molluscs were found dead in the clam breeding farms in the Venetian Lagoon, creating a true economic and social emergency. Fishermen in the central lagoon area and their families (around 200) have become heavily indebted and put their very homes at risk in order to obtain the guarantees they need from the banks to purchase concessions to conduct aquaculture activities; these concessions are now useless.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the desperate crisis in the fishing sector in the Venetian lagoon and in all its satellite activities, which are so vital for the local economy.

2. Whether it intends to promote initiatives to protect this particular type of fishing.

3. Whether it intends to promote the creation of microcredit instruments to enable workers in the Venetian lagoon to pay their concession fees.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the emergency in the Venetian lagoon of 28 August 2012. According to the clam farmers, the death of the clams could be linked to works for the MOSE dam infrastructure. It appears that Italy has not notified the case via the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF).

Under Council Regulation (EU) 1198/2006 (European Fisheries Fund [1]) Member States may decide to provide support to compensate mollusc farmers for the temporary suspension of harvesting of farmed mollusc. The compensations may be granted where contamination of molluscs owing to the proliferation of toxin-producing plankton or the presence of plankton containing bio-toxins entails, for public health protection reasons, suspension of the harvest for more than four months consecutively or where the loss suffered as a result of suspension of the harvest amounts to more than 35% of the annual turnover of the business concerned, calculated on the basis of the average turnover of the business over the preceding three years.

The Commission proposal for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund [2] envisages the possibility to safeguard the income of aquaculture producers by supporting the contribution to an aquaculture stock insurance which shall cover the losses due to natural disasters, adverse climatic events, sudden water quality changes, diseases in aquaculture or destruction of production facilities.

Concession fees are considered as operational costs and are not eligible under the European Funds. Information on opportunities to access microcredit for other aspects of SME business can be found at the dedicated EU portal [3].

It is the responsibility of the Member State concerned (at the appropriate administrative level) to envisage possible remedial actions.

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[1] OJ L 223, 15.8.2006.
[2] COM(2011) 807 final.
[3] http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-support/access-to-finance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004376/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sigarette elettroniche e pubblicità ingannevole

Le vendite dei dispositivi denominati «sigarette elettroniche» hanno subito un fortissimo incremento dacché sono state immesse sul mercato, mentre solo in Italia si stimano più di 400.000 utilizzatori.

Oltre ai punti vendita ed agli acquirenti, si moltiplicano anche gli spot pubblicitari che reclamizzano questi prodotti, alcuni dei quali hanno destato preoccupazione tra le associazioni dei consumatori, in particolare gli spot che pubblicizzano le e-cigar come metodo per smettere di fumare.

Uno di questi spot è stato denunciato all'Antitrust italiana che ne ha chiesto l'inibizione della messa in onda, in quanto considerato ingannevole per i consumatori, non essendoci ricerche scientifiche certificate che attestino che tali dispositivi rappresentino un metodo efficace per permettere alle persone di smettere di fumare.

Può la Commissione dire:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra descritti;

2. se può riferire se anche negli altri Stati membri vengono messe in onda pubblicità di questo tipo;

3. se può fornire cifre sulla commercializzazione dei dispositivi definiti «sigaretta elettronica» all'interno degli Stati membri dell'UE;

4. se intende commissionare studi specifici circa l'effettiva efficacia di questi dispositivi per quanto concerne lo smettere di fumare «normali» sigarette?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2013)

La valutazione effettuata dalla Commissione sulle tendenze di mercato per quanto concerne le sigarette elettroniche è riportata nella valutazione d'impatto della Commissione ([1]). La Commissione sa che l'uso delle sigarette elettroniche si sta diffondendo rapidamente.

Come indicato in una risposta all'interrogazione E-002905/13 ([2]), nell'ottica della protezione della salute la proposta della Commissione serve a incoraggiare le potenzialità delle sigarette elettroniche quali sussidio alla disassuefazione dal fumo poiché assoggetta le sigarette elettroniche che superano una certa soglia di nicotina alla legislazione che disciplina i prodotti medicinali. Ciò assicurerebbe che, prima di immetterle sul mercato, si proceda a un'adeguata valutazione della correlazione rischi/benefici per le sigarette elettroniche che si situano al di sopra di tale soglia.

([1]) SWD(2012)452 def., pagg. 15-17.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004376/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Electronic cigarettes and misleading advertising

There has been a dramatic rise in the sale of devices known as 'electronic cigarettes' since they were launched on the market. There are estimated to be over 400 000 users in Italy alone.

Retail outlets and purchasers have multiplied and so have advertisements for these products, some of which have caused concern among consumer associations, especially those that promote e-cigars as a way to quit smoking.

A complaint about one of these advertisements was made to the Italian competition authority, which asked for it to be withdrawn as it was deemed to be misleading for consumers, as there is no documented scientific research to confirm that these devices represent an effective method for people to quit smoking.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the facts described above.

2. Whether similar advertising has also been broadcast in other Member States.

3. Whether it can provide figures about the sales of 'electronic cigarettes' in the Member States of the EU.

4. Whether it intends to commission specific studies into the actual effectiveness of these devices in allowing people to quit smoking 'normal' cigarettes.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission's assessment of the market trends with regard to electronic cigarettes is set out in the Commission's Impact Assessment ([1]). The Commission is aware of the fact that the use of electronic cigarettes is growing quickly.

As indicated by a reply to the Question E-002905/13 ([2]), from the point of view of health protection, the Commission's proposal seeks to encourage the potential of electronic cigarettes as a smoking cessation aid by subjecting those products exceeding a certain threshold of nicotine to the medicinal products legislation. This would ensure that a proper assessment of the risks and benefits of electronic cigarettes above this threshold would have to be made before placing them on the market.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final, pp. 15-17.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004377/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile inasprimento delle pene per i «blogger atei» in Bangladesh

Il 2 aprile in Bangladesh sono stati arrestati tre blogger con l'accusa di aver diffamato il profeta Maometto e l'Islam, con scritte ritenute blasfeme dalle autorità e che sono punibili per legge con una pena di dieci anni di reclusione.

L'arresto dei tre uomini è avvenuto nella settimana in cui migliaia di esponenti integralisti islamici hanno organizzato una manifestazione con la quale richiedono al governo che tale legge sia modificata in modo tale da prevedere la pena di morte per i «Blogger atei».

Può la Commissione dire:

1. se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti;

2. come li valuta;

3. qual è lo stato del rispetto dei dritti umani in tale paese;

4. qual è l'ammontare degli aiuti erogati al Bangladesh e gli ambiti cui essi sono stati destinati?

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

L'UE è a conoscenza degli arresti e segue con preoccupazione gli scontri per le strade fra i vari partiti politici e fra i sostenitori di un approccio laico, da un lato, e quelli dei partiti religiosi, dall'altro. Questi atti di violenza hanno provocato incidenti particolarmente gravi e diverse vittime. L'UE ha invitato le forze politiche a mettere fine a questa atmosfera di contrapposizione, che, con l'avvicinarsi delle elezioni, può solo complicare una situazione già tesa.

Sussistono ancora motivi di preoccupazione in merito ai diritti umani in Bangladesh (per esempio, in campo sociale, la sicurezza al lavoro e la situazione di profughi e minoranze), di cui l'UE discute periodicamente con il governo del paese.

L'Unione europea è il principale fornitore di assistenza al Bangladesh, che riceve annualmente circa 500 milioni di euro dalle istituzioni dell'UE e a titolo degli accordi bilaterali con gli Stati membri. L'UE si adopera per rafforzare la democrazia e i diritti umani nel paese, sia sul piano politico che contribuendo come partner per lo sviluppo. Ha sostenuto attivamente il ritorno del Bangladesh alla democrazia nel 2008 e ha offerto la propria assistenza in vista delle prossime elezioni. L'Unione europea è uno dei principali donatori in settori quali la salute, l'istruzione, la buona gestione politica, i diritti umani e la sicurezza alimentare e ha fornito aiuti umanitari a seguito delle catastrofi naturali che colpiscono periodicamente il paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004377/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Possible stricter penalties for 'atheist bloggers' in Bangladesh

On 2 April, two bloggers were arrested in Bangladesh, accused of having defamed the Prophet Mohammed and Islam with pieces of writing deemed to be blasphemous by the authorities and legally punishable by 10 years' imprisonment.

The three men were arrested in a week during which thousands of Islamic extremists organised a demonstration demanding that the government amend the law in order to punish 'atheist bloggers' with the death penalty.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it is aware of the events stated above.

2. What its assessment is of these events.

3. What the human rights situation is in Bangladesh.

4. What aid has been provided to Bangladesh and the intended uses of this aid.

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

The EU is aware of the arrests. It is following with concern the clashes on the streets between political parties, and between those who advocate a secular approach and supporters of religious parties. These clashes have now provoked very serious incidents and a number of deaths. The EU has called on the political forces to put an end to this atmosphere of confrontation, which can only make a tense situation more difficult as the general elections approach.

There remain a number of areas of concern regarding human rights in Bangladesh — including those affecting social issues such as safety at work, refugees and minorities — and the EU has raised them regularly with the Bangladeshi Government.

The EU is the largest provider of grant assistance to Bangladesh, disbursing around EUR 500 million annually through the EU institutions as well as through Member States' bilateral programmes. The EU has been working to strengthen democracy and human rights in Bangladesh, both politically and as a development partner. It actively supported the country's return to democracy in 2008, and has offered its support in view of the next elections. The EU has been a major donor in areas such as health, education, good governance, human rights and food security, and has provided humanitarian support in response to natural disasters which have periodically affected the country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004378/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sicurezza alimentare

Gli alimenti sono un bene prezioso e l'intero settore rappresenta interessi economici molto importanti invogliando alcuni produttori e/o rivenditori a trarre profitti illeciti tramite «frodi». Esse hanno come obiettivo principale quello di rendere «vendibili» prodotti con caratteristiche merceologiche e/o sanitarie non idonee al consumo. Le frodi alimentari generano danni economici alle imprese, allo Stato e in particolare alla salute pubblica. Quest'affermazione risulta valida sia per le frodi sulla qualità sia per quelle sull'origine e la provenienza degli alimenti. Ciò premesso, quindi, lo scopo di tali frodi è quello di migliorare la qualità degli alimenti con «azioni» che sono spesso di «facciata» come nel caso della modifica delle etichette, attribuendo ai prodotti denominazioni che persuadono e inganno i consumatori.

L'inscindibile sistema di regole europee a garanzia della sicurezza alimentare si basa sulla prevenzione che deve essere assicurata da tutti gli operatori della filiera e sorvegliata dalle pubbliche autorità. Il sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi dell'UE ha permesso di evitare o ridurre i rischi per la sicurezza degli alimenti. Tale sistema svolge un ruolo fondamentale perché mette in moto una reazione rapida non appena viene individuato un rischio per la sicurezza alimentare, garantendo così la sicurezza dal produttore al consumatore.

Inoltre, occorre anche precisare che l'industria dei prodotti alimentari e delle bevande è uno dei settori industriali più importanti e più dinamici d'Europa. Esso è rappresentato da circa 310.000 aziende e offre lavoro a oltre quattro milioni di persone con un volume di affari annuo superiore a 900 miliardi di euro. Questo fa sì che le sofisticazioni siano sempre più difficili da individuare e che le aziende ricorrano a tali stratagemmi per superare la concorrenza.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione precisare se reputa necessario inasprire le norme per mettere al bando nell'UE (anche temporaneamente) e società che non rispettano determinati standard o che sono ree di sofisticazione di etichette alimentari?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(29 maggio 2013)

La responsabilità di far rispettare la legislazione relativa alla filiera alimentare compete agli Stati membri ([1]), che sono tenuti a istituire un sistema di controlli ufficiali per verificare l'ottemperanza, da parte degli operatori, ai requisiti derivanti da detta legislazione. Laddove si individuino inadempienze, gli Stati membri devono intervenire, sulla base di informazioni concrete, per assicurare che gli operatori interessati rimedino alle inadempienze. Tale intervento può comprendere la sospensione delle operazioni o la chiusura in toto o in parte dell'azienda interessata per un appropriato periodo di tempo (articolo 54 del regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativa ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normativa in materia di mangimi e di alimenti e alle norme sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, GU L 165 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004378/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Food safety

Food is a precious asset and the entire food industry represents major economic interests which tempt some producers and/or dealers to derive illegal profits through 'scams'. The main goal of such scams is to make products which are commercially and hygienically unfit for sale 'sellable'. Food scams are economically harmful to companies, States and public health. This assertion holds true for scams that concern the quality of food as well as its origin or source. The aim of such scams is to improve the quality of food by taking 'action' which is often a mere 'facade', such as changing labels to give products names that will persuade and mislead consumers.

The single and indivisible system of European food safety rules is based on prevention, which must be guaranteed by all industry operators and monitored by public authorities. The EU's rapid alert system for food and feed has allowed risks to food safety to be avoided or reduced. This system plays a fundamental role by ensuring that quick action is taken as soon as a food safety risk is detected, thus guaranteeing safety from the producer to the consumer.

It is also important to state that the food and drink industry is one of the most important and dynamic industrial sectors in Europe. It comprises some 310 000 companies and provides work for over four million people with an annual business volume of over EUR 900 billion. The upshot of this has been that food adulteration is ever more difficult to detect and that companies are using such tricks to outstrip the competition.

In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it believes it necessary to tighten the rules for banning within the EU (even temporarily) companies which fail to respect specific standards or which are guilty of using misleading food labels?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

The responsibility for enforcing food chain legislation lies with Member States ([1]), which are required to establish a system of official controls to verify compliance by operators with requirements deriving therefrom. Where non-compliance is detected Member States must, depending on the factual information available, take appropriate action to ensure that the non-compliance is remedied by the operators concerned. Such action may include the suspension of operation or closure of all or part of a business for an appropriate period of time (Article 54 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004379/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(18 april 2013)

Betreft: Commissievoorstel om de directe betalingen aan landbouwers te verlagen met 5 %

De Commissie stelt in haar voorstel tot „financiële discipline" voor directe betalingen uit hoofde van het GLB voor het jaar 2014 ([1]) dat alle directe betalingen boven 5.000 euro gekort worden met 4,98 %, met uitzondering van directe betalingen voor Bulgarije, Kroatië en Roemenië.

De antieke systematiek van landbouwsubsidies en inkomenssteun heeft boeren afhankelijk gemaakt van de EU. Zij hangen aan het subsidie-infuus van Brussel, in plaats van dat zij op een gezonde manier via goede handelsprijzen kunnen ondernemen en daarmee zelf in hun bestaan kunnen voorzien.

1. Is de Commissie ervan op de hoogte dat de financiële situatie van veel Nederlandse landbouwers nijpend is en dat deze aan de rand van een faillissement staan ([2])?

2. Is de Commissie ervan op de hoogte dat veel Nederlandse boeren helemaal niet zitten te wachten op de systematiek van inkomenssteun maar liever met eerlijke handelsprijzen een bloeiend boerenbedrijf in stand houden?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het niet aan hard werkende burgers is uit te leggen dat de Commissie liever 5 % van het inkomen van hardwerkende boeren afpakt dan snijdt in de eigen begroting? Zo nee, kan zij het dan uitleggen aan hen?

4. Is de Commissie bereid om het systeem van landbouwsubsidies af te schaffen, de financiële middelen terug te geven aan de bijdragende lidstaten en het landbouwbeleid aan de lidstaten zelf over te laten? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Cioloș namens de Commissie
(30 mei 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de moeilijkheden waarmee heel wat landbouwers in de Europese Unie worden geconfronteerd. Daarom is het belangrijk om de inkomenssteun te handhaven, landbouwers te vergoeden voor de levering van collectieve goederen, de risico's beter te beheren, beter te reageren op crisissituaties en plattelandsontwikkeling te ondersteunen. Deze elementen maken deel uit van het voorstel van de Commissie voor de hervorming van het GLB met het oog op een meer concurrerende en duurzamere landbouw.

Op basis van het wettelijke kader ([3]) en de voorlopige ramingen voor de ontwerpbegroting 2014, met name de ramingen voor rechtstreekse betalingen aan landbouwers en marktuitgaven, zag de Commissie zich in de huidige periode genoodzaakt uiterlijk op 31 maart 2013 de toepassing van het mechanisme voor financiële discipline voor te stellen voor het begrotingsjaar 2014 om de maxima van het Europees Landbouwgarantiefonds niet te overschrijden. Meer details over de achterliggende redenen hiervoor zijn terug te vinden in het voorstel van de Commissie ([4]).

Het Gemeenschappelijk Landbouwbeleid (GLB) is een werkelijk Europees beleid: in plaats van in 28 landen een eigen landbouwbeleid te voeren, brengen de lidstaten hun middelen samen om één Europees beleid met één Europese begroting te voeren. Dit garandeert zowel de meest doeltreffende reactie op de beleidsuitdagingen als het meest efficiënte gebruik van begrotingsmiddelen. In haar effectbeoordeling ([5]) van het GLB tot 2020 heeft de Commissie de optie om de inkomenssteun geleidelijk af te bouwen, beoordeeld. Zij is tot de conclusie gekomen dat aan een dergelijke uitfasering meer negatieve gevolgen dan mogelijke voordelen zijn verbonden.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-297_en.htm
([2]) http://www.boerderij.nl/Home/Nieuws/2012/12/Meer-boeren-aangewezen-op-voedselbank-1132843W/.
([3]) Artikel 11 van Verordening (EG) nr. 73/2009.
([4]) COM(2013) 159.
([5]) SEC(2011) 1154 definitief/2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004379/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Commission proposal to reduce direct payments to farmers by 5%

In its proposal for 'financial discipline' for direct payments under the heading of the CAP for the year 2014, the Commission stipulates ([1]) that all direct payments above EUR 5 000 should be reduced by 4.98% with the exception of direct payments for Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania.

The age-old system of farming subsidies and income support has made farmers dependent on the EU. They depend on the injection of subsidies from Brussels instead of running a sound business using good trade prices and thus providing for their own subsistence.

1. Is the Commission aware that the financial situation of many Dutch farmers is precarious and that they are on the verge of bankruptcy ([2])?

2. Is the Commission aware that many Dutch farmers absolutely do not sit around waiting for the income support system but prefer to maintain a thriving farming business with fair trade prices?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is inexplicable to hard-working citizens that the Commission prefers to take 5% from the income of hard-working farmers than to make cuts in its own budget? If not, can the Commission explain it to them?

4. Is the Commission prepared to abolish the system of farming subsidies, return the funds to the contributing Member States and transfer agricultural policy to the Member States themselves? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission is aware of the difficulties faced by many farmers in the European Union. Hence the need to maintain income support, compensate farmers for the provision of public goods, better manage risks and respond to crisis situations and support rural development. These elements are part of the Commission proposal for the CAP reform aimed at a more competitive and sustainable agriculture. .

In the current period, according to the legislative framework ([3]) and the provisional estimates for the Draft Budget 2014 and in particular direct payments to farmers and market-related expenditure, the Commission was obliged to propose by 31 March 2013 the application of the financial discipline mechanism for financial year 2014 to stay within the ceiling for the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund. Further details on the underlying motivations are provided in the Commission proposal ([4]).

The common agricultural policy (CAP) is a genuinely European policy as instead of operating 28 agricultural policies, Member States pool resources to operate a single European policy with a single European budget. This ensures both the most effective response to the policy challenges as well as the most efficient use of budgetary resources. In its impact assessment ([5]) on the CAP towards 2020, the Commission has assessed the option of phasing-out income support with the negative implications outweighing potential benefits.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-297_en.htm
([2]) http://www.boerderij.nl/Home/Nieuws/2012/12/Meer-boeren-aangewezen-op-voedselbank-1132843W/.
([3]) Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.
([4]) COM(2013)159.
([5]) SEC(2011)1154 final/2.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004380/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Birmania/Myanmar — La UE no debe abandonar los requisitos de derechos humanos

Actualmente la Unión Europea está revisando su política relativa a Birmania/Myanmar e incluso valora si continuar con la suspensión de las sanciones de la UE o suprimirlas. El 22 de abril se adoptará una decisión final.

No existe ninguna duda de que se han producido cambios espectaculares en Birmania/Myanmar en los últimos dos años y de que se da una oportunidad para seguir cambiando, lo que debe fomentarse. Sin embargo, la Unión Europea tiene tendencia a destacar lo positivo y a ignorar algunas importantes y duras realidades sobre el terreno.

Es necesario encontrar, con cuidado, un equilibrio entre los estímulos y la presión continuada de varios tipos. Este equilibrio reviste suma importancia.

La campaña Burma Campaign UK ha publicado un informe en el que pueden encontrarse varios casos en los que se vulneran estos derechos ([1]).

Levantar las sanciones económicas y diplomáticas, cuando no se han cumplido exigencias clave de la UE en cuanto a la mejora de los derechos humanos, transmite al Gobierno de Birmania/Myanmar el mensaje de que puede ignorar, con toda seguridad, las peticiones de la UE para mejorar los derechos humanos sin tener que afrontar consecuencias.

¿Qué valoración han hecho los representantes de la UE/la VP/AR de la situación real de los derechos humanos en Birmania/Myanmar?

¿Dispone la UE/la VP/AR de información sobre si la situación y el bienestar de los rohingya ha mejorado?

¿Se tendrá en cuenta la situación real de los derechos humanos en la revisión final de la política de la UE?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de junio de 2013)

El 22 de abril, el Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores decidió levantar las sanciones, con excepción del embargo sobre las armas. Myanmar/Birmania se encuentra, sin duda, en una situación diferente de la imperante doce meses atrás, cuando se suspendieron las sanciones. La decisión de levantar las sanciones en lugar de prorrogar su suspensión se adoptó tras una rigurosa evaluación de la evolución registrada en el país. A través de dicha decisión se ha pretendido establecer un cuidadoso equilibrio entre, por una parte, el reconocimiento de los importantes progresos conseguidos y, por otra, los persistentes motivos de preocupación, en particular en el ámbito de los derechos humanos, como son la violencia entre comunidades y la situación de los rohingya.

La UE ha estado y seguirá estando en la primera línea de la actuación internacional encaminada a promover los derechos humanos en Myanmar/Birmania. La UE fue el principal promotor de la Resolución sobre la situación de los derechos humanos en Myanmar, aprobada por el Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas el 21 de marzo de 2013.

Los derechos humanos seguirán estando también en el centro del compromiso bilateral de la UE con Myanmar/Birmania. Tal como se estipula en las conclusiones de 22 de abril, ello implicará igualmente la promoción de un diálogo sistemático sobre derechos humanos entre la UE y Myanmar/Birmania. El representante especial de la UE para los derechos humanos visitó este país a mediados de mayo, a fin de debatir con las partes interesadas las modalidades para la puesta en marcha del diálogo sobre derechos humanos y tener una visión global de la situación actual.

De cara al futuro, la UE se ha comprometido a asumir un papel destacado con vistas a fomentar nuevas reformas democráticas, la reconciliación nacional y la consolidación de los derechos humanos en Myanmar/Birmania. Este compromiso quedó patente en la Declaración Conjunta emitida con ocasión de la visita a Bruselas del Presidente Thein Sein, el pasado mes de marzo.

([1]) http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk/index.php/news-and-reports/burma-briefing

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004380/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Burma — the EU must not abandon human rights benchmarks

The European Union is currently reviewing its policy on Burma, including whether to continue with the suspension of EU sanctions, or to lift them altogether. A final decision will be taken on 22 April.

There is no doubt that there have been dramatic changes in Burma in the past two years and that there is an opportunity for further change, which must be encouraged. However, there is a tendency by the European Union to highlight the positives while ignoring some important and harsh realities on the ground.

A careful balance needs to be struck between encouragement and continued pressure of various kinds. This balance is extremely important.

The Burma Campaign UK recently published a briefing where many cases of this breach of rights can be found ([1]).

The expected lifting of economic and diplomatic sanctions when key EU demands for improvements in human rights have not been met sends a signal to the Government of Burma that it can safely ignore EU calls for improvements in human rights, and face no consequences.

What assessment have representatives of the EU/VP-HR made of the real human rights situation in Burma?

Does the EU/VP-HR have information that the status and welfare of the Rohingya has improved?

Will the reality of the human rights situation be taken into account in the final revision of the EU policy revision?

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

On 22 April, the Foreign Affairs Council decided to lift sanctions with the exception of the arms embargo. Myanmar/Burma is undeniably in a different situation than it was 12 months ago, when sanctions were suspended. The decision to lift rather than extend suspension of the sanctions was taken after thorough assessment of developments in the country. It represents a careful balance struck between recognition of important progress achieved, and persisting concerns, notably in the field of human rights, such as inter-communal violence and the situation of the Rohingya.

The EU has been and will continue to be at the forefront of international action to promote human rights in Myanmar/Burma. The EU was the leading sponsor of the UN Human Rights Council's Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar of 21 March 2013.

Human rights will also remain at the heart of the EU's bilateral engagement with Myanmar/Burma. As stipulated in the 22 April Conclusions, this will also include the promotion of a regular human rights dialogue between the EU and Myanmar/Burma. The EU's Special Representative for Human Rights visited Myanmar/Burma in mid-May to discuss with stakeholders the modalities for launching the human rights dialogue and to gain an overview of the current situation.

Looking forward, the EU is committed to playing a key role in encouraging further democratic reforms, national reconciliation and strengthening of human rights in Myanmar/Burma. This commitment was underlined in the Joint Statement issued on the occasion of President Thein Sein's visit to Brussels in March

([1]) http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk/index.php/news-and-reports/burma-briefing.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004381/13
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Cardiff airport and EU state aid rules

In Written Question E-000903/2013, I advised the Commission of the intention of the Welsh Government, which is controlled by the Labour Party, to purchase Cardiff airport from its private owners, and of the consequence of this market distortion for neighbouring airports such as Bristol airport.

In its response, the Commission stated: 'As long as the state behaves as a profit-oriented market economy investor would do, there is no state aid involved … the price for which the state acquires the undertaking has to be a market price'.

The Welsh Government has now completed the purchase of Cardiff airport, at a sale price of GBP 52 million. This figure is considered to be considerably above market value. Despite assurances from the Welsh Government that the airport will be operated on an 'arm's-length' basis, it is expected that it will be providing annual funding to the sum of GBP 6 million to support capital investment and route development.

Does the Commission believe that this constitutes a breach of EU state aid rules?

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

To prevent illegal state aid being granted to the seller of the airport through the purchase of Cardiff Airport by the Welsh Government, the price paid by the state must indeed not be above the market price for the airport. At present the Commission has no information that the sale price of GBP 52 million is above this market price, and so has no indication that state aid might have been granted to the seller of the airport.

If after having acquired an economic undertaking, the state then subsequently invests in it, no state aid is involved if the investment is expected to yield adequate profits. If this is not the case the investment may constitute state aid.

With regard to possible future aid granted to the airport for the financing of its operation and infrastructure investments as well as for start-up aid for airlines, the UK authorities are obliged to notify any such aid to the Commission according to Article 107 (3) TFEU.

The Commission would then assess the compatibility of the aid with the internal market. With regard to aid to airports and airlines the Commission assesses the aid in line with the Community guidelines on financing of airports and start-up aid to airlines departing from regional airports (OJ C 312, 9.12.2005, p.1).

At the moment the Commission has no information that the United Kingdom plans to grant state aid to Cardiff Airport or the airlines using the airport.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004382/13
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Capital controls

With reference to your answer to my Written Question E-011592/2011 of 8 December 2011 on capital flight, it is clear that recent events in Cyprus have justified the fears I anticipated in my question.

1. Does the Commission concur that it would be prudent for citizens in the 'southern periphery' of the eurozone to protect their savings from default on the part of their government and/or their bank and/or from a possible restoration of their nation's currency (at a devalued rate) by moving their savings to safer havens? If not, why not?

2. Will the Commission rule out any further confiscation of savings of the kind recently carried out in Cyprus? If not, why not?

3. Will the Commission rule out any further capital control measures of the kind recently taken in Cyprus? If not, why not?

4. If the Commission will not rule out any further confiscation of savings and/or any further capital controls, will it therefore concur that it would be prudent for savers and depositors to take steps to seek out safe havens for their savings?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

A whole range of measures are in place or being negotiated which contribute to a consistent level of deposit protection throughout the internal market. For example, Directive 94/19/EC ensures that depositors are covered by deposit guarantee schemes up to a coverage level of EUR 100 000 in case of bank default. This guarantee has always been preserved for all depositors in the EU, including in Cyprus. The DGS system is complemented by Directive 97/9/EC on investor compensation schemes which offers protection with regard to securities. Measures have been proposed by the Commission to strengthen deposit guarantee schemes and investor compensation schemes and are awaiting the legislator's final decision. In addition, the proposal on bank recovery and resolution made in June 2012 aims at ensuring convergence in regulatory and financial frameworks for bank crisis management in the whole EU. This will reinforce the establishment of a common level of financial safety throughout the internal market.

While the imposition of capital control measures is an unprecedented measure, Article 65 TFEU allows such temporary restrictions to the free movement of capital. In the case of Cyprus, the Commission acknowledges that, taking into account the emergency situation and the significant risk of an uncontrollable outflow of deposits, temporary unilateral restrictions were justified in the overriding public interest in the given circumstances.

A monitoring system is in place to ensure that the capital controls are not maintained longer than necessary

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004383/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Accords UE-Inde, menace pour l'avenir des médicaments génériques

L'accord en cours de finalisation entre l'Union européenne et l'Inde suscite de vives inquiétudes. C'est un accord qui ne manquera pas d'être lourd de conséquences, notamment en ce qui concerne l'accès aux médicaments. En effet, certaines clauses, considérées comme dangereuses, pourraient avoir un fort impact aussi bien en Inde que dans l'ensemble des pays en développement qui s'approvisionnent massivement en médicaments génériques à bas prix produits par l'Inde. En effet, l'Inde est considérée comme la «pharmacie des pays sous-développés»; elle produit de ce fait plus de 80 % des médicaments génériques utilisés contre le VIH/sida. Au-delà des médicaments antirétroviraux et anticancéreux, ce pays produit de nombreux médicaments à moindre coût. Le jeu de la concurrence entre les producteurs de génériques est l'un des principaux facteurs à avoir permis la mise sous traitement de millions de malades dans les pays en développement depuis les débuts de la pandémie.

1. Par conséquent, si l'on coupe le robinet indien que constitue son industrie du médicament générique, ne met-on pas en danger des millions de personnes? La Commission a-t-elle considéré le fait que, rédigés comme tels, ces accords commerciaux auront des conséquences dramatiques pour la santé publique? L'industrie du médicament générique est essentielle pour les malades dans les pays en développement.

2. Le passage sur les mesures dangereuses que le texte comporte, mentionnant par exemple l'augmentation de la durée des brevets et l'exclusivité des données, ne va-t-il pas sonner la mise à mort de l'industrie du générique?

3. La Commission a-t-elle quantifié, ou compte-t-elle quantifier, les conséquences d'un tel traité sur le générique? Quel est le nombre des génériques qui sont fabriqués? Combien de vie ont-ils permis de sauver?

4. Pour répondre aux enjeux de santé publique, importer ou produire des copies génériques à bas prix est crucial pour des millions de personnes à travers le monde. La Commission est-elle prête à prendre le risque de voir ces gens mourir, faute de traitement?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(31 mai 2013)

La Commission est tout à fait consciente du rôle que peuvent jouer les médicaments génériques pour améliorer l'accès des populations les plus pauvres aux médicaments, ainsi que du rôle de l'Inde à cet égard. Le chapitre relatif à la propriété intellectuelle (DPI) de l'accord de libre-échange (ALE) entre l'UE et l'Inde ne portera pas atteinte à la capacité de ce pays à produire et à exporter des médicaments génériques à un prix abordable pour les populations qui en ont besoin.

De fait, en 2010 l'Union européenne et l'Inde étaient déjà convenues que le chapitre sur les droits de propriété intellectuelle du futur accord n'imposerait à aucune des parties d'introduire des modifications dans sa législation en matière de DPI en ce qui concerne l'accès aux médicaments. Cela signifie que l'ALE n'entraînera aucun changement dans la législation actuelle de l'Inde à cet égard, qu'il s'agisse de la protection des données, de la durée des brevets ou encore de l'application des DPI. Par ailleurs, l'UE a proposé d'inclure dans l'ALE une clause aux termes de laquelle «aucune disposition de l'accord ne peut être interprétée de manière à compromettre la capacité des parties à promouvoir l'accès aux médicaments». La position de négociation de l'UE n'a pas changé.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004383/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: EU-India agreements, a threat to the future of generic medicinal products

The agreement being finalised between the European Union and India has given rise to grave concerns. It cannot fail to have serious consequences, particularly as regards access to medicinal products. Some of the clauses deemed to be risky could have a major impact not only in India, but also in all the developing countries which are supplied with vast quantities of low-cost generic medicinal products by India. India has been called a 'pharmacy for under-developed countries' and it produces over 80% of the generic medicinal products used to treat HIV/AIDS. The country produces many other low-cost medicinal products as well as anti-retroviral and anti-cancer drugs. Competition between the manufacturers of generic medicinal products is one of the main factors which have made it possible to treat millions of patients in developing countries since the start of the pandemic.

1. Is it not therefore the case that millions of people would be put at risk if supplies from the Indian generic medicinal product industry were cut off? Has the Commission taken into account the fact that, as they stand, these trade agreements will have dramatic consequences for public health? The generic medicinal product industry is vital for patients in developing countries.

2. The text refers to certain measures which entail risks, for example longer patent lives and greater data exclusivity rights; will these not sound the death knell for the generics industry?

3. Has the Commission quantified, or does it intend to quantify, the effects of a treaty of this kind on generic medicinal products? How many generic medicinal products are manufactured? How many lives have they saved?

4. In order to respond to public health challenges, it is crucially important for millions of people across the world that low-cost generic copies can be imported or produced. Is the Commission prepared to accept the risk of these people dying if such treatment is not available?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

The Commission is well aware of the role that generics can play in improving access to medicines for the poorest populations, as well of the role played by India in this respect. The Intellectual Property (IPR) Chapter in the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will not undermine India's ability to produce and export affordable generic medicines for people in need.

In fact, in 2010 the EU and India already agreed that the IPR chapter of the future agreement will not request either party to introduce amendments to its current IPR law in relation to access to medicines. This implies that the FTA will not result in any changes to India's current legislation, not only with respect to data protection and patent term, but also in relation to IPR enforcement. Furthermore, the EU has proposed that the FTA contain a provision stating that 'nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as to impair the capacity of the Parties to promote access to medicines'. The EU's negotiating position has not changed.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004384/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Libéralisation des aides d'États

La France, l'Allemagne et le Royaume-Uni ont appelé la Commission à «libéraliser» les aides d'État pour les investir dans l'innovation des entreprises.

Les trois grandes puissances de l'Union européenne défendent l'assouplissement et la libéralisation des aides d'État devant la Commission.

Dans leur argumentation, les trois États expliquent que dans le monde entier, hormis la Silicon Valley en Californie, ce sont les États qui payent l'innovation technologique: en Chine, en Corée, en Amérique du Sud, au Canada, aux États-Unis. L'Europe devrait dès lors être «au niveau», sinon «ce seront eux qui inventeront les technologies de demain».

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle prendre des dispositions protectrices contre la concurrence déloyale?

3. Les trois États prennent d'ailleurs comme exemple le secteur de l'énergie photovoltaïque qui a souffert de la concurrence des bas prix chinois. Est-ce un exemple acceptable pour la Commission?

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

En premier lieu, la Commission rappelle qu'un soutien efficace à l'innovation exige un dispositif de contrôle permettant de garantir que les aides d'État ciblent les situations où le marché seul ne permet pas de développer l'innovation et où ces aides ont un effet incitatif et sont limitées au minimum nécessaire pour atteindre leur objectif.

Actuellement, la Commission travaille à la modernisation des règles de l'UE applicables aux aides d'État, qui comprennent les règles relatives à la RDI et au financement des risques. L'objectif est de garantir une concurrence effective sur le marché intérieur afin de permettre aux entreprises de l'UE d'innover et de faire face à la mondialisation.

En second lieu, on observera que, si les règles de l'UE relatives aux aides d'État ne peuvent pas en elles-mêmes offrir une protection contre la concurrence déloyale, les dispositions applicables aux aides à la RDI prévoient la possibilité d'octroyer des aides dont l'intensité est équivalente à celle des aides octroyées hors de l'Union pour des projets similaires. De manière plus générale, l'UE peut recourir à des instruments de défense commerciale, comme des mesures antidumping et compensatoires, afin de garantir des conditions de concurrence équitables dans le domaine du commerce international.

En ce qui concerne plus particulièrement le secteur de l'énergie photovoltaïque, la Commission a récemment soumis les importations de produits chinois à des conditions strictes ([1]). Cela témoigne de sa détermination à utiliser des instruments adéquats chaque fois que cela s'avère nécessaire, afin de garantir des conditions de concurrence équitables au niveau mondial.

En outre, il convient de noter que les règles applicables aux aides d'État permettent déjà à l'industrie photovoltaïque de l'UE de recevoir un soutien efficace. La Commission a, par exemple, autorisé ([2]) l'Allemagne à financer la construction d'un nouveau centre de recherche sur l'énergie photovoltaïque à base de silicium, auquel les entreprises européennes ont librement accès.

([1]) Concernant les importations de modules photovoltaïques en silicium cristallin et de leurs composants essentiels originaires ou en provenance de la République populaire de Chine, voir le règlement (UE) nº 182/2013 de la Commission du 1er mars 2013 (JO L 61 du 5.3.2013).

([2]) Décision de la Commission du 30 janvier 2008 concernant l'aide d'État N 365/2007 (JO C 91 du 12.4.2008).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004384/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Liberalisation of state aid

France, Germany and the United Kingdom have called on the Commission to 'liberalise' State aid so that it can be invested in business innovation.

The European Union's three major powers have made a case to the Commission for relaxing and liberalising state aid.

The three Member States explain in their arguments that technological innovation is publicly funded everywhere in the world except for Silicon Valley in California: in China, Korea, South America, Canada and the United States. Europe should therefore be 'up to standard', otherwise 'it will be other countries which invent the technologies of tomorrow'.

1. What is the Commission's response to this?

2. Is the Commission planning to take steps to protect against unfair competition?

3. The three Member States refer to the example of the photovoltaic energy sector, which has been hit by low-cost Chinese competition. Does the Commission believe that this is a valid example?

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

The Commission recalls firstly that effective innovation support requires a control system ensuring that state aid is targeted at situations where the market alone would not deliver innovation, and where aid has an incentive effect and is limited to the minimum necessary to achieve its policy objective.

The Commission is currently modernising EU State aid rules, including those on R&D&I and risk financing. The objective is to ensure effective competition in the internal market so that EU companies innovate and tackle globalisation.

Secondly, while EU State aid rules cannot by themselves 'protect against unfair competition', R&D&I aid rules currently provide for the possibility of granting R&D aid that matches aid intensities granted outside the EU for comparable projects. More generally, the EU can make use of trade defence instruments, such as anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures, in order to ensure a level playing field in international trade.

As regards the photovoltaic sector in particular, the Commission has recently made imports from China subject to strict conditions ([1]). This demonstrates the Commission's determination to use appropriate instruments whenever necessary to ensure a global level playing field.

Further, it should be noted that state aid rules already allow effective support for the EU photovoltaic industry. For example, the Commission authorised ([2]) Germany to support the construction of a new Research Centre for Silicon Photovoltaic, to which European enterprises have unrestricted access.

([1]) Concerning imports of crystalline silicon photovoltaic modules and key components originating in or consigned from China; Regulation (EU) No 182/2013 of 1 March 2013, OJ L 61, 5.3.2013.

([2]) Commission decision of 30.1.2008, State-aid N 365/2007, OJ C 91, 12.4.2008.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004385/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Banque centrale européenne (BCE) — rapport annuel

1. La Commission compte-t-elle présenter des propositions en vue d'un nouveau fonds européen de résolution et d'un système européen de garantie des dépôts venant compléter les fonctions de surveillance de la BCE, comme l'y invite le Parlement européen dans sa résolution adoptée le mercredi 17 avril 2013 sur le rapport annuel 2011 de la Banque centrale européenne?

2. Dans l'affirmative, quelles sont ces propositions?

Réponse donnée par M. Rehn au nom de la Commission
(30 mai 2013)

La Commission a l'intention de présenter avant l'été une proposition de mécanisme de résolution unique, afin de parachever l'union bancaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004385/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: European Central Bank (ECB) — annual report

1. Is the Commission planning to put forward proposals for a new European resolution fund and a European deposit guarantee system that complement the supervisory functions of the ECB, as called for by Parliament in its resolution of Wednesday 17 April 2013 on the 2011 annual report of the European Central Bank?

2. If so, what are its proposals?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission intends to put forward a proposal for a Single Resolution Mechanism by the Summer in order to complement the Banking Union.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004386/13
au Conseil
Marielle Gallo (PPE)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement — exclusion des services audiovisuels

Le 12 mars 2013, la Commission a présenté une proposition de mandat pour la négociation d'un accord de libre-échange avec les États-Unis appelé «Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement».

Ce partenariat aura vocation à stimuler la croissance de l'Union européenne et la création de nouveaux emplois, objectifs louables en cette période de crises économique et sociale. Cependant, il ne faut pas perdre de vue que la promotion de la diversité culturelle est aussi un objectif de l'Union, énoncé à l'article 167 du traité FUE. En outre, depuis le cycle d'Uruguay, l'Union exclut systématiquement les services audiovisuels des accords commerciaux.

1. Le Conseil exclura-t-il explicitement les services audiovisuels de l'accord de libre-échange avec les États-Unis?

2. En cas de réponse négative à la première question, quelles sont les raisons qui justifient un changement de position de la part de l'Union en ce qui concerne les services audiovisuels dans le cadre de la politique commerciale commune?

Réponse
(24 juin 2013)

La recommandation de décision du Conseil autorisant l'ouverture de négociations concernant un accord global sur le commerce et l'investissement entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis d'Amérique, qui comporte le projet de directives de négociation, est en cours d'examen au sein du Conseil. Les discussions portent notamment sur la question de la diversité culturelle. Dès que les directives de négociation auront été adoptées, le Conseil informera le Parlement européen de leur teneur, comme l'y oblige le traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004386/13
to the Council
Marielle Gallo (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic trade and investment partnership — exclusion of audiovisual services

On 12 March 2013, the Commission tabled a proposal for a negotiating mandate for a free trade agreement with the United States entitled 'Transatlantic trade and investment partnership'.

The partnership is intended to boost growth in the European Union and create new jobs, which are laudable objectives at a time of economic and social crisis. However, it should not be forgotten that promoting cultural diversity is another of the EU's objectives, as enshrined in Article 167 TFEU. What is more, the EU has systematically excluded audiovisual services from trade agreements since the Uruguay Round.

1. Will the Council explicitly exclude audiovisual services from the free trade agreement with the United States?

2. If not, what reasons would justify a change in the EU's position on audiovisual services under the common trade policy?

Reply
(24 June 2013)

The Commission's Recommendation for a Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations on a comprehensive trade and investment agreement between the European Union and the United States of America, including the draft negotiating directives, is currently under discussion in the Council. These discussions include the issue of cultural diversity. As soon as the negotiating directives are adopted, the Council will inform the European Parliament, in line with its obligations under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004387/13
à la Commission
Marielle Gallo (PPE)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement — exclusion des services audiovisuels

Le 12 mars 2013, la Commission a présenté une proposition de mandat pour la négociation d'un accord de libre-échange avec les États-Unis appelé «Partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement».

Cette proposition de mandat n'exclut pas explicitement les services audiovisuels. Or, il ne faut pas perdre de vue que la promotion de la diversité culturelle est un objectif de l'Union européenne, énoncé à l'article 167 du traité FUE. D'ailleurs, depuis le cycle d'Uruguay, l'Union exclut systématiquement les services audiovisuels des accords commerciaux, l'exemple le plus récent étant les négociations pour un accord de libre-échange entre l'UE et le Canada (CETA).

1. La Commission s'est elle fixée comme objectif l'exclusion des services audiovisuels de l'accord de libre-échange avec les États-Unis?

2. En cas de réponse négative à la première question, quelles sont les raisons qui justifient un changement de position de la part de l'Union dans le cadre de la politique commerciale commune en ce qui concerne les services audiovisuels?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(24 mai 2013)

La diversité culturelle, inscrite à l'article 167, paragraphe 4, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne et dans la Convention de l'Unesco sur la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles, est un des principes directeurs de l'action de la Commission, y compris de sa politique commerciale. Les directives de négociation proposées en vue de la conclusion d'un partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement respectent pleinement cette ligne de conduite. C'est dans cet esprit que la Commission et les États membres discutent actuellement des moyens d'introduire dans les directives de négociation un juste équilibre entre, d'une part, la sensibilité du secteur de l'audiovisuel et la nécessité de maintenir une marge de manœuvre politique appropriée et, d'autre part, l'objectif de mener des négociations larges et ambitieuses. L'Honorable Parlementaire notera que dans des propositions de directives de négociation antérieures, notamment celles concernant le Japon, en rapport avec le programme de Doha pour le développement, le secteur de l'audiovisuel n'a pas été totalement exclu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004387/13
to the Commission
Marielle Gallo (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Transatlantic trade and investment partnership — exclusion of audiovisual services

On 12 March 2013, the Commission presented a proposal for a negotiating mandate for a free trade agreement with the United States entitled 'Transatlantic trade and investment partnership'.

The mandate proposal does not explicitly exclude audiovisual services, and it should not be forgotten that promoting cultural diversity is one of the EU's objectives, as enshrined in Article 167 TFEU. Yet the EU has systematically excluded audiovisual services from trade agreements since the Uruguay Round, the most recent example being the negotiations for a free trade agreement between the EU and Canada (CETA).

1. Is the Commission aiming to exclude audiovisual services from the free trade agreement with the United States?

2. If not, what reasons would justify a change in the EU's position on audiovisual services under the common trade policy?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

Cultural diversity, as enshrined in Article 167 (paragraph 4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Unesco Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, is a guiding principle of the Commission's actions, including in the context of trade. The proposed negotiating directives for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement (TTIP) fully respect this policy. Against this background, Commission and Member States are currently discussing ways of how to reflect in the negotiating directives the right balance between, on the one hand, the sensitivity of the audiovisual sector and the need to maintain commensurate policy space and, on the other hand, the objective of broad and ambitious negotiations. The Honourable Member should note that in earlier proposals for negotiating directives, such as these concerning Japan on the Doha Development Agenda, the audiovisual sector was not entirely excluded.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004388/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) e Guido Milana (S&D)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Concessioni demaniali per l'esercizio delle attività di acquacoltura

Il processo di recepimento nell'ordinamento italiano della direttiva 2006/123/CE relativa ai servizi nel mercato interno ha sollevato la questione della sua applicabilità al regime per il rilascio e rinnovo delle concessioni demaniali marittime per lo svolgimento delle attività di acquacoltura, questione che in Italia assume particolare urgenza soprattutto in relazione alle concessioni in procinto di scadenza o già scadute il 31 dicembre 2012.

Per la tutela degli investimenti, così come per la salvaguardia dei livelli occupazionali, fatti salvi gli obiettivi di tutela della concorrenza, occorre dare certezza di diritto agli operatori e alle imprese operanti in un settore di importanza strategica per il futuro della filiera ittica nazionale.

L'attività di acquacoltura, quale recentemente definita nella normativa nazionale di riordino del settore, decreto legislativo del 9 gennaio 2012, n.4, non costituisce prestazione di servizi, ma attività di produzione primaria, rientrante nel settore dell'attività agricola. Il tipo di concessioni in questione si avvicina più a una semplice locazione del bene demaniale a fini di produzione, senza che, appunto, vengano prestati servizi su tali beni.

Al fine di porre e affrontare il problema sulla base della specificità che gli è propria, senza incappare nell'errore di mutuare per il settore dell'acquacoltura soluzioni idonee ad altri settori, considerando la netta separazione esistente tra concessioni rilasciate per lo svolgimento di attività di produzione primaria e concessioni rilasciate per lo svolgimento di attività di servizi, si chiede alla Commissione:

Le previsioni e le decadenze della Direttiva Servizi, e conseguentemente dei relativi atti di recepimento emanati dal legislatore nazionale, in relazione a rapporti concessori sul demanio marittimo sono applicabili al regime di rilascio e rinnovo delle concessioni demaniali per lo svolgimento delle attività di acquacoltura?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2013)

La direttiva 2006/123/CE (la direttiva «Servizi»), come indicato all'articolo 2, si applica ai servizi forniti dai prestatori stabiliti in uno Stato membro. Secondo la giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia, la produzione di merci non è un'attività di servizi. Inoltre, è necessario valutare caso per caso se determinate attività costituiscano o no un servizio, tenendo conto di tutte le loro caratteristiche, tra cui il modo in cui tali attività vengono prestate e gestite nello Stato membro interessato.

Come segnalato dagli onorevoli deputati, il decreto legislativo del 9 gennaio 2012, n. 4, definisce l'acquacoltura un'attività di produzione primaria rientrante nel settore dell'attività agricola. Lo stesso vale per la definizione di cui all'articolo 3, lettera d), del regolamento (CE) n. 1198/2006 del Consiglio.

La Commissione ritiene che l'attività di acquacoltura in quanto tale non rientri nell'ambito di applicazione della direttiva «Servizi». Tuttavia, va tenuto presente che esistono molte attività correlate all'agricoltura, come la vendita al dettaglio o la manutenzione, cui essa potrebbe applicarsi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004388/13
to the Commission
Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D) and Guido Milana (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Concession of State-owned property for conducting aquaculture business

The process of transposing Directive 2006/123/EC concerning services in the internal market into Italian law has raised the question of its applicability to the system for granting and renewing concessions of State-owned maritime property for aquaculture businesses, an issue which is particularly topical in Italy because of the concessions which are on the verge of expiring or expired on 31 December 2012.

In order to safeguard investments, as well as levels of employment, without prejudice to the objectives of safeguarding competition, the operators and companies operating in this strategically important sector for the future of the national fishing industry must be given certainty about their rights.

The aquaculture business, as recently defined in national legislation governing the reorganisation of the sector, i.e. Legislative Decree No 4 of 9 January 2012, is not a service but a primary production activity, which places it in the farming sector. The type of concession in question is closer to a simple hiring of State-owned property for the purposes of production, without services actually being provided at the property.

In order to determine and tackle the problem on the basis of its own unique features, without making the mistake of borrowing solutions suitable for other sectors for the aquaculture sector, considering the clear separation which exists between concessions awarded for conducting primary production activities and concessions awarded for conducting service activities, can the Commission state:

Are the provisions and deadlines of the Services Directive, and consequently of the transposition measures issued by the national legislator, in relation to the concessional relationships for State-owned maritime property, applicable to the regime for granting and renewing concessions of State-owned maritime property for conducting aquaculture business?

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

Directive 2006/123/EC ('the Services Directive'), as indicated in its Article 2, shall apply to services supplied by providers established in a Member State. According to the case law of the Court of Justice, the production of goods is not a service activity. Furthermore, the assessment of whether certain activities constitute a service has to be carried out on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all of their characteristics, including the way they are provided and organised in the Member State concerned.

As the Honourable Members points out, Legislative Decree No 4 of 9 January 2012 defines the aquaculture business as a primary production within the farming sector. The same applies to the definition given by Council Regulation (EC) 1198/2006 in its Art. 3 (d).

The Commission considers that the activity of aquaculture as such is not within the scope of the Services Directive. However, it must be taken into consideration that there are many activities ancillary to aquaculture, e.g retailing or maintenance, to which the Services Directive could be applicable.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004389/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Cuestiones sobre actos delegados y actos de ejecución

Los artículos 290 y 291 del Tratado de Lisboa regulan el funcionamiento básico y general de los actos delegados y de los actos de ejecución, a través de los cuales se ejercita la delegación de poderes por parte de las instituciones europeas a favor de la Comisión. Esta normativa de alcance general, y la aprobada para regular su desarrollo procedimental, ha modificado el funcionamiento legislativo de la Unión Europea, intentando clarificar las competencias otorgadas por el Tratado de Lisboa a unas u otras instituciones comunitarias.

Sin embargo, a pesar de esta normativa, en la práctica esta distinción de poderes y procedimientos no está tan clara. Cada día son más los problemas existentes en la tramitación de las diferentes iniciativas legislativas, debido a la inclusión del uso de los actos delegados o de ejecución. Su aceptación o no por uno u otro colegislador hace en ocasiones inviable alcanzar el necesario acuerdo interinstitucional.

Ante esta situación general de posible bloqueo legislativo, ¿qué acciones ha pensado tomar la Comisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Šefčovič en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión sigue un planteamiento coherente que se basa en la elección entre actos delegados y de ejecución dependiendo de cada caso concreto y de conformidad con los criterios del Tratado, y únicamente en función de la naturaleza de las competencias que le han sido otorgadas. Cualquier aplicación incorrecta de los criterios establecidos en los artículos 290 y 291 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE podría afectar a la legalidad del acto legislativo de base e incluso a la validez de los actos posteriormente adoptados por la Comisión.

La Comisión seguirá, por tanto, mediando con honestidad en cada procedimiento legislativo al tiempo que garantizará el respeto de los criterios del Tratado. Esto podría implicar además el rechazo de las modificaciones introducidas por el legislador en el transcurso del procedimiento legislativo, o la remisión de actos legislativos al Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea en los casos en que la Comisión considere que el legislador no ha respetado los criterios del Tratado.

Asimismo, la Comisión ha iniciado un diálogo con el Consejo y el Parlamento Europeo, basado en las prácticas seguidas en el pasado y documentado con ejemplos concretos de legislación anteriormente aprobada. El objetivo es desarrollar un enfoque horizontal entre las tres instituciones que ofrezca orientación para aplicar más coherentemente, en determinados expedientes legislativos, los criterios establecidos en los artículos 290 y 291 del Tratado. Si dichas conversaciones culminaran con éxito, este enfoque horizontal podría resultar útil para complementar el actual «Acuerdo común sobre actos delegados», suscrito entre las tres instituciones en 2011, y, al mismo tiempo, facilitaría las negociaciones sobre las actuales y futuras propuestas legislativas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004389/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Questions concerning delegated acts and implementing acts

Articles 290 and 291 of the Treaty of Lisbon govern the basic and general functioning of the delegated acts and implementing acts by which powers are delegated to the Commission by European institutions. These regulations of general application, and those adopted to govern their procedural execution, have changed the functioning of EU legislation by attempting to clarify the powers conferred by the Treaty of Lisbon on the various EU institutions.

In practice, however, this means of distinguishing powers and procedures is not so straightforward. The use of delegated and implementing acts has had an increasingly detrimental effect on the processing of different legislative initiatives. The question of whether or not such acts have been adopted by a particular co-legislator sometimes makes it impossible for the required interinstitutional agreement to be reached.

In the face of this potential legislative deadlock, what actions does the Commission intend to take?

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

The Commission's consistent approach is that the choice between delegated and implementing acts has to be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Treaty criteria, solely with regard to the nature of the power that is to be conferred. A misuse of the criteria set out in Articles 290 and 291 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU might not only affect the legality of the basic legislative act but it could also impinge on the validity of subsequent acts adopted by the Commission.

The Commission will, therefore, continue to act as an honest broker in each legislative procedure while ensuring the respect of the Treaty criteria, which can also include the non-acceptance of amendments made by the legislator during the legislative procedure or the referral of legislative acts to the Court of Justice of the European Union in cases where the Commission considers that the legislator has not respected the Treaty criteria.

In addition, the Commission has initiated a dialogue with the Council and the European Parliament, based on past practice and supported by concrete examples from previously adopted legislation, with the aim to develop a horizontal approach between the three Institutions that would provide guidance for a more coherent application, in specific legislative files, of the criteria laid down in Articles 290 and 291 of the Treaty. If such an exercise was successful, this horizontal approach could helpfully complement the existing 'common understanding on delegated acts' agreed between the three Institutions in 2011 and facilitate the negotiations in pending and future legislative proposal.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004390/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Defensa de los derechos de las minorías

La Unión Europea, tal y como recoge el Programa de Estocolmo, debe ser ante todo un espacio único de protección de los derechos y libertades fundamentales. Desgraciadamente en los últimos años estamos asistiendo a la proliferación de movimientos extremistas que atentan contra los derechos de determinados colectivos, especialmente por motivos étnicos, de género o religiosos.

Ante esta situación, ¿está tomando la Comisión algún tipo de medida para fomentar y lograr el efectivo respeto de los derechos de las minorías?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

De conformidad con el artículo 2 del Tratado de la Unión Europea, el respeto de los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías es uno de los valores fundadores de la UE que son comunes a todos los Estados miembros. Además, los artículos 21 y 22 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea prohíben toda discriminación basada en la pertenencia a una minoría nacional y establecen el respeto por parte de la Unión de la diversidad cultural, religiosa y lingüística.

Tal como ya explicó, por ejemplo, en su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-01067/2012, la Comisión no tiene ninguna competencia general en lo que respecta a las minorías. No obstante, en el ámbito del Derecho de la UE, la Comisión vela por que los Estados miembros respeten los derechos fundamentales, incluido el principio de no discriminación contemplado en el artículo 21 de la Carta, al aplicar ese Derecho. Además, la legislación de la UE ([1]) y los programas de financiación contribuyen a solucionar algunas dificultades que es probable que afecten a las personas pertenecientes a minorías, tales como la discriminación y la incitación a la violencia o al odio por motivos de raza u origen nacional o étnico ([2]).

La Comisión también apoya proyectos relacionados con las lenguas regionales y minoritarias mediante una variedad de programas, inclusive en ámbitos como la educación y la formación, la cultura y el apoyo a la juventud.

La Comisión apoya activamente la lucha contra la discriminación por motivos de origen étnico en el marco del programa Progress, mediante estudios, subvenciones a la sociedad civil y las autoridades nacionales, intercambios entre pares, y campañas de concienciación ([3]).

([1]) Véase http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/law/index_en.htm
([2]) Para más información, puede consultarse la página web de la DG de Justicia: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/index_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004390/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Defending minority rights

According to the Stockholm Programme, the European Union must primarily be a unique space in which fundamental rights and freedoms are protected. Unfortunately, in the past few years very many extremist movements have emerged that seek to curtail the rights of certain groups, particularly on the grounds of ethnicity, gender and religion.

In the face of this situation, is the Commission taking any measures to ensure that minority rights are effectively fostered and respected?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the EU, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the EU that are common to all Member States. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

As explained for instance in its reply to Written Question E-01067/2012, the Commission has no general powers as regards minorities. However within the scope of EC law, the Commission ensures that Member States, when implementing this law, respect fundamental rights, including the principle of non-discrimination provided in Article 21 of the Charter. Furthermore, EU legislation ([1]) and financing programmes contribute to address certain difficulties which are likely to affect persons belonging to minorities, such as discrimination and incitement to violence or hatred based on race or national or ethnic origin ([2]).

The Commission also supports projects related to regional and minority languages through a variety of programmes, including in areas such as education and training, culture and youth support.

The Commission is actively supporting activities in the field of antidiscrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin through the PROGRESS programme, including studies, grants to civil society and national authorities, peer exchange, and awareness raising campaigns ([3]).

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/law/index_en.htm
([2]) For further information, please see DG Justice website at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004391/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Ayuda alimentaria 2014-2020

Actualmente existen cerca de 80 millones de ciudadanos europeos que viven por debajo del umbral de la pobreza, 13 millones de personas que padecen pobreza en 19 Estados miembros y en torno a 30 millones de personas mal nutridas en el territorio europeo. Y estas cifras no hacen sino aumentar año tras año como consecuencia de la crisis económica que atraviesan los diferentes Estados miembros.

Durante los últimos años hemos asistido a debates y visto movimientos políticos destinados, si no a eliminar, sí a reducir paulatinamente las ayudas destinadas a estos colectivos tan vulnerables. Esto debe evitarse.

El debate del marco financiero plurianual 2014-2020 juega un papel vital para el futuro de estas políticas, ya que de su contenido dependerá el mantenimiento o la desaparición en mayor o menor medida de estas ayudas en favor de los ciudadanos más necesitados de ayuda en la Unión.

Ante esta situación de posible desamparo, ¿qué acciones está llevando a cabo la Comisión para asegurar la sostenibilidad de las ayudas alimentarias para el periodo 2014-2020?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión está apoyando activamente a los dos colegisladores para lograr un acuerdo acerca de su propuesta sobre el nuevo Fondo de Ayuda Europea para los Más Necesitados. Si desea Su Señoría conocer más detalles sobre dicha propuesta, la Comisión tiene a bien remitirle a las respuestas dadas a las anteriores preguntas escritas E-001134/2013 y E-002087/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004391/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Food aid 2014-2020

Currently, almost 80 million European citizens live below the poverty line, 13 million people suffer the effects of poverty in 19 Member States and around 30 million people are malnourished within European territory. Every year, these figures keep rising as a result of the economic crisis affecting the different Member States.

Over the past few years we have witnessed debates and seen political movements whose aim was, if not to eliminate, then to gradually reduce, the aid earmarked for these vulnerable groups. This must be avoided.

The debate surrounding the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 is essential to the future of these policies since it will determine whether aid continues to be provided to those who most need the EU's assistance.

In the face of this situation, what actions is the Commission taking to ensure that food aid is maintained for the period 2014-2020?

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

The Commission is actively supporting the two co-legislations to find an agreement on its proposal for the new Fund for European Aid to the most deprived. For further details on its proposal, the Commission would like to kindly refer the Honorable Member to the answers provided to previous written questions, notably E-001134/2013 and E-002087/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004392/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Futuras medidas para luchar contra el desempleo

El problema del paro afecta en el conjunto de la UE a 26,2 millones de personas, 19 millones de los cuales viven en la zona del euro.

En el mes de febrero de 2013 en el conjunto de la UE el paro se situó en el 10,90 %. Estos datos son aún peores en la zona del euro, en la que el desempleo alcanza el 11,9 %.

Este problema no ha hecho sino agudizarse en los últimos años, mostrando una tendencia ascendente. La tasa de paro en el conjunto de la UE se situaba en el mes de febrero de 2011 en el 9,40 %, y en el año 2012, en el 10,20 %. Por su parte, en la zona del euro el incremento sufrido por la tasa de paro ha sido superior a un punto.

Desgraciadamente, todos los indicadores económicos prevén que el paro se agravará aún más durante los próximos periodos.

Ante estas perspectivas, ¿qué medidas ha pensado desarrollar la Comisión para solucionar el problema del paro en los próximos años?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004394/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Futuras medidas para luchar contra el desempleo

El problema del desempleo afecta en el conjunto de la UE a 26,2 millones de personas, de las que 19 millones viven en la zona del euro.

Así, en el conjunto de la UE el desempleo ha aumentado siete décimas en el último año, hasta alcanzar el 10,8 %. En la zona del euro el incremento es superior a un punto y alcanza ya el 11,9 %.

¿Podría indicar la Comisión qué medidas está desarrollando para hacer frente en estos momentos al problema del desempleo en la Unión Europea?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

Los actuales niveles de desempleo son intolerables, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la juventud europea. Con el paquete sobre el empleo ([1]) la Comisión aconseja a los Estados miembros unas medidas en áreas tales como la creación de puestos de trabajo en sectores estratégicos, la inversión en cualificaciones y la plena realización del mercado laboral de la UE. En el paquete de empleo juvenil ([2]), la Comisión propone la Garantía Juvenil. El Consejo Europeo aprobó una Iniciativa de Empleo Juvenil, con 6 000 millones de euros a favor de medidas de empleo juvenil. El paquete sobre inversión social ([3]) insta a los Estados miembros a gastar de un modo más eficaz y eficiente para garantizar una protección social adecuada y sostenible.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 de 18 de abril de 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 de 5 de diciembre de 2012.
([3]) COM(2013) 144 de 12 de marzo de 2013.

También es necesario actuar a escala nacional. El Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento 2013 ([4]) fijó los objetivos estratégicos siguientes: consolidación fiscal diferenciada y favorable al crecimiento; fomento del crecimiento y la competitividad; lucha contra el desempleo y las consecuencias sociales de la crisis. Estos objetivos deben inspirar a los Estados miembros y hacerles tomar las adecuadas medidas laborales y sociales, incluidas las reformas estructurales. Como parte del Semestre Europeo de 2013, la Comisión ha propuesto una recomendación para tratar el empleo juvenil.

([4]) COM(2012) 750 de 28 de noviembre de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004392/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Future measures to tackle unemployment

Across the EU, unemployment affects 26.2 million people, of whom 19 million live in the euro area.

In February 2013, unemployment across the EU was 10.9%. These figures are even worse in the euro area, where unemployment has reached 11.9%.

Over the past few years the problem has only worsened, with unemployment on an upward trend. In February 2011, the unemployment rate across the EU was 9.4% whereas in 2012 it was 10.2%. The rise in unemployment in the euro area has been greater than 1%.

Unfortunately, all economic indicators predict that unemployment will rise even further in the near future.

Faced with this perspective, what measures will the Commission take to solve the problem of unemployment in the next few years?

Question for written answer E-004394/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Future measures for tackling unemployment

The problem of unemployment is affecting 26.2 million people across the EU, 19 million of whom live within the euro area.

Therefore, unemployment in the EU as a whole has increased by 70% in the last year and has now reached 10.8%. There has been an increase of more than one percentage point in the euro area, where the figure is now 11.9%.

Could the Commission specify what measures it is developing to address the problem of unemployment in the European Union at this critical time?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(14 June 2013)

Current unemployment levels are intolerable, especially for what concerns the European youth. With the Employment Package ([1]) the Commission has advised Member States on measures in such areas as job creation in strategic sectors, investment in skills and completion of the EU labour market. In the Youth Employment Package ([2]), the Commission proposed the Youth Guarantee. The European Council approved a EUR 6 billion worth Youth Employment Initiative in support of youth employment measures. The Social Investment Package ([3]) invited Member States to spend more effectively and efficiently to ensure adequate and sustainable social protection.

Action is also needed at the national level. The 2013 Annual Growth Survey ([4]) set the strategic objectives of pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; promoting growth and competitiveness; tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis. These objectives should inspire Member States to take appropriate labour market and social policy measures, including structural reforms. As part of the 2013 European Semester, the Commission has proposed a country-specific recommendation on tackling youth employment.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012.
([2]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 5 December 2012.
([3]) COM(2013) 144 of 12 March 2013.
([4]) COM(2012) 750 of 28 November 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004393/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Abolición de la pena de muerte, la tortura y otros tratos inhumanos y degradantes

El Programa de Estocolmo recoge, entre otros puntos, la invitación para que las instituciones europeas continúen con los esfuerzos para conseguir la abolición de la pena de muerte, la tortura y otros tratos inhumanos y degradantes.

Desgraciadamente estos delitos siguen produciéndose y en algunos países adquieren rango de legalidad. La UE no puede permanecer impasible ante tales hechos, no solo dentro de nuestras fronteras sino también fuera de ellas. Hemos visto que algunos delitos, como la trata de seres humanos, han aumentado considerablemente dentro de nuestras fronteras. Concretamente, y a modo ilustrativo, entre los años 2008 y 2010 el tráfico de personas en la EU ha aumentado un 18 %, afectando principalmente a mujeres utilizadas para el comercio sexual. Por el contrario, las detenciones de sospechosos han disminuido un 13 % en ese periodo.

Por ello, ¿puede informar la Comisión sobre las medidas que está desarrollando para conseguir la abolición de la pena de muerte, la tortura y otros tratos inhumanos y degradantes?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

La UE es una firme defensora de la abolición de la pena de muerte y la erradicación de la tortura. Su compromiso con esta doble causa se reitera firmemente en el Marco estratégico de la UE sobre derechos humanos y democracia.

Habida cuenta de ello, la UE se muestra en todo momento dispuesta a responder al aumento de las ejecuciones, utilizando todos los medios a su alcance: a) declaraciones y comunicados, b) gestiones diplomáticas en los países afectados, c) sanciones, como en el caso de Irán, d) diálogos sobre los derechos humanos, y e) acciones en foros multilaterales, especialmente en el contexto de las Naciones Unidas donde la UE tuvo un papel fundamental en la adopción de la Resolución 67/206 de 21.12.2012, en la que se pide una moratoria mundial de la pena de muerte.

El Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (EIDHR) es un elemento esencial del compromiso de la UE contra la pena de muerte. Desde 2007, la Comisión presta su apoyo a ONG regionales e internacionales que defienden su abolición. El EIDHR ha destinado casi 20 millones de euros a la lucha contra la pena de muerte, siendo el único instrumento que financia proyectos en todos los países que aún la mantienen.

La prevención y erradicación de todas las formas de tortura es otro de los principales objetivos de la UE. Las Directrices de la UE sobre la tortura constituyen el marco general de actuación en la materia en relación con terceros países, así como en los foros multilaterales. Esas Directrices contemplan el uso de todos los instrumentos diplomáticos y de cooperación existentes, en particular el diálogo político, las gestiones de las representaciones diplomáticas y la concesión de ayudas a proyectos de ONG a través del EIDHR. En 2012 se publicó una convocatoria de propuestas bajo el título «Lucha contra la Impunidad», uno de cuyos lotes específicos, dotado con 20 millones de euros, era el de las acciones de la sociedad civil contra la tortura.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004393/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Abolition of the death penalty, torture and inhuman and degrading treatment

The Stockholm Programme includes a request to the European institutions to continue to press for the abolition of the death penalty, torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment.

Unfortunately, these crimes are still being committed and are even lawful in some countries. The EU cannot turn a blind eye to such acts, not only within our borders but also beyond them. We have seen certain crimes, such as human trafficking, increase substantially within our borders. By way of example, between 2008 and 2010, human trafficking in the EU increased by 18%, with most of the victims being women bound for the sex trade. Arrests of suspects over the same period, however, fell by 13%.

Can the Commission report on the measures it is taking towards the abolition of the death penalty, torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment?

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

The EU is fully committed to the abolition of capital punishment and the eradication of torture. This commitment is strongly reaffirmed in the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy.

In this light, the EU is very active and uses all tools available in responding to the increase in executions, through a) Statements/Declarations, b) diplomatic level demarches to targeted countries, c) sanctions, such as in the case of Iran, d) human rights dialogues and e) action in multilateral fora, especially in the context of the United Nations (UN) where the EU played a key role in the adoption of the UN Resolution 67/206 (21.12.2012) calling for a global moratorium.

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is an essential part of this EU commitment against the death penalty. Since 2007, the Commission has supported abolitionist regional and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The EIDHR has provided almost EUR 20 million to fight the death penalty and is the only actor to fund projects in every country which still retain the practice.

In parallel, also the prevention and eradication of all forms of torture represents one of the main objectives of the EU. The EU Guidelines on Torture provide the general framework for action in this area towards third countries, as well as in multilateral fora. The Guidelines foresee the use of all available tools of diplomacy and cooperation, most notably through political dialogue, diplomatic representations (e.g. demarches) and assistance to NGO projects under the EIDHR. In 2012 a global call for proposal 'fighting impunity' was launched with a total amount of EUR 20 million dedicated in a specific lot to supporting civil society actions in the field.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004395/13
al Consiglio
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(18 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Agenti iraniani attivi in Europa

Negli ultimi mesi sono emerse una serie di relazioni sull'attività di agenti del governo iraniano nelle principali città europee. A dicembre, la *Federal Research Division* (unità di ricerca e analisi) della Biblioteca del Congresso statunitense ha pubblicato una relazione in cui si indicava che città come Vienna rappresentano un crocevia di agenti del ministero delle Informazioni e della sicurezza (MOIS) dell'Iran, ai quali spetta il compito di reprimere le espressioni di dissenso e di contribuire a ridurre al silenzio gli attivisti politici, oltre che di raccogliere preziose informazioni per il programma nucleare iraniano.

Nel 2009, il programma di attualità tedesco «Panorama» segnalò che i servizi segreti tedeschi (Verfassungsschutz) avevano avvertito che agenti della polizia segreta iraniana stavano tentando di identificare gli attivisti contrari al regime filmando manifestazioni e proteste. Inoltre, esponenti dei servizi di intelligence dell'Iran stavano cercando di costringere i cittadini iraniani che vivevano in Germania a lavorare per il regime di Teheran.

Secondo la relazione di dicembre della *Federal Research Division*, gli agenti del MOIS iraniano sono estremamente attivi in paesi dell'UE come l'Austria, la Germania, la Francia e il Regno Unito.

1. Alla luce delle relazioni sul ruolo attivo degli agenti segreti dell'Iran in diversi paesi europei, sia nel reclutare i cittadini iraniani che nel monitorare i dissidenti, quali azioni è disposto il Consiglio a intraprendere per individuare i soggetti sospettati di collegamenti con il MOIS?

2. Ha il Consiglio adottato negli ultimi anni provvedimenti tesi a valutare la portata delle operazioni del MOIS in tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE?

3. È il Consiglio disposto a intensificare le attività per impedire agli agenti del MOIS di operare all'interno degli Stati membri dell'UE? Può il Consiglio fornire alcuni esempi di provvedimenti che potrebbe adottare?

Risposta
(16 settembre 2013)

Per principio, il Consiglio non si pronuncia su articoli pubblicati dalla stampa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004395/13
to the Council
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Iranian agents operating in Europe

In recent months a number of reports have emerged that Iranian Government operatives are active in major European cities. In December the Federal Research Division of the U.S. Library of Congress published a report which stated that cities such as Vienna are hubs for agents from the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security. They are responsible for suppressing dissent and helping to silence political activists. They also work to gather valuable information for Iran's nuclear programme.

In 2009 the German current affairs show 'Panorama' reported that Germany's domestic intelligence service Verfassungsschutz warned of Iranian agents from Iran's secret police trying to identify anti-regime activists by filming demonstrations and protests. In addition, Iranian intelligence agents were attempting to coerce Iranian individuals living in Germany to work on behalf of the regime in Tehran.

According to the Federal Research Division December report, operatives from Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) are most active in EU countries such as Austria, Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

1. In the light of reports that agents from Iran's Intelligence Ministry are active in various European countries, both recruiting Iranian citizens and monitoring dissidents, what steps is the Council prepared to take in order to track individuals with suspected links to the MOIS?

2. Has the Council taken steps in recent years to assess the extent of MOIS operations across all EU Member States?

3. Is the Council prepared to step up activities to prevent MOIS operatives from working within EU Member States? Can the Council provide some examples of steps it could adopt?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

As a matter of principle, the Council does not comment on articles in the press.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004396/13
à la Commission
Patrice Tirolien (S&D)
(18 avril 2013)

Objet: Suites de l'action préparatoire «BEST»

L'action préparatoire initiée par le Parlement européen sur la biodiversité et les services écosystémiques dans les territoires d'outre-mer européen (BEST) arrive maintenant à sa troisième et dernière année. Les deux précédents appels organisés par la Commission européenne dans le cadre de cette initiative ont connu un vif intérêt avec plus de 84 propositions au total. Les projets présentés et la mobilisation qu'a suscitée cette initiative ont démontré non seulement les besoins mais aussi la capacité des RUP (régions ultrapériphériques) et des PTOM (pays et territoires d'outre-mer) à porter des projets, ainsi que la pertinence de développer un outil dédié à la biodiversité de l'outre-mer européen. Cette action préparatoire appelle nécessairement une décision de la Commission européenne. Le Parlement européen a appelé à une collaboration de tous les services de la Commission européenne afin de mettre en place le schéma volontaire vivement recommandé lors de la conférence de la Réunion en 2008. À ce titre, au-delà du troisième appel qui sera publié prochainement, il est désormais possible pour la Commission européenne de créer un fonds fiduciaire («trust fund»). Cet outil a l'intérêt de permettre d'agréger des fonds de différentes sources et d'organiser aussi des appels adaptés aux acteurs ciblés.

Eu égard à ce qui précède, la Commission est invitée à répondre aux questions suivantes:

1) Quelles sont ses intentions pour donner suite à l'action préparatoire au-delà de l'organisation du troisième appel?

2) La possibilité de créer un «trust fund» pour la biodiversité des outre-mer européens est-elle envisagée?

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

La décision de financement concernant la troisième année de l'action préparatoire BEST a été adoptée par la Commission européenne le 18 avril 2013 ([1]). Étant donné que les actions préparatoires ont une durée maximale de trois ans, il a été décidé que l'utilisation la plus efficace de la troisième et dernière tranche des fonds alloués à l'action préparatoire BEST serait d'investir dans la création des structures et de la base de connaissances qui permettront de promouvoir le flux à long terme de projets fondés sur des données scientifiques et liés à un réseau de sources établies et fiables de financement public et privé. Par conséquent, comme le prévoit la décision de financement, la mise en œuvre de la troisième (et dernière) année de l'action préparatoire sera assurée au moyen d'un appel d'offres ouvert et non d'un appel à propositions ouvert.

On étudie actuellement la possibilité de créer un fonds multi-bailleurs en faveur de la biodiversité dans les territoires d'outre-mer de l'Union. Il est néanmoins trop tôt pour tirer des conclusions tangibles concernant les bailleurs susceptibles de participer à ce fonds, les fonds potentiellement disponibles, les modalités précises de mise en œuvre de ce fonds et le rôle que l'entité sélectionnée à l'issue de l'appel d'offres pourrait jouer. DEVCO a exprimé un intérêt éventuel à contribuer à ce type de fonds en faveur des PTOM en utilisant la ligne budgétaire réservée aux biens publics mondiaux et aux défis dans le cadre de l'instrument ICD, qui n'en est encore qu'au début de sa phase de programmation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/2020.htm#best

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004396/13
to the Commission
Patrice Tirolien (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to the 'BEST' preparatory action

The Parliament-initiated preparatory action for biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU's overseas territories (BEST) is now entering its third and final year. There was considerable interest in the previous two calls for proposals organised by the Commission under the initiative, with over 84 proposals received in total. The projects submitted and the enthusiastic response to the initiative have revealed not only the needs but also the capabilities of the outermost regions (ORs) and the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) in terms of project implementation, as well as the importance of developing a biodiversity-specific instrument for the EU's overseas territories. A decision needs to be taken by the Commission on this preparatory action, and Parliament has called for all Commission services to work together to implement the voluntary scheme strongly recommended during the conference held in Réunion in 2008. In addition to the third call for proposals, which will be published shortly, the Commission could set up a trust fund. The advantage of this instrument is that funds from different sources could be combined, and calls for proposals could be adapted to specific stakeholders.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How does it intend to follow up on the preparatory action in addition to organising the third call for proposals?

2. Are there any plans to create a trust fund for biodiversity in the EU's overseas territories?

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

The Financing Decision on the third year of BEST preparatory action was adopted by the European Commission on 18 April 2013 ([1]). As preparatory actions have a maximum duration of three years it was decided that most effective use of the third and final tranche of the money allocated to the BEST preparatory action would be to invest in creating the structures and the knowledge-base that will promote the long-term flow of scientifically robust projects linked to a network of established and reliable sources of public and private funding. Therefore, as stated in the Financing Decision the implementation of the third (and final) year of the preparatory action will proceed through an open call for tender and not through an open call for proposals.

The possibility of a multi-donor fund for biodiversity in the EU's overseas territories is being explored. However, it is too early to draw tangible conclusions on which donor would join this fund, what envelops would be available, how precisely this fund would be implemented and what might be the role of the entity which will be selected through the call for tender. There is a potential interest from DEVCO to contribute to such a fund for OCTs through the Global Public Goods and Challenges budget line under the DCI instrument, which is however still in its early programming phase.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/2020.htm#best.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004397/13
do Komisji
Sidonia Elżbieta Jędrzejewska (PPE)
(18 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowelizacja rozporządzenia Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r. uznającego niektóre rodzaje pomocy za zgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem w zastosowaniu art. 87 i 88 Traktatu

W dniu 31 grudnia 2013 r. upływa termin obowiązywania rozporządzenia Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r. uznającego niektóre rodzaje pomocy za zgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem w zastosowaniu art. 87 i 88 Traktatu. To kluczowy dokument dla osób niepełnosprawnych i ich pracodawców, potwierdzający, że wspieranie szkoleń i rekrutacji pracowników znajdujących się w szczególnie niekorzystnej sytuacji lub niepełnosprawnych oraz rekompensata dodatkowych kosztów zatrudnienia pracowników niepełnosprawnych są istotnymi celami polityki gospodarczej i społecznej Wspólnoty i państw członkowskich. W związku z tym pomoc na zatrudnianie tych pracowników w formie subsydiów płacowych oraz pomoc na rekompensatę dodatkowych kosztów związanych z ich zatrudnieniem są zgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem w rozumieniu art. 87 ust. 3 Traktatu ustanawiającego Wspólnotę Europejską i nie podlegają zgłoszeniu.

Mając na uwadze zbliżający się termin wygaśnięcia tego rozporządzenia, zwracam się do Komisji Europejskiej z następującymi pytaniami:

1. czy w Komisji trwają prace nad nowym rozporządzeniem, które zastąpi rozporządzenie Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r.?

2. czy znany jest już projekt nowego rozporządzania?

3. czy znany jest przybliżony termin wejścia w życie nowego rozporządzenia uznającego niektóre rodzaje pomocy za zgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem w zastosowaniu art. 87 i 88 Traktatu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquína Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(17 czerwca 2013 r.)

W istocie trwają prace nad przeglądem ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych (nr 800/2008).

W dniu 8 maja 2013 r. służby Komisji ds. konkurencji rozpoczęły konsultacje społeczne w sprawie pierwszego wniosku dotyczącego przeglądu rozporządzenia. Wniosek ten jest skutkiem konsultacji społecznych przeprowadzonych w 2012 r., których celem było zgromadzenie opinii państw członkowskich i zainteresowanych stron, aby przygotować przyjęcie wniosku Komisji dotyczącego przeglądu rozporządzenia jeszcze w tym roku.

Ogólne rozporządzenie w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych określa warunki, przy spełnieniu których pomoc państwa może zostać zwolniona z obowiązku uprzedniego zgłoszenia Komisji. Ogólne rozporządzenie w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych ma na celu promowanie stosowanych przez państwa członkowskie środków wsparcia (które nie zakłócają konkurencji i wymiany handlowej na rynku wewnętrznym) w ramach strategii „Europa 2020". Projekt proponuje szereg zmian do obowiązującego rozporządzenia zgodnie z celami w zakresie unowocześnienia polityki w dziedzinie pomocy państwa, takimi jak promowanie „dobrej" pomocy oraz bardziej skuteczne i wydajne wsparcie publiczne. Nadal dopuszcza się wsparcie na rzecz kształcenia i zatrudnienia pracowników niepełnosprawnych i znajdujących się w szczególnie niekorzystnej sytuacji, w tym rekompensatę dodatkowych kosztów.

Konsultacje zakończono w dniu 28 czerwca 2013 r. Wniosek jest dostępny na stronie internetowej: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_gber/index_en.html.

Przyjęcie zmienionego rozporządzenia planuje się w pierwszej połowie 2014 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004397/13
to the Commission
Sidonia Elżbieta Jędrzejewska (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Revision 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

On 31 December 2013, 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 will expire. This legal act is of vital importance for disabled people and their employers. It reaffirms that supporting the training and recruitment of particularly disadvantaged or disabled people and providing compensation for the additional costs associated with the employment of disabled people are key economic and social policy aims for the EU and the Member States. In this connection, assistance for the employment of workers from these groups in the form of financial subsidies, as well as compensation for the additional costs associated with their employment, are compatible with the common market within the meaning of Article 87(3) of the Treaty establishing the European Community and are not subject to notification.

Given the upcoming expiry of the regulation, I put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Is work under way in the Commission on a new regulation to replace Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008?

2. Has a draft of the new regulation already been produced?

3. Has an indicative date been set for the entry into force of the new Regulation declaringcertain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 87and 88 of the Treaty?

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

Work on revision of the General block exemption Regulation No 800/2008 (GBER) is indeed ongoing.

On 8 May 2013 the Commission's competition service launched a public consultation on a first proposal for the review of the GBER. This proposal follows a public consultation held in 2012 aimed at collecting views from Member States and stakeholders, to prepare for the adoption of a Commission proposal for a revised Regulation later this year.

The GBER sets out the conditions under which state aid can be exempted from prior notification to the Commission. The GBER aims to promote Member States' support measures (that do not distort competition and trade in the internal market) for EU 2020 objectives. The draft proposes a number of changes to the current GBER in line with the State Aid Modernisation objectives of promoting 'good' aid and more effective and efficient public support. It continues to allow support for training and employment of disabled and disadvantaged workers, including compensation for additional costs.

The consultation closes on 28 June 2013. The draft proposal is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_gber/index_en.html.

The adoption of the revised Regulation is planned for the first half of 2014.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004398/13
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: VP/HR — Echilibrul geografic în selecția și numirea personalului

Serviciul European de Acțiune Externă este rugat să răspundă la următoarea întrebare: care este numărul de angajați ai Serviciului European de Acțiune Externă; care este proveniența, după statul membru, a angajaților SEAE; care este proveniența, după statul membru, a angajaților SEAE cu funcții de conducere; ce măsuri va lua conducerea SEAE pentru realizarea unui echilibru geografic mai pronunțat în selecția și numirea personalului.

Răspuns dat de Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte al Comisiei, dna Ashton în numele Comisiei
(3 iunie 2013)

Numărul total de persoane angajate la SEAE, atât la sediul central, cât și în delegații, pe categorii, la data de 25 aprilie 2013, este prezentat în tabelul 1 (vă rugăm să consultați anexa).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004398/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — geographical balance in the selection and appointment of staff

Can the European External Action Service (EEAS) answer the following questions? How many people are employed by the EEAS? What is the breakdown by Member State in terms of where EEAS employees come from? What is the breakdown by Member State in terms of where EEAS employees in management positions come from? What measures is the EEAS leadership going to take to achieve a more apparent geographical balance in the selection and appointment of staff?

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

The breakdown by categories of all staff in activity in the EEAS, together in Headquarters and in Delegations, on the 25 of April 2013 is shown in the Table 1 (please see Annex).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004399/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Eventuale propuneri legislative cu privire la utilajele folosite în agricultură pentru împrăștierea pesticidelor și/sau a fertilizatorilor

Având în vedere informațiile cu caracter neoficial vehiculate în rândurile agricultorilor europeni, Comisia este rugată să răspundă la următoarea întrebare: dacă are intenția de a iniția, în cursul acestui an sau în cursul anului viitor, propuneri legislative cu privire la utilajele folosite în agricultură pentru împrăștierea pesticidelor și/sau a fertilizatorilor.

Răspuns dat de dl Tajani în numele Comisiei
(30 mai 2013)

Consiliul și Parlamentul European au adoptat deja legislația privind echipamentele agricole folosite pentru împrăștierea pesticidelor:

a) Proiectarea și construcția acestor echipamente tehnice constituie obiectul Directivei 2009/127/CE ([1]) de modificare a Directivei 2006/42/CE în ceea ce privește echipamentele tehnice de aplicare a pesticidelor, care introduce cerințe privind protecția mediului. Aceste dispoziții, care se referă la producătorii de echipamente tehnice noi, se aplică începând cu 15 decembrie 2011.

b) Directiva 2009/128/CE de stabilire a unui cadru de acțiune comunitară în vederea utilizării durabile a pesticidelor ([2]) prevede, printre alte măsuri, că echipamentele de uz profesional pentru aplicarea pesticidelor fac obiectul unor inspecții periodice. Perioada dintre inspecții este stabilită de statele membre și nu depășește cinci ani până în 2020 și trei ani după această dată. Până la 14 decembrie 2016, statele membre se asigură că echipamentul de aplicare a pesticidelor a fost inspectat cel puțin o dată. După această dată, numai acele echipamente de aplicare a pesticidelor care au trecut cu succes de inspecție pot fi utilizate în scop profesional. Orice echipament nou este inspectat cel puțin o dată pe parcursul unei perioade de cinci ani după cumpărare. Aceste dispoziții se referă la utilizatorii echipamentelor de aplicare a pesticidelor, inclusiv la agricultori.

Niciuna dintre măsurile de mai sus nu se referă la echipamentele pentru aplicarea îngrășămintelor, cu toate acestea ele se aplică echipamentelor cu utilizare dublă.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:310:0029:0033:ro:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:ro:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004399/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Prospective legislative proposals regarding agricultural machinery used for spreading pesticides and/or fertilisers

Given the unofficial information doing the rounds among European farmers, can the Commission answer the following question? Does it intend to initiate, during this year or next, legislative proposals regarding agricultural machinery used for spreading pesticides and/or fertilisers?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Council and the European Parliament have already adopted legislation on agricultural machinery used for spreading pesticides:

a) The design and construction of such machinery is the subject of Directive 2009/127/EC ([1]), amending the Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC with regard to machinery for pesticide application, which introduces requirements relating to the protection of the environment. These provisions, which concern the manufacturers of new machinery, have been applicable since 15 December 2011.

b) Directive 2009/128/EC establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides ([2]) lays down, amongst other measures, that pesticide application equipment in professional use shall be subject to periodic inspections. The interval between inspections is fixed by the Member States and shall not exceed five years until 2020 and three years thereafter. By 14 December 2016, Member States shall ensure that pesticide application equipment has been inspected at least once. After that date, only pesticide application equipment having successfully passed inspection shall be in professional use. New equipment shall be inspected at least once within a period of five years after purchase. These provisions concern the users of pesticide application equipment, including farmers.

Neither of the above measures concerns machinery for applying fertilisers, however they do apply to dual purpose machinery.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:310:0029:0033:en:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:en:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004400/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Futuras medidas para luchar contra el desempleo

El problema del paro afecta en el conjunto de la UE a 26,2 millones de personas, 19 millones de los cuales viven en la zona del euro.

Así, en el conjunto de la UE el paro ha crecido en el último año siete décimas, hasta el 10,8 %. En la zona euro el incremento es superior a un punto y alcanza ya el 11,9 %.

Este problema no ha hecho más que agudizarse en los últimos años, y los principales indicadores económicos, financieros y políticos apuntan que seguirá agravándose en los próximos periodos.

En medio de esta situación la Unión Europea está inmersa en el debate sobre el Marco Financiero Plurianual para el periodo 2014-2020, en el que deberían fijarse las partidas presupuestarias destinadas a políticas para luchar contra el desempleo en la Unión.

¿Puede informar la Comisión si en el debate sobre el MFP 2014-2020 se está teniendo en cuenta el problema que supone el paro? ¿El futuro MFP contendrá partidas económicas concretas destinadas a luchar contra el paro en la Unión?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

El marco financiero plurianual (MFP) ([1]) y sus instrumentos se centran en el apoyo a la Estrategia Europa 2020, cuyo objetivo es reducir el desempleo y la pobreza. A raíz de la propuesta de la Comisión, corresponde al Parlamento Europeo y al Consejo acordar un MFP que sea suficientemente ambicioso para abordar los retos del empleo en la EU.

La Comisión ha propuesto que al menos el 25 % de la financiación de las políticas de cohesión se asignen al Fondo Social Europeo (FSE) ([2]). El papel del FSE es hacer que haya más oportunidades de empleo, fomentar la educación y el aprendizaje permanente, mejorar la inclusión social, contribuir a luchar contra la pobreza y mejorar la capacidad institucional y la eficiencia de la administración pública, mediante el tratamiento de los principales retos expuestos en las recomendaciones específicas por país.

La propuesta de Iniciativa de Empleo Juvenil ([3]) constituirá una contribución concreta a partir de 2014 para aplicar medidas de empleo juvenil en las regiones que más lo necesitan, es decir, en las que el desempleo juvenil ha superado el 25 %.

El Fondo Europeo de Adaptación a la Globalización ([4]) ofrece medidas transitorias dirigidas a los trabajadores que hayan perdido su puesto de trabajo a consecuencia de la globalización. Se propone que se amplíe a aquellos casos en los que los despidos se deban a la crisis económica y financiera.

El nuevo Programa para el Cambio y la Innovación Sociales ([5]) apoya el desarrollo y la coordinación de políticas de inversión social, el intercambio de las mejores prácticas, el incremento de las capacidades y la verificación de las innovaciones sociales, con el objetivo de reforzar sustancialmente las medidas de mayor éxito.

El apoyo del Parlamento para los diferentes fondos es crucial para garantizar que las negociaciones tripartitas sigan centrándose en la lucha contra el desempleo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/mff/index_en.cfm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=es
([3]) COM(2012) 173, de 18 de abril de 2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf
([5]) COM(2011) 609 final de 6 de octubre de 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004400/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Future measures to combat unemployment

Across the EU, 26.2 million people are unemployed, 19 million of whom live in the euro area.

Across the EU, unemployment has risen by seven tenths in the last year to reach 10.8%. In the euro area, unemployment has increased by over one percentage point and now stands at 11.9%.

This problem has only become worse in recent years and, according to the main economic, financial and political indicators, it will continue to get worse in the future.

Against this backdrop, the European Union is engaged in talks on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020, which should include the necessary budget lines for policies to tackle unemployment in the EU.

Can the Commission say whether the problem of unemployment is being considered in the MFF 2014-2020 negotiations? Will the future MFF contain specific budget lines for tackling EU unemployment?

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

The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) ([1]) and its instruments are focused on supporting the Europe 2020 strategy, which aims at reducing unemployment and poverty. Following the Commission's proposal, it is up to the European Parliament and the Council to agree on a MFF that will be ambitious enough to address EU employment challenges.

The Commission has proposed that at least 25% of cohesion policy funding should be allocated to the European Social Fund (ESF) ([2]). The role of the ESF is to increase employment opportunities, promote education and lifelong learning, enhance social inclusion, contribute to combating poverty, and enhance institutional capacity and efficient public administration, by addressing the key challenges set out in the country specific recommendations.

The proposed Youth Employment Initiative ([3]) will make a concrete contribution from 2014 onwards to implement youth employment measures in those regions that need it most, i.e. where youth unemployment has risen above 25%.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund ([4]) provides one-off, targeted support for workers who have lost their jobs because of globalisation. It is proposed to extend it to case when redundancies are due to the financial and economic crisis.

The new Programme for Social Change and Innovation ([5]) support the development and coordination of social investment policies, sharing of best practices, capacity-building, and testing of social innovations, with the aim of up-scaling the most successful measures.

The support of the Parliament for these various funds is critical to ensure that the focus on fighting unemployment is preserved in the course of the trilogue negotiations.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/mff/index_en.cfm.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=62&langId=en.
([3]) COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/egf.
([5]) COM(2011) 609 final of 6 October 2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004401/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Desempleo juvenil: medidas de futuro

Según los datos de Eurostat de fecha 1 de marzo de 2013 ([1]), el porcentaje de jóvenes de la zona euro que busca trabajo se ha incrementado en 2,3 puntos, situándose en estos momentos en el 24,2 %. Este ascenso es aún mayor en los países mediterráneos. En el mes de enero de 2013 en España llegó al 55,5 %, en Italia al 38,7 %, y en Portugal al 38,6 %. Grecia, en el mes de noviembre de 2012, situó su tasa de desempleo juvenil en el 59,4 %.

Esta trayectoria es ascendente, y la crisis en la que sigue inmersa la Unión Europea hace que las previsiones para los próximos años sean aún peores.

En medio de esta situación la Unión Europea está inmersa en el debate sobre el Marco Financiero Plurianual para el periodo 2014- 2020, en el que deberían fijarse las partidas presupuestarias necesarias destinadas a políticas para luchar contra el desempleo juvenil en la Unión. Es necesario tomar medidas para evitar perder generaciones de jóvenes.

¿Qué medidas tiene pensadas la Comisión para hacer frente al paro juvenil en los próximos años?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004402/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Desempleo juvenil

Según los datos de Eurostat de fecha 1 de marzo de 2013 ([2]), el 24,2 % de los jóvenes de la zona del euro buscaba trabajo. En los países del sur de Europa el drama se multiplica por dos: Grecia acumulaba en noviembre de 2012 un paro juvenil del 59,4 %, mientras que en España llegó en enero de 2013 al 55,5 %, en Italia al 38,7 %, y en Portugal al 38,6 %.

En total, según los datos de Eurostat, 5,7 millones de menores de 25 años buscan trabajo en los veintisiete países de la UE, mientras que en la zona del euro el número desempleados jóvenes es de 3,6 millones, casi 300 000 más que hace un año.

Ante esta situación, ¿qué medidas está llevando a cabo la Comisión para frenar el paro juvenil en estos momentos?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2013)

La lucha contra el desempleo juvenil es una prioridad fundamental de la Comisión Europea, que en diciembre de 2010 adoptó el Paquete sobre Empleo Juvenil ([3]) para facilitar la transición de los jóvenes desde el sistema educativo a la vida laboral.

En abril de 2013 el Consejo adoptó una recomendación sobre la base de una propuesta de la Comisión, contenida en el Paquete sobre Empleo Juvenil, por la que se pedía a los Estados miembros que garantizaran que todos los jóvenes menores de veinticinco años pudieran recibir una oferta de empleo de calidad o seguir una educación continua, un aprendizaje o un período de prácticas a los cuatro meses de haberse quedado sin empleo o de haber finalizado la educación formal.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF
([3]) COM(2012) 727 final de 5.12.2012.

El Paquete sobre Empleo Juvenil y la comunicación titulada «Un nuevo concepto de educación» ([4]) también incluía la idea de la Alianza Europea para la Formación de Aprendices, que pondrá en marcha la Comisión en julio de 2013 con el fin de mejorar la calidad y la oferta de los contratos de aprendiz y de fomentar las asociaciones nacionales de sistemas de formación profesional dual.

Sobre la base también del Paquete sobre Empleo Juvenil, la Comisión presentará en diciembre de 2013 una propuesta de Marco de Calidad para los Períodos de Prácticas con el fin de que los períodos de prácticas ofrezcan a los jóvenes experiencias laborales de alta calidad y en condiciones seguras.

El Consejo Europeo de febrero de 2013 decidió asignar 6 000 millones EUR a la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil (2014-2020), con los que financiar los objetivos del Paquete sobre Empleo Juvenil y, concretamente, la aplicación de la conocida como Garantía Juvenil.

En mayo de 2012 entró en funcionamiento el nuevo régimen europeo de movilidad laboral conocido como «Tu primer trabajo EURES», cuyo objetivo es ayudar a los jóvenes a encontrar su primer empleo en cualquiera de los 27 Estados miembros, y a las empresas a que contraten a ciudadanos de otros Estados miembros de la UE.

([4]) COM(2012) 669 final de 21.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004401/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment: future measures

According to Eurostat figures published on 1 March 2013 ([1]), the percentage of young people in the euro area looking for work now stands at 24.2%, an increase of 2.3 percentage points. This increase is even higher in Mediterranean countries. In January 2013, youth unemployment reached 55.5% in Spain, 38.7% in Italy and 38.6% in Portugal. In November 2012, the level of youth unemployment in Greece was 59.4%.

This is an increasing trend and the crisis in which the EU is still embroiled means that projections for future years are even worse.

Against this backdrop, the European Union is engaged in talks on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, which should include the necessary budget lines for policies to tackle youth unemployment in the EU. Steps need to be taken to avoid losing whole generations of young people.

What steps will the Commission take to tackle youth unemployment in the coming years?

Question for written answer E-004402/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment

According to Eurostat figures published on 1 March 2013 ([2]), 24.2% of young people in the euro area are looking for work. In southern Europe, the situation is twice as bad: in November 2012, youth unemployment in Greece reached 59.4% while in January 2013 it was 55.5% in Spain, 38.7% in Italy and 38.6% in Portugal.

According to Eurostat figures, 5.7 million people under 25 are looking for work in the EU-27, while in the euro area 3.6 million young people are unemployed, almost 300 000 more than a year ago.

In view of this situation, what steps is the Commission taking to curb youth unemployment?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Fighting youth unemployment is a top priority for the European Commission which adopted the Youth Employment Package ([3]) (YEP) in December 2012 to enhance young people's transitions from school to work.

In April 2013, the Council adopted a recommendation based upon the Commission's proposal in the YEP, which calls on Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

The YEP and the communication on 'Rethinking Education' ([4]) also announced the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, which the Commission will launch in July 2013, to improve the quality and supply of apprenticeships and to promote national partnerships for dual vocational training systems.

Building upon the YEP, the Commission will present in December 2013 a proposal related to a Quality Framework for Traineeships to help ensure that traineeships provide young people with high quality work experience under safe conditions.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF
([3]) COM(2012) 727 final, 5.12.2012.
([4]) COM(2012) 669 final, 21.11.2012.

The February 2013 European Council decided to allocate a EUR 6 billon Youth Employment Initiative (2014-2020) to support the objectives of the Youth Employment Package and notably the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

In May 2012, the new European job mobility scheme 'Your first EURES job' became operational. It aims at helping young people to find their first job in any of the 27 Member States, and supporting companies to recruit from another EU country.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004403/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha contra la homofobia

El respeto de la persona y de la dignidad humana, así como de los demás derechos consagrados en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea y en el Convenio Europeo para la Protección de los Derechos Humanos y de las Libertades Fundamentales, constituye un valor esencial de la Unión.

En los últimos años estamos viendo cómo algunos Estados miembros están llevando a cabo profundos debates sobre los derechos del colectivo homosexual. En unos casos, referidos a la legalización o no del matrimonio, a la adopción o al reconocimiento de las uniones de hecho.

Desgraciadamente, a la sombra de estos debates políticos y ciudadanos, están surgiendo ciertos movimientos extremistas cuyo objetivo es impedir su democrática reflexión. Las amenazas verbales han pasado incluso a ser agresiones físicas. El pasado 7 de abril, una pareja fue brutalmente agredida en París por el mero hecho de ser homosexual. Y este no ha sido un episodio aislado.

Ante esta situación, ¿está llevando a cabo la Comisión algún tipo de medida para evitar las agresiones al colectivo LGTB, y para fomentar el respeto de los derechos de este colectivo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión rechaza la homofobia y la transfobia como violaciones flagrantes de la dignidad humana y confirma su determinación de combatir dichos fenómenos en toda la medida en que le competa en virtud de los Tratados. Sin embargo, la Comisión Europea no tiene competencias generales para intervenir ante los Estados miembros en el ámbito de los derechos fundamentales. Solo puede hacerlo si se trata de alguna cuestión relacionada con la legislación de la Unión Europea.

La actual Decisión Marco ([1]) relativa a la lucha contra el racismo y la xenofobia solo contempla las manifestaciones y delitos de odio racista y xenófobo pero no las manifestaciones y delitos homofóbicos. La Directiva 2000/78/CE del Consejo, de 27 de noviembre de 2000, establece un marco general para la igualdad de trato y prohíbe explícitamente toda discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual en el lugar de trabajo.

La Comisión presentó una propuesta de Directiva en 2008 con el fin de ampliar la protección contra la discriminación por razones de orientación sexual y demás motivos de exclusión a ámbitos fuera del lugar de trabajo, tales como el acceso a los bienes y servicios, la protección social y la educación.

La adopción de la nueva Directiva relativa a los derechos garantizados a las víctimas de delitos en la EU, una vez aplicada por los Estados miembros, también prestará asistencia y protección específica a las personas que hayan sido víctimas de delitos cometidos por motivos de orientación sexual, identidad de género o expresión de género.

Al mismo tiempo, la Comisión apoya acciones en toda Europa destinadas a fomentar la igualdad y a concienciar sobre la discriminación y, desde hace más de una década, viene apoyando a las ONG y acompañándolas en sus esfuerzos por promover la igualdad de derechos para las personas LGBT.

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría al reciente discurso de la Vicepresidenta Reding sobre cómo «las acciones de la Comisión están consiguiendo hacer realidad los derechos de las personas LGBT» ([2]).

([1]) Decisión Marco 2008/913/JAI del Consejo, de 28 de noviembre de 2008, relativa a la lucha contra determinadas formas y manifestaciones de racismo y xenofobia mediante el Derecho penal, DO L 328 de 6.12.2008, p. 55-58.

([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-424_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004403/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Fighting against homophobia

The European Union's core values include respect for the person and human dignity in addition to the other rights set down in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.

In recent years, intense debates on homosexual rights have been taking place in some Member States. In some cases, these debates concern the legalization of same-sex marriage, adoption, or the recognition of civil partnerships.

Unfortunately, in the wake of these political and public debates, extremist movements have emerged whose aim is to prevent democratic reflection. Verbal threats have given way to physical attacks. On 7 April, a couple was brutally assaulted in Paris simply for being homosexual. This is not an isolated incident.

In the face of this situation, is the Commission taking any measures to prevent attacks on the LGTB community and to encourage respect for this group's rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

The Commission rejects homophobia and transphobia as blatant violations of human dignity and confirms its determination to combating these phenomena to the full extent of the powers conferred on it by the Treaties. The European Commission has however no general powers to intervene with the Member States in the area of fundamental rights. It can only do so if an issue of European Union law is involved.

The current Framework Decision ([1]) on combating racism and xenophobia addresses only racist and xenophobic hate speech and crime, while homophobic hate speech and crime are not included. Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishes a general framework for equal treatment and explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation at the workplace.

The Commission proposed a directive in 2008 to extend protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and other grounds beyond the work place to areas, such as access to goods and services, social protection and education.

The adoption of the new Directive on the rights guaranteed to victims of crime in the EU, once implemented by Member States will provide specific assistance and protection also to people who suffered crime because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

In parallel, the Commission supports actions across Europe to raise awareness of discrimination and promote equality and, for more than a decade now, it has been supporting NGOs and their work to promote equal rights for LGBT people.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to Vice-President Reding's recent speech 'The Commission's actions are making LGBT rights a reality' ([2]).

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55-58.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-424_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004404/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Homologación de certificados acreditativos de discapacidad

La Unión Europea debe velar por la protección de los derechos de los ciudadanos europeos, protegiendo especialmente a los colectivos más vulnerables. Es cierto que en materia de accesibilidad la UE ha avanzado mucho durante los últimos años, pero aún quedan muchas medidas por desarrollar.

Desgraciadamente, los ciudadanos con algún tipo de discapacidad reconocida por las autoridades competentes en algún Estado miembro se encuentran con problemas a la hora de ver homologar esta situación en otro Estado miembro. El reconocimiento de su discapacidad realizado en un país de la Unión, y el documento acreditativo expedido a tal fin, no son siempre aceptados en otro Estado miembro, con los perjuicios que ello conlleva. Este problema se agrava aún más en los países con un alto grado de descentralización administrativa.

Ante esta situación, ¿qué medidas está llevando a cabo la Comisión para asegurar el respeto por parte de todos los Estados miembros de los documentos expedidos por la autoridad competente de un Estado miembro, por los cuales se acredita que un ciudadano posee algún tipo de discapacidad?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

La certificación y el reconocimiento de la condición de persona con discapacidad es competencia de las autoridades nacionales o locales de los Estados miembros de la UE. Cada Estado define esta condición de diferente forma y la Comisión no tiene previsto en estos momentos abordar la armonización en este ámbito.

No obstante, a efectos del reconocimiento transfronterizo de la condición de persona con discapacidad de cara a ventajas en determinados sectores como el turismo, el ocio, la cultura y el transporte, la Comisión está trabajando en una iniciativa sobre una tarjeta de discapacidad de la UE, tal como anuncia el Informe sobre la ciudadanía de la UE de 2013. Para más información, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-003455/2013. Asimismo, cabe señalar que esta iniciativa no afectará a la libertad de los Estados miembros de establecer sus propios criterios y procedimientos para el reconocimiento de la condición de persona con discapacidad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004404/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Recognition of disability certificates

The EU has a duty to protect the rights of European citizens, particularly the most vulnerable. Disability access in the EU has improved a great deal in recent years but much still remains to be done.

Unfortunately, citizens with a disability that is recognised by the competent authorities in one Member State find it difficult to have their status recognised in other Member States. One Member State's recognition of a disability and of the certificate issued for that purpose are not always accepted by other Member States, creating problems for the person concerned. This problem is even worse in countries with a highly decentralised administration.

In view of this situation, what steps is the Commission taking to ensure that all Member States recognise the documents issued by the competent authorities of other Member States to certify that a citizen has a particular disability?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

Certification and recognition of disability status is a matter of competence of national or local authorities in the EU Member States. They are using different definitions for this purpose and there are no current Commission plans for harmonisation in this area.

However, for the purpose of cross border recognition of disability status procuring benefits in certain areas such as tourism, leisure, culture and transport, the Commission is preparing an initiative for an EU disability card, as announced in the 2013 EU Citizenship Report. For more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member also to its answer to Written Question E-003455/2013. It should be noted that this initiative will not affect Member States' freedom to establish their own criteria and procedures for the recognition of disability status.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004405/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Homologación de títulos europeos

Una de las principales conquistas de la Unión Europea ha sido la libertad con la que transitan los ciudadanos europeos por su territorio. Existe libertad de capitales, de tránsito y de bienes. Pero en ocasiones los trabajadores europeos, cuando se desplazan a otro Estado miembro, se encuentran con ciertos problemas para poder ejercer una profesión cualificada, ya que no siempre se reconocen del mismo modo los títulos académicos que han obtenido en otro Estado miembro.

El reconocimiento de los títulos académicos es fundamental a efectos personales y profesionales. Supone además un valor añadido para la economía y la educación europea, generando un beneficio general en el conjunto de la Unión, al ser una herramienta que fomenta la inversión y los negocios intracomunitarios. Todo ello es importante, más aún ahora ante la necesidad de revitalizar la economía europea.

Por ello, ¿qué medidas está llevando a cabo la Comisión para asegurar la movilidad profesional y el reconocimiento de los títulos académicos en el territorio europeo?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2013)

La Directiva 2005/36/CE, relativa al reconocimiento de cualificaciones profesionales, se aplica a los profesionales que ejercen o prestan servicios en otro Estado miembro, si su profesión está regulada. La Directiva define una serie de normas relativas al reconocimiento de las cualificaciones profesionales, que es un paso necesario para acceder a una profesión regulada. El reconocimiento de las cualificaciones con el objetivo de continuar los estudios no se aborda en esta Directiva, pero cuenta con el apoyo de los centros nacionales de información sobre reconocimiento académico de títulos (ENIC-NARIC).

El 19 de diciembre de 2011, la Comisión presentó una propuesta legislativa para modernizar la Directiva sobre las cualificaciones profesionales, a fin de facilitar la movilidad de los profesionales en toda la UE. Los colegisladores están estudiando la propuesta y se prevé un acuerdo político al respecto para finales de junio de 2013.

La novedad más importante de esta propuesta es la creación de una tarjeta profesional europea, que se implantará en el caso de las profesiones interesadas y que simplificará considerablemente los procedimientos de reconocimiento. Se basará en el uso sistemático de la Información del Mercado Interior (IMI) y en el refuerzo de la cooperación entre los Estados miembros de origen y los de acogida.

Otro elemento importante de la modernización del reconocimiento de las cualificaciones es la introducción de un nuevo sistema de reconocimiento automático basado en un conjunto común de conocimientos, capacidades y competencias. Se podrían crear «marcos de formación comunes» para las profesiones interesadas y las cualificaciones obtenidas en virtud de dicho marco se reconocerían automáticamente en los otros Estados miembros, sin necesidad de medidas de compensación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004405/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Recognition of European qualifications

One of the EU's greatest achievements has been to enable its citizens to move freely around Europe. There is freedom of capital, transit and goods. However, when European workers move to another Member State, they sometimes find it difficult to enter a regulated profession because the academic qualifications that they have gained in another Member State are not always recognised in the same way.

Recognition of academic qualifications is essential for both personal and professional reasons. It also represents added value for the economy and European education, benefiting the whole of the EU by encouraging investment and intra-Community trade. This factor is even more important now that the European economy needs to be revitalised.

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure occupational mobility and the recognition of academic qualifications in Europe?

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

The Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC) applies to professionals willing to exercise or to provide services in another Member State, where their profession is regulated. The directive defines a set of rules for the recognition of professional qualifications, which is a necessary step for accessing a regulated profession. The recognition of qualifications for the purpose of further studies is not dealt within the context of this directive, but with the support of National Recognition Information Centres (ENIC-NARIC).

On 19 December 2011, the Commission presented a legislative proposal modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive, whose purpose is to facilitate the mobility of professionals across the EU. The proposal is currently being examined by the co-legislators and a political agreement is expected by the end of June 2013.

The major innovation of this proposal is the creation of a European Professional Card, which will be introduced for the interested professions and will significantly simplify recognition procedures. It will be based on the systematic use of the internal market Information (IMI) system and on the enhanced cooperation between the home and host Member States.

Another important element of the modernization of qualifications recognition is the introduction of a new system of automatic recognition based on a common set of knowledge, skills and competences. 'Common training frameworks' could be developed for the interested professions and the qualifications obtained under such a framework would be automatically recognised in other Member States, without the need for any compensation measures.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004406/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Desempleo femenino

Según datos de Eurostat con fecha 1 de marzo de 2013 ([1]), la tasa de paro masculino en la zona euro se situaba en el 11,8 %, siendo del 10,8 % en el conjunto de la Unión. Por su parte, esta tasa es mayor en el sector femenino, situándose en el 12,1 % en la eurozona y el 10,9 % en los veintisiete.

Analizando los datos existentes, vemos que la tasa de paro femenino ha sufrido un incremento mayor y más pronunciado que la masculina.

¿Qué medidas ha pensado tomar la Comisión para hacer frente al incremento de la tasa de desempleo femenina y para favorecer el acceso de las mujeres al mercado laboral?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de la evolución de la diferencia en la tasa de desempleo entre hombres y mujeres. Mientras que en el último trimestre de 2012, las tasas de desempleo entre las mujeres jóvenes y mayores eran más bajas (del 22,6 % frente al 23,6 % en el grupo de edad 15-24 años y del 7,1 % frente al 7,9 % en el grupo de edad 50-64), la tasa de desempleo de las mujeres en edad de máximo rendimiento (25-49 años) ha sido del 10,6 % frente al 9,8 % de los hombres. No obstante, las tasas de actividad son mucho más elevadas para los hombres que para las mujeres: del 45,5 % frente al 39,7 % para el grupo de edad 15-24; del 71,7 % frente al 56,2 % para el grupo de edad 50-64 y del 92,3 % frente al 79,8 % para el grupo de edad en máximo rendimiento. Además, la tasa de empleo de las mujeres (grupo de edad 15-64) es más baja que la de los hombres en todos los Estados miembros.

El empleo femenino debe aumentar sustancialmente para lograr el objetivo de empleo del 75 % de la Estrategia Europa 2020. Por consiguiente, en el contexto de los Semestres Europeos, la Comisión ha dirigido recomendaciones específicas a varios Estados miembros para que fomenten el empleo de las mujeres con medidas dirigidas, entre otras cosas, a mejorar la oferta de servicios de asistencia asequibles, suprimir la desincentivación fiscal para los segundos receptores de renta, fomentar prácticas flexibles en el lugar de trabajo y reducir la diferencia salarial entre hombres y mujeres. Con el fin de mejorar los niveles de empleabilidad, la Comisión hizo hincapié en que los Estados miembros deberían intensificar los esfuerzos para apoyar el acceso al empleo y la reincorporación al mundo laboral.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004406/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Female unemployment

According to Eurostat figures published on 1 March 2013 ([1]), the male unemployment rate stood at 11.8% in the euro area and 10.8% across the EU. Meanwhile, the female unemployment rate was higher at 12.1% in the euro area and 10.9% in the EU-27.

These figures clearly show that there has been a bigger and sharper increase in female unemployment than in male unemployment.

What steps has the Commission considered taking to tackle the rise in female unemployment and to help women to enter the labour market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the evolution of the gender unemployment gap. While young and senior females experienced lower unemployment rates than males (22.6% vs 23.6% in the 15-24 age group and 7.1% vs 7.9% for the 50-64 age group), prime age (25-49) female unemployment rate has been 10.6% vs. to 9.8% for males in 2012 Q4. However, activity rates are much higher for men compared to women: 45.5% vs 39.7% for the 15-24 age group; 71.7% vs 56.2% for the 50-64 age group and 92.3% vs 79.8% for the prime age group. Moreover, in all Member States employment rates of women (15-64 age group) are lower than of men.

The employment of women needs to increase substantially in order to reach the 75% employment target of the EU2020 strategy. Therefore in the context of the European semesters, the Commission has adressed country-specific recommendations to several Member States related to fostering female employment targeting among others the improvement of availability and affordability of care services, dismantling fiscal disincentives for second-income earners, provision of flexible workplace practices and the reduction of a high gender pay gap. With a view to improving employability levels the Commission stressed that Member States should do more to support access to jobs or a return to the world of work.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01032013-BP/EN/3-01032013-BP-EN.PDF

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-004407/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(18. april 2013)

Om: Tolkning af kørekortsregler for chauffører med epilepsi

Med den danske indarbejdelse af EU-direktiv 2006/126/EF om kørekort har de danske myndigheder ændret praksis i forbindelse med fornyelse af kørekort til lastbilchauffører, der lider af epilepsi. Hidtil har man godt kunnet få stort kørekort, hvis det er sket på visse vilkår, for eksempel at vedkommende får anfaldsforebyggende medicinering.

I bekendtgørelsen — som den kompetente myndighed (det danske Justitsministerium) anvender — står blandt andet, at kørekort kun kan udstedes, fornyes eller bevares for ansøgere med epilepsi efter en anfaldsfri periode på mindst 10 år uden anfaldsforebyggende behandling.

Nogle chauffører har ikke haft et anfald i 10 år eller mere, fordi de har fået anfaldsforebyggende behandling. De udelukkes nu, hvis der anlægges en fortolkning, der kræver en anfaldsfri periode på mindst 10 år uden anfaldsforebyggende behandling.

EU-direktivet tilsiger, at det netop ikke skal berøre en eksisterende førerret, der er tildelt eller erhvervet, inden EU-direktiv 2006/126/EF er trådt i kraft (præambel 5).

På baggrund af ovenstående bedes Kommissionen vurdere, om det danske Justitsministerium har lavet en korrekt indarbejdning af EU-reglerne i overensstemmelse med lovgivers hensigt?

Kommissionen bedes endvidere vurdere, om det er i overensstemmelse med direktiv 2006/126/EF, at førere, der har fået fornyet kørekort hvert andet år og ved at følge behandling for epilepsi, har lov til at være undtaget fra de nye regler om, at man skal have haft en anfaldsfri periode i mindst 10 år uden forebyggende medicin, da det nye direktiv ikke skal berøre en eksisterende førerret, og så førerne også i fremtiden kan få udstedt kørekort?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(23. maj 2013)

Kravene er i overensstemmelse med EU-reglerne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004407/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Interpretation of driving licence rules for drivers with epilepsy

With the Danish transposition of Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences, the Danish authorities have changed their practice in relation to the renewal of driving licences for lorry drivers suffering from epilepsy. Up to now it has been perfectly possible to obtain a driving licence, subject to certain conditions, for example that the person in question takes medication to prevent seizures.

The Order — applied by the competent authority (the Danish Ministry of Justice) — states, among other things, that driving licences may only be issued, renewed or retained by applicants with epilepsy after they have had a seizure-free period of at least 10 years without seizure-prevention treatment.

Some drivers have not had a seizure for 10 years or more because they have received seizure-prevention treatment. They will now be excluded if an interpretation requiring a seizure-free period of at least 10 years without seizure-prevention treatment is applied.

Directive 2006/126/EC specifically states that it should not prejudice existing entitlements to drive granted or acquired before the directive entered into force (recital 5).

In view of the above, could the Commission assess whether the Danish Ministry of Justice has correctly incorporated the EU rules as intended by the legislator?

Could the Commission also assess whether it is in accordance with Directive 2006/126/EC for drivers who have renewed their driving licence every two years and are receiving treatment for epilepsy to be entitled to be exempt from the new rules requiring a seizure-free period of at least 10 years without preventative medicine, as the new directive should not prejudice existing entitlements to drive, so the drivers can continue to obtain a driving licence in future?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The requirements are in line with the EU rules.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004408/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Peter van Dalen (ECR), Charles Tannock (ECR) en Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(18 april 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Sektarisch geweld tegen kopten in Egypte

Al enkele dagen laait het sektarische geweld in Egypte weer op. De situatie in de stad Wasta, gelegen op ongeveer honderd kilometer ten zuiden van Caïro, is gespannen en soms zelfs gevaarlijk. Naar verluidt werd een jonge moslima van de stad onlangs als vermist opgegeven en stelden de lokale salafisten de Mar-Girgis kerk verantwoordelijk voor haar verdwijning. Zij beweerden dat de leden van de kerk haar hadden gedwongen om zich tot het christendom te bekeren. In de week van 19 tot 25 maart 2013 werden alle christenen door de salafisten en hun aanhangers gedwongen om hun winkels en zaken te sluiten en de stad te verlaten.

Op vrijdag 5 april kwamen door sektarisch geweld in het dorp El Khusus vier christenen en één moslim om het leven. Na een uitvaartdienst op zondag 7 april in de belangrijkste koptische kathedraal van Caïro ontstonden nabij de kerk en in de aangrenzende wijken urenlange straatgevechten. Dit eiste opnieuw het leven van een koptische christen en er vielen tientallen gewonden. De politie zou zich niet volledig hebben ingezet om de woedende menigte jonge moslims tot bedaren te brengen en ze zou zelfs op de binnenplaats van de kerk traangas hebben afgevuurd.

1. Hoe beoordeelt de vicevoorzitter / hoge vertegenwoordiger de situatie in Egypte? Is zij van mening dat de Egyptische instanties zich voldoende inspannen om een van de oudste inheemse gemeenschappen in Egypte, met name de koptische christenen, te beschermen?

2. Welke maatregelen hebben de Europese dienst voor extern optreden en de EU-delegatie in Caïro genomen of voorgesteld teneinde de Egyptische instanties te ondersteunen in hun inspanningen om de kopten te beschermen en nieuw sektarisch geweld te voorkomen?

3. Is de vicevoorzitter / hoge vertegenwoordiger het erover eens dat artikel 2 van de Associatieovereenkomst EU-Egypte nog steeds van kracht is en dat de Egyptische instanties verantwoordelijk moeten worden gesteld voor hun handelen en nalaten indien als gevolg daarvan de fundamentele mensenrechten van de kopten worden geschonden?

4. Is de vicevoorzitter / hoge vertegenwoordiger voornemens sancties op te leggen, zoals een bevriezing van de hulp, teneinde het Egyptische regime ertoe aan te zetten concrete actie te ondernemen om de kopten te beschermen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(17 juni 2013)

De EU is bezorgd om de beperkingen waarmee verschillende religieuze minderheden in Egypte worden geconfronteerd en veroordeelt alle vormen van onverdraagzaamheid, discriminatie en geweld ten aanzien van personen op grond van hun godsdienst of levensovertuiging, ongeacht om welke godsdienst het gaat. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter heeft de Egyptische autoriteiten verzocht om de vrijheid van godsdienst of levensovertuiging in hun land te waarborgen.

De EU-delegatie volgt gevallen van sektarisch geweld op de voet en benadrukt tijdens haar contacten met de Egyptische autoriteiten het belang van het voorkomen van discriminatie op grond van religie. De EDEO wil graag samenwerken met alle relevante belanghebbenden in het land alsook met de regionale en internationale organisaties die de waarden en doelstellingen van de EU in dit verband delen, om een grotere vrijheid van godsdienst en levensovertuiging in Egypte te steunen.

Artikel 2 van de Associatieovereenkomst tussen de EU en Egypte is inderdaad van toepassing en het is van belang erop te wijzen, zoals ook in het gezamenlijk ENB-actieplan EU-Egypte is gesteld, dat de naleving van de mensenrechten en grondrechten, met inbegrip van de vrijheid van geloof, een belangrijk onderdeel van het Europees nabuurschapsbeleid vormt.

De EU is van mening dat samenwerking en politieke dialoog de meest geschikte kanalen zijn om druk uit te oefenen op de Egyptische regering en haar ertoe aan te moedigen concrete acties te ondernemen om kopten en andere religieuze minderheden te beschermen. De EU volgt de situatie ter plekke nauwlettend en onderhoudt nauwe contacten met de regering, de oppositie, het maatschappelijk middenveld en andere belanghebbenden om, indien nodig en in het licht van de veranderende politieke context, de juiste maatregelen te kunnen treffen.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004408/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Peter van Dalen (ECR), Charles Tannock (ECR) oraz Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(18 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – przemoc na tle wyznaniowym wobec Koptów w Egipcie

W ostatnich dniach w Egipcie ponownie miały miejsce akty przemocy na tle wyznaniowym. W mieście Wasta, położonym ok. 100 km na południe od Kairu, sytuacja jest napięta, a niekiedy nawet zapalna. Niedawno zaginęła podobno młoda muzułmanka, a miejscowi salafiści winą za jej zniknięcie obarczają Kościół św. Jerzego, twierdząc, że członkowie tego kościoła zmusili ją do nawrócenia się na chrześcijaństwo. W dniach od 19 do 25 marca 2013 r. salafiści i ich zwolennicy zmusili chrześcijańskich właścicieli sklepów i przedsiębiorstw do zamknięcia swoich zakładów i nakazali wszystkim chrześcijanom opuszczenie miasta.

W piątek 5 kwietnia w wyniku przemocy na tle wyznaniowym we wsi El Khusus śmierć poniosło czterech chrześcijan i jeden muzułmanin. Po mszy pogrzebowej w głównej katedrze koptyjskiej w Kairze w niedzielę 7 kwietnia przez kilka godzin trwały walki uliczne w pobliżu katedry i w sąsiadujących z nią dzielnicach. Życie stracił kolejny Kopt, a kilkadziesiąt osób odniosło rany. Policja uczyniła niewiele, aby poskromić rozwścieczony tłum młodych muzułmanów, a może nawet użyła gazu łzawiącego na dziedzińcu kościoła.

1. Jak Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel postrzega sytuację w Egipcie? Czy uważa ona, że władze Egiptu podejmują wystarczające środki mające na celu ochronę jednej z najstarszych lokalnych społeczności egipskich, jaką są chrześcijanie koptyjscy?

2. Jakie działania Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych i delegatura UE w Kairze podjęły lub zaproponowały, aby wspomóc władze Egiptu w ich wysiłkach zmierzających do ochrony Koptów i zapobiegnięcia dalszym przypadkom przemocy na tle wyznaniowym?

3. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel podziela opinię, że artykuł 2 układu o stowarzyszeniu między UE a Egiptem wciąż obowiązuje oraz że władze Egiptu powinny odpowiadać za wszelkie działania lub zaniechanie działań, jeżeli w ich konsekwencji dochodzi do łamania podstawowych praw człowieka Koptów?

4. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel rozważy możliwość nałożenia sankcji, takich jak np. wstrzymanie pomocy, jako środka wywarcia nacisku na władze Egiptu w celu skłonienia ich do podjęcia konkretnych działań z myślą o ochronie Koptów?

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

UE jest zaniepokojona ograniczeniami, jakim podlegają różne mniejszości religijne w Egipcie i potępia wszelkie formy nietolerancji, dyskryminacji i przemocy przeciwko tym osobom ze względu na ich religię lub przekonania niezależnie od ich wyznania. Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca wezwała egipskie władze do zapewnienia wolności wyznania lub przekonań w tym kraju.

Delegatura UE ściśle monitoruje przypadki przemocy na tle religijnym i w swoich kontaktach z władzami egipskimi podkreśla znaczenie unikania dyskryminacji z przyczyn religijnych. Aby wesprzeć poprawę wolności wyznania lub przekonań w Egipcie, ESDZ z zaangażowaniem współpracuje z wszelkimi odnośnymi zainteresowanymi stronami w tym kraju, a także z regionalnymi i międzynarodowymi organizacjami podzielającymi wartości i cele UE w tej dziedzinie.

W istocie ważny w tym kontekście jest art. 2 układu o stowarzyszeniu między UE i Egiptem i należy pamiętać, że – co odzwierciedla wspólny plan działania UE i Egiptu w ramach europejskiej polityki sąsiedztwa – poszanowanie praw człowieka i praw podstawowych, w tym wolności wyznania, jest ważnym elementem europejskiej polityki sąsiedztwa.

UE stwierdza, że współpraca i dialog polityczny są najbardziej odpowiednimi kanałami wspierania i wywierania presji na rząd w Kairze, aby podjął on konkretne działania w celu ochrony Koptów i innych mniejszości religijnych. Dlatego UE stale monitoruje sytuację na miejscu w ścisłym kontakcie i dialogu z rządem, opozycją, przedstawicielami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i innymi kluczowymi zainteresowanymi stronami w celu podejmowania niezbędnych i właściwych działań dostosowanych do rozwoju sytuacji politycznej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004408/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Peter van Dalen (ECR), Charles Tannock (ECR) and Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sectarian violence against Copts in Egypt

In recent days renewed sectarian violence has taken place in Egypt. The situation has been tense and at times explosive in the town of Wasta, about one hundred kilometres south of Cairo. Reportedly, a young local Muslim woman recently went missing, with local Salafis blaming the Mar-Girgis Church for her disappearance, claiming that its members had forced her to convert to Christianity. In the week of 19 to 25 March 2013, Salafis and their supporters forced Christian stores and businesses to shut and ordered all Christians to leave the town.

On Friday 5 April, sectarian violence in the village of El Khusus cost the lives of four Christians and one Muslim. Following a funeral mass in Cairo's main Coptic cathedral on Sunday 7 April, street battles raged for hours on the cathedral premises and in the surrounding neighbourhood. Another Coptic life was lost and dozens of people were wounded. It appears that the police did little to subdue the crowds of angry Muslim youths outside, and they may have even fired tear gas into the church's courtyard.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view the situation in Egypt? Does she believe that the Egyptian authorities are doing enough to protect one of Egypt's oldest indigenous communities, the Coptic Christians?

2. What actions have the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Delegation in Cairo undertaken or proposed in order to assist the Egyptian authorities in their efforts to protect the Copts and prevent further sectarian violence?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative share the opinion that Article 2 of the EU-Egypt Association Agreement still bears relevance, and that the Egyptian authorities should be held accountable for any actions or lack of action that harm the basic human rights of the Copts?

4. Will the Vice-President/High Representative consider imposing sanctions, such as an aid freeze, as a means of pressuring the Egyptian regime into taking concrete action to protect the Copts?

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

The EU is concerned about the constraints that different religious minorities face in Egypt and condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, regardless of the religion. The HR/VP repeatedly called on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country.

The EU delegation is closely monitoring cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities. In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the EEAS is keen to engage with all the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing EU's values and objectives in this respect.

Art. 2 of the EU-Egypt Association Agreement is indeed relevant and it is important to bear in mind, as reflected in the joint EU-Egypt ENP Action Plan, that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of belief, is an important part of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The EU considers that cooperation and political dialogue are the most appropriate channels to encourage and put pressure on Cairo's government so that it will undertake concrete actions in order to protect Copts and other religious minorities. Therefore, the EU is continuously monitoring the situation on the ground in close contact and dialogue with the government, opposition, civil society representatives and other key stakeholders in order to take the necessary and appropriate measures according to the evolution of the political context.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004409/13
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(18 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zezwolenie na użycie mączki mięsno-kostnej do karmienia przeżuwaczy i zwierząt innych niż przeżuwacze oprócz zwierząt akwakultury

Według rozporządzenia Komisji (UE) nr 56/2013 z dnia 16 stycznia 2013 r. zmieniającego załączniki I i IV do rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (WE) nr 999/2001 ustanawiającego zasady dotyczące zapobiegania, kontroli i zwalczania niektórych przenośnych gąbczastych encefalopatii wynika, że z dniem 1 czerwca 2013 r. zezwala się na karmienie zwierząt akwakultury przetworzonym białkiem zwierzęcym. Jednak w dalszym ciągu funkcjonuje zakaz używania tego rodzaju białka do produkcji pasz dla przeżuwaczy i zwierząt innych niż przeżuwacze (w tym w szczególności świń oraz drobiu). W związku z powyższym paszę dla wymienionych zwierząt produkuje się głównie z mączki rybnej. Powoduje to zwiększoną presję na połowy ryb w akwenie Morza Bałtyckiego, wpływając tym samym na ich populację. Ponadto należy wskazać, że mączka mięsno-kostna jest tańsza od mączki rybnej, a co za tym idzie, bardziej opłacalna dla przedsiębiorców.

Chciałbym w tym miejscu przywołać wyniki badań naukowych zatwierdzonych przez Europejski Urząd ds. Bezpieczeństwa Żywności ([1]), w których zawarta jest ocena ryzyka w odniesieniu do ryzyka BSE stwarzanego przez przetworzone białka zwierzęce. Stanowi ona, że przy odpowiednich założeniach „można by oczekiwać z 95 % pewnością, iż w unijnym pogłowiu bydła BSE zakażone zostanie rocznie mniej niż jedno dodatkowe zwierzę." Jak wynika z przedstawionej opinii ryzyko to jest bardzo niskie.

Wobec powyższego proszę o udzielenie następujących informacji:

1. Czy możliwe jest zniesienie zakazu używania mączki mięsno-kostnej do produkcji pasz dla przeżuwaczy i zwierząt innych niż przeżuwacze oprócz zwierząt akwakultury?

2. Jeśli tak, to jaki jest przewidywany horyzont czasowy na wprowadzenie zmian?

3. Czy trwają badania nad stworzeniem efektywnego systemu kontroli jakości surowców używanych do produkcji mączki mięsno-kostnej?

4. Czy Komisja posiada dane na temat tego, jak kształtuje się procentowy podział zużycia surowców do produkcji pasz? (Mam tu na myśli produkty wymienione w Rozdziale II rozporządzenia Komisji Europejskiej (UE) nr 56/2013).

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(31 maja 2013 r.)

Rozporządzenie Komisji (UE) nr 56/2013 ([2]) ma na celu ponowne zezwolenie na stosowanie przetworzonych białek zwierzęcych pochodzących od zwierząt gospodarskich innych niż przeżuwacze (tj. głównie od świń i drobiu) w paszy dla ryb hodowlanych i innych zwierząt akwakultury. Stosuje się je od dnia 1 czerwca 2013 r. i jest zgodne z najnowszymi opiniami EFSA, które wskazują, że ryzyko przenoszenia gąbczastej encefalopatii bydła (BSE) między zwierzętami innymi niż przeżuwacze jest niewielkie, pod warunkiem zapobieżenia powtórnemu przetwarzaniu wewnątrzgatunkowemu (kanibalizmowi).

1. Komisja zamierza zaproponować, z zastrzeżeniem dostępności zwalidowanych specyficznych testów analitycznych w celu zapewnienia właściwych kontroli urzędowych, dalszy środek w celu ponownego wprowadzenia stosowania przetworzonych białek zwierzęcych pochodzących od świń i drobiu z przeznaczeniem odpowiednio dla drobiu i świń. Komisja nie zamierza proponować ponownego zezwolenia na stosowanie przetworzonych białek zwierzęcych do karmienia przeżuwaczy (tj. bydła, owiec lub kóz) ani proponować ponownego stosowania przetworzonych białek zwierzęcych pochodzących od przeżuwaczy do karmienia zwierząt innych niż przeżuwacze, od których lub z których pozyskuje się żywność.

([1]) EFSA; http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/1947.pdf
([2]) Dz.U. L 21 z 24.1.2013, s. 3.

3. Do produkcji przetworzonych białek zwierzęcych mogą być wykorzystywane wyłącznie produkty uboczne pochodzenia zwierzęcego pochodzące ze zwierząt zdatnych do spożycia przez ludzi, a sposób, w jaki te produkty uboczne pochodzenia zwierzęcego są produkowane, gromadzone, transportowane, przechowywane i wykorzystywane, jest ściśle regulowany rozporządzeniem (WE) nr 1069/2009 ([3]), w celu uniknięcia ryzyka dla zdrowia ludzi i zwierząt. Właściwe organy w państwach członkowskich kontrolują prawidłowe wdrożenie tych przepisów.

4. Odsetek przetworzonych białek zwierzęcych, które mogłyby być dodawane do paszy, jest różny w zależności od potrzeb żywieniowych danego gatunku: jest to około 2-5 % w przypadku paszy dla drobiu i świń oraz do 40 % w przypadku paszy dla ryb mięsożernych.

([3]) Dz.U. L 300 z 14.11.2009, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004409/13
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Authorisation for the use of meat and bone meal to feed ruminants and non-ruminants, excluding aquaculture animals

According to Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013 of 16 January 2013 amending Annexes I and IV to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, the feeding of aquaculture animals with processed animal proteins will be authorised from 1 June 2013. Yet the ban on the use of such proteins for the production of feed intended for ruminants and non-ruminants, in particular pigs and poultry, is still in place. In view of this, feed intended for the aforementioned animals is produced mainly from fishmeal. This is putting additional pressure on fish catches in the Baltic Sea basin, which is in turn affecting fish stocks. It must also be stressed that meat and bone meal is cheaper than fishmeal and thus makes more economic sense for companies.

I should like to cite the findings of an EFSA-approved scientific study ([1]) which contains an assessment of the BSE risk posed by processed animal proteins. The assessment concludes that 'less than one additional BSE infected cattle could be expected in the EU cattle population per year with an upper 95% confidence'. This illustrates that the risk of infection is negligible.

1. Is it possible to lift the ban on the use of meat and bone meal in the production of feed for ruminants and non-ruminants, excluding aquaculture animals?

2. If so, within what time frame can such a change be expected?

3. Is research being carried out into establishing an effective quality control system for raw materials used in the production of meat and bone meal?

4. Does the Commission have data detailing the percentage of raw materials that are used in the production of feed? I refer to those products listed in Chapter II of Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013.

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

Commission Regulation (EU) No 56/2013 ([2]) aims to reauthorise the use of processed animal proteins (PAPs) derived from non-ruminant farmed animals (i.e. mainly from pigs and poultry) in feed for farmed fish and other aquaculture animals. It is applicable from 1 June 2013 and is in line with latest EFSA opinions which indicate that the risk of transmission of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) between non-ruminant animals is negligible provided that intra-species recycling (cannibalism) is prevented.

1. The Commission intends to propose, subject to the availability of validated specific analytical tests to ensure appropriate official controls, a further measure to re-introduce the use of pig and poultry PAPs for poultry and pigs respectively. The Commission does not intend to propose the re-authorisation of PAPs for feeding ruminant animals (i.e. cattle, sheep or goats) or to propose to re-use PAPs from ruminants for feeding non-ruminant food producing animals.

3. Only animal by-products (ABPs) derived from animals fit for human consumption can be used for producing PAPs, and the way those ABP are produced, collected, transported, stored and used is strictly regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 ([3]) in order to avoid any risk for human and animal health. Competent authorities from Member States shall control the correct implementation of those provisions.

4. The percentage of PAPs that could be incorporated in feed varies according the nutritional needs of the species concerned: it is around 2-5% for poultry and pig feed and up to 40% for feed for carnivore fish.

([1]) EFSA. http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/1947.pdf
([2]) OJ L 21, 24.1.2013, p. 3.
([3]) OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004410/13
komissiolle
Riikka Manner (ALDE)
(18. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Venäjän viisumivapaus

Vuoden 2003 EU:n ja Venäjän välisessä huippukokouksessa otettiin pitkän aikavälin tavoitteeksi viisumivapaus. Viimeisten kymmenen vuoden aikana tavoitetta on viety yhä käytännöllisemmän valmistelun tasolle.

Suomi on hyvä esimerkki EU:n itärajavaltiosta, jossa viisumivapauden vaikutukset olisivat suorat ja mittavat. Suomessa itärajan ylitykset ovat kasvaneet pitkään varsin voimakkaalla tahdilla. Silti kasvun mahdollisuudet ovat vielä merkittävän suuret, vaikka huomioitaisiin ainoastaan Venäjän oma väkiluku. Sen lisäksi viisumivapauden voidaan perustellusti uskoa kasvattavan myös muiden kuin Suomen ja Venäjän kansalaisten rajanylityksiä. Suomessa on ministeriötasolla arvioitu, että viisumivapaus kolminkertaistaa rajanylitysten määrän.

Rajanylitysten määrän kasvun hallinta vaatii käytännön rajaturvallisuustyöltä toiminnallisesti paljon. On arvioitu, ettei EU ole tällä hetkellä järjestelmien eikä rahoituksen suhteen valmis viisumivapauden laajentamiseen. Mikäli esimerkiksi rajanylitystietojärjestelmien valmius ei ole operatiivisesti riittävällä tasolla, rajat ylittävän rikollisuuden, ihmiskaupan ja laittoman maahantulon torjunta hankaloituu merkittävästi.

Kysynkin, onko komissio tehnyt vertailevan kartoituksen kaikkien EU-maiden ja erityisesti sen itärajalla sijaitsevien valtioiden valmiudesta viisumivapauteen Venäjän kanssa? Onko komissiolla ajantasaista tietoa itäisten rajanylityspaikkojen infrastruktuurin tasosta ja sen kehittämistarpeista ja -suunnitelmista?

Cecilia Malmströmin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(4. kesäkuuta 2013)

Komissio on tietoinen siitä, että jos viisumivapaus Venäjän federaation kanssa otetaan käyttöön, rajanylityspaikkojen ja rajaturvallisuuden on tärkeää olla laadultaan asianmukaisia.

Tästä syystä asiakirjassa Yhteiset toimet Venäjän ja EU:n kansalaisten lyhytaikaisten matkojen viisumivapauden toteuttamiseksi ([1]) määritellään kattavat vaatimukset, jotka koskevat rajaturvallisuuden ylläpitämistä koskevia sääntöjä ja käytänteitä Venäjällä ja EU:ssa (ks. erityisesti asiakirjan 2.3 kohta). Yhteiset toimet on pantava täytäntöön ennen kuin osapuolet päättävät EU:n ja Venäjän välistä viisumivapaussopimusta koskevien neuvottelujen aloittamisesta.

Kaikkien yhteisten toimien täytäntöönpanoa arvioidaan parhaillaan, ja kun tiedot toimien kaikista neljästä osa-alueesta on saatu koottua, komissio antaa kertomuksen täytäntöönpanon edistymisestä.

Samaan aikaan, ja ennen minkäänlaisten päätösten tekemistä, komissio laatii myös kattavan arvioinnin siitä, millaisia vaikutuksia EU:lle olisi mahdollisesta viisumivapauden käyttöönotosta Venäjän kanssa. Tämän arvioinnin pitäisi kattaa myös rajaturvallisuuteen liittyvät kysymykset.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/fi/11/st18/st18217.fi11.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004410/13
to the Commission
Riikka Manner (ALDE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Visa-free travel between Russia and the EU

At the EU-Russia summit in 2003, it was agreed that visa-free travel should be a long-term objective. In the past 10 years, preparations for achieving the objective have been proceeding on an increasingly practical basis.

Finland is a good example of an EU Member State on the EU's eastern border where the impact of visa-free travel would be direct and substantial. In Finland, numbers of people crossing the eastern border have for a long time been growing at a considerable pace. Even so, there is still a good deal of scope for further increases, if only bearing in mind the size of Russia's own population. In addition, visa-free travel may also justifiably be expected to cause an increase in numbers of people crossing the border who are not nationals of Finland or Russia. In Finland, it has been estimated by the relevant ministry that visa-free travel will cause a threefold increase in the numbers of people crossing the border.

Administering the increase in the number of people crossing the border is very demanding in terms of practical border security operations. The view has been taken that, from the point of view of systems or funding, the EU is not yet ready for an expansion of visa-free travel. If for example IT systems relating to border crossing are not yet sufficiently operational, it will become very much more difficult to fight cross-border crime, trafficking in persons and illegal immigration.

Has the Commission performed a comparative review of the preparedness of all EU countries, particularly those on the eastern border, for visa-free travel with Russia? Does the Commission have up-to-date information about the standard of infrastructure of border crossing points and the need/plans for developing it?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the importance of the appropriate quality of border crossing points and border management for the possible visa free regime with the Russian Federation.

For this reason the Common Steps towards visa free short-term travel document, as agreed between the EU and the Russian Federation, contain extensive benchmarks addressing the border management rules and practices both by Russia and the EU (see in particular Section 2.3 of the document ([1])). The Common Steps need to be implemented before the Parties decide on starting negotiations on an EU-Russia visa waiver agreement.

The evaluation of the implementation of all the Common Steps is ongoing and once the information on all four blocks of the Common Steps are gathered, the Commission will present a report on the state of the implementation.

At the same time, and before any decision is taken, the Commission will also prepare a comprehensive assessment of impact on the EU of a possible future visa liberalisation with Russia. This assessment should also cover border management issues.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/russia/docs/ common_steps_ towards_visa_free_ short__travel_ term_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004411/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Gesamtausgaben für Pauschalen für Reisen zum Herkunftsort von Beamten des Rates

Der Beamte hat für sich und, soweit er Anspruch auf die Haushaltszulage hat, für seinen Ehegatten und die unterhaltsberechtigten Personen einmal jährlich Anspruch auf eine Pauschalvergütung der Reisekosten vom Ort der dienstlichen Verwendung zum Herkunftsort (Anhang VII Abschnitt 3 C Artikel 8 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften vom 1.5.2004).

1. Wie hoch waren jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 die Ausgaben des Rates zur Erstattung dieser im Statut vorgesehenen Ausgaben?

2. Wie viele Beamte des Rats erhielten jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 den automatischen Pauschalbetrag?

3. Wie hoch war die Auszahlung im Durchschnitt? Wie hoch war der niedrigste gezahlte Pauschalbetrag; wie hoch war der höchste gezahlte Pauschalbetrag?

Antwort
(24. Juni 2013)

Die nachstehende Tabelle enthält die von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angeforderten Informationen. Es sei darauf hingewiesen, dass die Zahlen für 2012 vorläufig sind, da in diesem Jahr möglicherweise noch Anpassungen an der Anzahl der Anspruchsberechtigten und an den Beträgen vorgenommen werden.

Jahr	Gesamtkosten	Anzahl	durchschnittlicher Betrag	höchster Betrag	niedrigster Betrag
2007	4 442 643,30 EUR	2.574	1 725,97 EUR	10 244,51 EUR	0,70 EUR
2008	4 707 004,42 EUR	2.660	1 769,55 EUR	10 753,82 EUR	0,71 EUR
2009	4 901 256,64 EUR	2.661	1 841,89 EUR	11 251,48 EUR	2,92 EUR
2010	5 092 890,59 EUR	2.725	1 868,95 EUR	10 505,42 EUR	2,98 EUR
2011	4 975 263,75 EUR	2.834	1 755,56 EUR	10 760,80 EUR	3,08 EUR
2012	4 833 416,86 EUR	2.468	1 958,43 EUR	10 833,65 EUR	3,03 EUR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004411/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Total expenditure on lump-sum allowances for travel by Council officials to their place of origin

Officials shall be entitled to be paid in each calendar year a sum equivalent to the cost of travel from the place of employment to the place of origin for themselves and, if they are entitled to the household allowance, for the spouse and dependants (Section 3 C Article 8 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations of officials of the European Communities dated 1 May 2004).

1. What was the Council's expenditure in making these payments as provided for in the Staff Regulations in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. How many officials of the Council received the automatic lump-sum allowance in the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

3. What was the average payment? What was the lowest lump-sum allowance payment; what was the highest lump-sum allowance payment?

Reply
(24 June 2013)

The table below shows the information requested by the Honourable Member. It should be pointed out that the figures for 2012 are provisional, as it is still possible that some adjustments may be made this year to both the number of entitled persons and the amounts.

Year	Total cost	Number	Average payment	Maximum payment	Minimum payment
2007	EUR 4.442.643,30	2.574	EUR 1.725,97	EUR 10.244,51	EUR 0,70
2008	EUR 4.707.004,42	2.660	EUR 1.769,55	EUR 10.753,82	EUR 0,71
2009	EUR 4.901.256,64	2.661	EUR 1.841,89	EUR 11.251,48	EUR 2,92
2010	EUR 5.092.890,59	2.725	EUR 1.868,95	EUR 10.505,42	EUR 2,98
2011	EUR 4.975.263,75	2.834	EUR 1.755,56	EUR 10.760,80	EUR 3,08
2012	EUR 4.833.416,86	2.468	EUR 1.958,43	EUR 10.833,65	EUR 3,03

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004412/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Gesamtausgaben für Pauschalen für Reisen zum Herkunftsort von Beamten der Kommission

Der Beamte hat für sich und, soweit er Anspruch auf die Haushaltszulage hat, für seinen Ehegatten und die unterhaltsberechtigten Personen einmal jährlich Anspruch auf eine Pauschalvergütung der Reisekosten vom Ort der dienstlichen Verwendung zum Herkunftsort (Anhang VII Abschnitt 3 C Artikel 8 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften vom 1.5.2004).

1. Wie hoch waren jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 die Ausgaben der Kommission zur Erstattung dieser im Statut vorgesehenen Ausgaben?

2. Wie viele Beamte der Kommission erhielten jeweils in den Jahren 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 den automatischen Pauschalbetrag?

3. Wie hoch war die Auszahlung im Durchschnitt? Wie hoch war der niedrigste gezahlte Pauschalbetrag; wie hoch war der höchste gezahlte Pauschalbetrag?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(31. Mai 2013)

Ungefähr 20 000 Personalmitglieder erhalten die jährliche Pauschalvergütung der Reisekosten vom Ort der dienstlichen Verwendung zum Herkunftsort. Angaben zu den ausgezahlten Beträgen können den Arbeitsunterlagen („Verwaltungsausgaben") im Anhang zum Haushaltsentwurf der Europäischen Kommission entnommen werden.

Die Höhe der einzelnen Beträge hängt u. a. von der Familienzusammensetzung ab.

Die Kommission hat im Rahmen ihres Vorschlags zur Änderung des Statuts (siehe KOM(2011)890) eine Änderung der Berechnungsmethode dieser Pauschalvergütung vorgeschlagen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004412/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Total expenditure on flat rates for travel by Commission officials to their place of origin

Officials shall be entitled to be paid in each calendar year a sum equivalent to the cost of travel from the place of employment to the place of origin for themselves and, if they are entitled to the household allowance, for the spouse and dependants (Section 3 C Article 8 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations of officials of the European Communities dated 1 May 2004).

1. What was the Commission's expenditure in making these payments as provided for in the Staff Regulations in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. How many officials of the Commission received the automatic lump-sum allowance in the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

3. What was the average payment? What was the lowest lump-sum allowance payment; what was the highest lump-sum allowance payment?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(31 mai 2013)

Environ 20 000 membres du personnel reçoivent un remboursement au titre de leur frais de voyage annuel. L'Honorable Parlementaire trouvera les informations concernant les montants versés dans les documents de travail annexés au projet de Budget de la Commission européenne intitulés «Dépenses Administratives».

Les montants individuels de ce remboursement dépendent notamment de la composition familiale.

Dans le cadre de son projet de modification du statut, la Commission a proposé de modifier les règles de calcul de ce remboursement (voir COM(2011)890).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004413/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Gesamtausgaben für Pauschalen für Reisen zum Herkunftsort von EAD-Beamten

Der Beamte hat für sich und, soweit er Anspruch auf die Haushaltszulage hat, für seinen Ehegatten und die unterhaltsberechtigten Personen einmal jährlich Anspruch auf eine Pauschalvergütung der Reisekosten vom Ort der dienstlichen Verwendung zum Herkunftsort (Anhang VII Abschnitt 3 C Artikel 8 des Statuts der Beamten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften vom 1.5.2004).

1. Wie viele Beamte des EAD erhielten jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 den automatischen Heimreise-Pauschalbetrag?

2. Wie hoch waren jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 — soweit dies für den EAD getrennt erhoben werden kann — die Kosten für Heimreise-Pauschalbeträge?

3. Wie hoch war der Pauschalbetrag im Durchschnitt? Wie hoch war der niedrigste gezahlte Pauschalbetrag; wie hoch war der höchste gezahlte Pauschalbetrag?

4. Welche Heimreise-Sonderregelungen finden für Beamte des Europäischen Auswärtigen Diensts (EAD) Anwendung?

5. Wie viele Beamte des EAD erhielten jeweils in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 Zahlungen nach speziellen Heimreise-Sonderregelungen des EAD?

6. Wie hoch waren in den Jahren 2010, 2011 und 2012 die Aufwendungen des EAD für EAD-spezifische Heimreise-Zahlungen?

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

1. Im Jahr 2011 haben 1 504 Beamte und Vertragsbedienstete des EAD einen Pauschalbetrag für jährliche Reisekosten (vom Ort der dienstlichen Verwendung zum Herkunftsort) erhalten; im Jahr 2012 waren es 1 688. Da der EAD erst im Laufe des Jahres 2010 gegründet wurde, liegen für dieses Jahr keine Angaben vor.

2. Die Pauschalvergütungen für Reisekosten beliefen sich im Jahr 2011 auf insgesamt 8 310 203 EUR; 2012 waren es 10 527 413,64 EUR.

3. Die Pauschalvergütung betrug durchschnittlich 5 525,40 EUR (2011) bzw. 6 236,62 EUR (2012). Die einzelnen Beträge variieren je nach der familiären Situation des Empfängers.

4. Der EAD hat Regelungen für jährlich anfallende Reisekosten verabschiedet („Allgemeine Durchführungsbestimmungen zu Artikel 8 des Anhangs VII des Beamtenstatuts", Verwaltungsmitteilungen Nr. 56-2004, Kommissionsbeschluss K(2004)1588).

5. Für den EAD gelten keine Sonderregelungen für jährliche Reisekosten (vgl. Antwort zu Frage 1).

6. Der EAD leistet keine EAD-spezifischen Zahlungen für jährliche Reisekosten (vgl. Antwort zu Frage 2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004413/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Total expenditure on lump sum allowances for travel by officials of the European External Action Service (EEAS) to their place of origin

Officials shall be entitled to be paid in each calendar year a sum equivalent to the cost of travel from the place of employment to the place of origin for themselves and, if they are entitled to the household allowance, for the spouse and dependants (Section 3 C Article 8 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations of officials of the European Communities dated 1 May 2004).

1. How many officials of the EEAS received the automatic lump-sum allowance for journeys home in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. What were the costs for the lump-sum allowances for journeys home in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012, insofar as these can be ascertained separately for the EEAS?

3. What was the average lump-sum allowance payment? What was the lowest lump-sum allowance payment; what was the highest lump-sum allowance payment?

4. What special arrangements for journeys home apply to officials of the European External Action Service (EEAS)?

5. How many officials of the EEAS received payments under the special EEAS arrangements for journeys home in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012?

6. What was the expenditure of the EEAS for EEAS-specific payments for journeys home in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

1. The number of officials and contract agents of the EEAS receiving a lump-sum allowance for annual travel reached 1 504 for 2011 and 1 688 for 2012. Given the date of creation of the EEAS, 2010 figures are not available.

2. The payments for the lump-sum allowances for annual travel were EUR 8 310 203 in 2011 and EUR 10 527 413.64 for 2012.

3. The average lump-sum allowance was EUR 5 525.40 (2011) and EUR 6 236.62 (2012). Individual payments vary depending on the family situation of the recipients.

4. The EEAS has adopted the arrangements for annual travel applicable for the Commission (General Implementing Provisions 'giving effect to Article 8 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations' Administrative Notices N° 56-2004, Commission Decision C(2004) 1588).

5. The EEAS does not have any special arrangements for annual travel (See Point 1).

6. The EEAS does not have any EEAS specific payments for annual travel (See Point 2).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004414/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Beamte mit Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg

Wie viele Beamte des Rates hatten in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 ihren Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg?

Wie viele Beamte davon arbeiten regelmäßig in Brüssel?

Wie hoch waren die Kosten für den Rat in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012, die durch das Pendeln dieser Beamten entstehen?

Welche zusätzlichen Zulagen bekommen Beamte, die in Brüssel arbeiten und ihren Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg haben, im Gegensatz zu Beamten mit Hauptwohnsitz und Arbeitsort in Brüssel?

Wie hoch waren die Kosten in den Jahren 2009, 2010, 2011 und 2012 für die zusätzlichen Zulagen für Beamte mit Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg?

Antwort
(10. Juni 2013)

Nur ein Beamter (eine Beamtin) hatte von 2009 bis 2011 seinen (ihren) Hauptwohnsitz in Luxemburg. Der Beamte (die Beamtin) hatte im gesamten Zeitraum Urlaub aus persönlichen Gründen und wurde letztendlich zur Europäischen Kommission nach Luxemburg versetzt. Dem Rat entstanden keine Kosten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004414/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Officials with their principal residence in Luxembourg

How many Council officials had their principal residence in Luxembourg in the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012?

How many of these officials regularly work in Brussels?

What were the costs incurred by the Council in the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 through commuting by these officials?

What additional allowances are paid to officials who work in Brussels and who have their principal residence in Luxembourg in contrast to officials who have their principal residence in Brussels and who also work there?

What were the costs incurred in the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 for the additional allowances for officials with their principal residence in Luxembourg?

Reply
(10 June 2013)

Only one official had his/her principal residence in Luxembourg from 2009 until 2011. The official was on leave on personal grounds for the whole period and finally transferred to the European Commission in Luxembourg. No costs were incurred by the Council.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004415/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Compatibilidad del Código Penal Español con las directivas comunitarias en materia de propiedad intelectual

Pese a las múltiples reformas del Código Penal español y la existencia de directivas europeas que regulaban de manera clara materias de propiedad intelectual, el legislador español se ha negado sistemáticamente a incluir modificaciones en dicho código que permitan que los artículos 270 a 272 del Código Penal, delitos relativos a la propiedad intelectual, sean compatibles con la legislación comunitaria.

En estos artículos se incluye el concepto de programa de ordenador dentro del concepto de derecho de autor, cuando las directivas europeas como la Directiva 2009/24/CE sobre la protección jurídica de los programas de ordenador (anterior Directiva 91/250/CEE) y múltiple jurisprudencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea como la sentencia sobre el Asunto C-406/10 SAS Institute Inc./World Programming Ltd, entre otras, separan estos dos conceptos, no considerándolo susceptible de la cobertura genérica de los derechos de autor, sino de una cobertura específica.

Como consecuencia, la normativa española permite interpretar que los programas de ordenador y los mismos ordenadores pueden venderse de manera conjunta y obligada, bajo la protección del Código Penal, mientras que la misma Comisión, en el caso COMP/C-3/37.792 Microsoft y el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea en su sentencia sobre el Asunto T-167/08 Microsoft Corp./Comisión, consideraron esta práctica como claramente contraria a la libre competencia.

¿Qué acciones piensa llevar a cabo la Comisión frente a este claro incumplimiento de la legislación comunitaria?

¿Considera la Comisión que la regulación española es contraria a la libre competencia? De ser así, ¿considera recomendar al Reino de España la adopción de normativas que obliguen a separar la venta del ordenador de la de los programas?

¿Qué recomendaciones haría la Comisión para que la legislación española se adaptase a la legislación comunitaria?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de junio de 2013)

El artículo 4 del Tratado de la OMPI sobre Derecho de Autor establece que los programas de ordenador están protegidos como obras literarias en el marco de lo dispuesto en el artículo 2 del Convenio de Berna ([1]). Con arreglo al artículo 1, apartado 1, de la Directiva 2009/24/CE ([2]), «los Estados miembros protegerán mediante derechos de autor los programas de ordenador como obras literarias tal como se definen en el Convenio de Berna ([3])». Además de la protección que se deriva de la Directiva 2009/24/CE, los programas de ordenador están también protegidos por la Directiva 2001/29/CE ([4]) ([5]). No obstante, el artículo 1, apartado 2, letra a) ([6]), de dicha Directiva dispone que esta «dejará intactas y no afectará en modo alguno las disposiciones comunitarias vigentes relacionadas con: a) la protección jurídica de los programas de ordenador» ([7]).

1. y 3. Desgraciadamente, resulta difícil valorar si puede haberse producido una infracción del Derecho de la UE sobre la base de la información facilitada por Su Señoría. La Comisión estaría dispuesta a investigar el asunto si recibiera información más detallada sobre la manera en que España no ha incorporado las Directivas a su ordenamiento jurídico.

([1]) El Tratado de la OMPI sobre Derecho de Autor fue ratificado en nombre de la Comunidad Europea mediante la Decisión 2000/278/CE del Consejo, de 16 de marzo de 2000 (DO L 89 de 11.4.2000, p. 6).
([2]) Directiva 2009/24/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de abril de 2009, sobre la protección jurídica de programas de ordenador.
([3]) Convenio de Berna para la Protección de las Obras Literarias y Artísticas.
([4]) Directiva 2001/29/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 22 de mayo de 2001, relativa a la armonización de determinados aspectos de los derechos de autor y derechos afines a los derechos de autor en la sociedad de la información (DO L 167 de 22.6.2001, p. 10).
([5]) Del artículo 1, apartado 2, letra a), de la Directiva 2001/29/CE se desprende que esta «dejará intactas y no afectará en modo alguno las disposiciones comunitarias vigentes relacionadas con la protección jurídica de los programas de ordenador» otorgada por la Directiva 91/250/CEE, que luego fue codificada por la Directiva 2009/24/CE.
([6]) Véase el considerando 50 de la Directiva 2001/29/CE.
([7]) El Tribunal de Justicia ha interpretado esta disposición en su sentencia en el asunto C-128/11, Usedsoft, en el sentido de que las disposiciones de la Directiva 2009/24 constituyen lex specialis en relación con las disposiciones de la Directiva 2001/29, lo que significa que las disposiciones de la Directiva 2009/24/CE priman sobre la aplicación de las disposiciones de esta última Directiva.

2. Si la normativa española infringe la legislación de la UE en materia de competencia dependerá de un análisis caso por caso de una serie de factores materiales, jurídicos y económicos. La Comisión señala que, en el asunto de Microsoft, ni la Comisión ([8]) ni el Tribunal General de la Unión Europea ([9]) consideraron que la venta conjunta de ordenadores y programas informáticos constituyese una infracción del artículo 102 del TFUE.

([8]) Asunto COMP/C-3/37.792 Microsoft.
([9]) Asuntos T-201/04 y T-167/08 Microsoft contra la Comisión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004415/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Compatibility of the Spanish Criminal Code with EU directives on intellectual property

Despite the Spanish Criminal Code having been revised several times and the fact that there are EU directives which clearly regulate intellectual property matters, the Spanish legislature has systematically neglected to amend the Criminal Code to make Articles 270 to 272 thereof, on intellectual property offences, compatible with EC law.

These articles include the concept of computer programming within the concept of copyright, while EU directives such as Directive 2009/24/EC on the legal protection of computer programs (previously Directive 91/250/EEC) and extensive case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, such as the judgment in Case C-406/10 SAS Institute Inc./World Programming Ltd, *inter alia*, separate these two concepts, not considering computer programming eligible for generic cover under copyright, but for specific cover.

Consequently, Spanish legislation allows the interpretation that computer programs and computers themselves can necessarily be sold together under the protection of the Criminal Code, while the Commission, in Case COMP/C-3/37.792 Microsoft, and the Court of Justice of the European Union in its judgment in Case T-167/08 Microsoft Corp./Commission, considered this practice clearly to run counter to free competition.

What action will the Commission take in response to this clear failure to comply with EC law?

Does the Commission think that Spanish legislation runs counter to free competition? If so, is it planning to recommend that Spain adopt rules making it compulsory to sell computers separately from programs?

What recommendations will the Commission make to bring Spanish legislation into line with EU legislation?

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

Article 4 of the WIPO Copyright Treaty states that 'computer programs are protected as literary works within the meaning of Article 2 of the Berne Convention' ([1]). According to Article 1(1) of Directive 2009/24/EC ([2]), 'Member States shall protect computer programs, by copyright, as literary works within the meaning of the Berne convention' ([3]). In addition to the protection that follows from Directive 2009/24/EC, computer programs are also protected by Directive 2001/29/EC ([4]) ([5]). However, it follows from Article 1.2 a) ([6]) that that directive 'shall leave intact and shall in no way affect Community provisions relating to: a) the legal protection of computer programs' ([7]).

1 + 3. It is unfortunately difficult to assess whether there could be a possible violation of EC law on the basis of the facts provided by the Honourable Member. The Commission is willing to investigate the matter should it be provided with more detailed information on how Spain has failed to transpose the directives.

2. Whether Spanish legislation is in breach of EU competition law will depend on a case-by-case analysis of a range of factual, legal and economic factors. The Commission notes that in Microsoft, neither the Commission ([8]), nor the General Court of the European Union ([9]) found that the joint-selling of computer programs and computers constituted a breach of Article 102 TFEU.

([1]) The WIPO Copyright Treaty was ratified on behalf of the European Community by Council Decision 2000/278/EC of 16 March 2000 (OJ 2000 L 89, p. 6).
([2]) Directive 2009/24 /EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the legal protection of computer programs.
([3]) Berne convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works.
([4]) Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society, OJ L 167, 22.6.2001, p. 10-19.
([5]) It follows from Article 1(2)(a) of Directive 2001/29/EC that the directive 'leave[s] intact and … in no way affect[s] existing … provisions [of European Union law] relating to … the legal protection of computer programs' conferred by Directive 91/250, which was subsequently codified by Directive 2009/24.
([6]) See also Recital 50 of Directive 2001/29/EC.
([7]) The Court has interpreted this provision in its judgment in Case C-128/11, Usedsoft, stating that 'the provisions of Directive 2009/24 […] constitute lex specialis in relation to the provisions of Directive 2001/29', which means that the provisions in Directive 2009/24/EC shall take precedent over the provisions in the latter directive.
([8]) Case COMP/C-3/37.792 *Microsoft*.
([9]) Cases T-201/04 and T-167/08 *Microsoft* v *Commission*.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004416/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Situación del Parque Nacional Marítimo Terrestre del Archipiélago de Cabrera

Oceana ha denunciado la insostenible situación del Parque Nacional Marítimo-Terrestre del Archipiélago de Cabrera que ha empeorado con creces en el último año tras la reducción drástica de presupuesto destinado a personal de control, mantenimiento e investigación y seguimiento. La consecuencia inmediata es la incentivación de la pesca ilegal y la actividad de los furtivos, cosa que contradice flagrantemente lo dispuesto en la Directiva sobre hábitats. Actualmente para las 10 000 hectáreas del Parque Nacional Marítimo-Terrestre del Archipiélago de Cabrera se dispone de un grupo de ocho trabajadores que repartidos en turnos semanales resulta que se hacen cargo al mismo tiempo de todo el archipiélago (dos islas y quince islotes) un vigilante y un agente medioambiental. Esta situación se debe a la no renovación por parte del Gobierno Balear del contrato con la empresa Tragsa que ha supuesto el despido de veintidós personas. Oceana también denuncia que el ejecutivo autonómico ha desviado el 5 millones de euros de aportación anual del Estado a otros fines que nada tienen que ver con la gestión del archipiélago, dejando al Parque Nacional en la situación más precaria en la que se ha visto desde su creación.

¿Cómo valora la Comisión la denuncia de Oceana en torno al proceso de desmantelamiento de facto que está sufriendo el Parque Nacional Marítimo-Terrestre del Archipiélago de Cabrera?

¿Qué acciones piensa llevar a cabo la Comisión, en base a la legislación comunitaria y estatal que prohíbe desde 2006 de manera expresa la pesca con redes de arrastre en las zonas con presencia de fondos de coralígeno y maërl?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de junio de 2013)

1. El archipiélago de Cabrera ha sido designado por España como lugar perteneciente a la red Natura 2000, con arreglo a lo dispuesto en la Directiva sobre hábitats ([1]) y la Directiva sobre aves ([2]). De conformidad con el artículo 6 de la Directiva sobre hábitats, las autoridades españolas deben implantar las medidas de conservación necesarias y evitar el deterioro de los hábitats naturales y las alteraciones que repercutan en las especies que hayan motivado la designación de la zona, a través de una gestión eficaz de la misma, incluidas una vigilancia y financiación adecuadas. Sin embargo, las modalidades concretas de la gestión del parque nacional son competencia nacional.

2. La Comisión coincide con Su Señoría en que es fundamental la protección de las zonas con presencia de fondos de coralígeno y maërl.

Sin embargo, el control de las actividades pesqueras llevadas a cabo en aguas de los Estados miembros es competencia nacional. La UE ha adoptado un conjunto de normas relativas a dicho control y a la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, si bien es responsabilidad del Estado miembro garantizar que dichas normas se apliquen correctamente y que se penalicen las infracciones.

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

([2]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010, p. 7), que codifica la Directiva 79/409/CEE del Consejo, de 2 de abril de 1979, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004416/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Situation of the Cabrera Archipelago Maritime-Terrestrial National Park

Oceana, the marine conservation organisation, has condemned the unsustainable situation of the Cabrera Archipelago Maritime-Terrestrial National Park, which has markedly deteriorated in the last year after a drastic cut in the budget for management, maintenance, and research and monitoring staff. The immediate consequence is to encourage illegal fishing and poaching, in clear breach of the Habitats Directive. A group of eight people currently work on the 10 000 hectares of the Cabrera Archipelago Maritime-Terrestrial National Park sharing weekly shifts, meaning that at any given time one watchman and one environmental officer are responsible for the whole archipelago (2 islands and 15 islets). This situation has been brought about by the Balearic Government not renewing its contract with the company Tragsa, meaning that 22 people have lost their jobs. Oceana also condemns the fact that the autonomous executive has diverted the EUR 5 million in annual state aid for other purposes which have nothing to do with the management of the archipelago, leaving the National Park in the most precarious situation it has faced since its creation.

How does the Commission assess Oceana's criticism regarding the de facto dismantling of the Cabrera Archipelago Maritime-Terrestrial National Park?

What steps will the Commission take given that EU and state legislation has, since 2006, explicitly prohibited fishing with trawl nets in areas where there are coralligenous habitats and mäerl beds?

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

1. The site *Archipèlag de Cabrera* has been designated by Spain for the Natura 2000 network under the provisions of the Habitats ([1]) and Birds Directives ([2]). In accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, Spanish authorities are required to put in place the necessary conservation measures and to avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and disturbance to the species for which the area has been designated, by ensuring the effective management of the area, including its adequate wardening and financing. However, the detailed arrangements for the management of the national park are a matter of national competence.

2. The Commission agrees with the Honourable member that the protection of areas where there are coralligenous habitats and mäerl beds habitats is essential.

Nevertheless, the control of fishing activities performed in the Member States' waters is essentially a matter of national competence. The EU has adopted a comprehensive set of rules to deal with the control of fishing activities and to combat illegal fishing but it is primarily the responsibility of the Member State to ensure that they are correctly applied and that infringements are sanctioned.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010) that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004417/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Coexistencia ganadería-lobo

El Proyecto Wolf, Wild Life and Farmers, está formado por once Grupos de Desarrollo Rural de España, Estonia y Portugal, por el que se busca alternativas para garantizar la agro-compatibilidad y coexistencia de la ganadería extensiva y el lobo.

Dicho proyecto ha concluido que, debido al número y distribución actual de lobos, tanto en España como en Europa, es obligado hacer una gestión adecuada para garantizar la biodiversidad y la coexistencia ganadera, más teniendo en cuenta la actual Política Agraria Europea, dirigida a la utilización de mayores superficies, lo que conlleva a acrecentar los problemas en esta relación lobo-ganadería.

Por ello, los grupos sostienen que es conveniente, dentro de la PAC, incluir en el pago compensatorio verde a los ganaderos con actividad extensiva en zonas loberas por los servicios ambientales que prestan, así como a los ganaderos en zonas loberas que se hallen en zonas con limitaciones naturales.

A su vez, proponen la inclusión de líneas específicas para zonas loberas dentro de los Programas Agroambientales que incluyan medidas de prevención y de compensación de daños.

¿Piensa la Comisión tener en cuenta estas medidas? En su defecto, ¿qué medidas de coexistencia entre ambas partes propone? ¿Se plantea la Comisión la posibilidad de una regulación uniforme y clara de dotación en cuanto a la defensa del ganado, así como con respecto a las medidas compensatorias por daños por ataques de lobos?

Respuesta del Sr. Cioloş en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

En el marco del pilar de la PAC relativo al desarrollo rural y durante el actual y el próximo período de programación, los Estados miembros pueden prestar ayuda a aquellos agricultores que pongan en marcha distintas medidas de prestación de servicios medioambientales. Las prácticas extensivas de explotación agrícola que proporcionan bienes públicos medioambientales pueden beneficiarse de medidas agroambientales, así como de otras medidas, tales como las inversiones no productivas vinculadas a objetivos medioambientales.

Estas últimas incluyen la posibilidad de prestar ayuda para acciones preventivas destinadas a paliar el riesgo de daños causados por grandes carnívoros a la ganadería.

En cuanto a la indemnización por los daños causados por carnívoros, el marco jurídico de la PAC no contempla la concesión de este tipo de indemnización.

En el contexto de distintas decisiones sobre ayudas estatales ([1]), la Comisión ha procedido ya a una evaluación de medidas de financiación exclusivamente nacionales de indemnización por los daños causados por carnívoros, en el marco del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea («TFUE»). Como alternativa, los Estados miembros pueden conceder a los agricultores, a lo largo de un período de tres años, una ayuda *de minimis* de hasta 7 500 euros para medidas preventivas y a modo de indemnización por los daños causados por carnívoros, de conformidad con el Reglamento (CE) n° 1535/2007 ([2]).

En el marco de la revisión de las Directrices comunitarias aplicables a la agricultura y la silvicultura en 2007-2013, como parte del proceso de modernización de las ayudas estatales actualmente en curso, se contempla la posible inclusión de disposiciones específicas sobre ayudas estatales para daños causados por animales predadores.

([1]) N 723/2009-«indemnización por daños causados por carnívoros» (Sajonia); SA.34622 — indemnización financiera con cargo al «Fondo de indemnización grandes predadores» por daños causados por lobos, linces y osos (Baviera); SA.33040 — indemnización por daños causados por lobos (Brandenburgo); se pueden consultar las decisiones en: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register/

([2]) DO L 337 de 21.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004417/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Coexistence of wolves and livestock farming

The 'Wolf: Wildlife and Farmers' project brings together 11 rural development groups from Spain, Estonia and Portugal with the aim of looking for alternative ways to guarantee agricultural compatibility and coexistence between extensive livestock farming and wolves.

This project has concluded that, owing to the number and current distribution of wolves, in Spain and in the rest of Europe, proper management is needed to guarantee biodiversity and coexistence with livestock, while taking into account the current common agricultural policy (CAP), which aims at using larger areas, leading to more problems in the relationship between wolves and livestock farming.

For this reason, the groups claim that the CAP should include greening payments for livestock farmers who farm extensively in areas where wolves are present for the environmental services they provide, as well as for livestock farmers in areas where wolves are present, located in areas with natural constraints.

They suggest including specific delineated areas where wolves are present within agri-environmental programmes, including ways to prevent and compensate for losses.

Will the Commission take these measures into consideration? If not, what measures does it suggest to promote coexistence between livestock farming and wolves? Will the Commission consider the possibility of a uniform, clear regulation for providing resources to protect livestock, as well as for compensating for losses caused by wolf attacks?

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

In the framework of rural development pillar of the CAP, in the current and next programming period, Member States may provide support for farmers undertaking various measures with the aim of delivering environmental services. Extensive methods of farming providing environmental public goods can be supported under the agri-environment measure but also under other measures such as non-productive investments linked to environmental objectives.

The latter measure includes the possibility to grant support for preventive actions aimed at mitigating the risk of damages done by large carnivores to livestock farming.

With regard to the possible compensation for damages done by carnivores, the CAP legal framework does not foresee the possibility of granting such compensation.

In several state aid decisions ([1]), the Commission has already assessed pure national financing measures aiming at compensating for damages caused by carnivores directly under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). As an alternative, Member States may grant to farmers for preventive measures and for compensation of damages done by carnivores, *de minimis* aid up to 7 500 EUR over a three-year-period under Regulation 1535/2007 ([2]).

In the framework of the revision of the Community Guidelines for agriculture and forestry 2007-2013, as part of the ongoing State Aid Modernisation (SAM) process, consideration is given to include specific provisions on state aid for damages caused by predatory animals.

([1]) N 723/2009-'Compensation for damages caused by carnivores' (Saxony); SA.34622 Financial compensation by the 'Compensation funds large predators' for damages caused by wolfs, lynxes and bears (Bavaria); SA.33040 Compensation for damages caused by wolves (Brandenburg). Decisions are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register/

([2]) OJ L 337, 21.12.2007.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004418/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Ganado porcino

En 2001 se aprobó la Directiva Europea para determinar las normas mínimas para la protección de cerdos (Directiva 2001/88/CE, de 23 de octubre de 2001, por la que se modifica la Directiva 91/630/CEE, relativa a las normas mínimas para la protección de cerdos). En ambas legislaciones se fijan los requisitos que deben cumplir todas las instalaciones para cerdos confinados destinados a la cría o al engorde y además se establecía un plazo de diez años para la aplicación de la citada normativa en el caso de las explotaciones existentes. Es decir, desde el 2003 era de obligado cumplimiento para aquellas instalaciones nuevas o las que se reconstruyan, y a partir del 2013 es de obligado cumplimiento para la totalidad.

Sin embargo, a pesar de la nueva normativa, es necesario seguir trabajando a fin de mejorar el bienestar del ganado porcino. El artículo 3 de dicha Directiva establece que los Estados miembros deben velar por que las cerdas y las cerdas jóvenes se críen en grupos, con al menos diez cerdas o más. Directriz que sigue sin cumplirse por parte de los productores de algunos Estados miembros. A su vez, cada año son mutilados cientos de cerdos, a los cuales se les corta la cola o son castrados a veces con tijeras, o se les extraen los dientes de atrás incluso utilizando alicates, a pesar de que la Directiva establece claramente que dichos procedimientos no pueden llevarse a cabo de forma rudimentaria.

La industria se escuda aduciendo que dichas mutilaciones son necesarias para evitar que los cerdos se ataquen unos a otros mediante caudofagia. Pero esta situación la han creado ellos mismos debido a las lamentables condiciones de las granjas.

¿Cómo piensa actuar la Comisión para garantizar el pleno cumplimiento de la Directiva 2001/88/CE? ¿Tiene previsto imponer algún tipo de sanción a aquellos productores que no cumplan con la normativa? ¿Se plantea estudiar alternativas a la castración? ¿Qué opciones menos agresivas propone al corte de cola, así como a la extracción de dientes?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de mayo de 2013)

En lo que respecta a la Directiva 2008/120/CE ([1]) y al requisito de estabulación en grupo de las cerdas, el 21 de febrero de 2013 la Comisión incoó procedimientos de infracción contra nueve Estados miembros por incumplimiento. Por lo que se refiere a las demás cuestiones, como el suministro de materiales manipulables, la Comisión tiene previsto elaborar directrices, que pueden ayudar tanto a los productores de porcino como a las autoridades de los Estados miembros en sus esfuerzos para dar cumplimiento a lo dispuesto en la Directiva, evitando así, por ejemplo, tener que amputar la cola de los cerdos.

Por lo que respecta a las alternativas a la castración de los cerdos, actualmente se están realizando cinco estudios, y se espera que sus resultados contribuyan a garantizar que, de aquí a 2018, se vaya reduciendo progresivamente la castración quirúrgica.

Además, es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros adoptar todas las medidas necesarias para garantizar el cumplimiento de las medidas y/o de las sanciones, tal como se establece en los artículos 54 y 55 del Reglamento (CE) n° 882/2004 ([2]), sobre los controles oficiales para corregir la situación si se detectan casos de incumplimiento.

([1]) DO L 47 de 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([2]) DO L 191 de 28.5.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004418/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Pigs

The EU directive laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs was adopted in 2001 (Council Directive 2001/88/EC of 23 October 2001 amending Directive 91/630/EEC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs). Both directives laid down the requirements to be met by all installations with pigs confined for rearing or fattening, and a period of 10 years was established for existing holdings to comply with the rules. In other words, compliance had been compulsory since 2003 for newly built or rebuilt holdings, and has been compulsory for all holdings as of 2013.

However, despite the new rules, work is still needed to improve pigs' well-being. Article 3 of the directive lays down that Member States must ensure that sows and gilts are reared in groups of at least 10 sows or more. This guideline is still being ignored by producers in some Member States. Each year hundreds of pigs are mutilated, having their tails cut off or being castrated, sometimes with scissors, or having their back teeth extracted, even with pliers, despite the directive clearly stipulating that these practices must not be carried out in a rudimentary manner.

The industry hides behind claims that these mutilations are necessary to stop the pigs attacking each other by tail biting. However, it is the industry that has created this situation, owing to the deplorable conditions on farms.

What will the Commission do to guarantee full compliance with Directive 2001/88/EC? Does it plan to impose some kind of sanction on producers who do not comply with the rules? Will alternatives to castration be looked into? What less brutal alternatives are there to tail docking and tooth extraction?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2013)

With regard to Directive 2008/120/EC ([1]) and the requirement for group housing of sows the Commission on 21 February 2013 launched infringement proceedings against nine Member States for non-compliance. On other issues such as the provision of manipulable material the Commission plans to develop guidelines. Such guidelines may assist both pig producers and Member States' authorities in their efforts to comply with the directive and thus e.g. avoid the need to tail dock pigs.

With regard to alternatives to pig castration currently five studies are being performed the outcomes of which should help ensure the phasing out of surgical castration by 2018.

It is furthermore the responsibility of the Member States to take all the necessary enforcement measures and/or sanctions as laid down in Articles 54 and 55 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]) on official controls to correct the situation if cases of non-compliance are discovered.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009; p 5.
([2]) OJ L 191, 28.5.2004.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004419/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Rechtsrahmen für die gerätgebundene Lizenzierung von Software

Im Februar 2013 wurde bekannt, dass das US-Unternehmen Microsoft die neue Version seiner Bürosoftware „Office 2013" mit einer gerätgebundenen Lizenz verkaufen will. Diese Lizenz sieht vor, dass die Software nur auf einem einzigen Gerät genutzt werden darf; selbst nach einer Deinstallation oder nach Versagen der Hardware kann Office 2013 somit nicht auf einem neuen Gerät installiert werden. Am 3. Juli 2012 entschied der Europäische Gerichtshof in einem Urteil zum Wiederverkaufsrecht für Software, dass Software und Lizenzvertrag ein „unteilbares Ganzes" darstellen.

1. Sind gerätgebundene Lizenzen nach den EU-Rechtsrahmen für Wettbewerbs- und Konsumentenschutzrecht erlaubt, oder regeln andere europäische Richtlinien diesen Bereich?

2. Falls solche Lizenzen nicht erlaubt sind, welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, falls Microsoft das Office 2013-Paket mit einer solchen Lizenz in der EU anbietet?

3. Falls solche Lizenzen erlaubt sind, plant die Kommission Regelungen zum Schutz von Verbrauchern, die dies ändern?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juni 2013)

In der Softwarebranche ist es gängige Praxis, dass Softwareanbieter je nach Bedarf ihrer Kunden verschiedene Arten von Softwarelizenzen anbieten und die Preise entsprechend staffeln. Ein solches Vorgehen allein gibt keinen Anlass zu Bedenken in Bezug auf das Wettbewerbsrecht oder den Verbraucherschutz, da die Verbraucher auf diese Weise selbst das Lizenzpakete auswählen können, das am ehesten ihren Bedürfnissen entspricht.

Unabhängig von der Würdigung nach dem EU-Wettbewerbsrecht ist zu prüfen, ob es einschlägige abgeleitete Rechtsvorschriften zu Fragen im Zusammenhang mit gerätgebundenen Lizenzen gibt. Nach Artikel 7 der Richtlinie 2009/24 sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, gemäß ihren innerstaatlichen Rechtsvorschriften geeignete Maßnahmen gegen Personen vorzusehen, die Mittel in Verkehr bringen, die dazu bestimmt sind, die unerlaubte Beseitigung technischer Programmschutzmechanismen zu erleichtern ([1]).

Zahlreiche EU-Richtlinien verpflichten Händler ferner, die Verbraucher vor dem Kauf über die wesentlichen Merkmale des Produkts klar zu informieren (Art. 4 Abs. 1 Buchst. b der Richtlinie 97/7/EG, Art. 7 Abs. 4 Buchst. a der Richtlinie 2005/29/EG, Art. 22 Abs. 1 Buchst. j). Sobald die Richtlinie 2011/83/EU über die Rechte der Verbraucher in den Mitgliedstaaten im Juni 2014 in den Mitgliedstaaten in Kraft getreten ist, müssen die Händler nicht nur die Verbraucher von den wesentlichen Eigenschaften in Kenntnis setzen (Art. 5 Abs. 1 Buchst. a und Art. 6 Abs. 1 Buchst. a), sondern sie auch gezielt informieren über „die Funktionsweise digitaler Inhalte, einschließlich anwendbarer technischer Schutzmaßnahmen für solche Inhalte" und „gegebenenfalls — soweit wesentlich — die Interoperabilität digitaler Inhalte mit Hard- und Software, soweit diese dem Unternehmer bekannt ist oder vernünftigerweise bekannt sein muss" (Art. 5 Abs. 1 Buchst. g und h, Art. 6 Abs. 1 Buchst. r und s).

([1]) Bisher liegt kein Urteil des Gerichtshofs zum Umfang des mit dieser Bestimmung gewährten Schutzes vor. Der Gerichtshof hat kürzlich jedoch in einem anderen Zusammenhang entschieden, dass sich der zweite Erwerber einer Nutzungslizenz auf die Erschöpfung des Verbreitungsrechts nach Art. 4 Abs. 2 der Richtlinie 2009/24 berufen kann und somit im Sinne von Art. 5 Abs. 1 der Richtlinie als rechtmäßiger Erwerber einer Programmkopie anzusehen ist (Urteil vom 3. Juli 2012, UsedSoft/Oracle, C-128/11). Der Gerichtshof urteilte ferner, dass der Urheberrechtsinhaber zwar dem Weiterverkauf nicht widersprechen kann, aber mit allen ihm zur Verfügung stehenden technischen Mitteln sicherstellen darf, dass die beim Verkäufer noch vorhandene Kopie unbrauchbar gemacht wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004419/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Legal framework for the device-specific licensing of software

In February 2013 it became known that US company Microsoft intends selling the new version of its 'Office 2013' software with a device-specific license. This license means that the software can only be used on a single device, so that Office 2013 cannot be installed on a new device even after it has been removed from the original device or after a hardware failure. On 3 July 2012, in a judgment on software resale rights, the European Court of Justice determined that a software and licensing agreement constitutes an 'indivisible whole'.

1. Are device-specific licenses permitted according to the EU legal framework for competition and consumer protection law, or do other European directives regulate this area?

2. If such licenses are not permitted, what measures does the Commission plan to take if Microsoft offers the Office 2013 package for sale in the EU with a license of this kind?

3. If such licenses are permitted, is the Commission planning to introduce regulations to protect consumers that change this?

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

It is a common practice in the software industry for vendors to offer different types of software licences in accordance with customer needs and to price them accordingly. This practice does not, in itself, give rise to competition or consumer protection concerns, as it may allow consumers to purchase the licensing package which best suits their needs.

Any assessment under EU competition law is also separate from the issue of whether there is any relevant secondary legislation which addresses any of the issues raised by device specific licences. Article 7 of Directive 2009/24 requires Member States to provide appropriate remedies against persons that put into circulation the means to facilitate the unauthorised removal of technical devices that are applied to protect a program. ([1])

In addition, several EU Directives oblige traders to inform the consumer clearly before the purchase on the key characteristics of the product (Art. 4(1)(b) of Directive 97/7/EC, Article 7(4)(a) of Directive 2005/29/EC, Article 22(1)(j). Once Directive 2011/83/EU on Consumer Rights takes effect in the Member States in June 2014, it will, beyond the obligation to inform consumers on the main characteristics (Article 5(1)(a) and Article 6(1)(a) also oblige traders to inform consumers specifically on 'functionality, including applicable technical protection measures, of digital content', and 'where applicable, any relevant interoperability of digital content with hardware and software that the trader is aware of or can reasonably be expected to have been aware of' (Article 5(1)(g) and (h), Article 6(1)(r) and (s)).

([1]) There is as yet no judgment of the Court of Justice on the scope of the protection granted under this provision. However, the Court has recently ruled in another context that a secondary purchaser of a software licence can rely on the exhaustion of the distribution right under Article 4(2) of Directive 2009/24 and hence be regarded as a lawful acquirer of a copy of a computer program (judgment of 3 July 2012 in Case C-128/11 (UsedSoft/Oracle). The Court also held that whilst the rightholder cannot object to the resale, it may nevertheless ensure by all technical means at his disposal that the copy still in the hands of the reseller is made unuseable.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004420/13
an den Rat
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Standpunkt des Rates zur Sicherheit europäischer Computersysteme

Medien berichteten Anfang 2013 wiederholt darüber, dass Einbrüche in Computersysteme von US-Unternehmen und Organisationen von scheinbar staatlichen Akteuren oder zumindest mit Duldung staatlicher Akteure der Volksrepublik China verübt wurden.

1. Hat der Rat in den letzten drei Jahren die Sicherheit von (a) privaten europäischen Computersystemen, (b) europäischer Infrastruktur und (c) staatlichen europäischen Einrichtungen sowie den Schutz dieser Systeme vor staatlichen und nichtstaatlichen Cyberattacken besprochen?

2. Welche Pläne verfolgt der Rat was die Zusammenarbeit im Bereich der digitalen Sicherheit innerhalb der EU betrifft?

Antwort
(24. Juni 2013)

(a) Der Rat möchte einige Initiativen hervorheben, die im Hinblick auf private europäische Computersysteme ergriffen wurden:

— der Rat hat in seinen Schlussfolgerungen zu der Mitteilung der Kommission zur EU-Strategie der inneren Sicherheit ([1]) erklärt, dass ein besserer Schutz der Bürger und Unternehmen im Cyberspace — neben den vier anderen von der Kommission ermittelten strategischen Zielen für die innere Sicherheit — für eine weitere Stärkung der Freiheit, der Sicherheit und des Rechts in der Europäischen Union von entscheidender Bedeutung sind;

— der Rat hat die Bekämpfung der Cyberkriminalität und des kriminellen Missbrauchs des Internets durch organisierte kriminelle Gruppen als eine der Prioritäten der Europäischen Union für die Bekämpfung der organisierten Kriminalität in den Jahren 2011-2013 festgelegt ([2]);

— der Rat hat Schlussfolgerungen zur Errichtung eines Europäischen Zentrums zur Bekämpfung der Cyberkriminalität ([3]) angenommen, welches sich mit den unterschiedlichen Bereichen der Cyberkriminalität befasst und als europäische Anlaufstelle für Informationen über Cyberstraftaten dient.

(b) Bezüglich der europäischen Infrastruktur sind die Schlussfolgerungen des Rates zum Schutz kritischer Informationsinfrastrukturen („Ergebnisse und nächste Schritte: der Weg zur globalen Netzsicherheit" ([4])) zu nennen, in denen auf die Bedeutung hingewiesen wird, die dem Aufbau nationaler/staatlicher IT-Notfalldienste (Computer Emergency Response Teams — CERTs), der Ausarbeitung nationaler Notfallpläne für Netzstörungen sowie der Veranstaltung von nationalen Übungen zur Internetsicherheit zukommt.

(c) Was die europäischen Verwaltungseinrichtungen und den Schutz ihrer Systeme vor staatlichen und nichtstaatlichen Cyber-Angriffen anbelangt, so wurde im Rat ein Meldeverfahren für Netzsicherheitsverletzungen ([5]) eingeführt und für die Organe und sonstigen Stellen der EU wurde ein CERT eingerichtet ([6]), nachdem Rolle und Wirksamkeit dieses Notfalldienstes nach einer einjährigen Pilotphase positiv beurteilt worden waren.

Der Rat prüft gegenwärtig einen Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie über Maßnahmen zur Gewährleistung einer hohen gemeinsamen Netz- und Informationssicherheit in der Union, den die Kommission am 7. Februar 2013 angenommen hat.

Die Europäische Agentur für Netz- und Informationssicherheit (ENISA) wird in dieser Hinsicht eine wichtige Rolle spielen, indem sie auf der Grundlage ihres verlängerten Mandats, auf das sich der Rat und das Parlament Anfang dieses Jahres geeinigt haben, auf EU-Ebene Fachwissen und Beratung anbieten wird.

([1]) Dok. 6699/11 JAI 124.
([2]) Dok. 11050/11 JAI 396 COSI 46 ENFOPOL 184 CRIMORG 81 ENFOCUSTOM 52 PESC 718 RELEX 603.
([3]) Dok. 10603/12 ENFOPOL 154 TELECOM 116.
([4]) Dok. 10299/11 TELECOM 71 DATAPROTECT 55 JAI 332 PROCIV 66. Siehe auch Dok. 10494/11, S. 8.
([5]) Dok. 8184/2/10 REV 2 EXT 1 CSC 15 SAP 5 CSCI 8.
([6]) Dok. 13737/12 CIS 5 CSC 56.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004420/13
to the Council
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: The Council's position on the security of European computer systems

At the beginning of 2013, the media repeatedly reported that cyber-attacks on the computer systems of US businesses and organisations had been perpetrated by actors apparently operating with at least the tolerance, if not the actual backing, of the Government of the People's Republic of China.

1. Over the last three years, has the Council discussed the security of (a) private European computer systems, (b) European infrastructure and (c) European governmental institutions and the protection of these systems against state and non-state cyber-attacks?

2. What plans is the Council pursuing in relation to cooperation in the area of digital security within the EU?

Reply
(24 June 2013)

(a) The Council would like to hightlight some initiatives regarding private European computer systems.

— In its conclusions on the Commission communication on the European Union internal security strategy in action ([1]), the Council stated that raising levels of security for citizens and businesses in cyberspace, along with the other four strategic objectives for internal security developed by the Commission, is crucial to further strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union.

— The Council made the fight against cybercrime and criminal misuse of the Internet by organised crime groups one of the European Union's priorities in the fight against organised crime between 2011 and 2013 ([2]).

— The Council adopted conclusions on the establishment of a European Cybercrime Centre ([3]) which focuses on different areas of cybercrime and serves as the European cybercrime information focal point.

(b) Concerning European infrastructure, the Council adopted conclusions on Critical Information Infrastructure Protection ('Achievements and next steps: towards global cybersecurity' ([4])), underlining the importance of the development of National/Governmental Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and the elaboration of national cyber incident contingency plans as well as the organisation of national cyber exercises.

(c) Concerning European governmental institutions and the protection of these systems against state and non-state cyber-attacks,a Network Security Incident Alert Mechanism has been established in the Council ([5]) and a CERT for the EU institutions, bodies and agencies has been set up ([6]) following a pilot phase of one year and successful assessment of its role and effectiveness.

The Council has begun the examination of the proposal for a directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union, which the Commission adopted on 7 February 2013.

The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) will play a key role in this regard and will provide expertise and advice at EU level on the basis of its renewed mandate, agreed by the Council and the Parliament earlier this year.

([1]) Doc. 6699/11 JAI 124.
([2]) Doc. 11050/11 JAI 396 COSI 46 ENFOPOL 184 CRIMORG 81 ENFOCUSTOM 52 PESC. 718 RELEX 603.
([3]) Doc. 10603/12 ENFOPOL 154 TELECOM 116.
([4]) Doc. 10299/11 TELECOM 71 DATAPROTECT 55 JAI 332 PROCIV 66. See also 10494/11 (p. 8).
([5]) Doc. 8184/2/10 REV 2 EXT 1 CSC 15 SAP 5 CSCI 8.
([6]) Doc. 13737/12 CIS 5 CSC 56.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004421/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(18. April 2013)

Betrifft: Empfänger und Leser der Stellungnahme 2/2012 des OLAF-Überwachungsausschuss

Auf Frage Nr. 36 der Fragen an die Generalsekretärin der Kommission für die Anhörung im Haushaltskontrollausschuss am 22.1.2013 hatte das Generalsekretariat geantwortet, dass dem Generalsekretariat keine Kopie der Stellungnahme des OLAF-Überwachungsausschusses zugesandt wurde. Eine vorläufige Version des Berichts wurde bereits am 21.12.2012 an den Generaldirektor des OLAF mit der Aufforderung zur Stellungnahme übermittelt. Die endgültige Version der Stellungnahme des Überwachungsausschusses wurde dem Präsidenten der Kommission zugesandt.

1. Zu welchem Zeitpunkt hatte das Generalsekretariat eine Kopie dieser Stellungnahme vorliegen?

2. Welche Personen hatten oder haben in der Kommission Zugang zu diesem Bericht? In welcher Funktion? Wann?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(27. Mai 2013)

Mit Schreiben vom 29. Januar 2013 übermittelte der Vorsitzende des OLAF-Überwachungsausschusses den Präsidenten des Europäischen Parlaments, des Rates der Europäischen Union und der Europäischen Kommission eine Kopie seiner Stellungnahme 2/2012. Der Vorsitzende wies in seinem Anschreiben darauf hin, dass kleinere Teile der Stellungnahme ausgenommen waren, da sie unter Artikel 8 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1073/1999 fielen. In dem Schreiben hieß es ausdrücklich, dass das Dokument weiterhin als vertraulich anzusehen sei und angesichts des laufenden Gerichtsverfahrens auf nationaler Ebene nicht weitergegeben werden sollte.

Um die vom Vorsitzenden geforderte Vertraulichkeit zu wahren, wurden das Schreiben und die Anlage innerhalb der Kommission nur streng begrenzt weitergegeben. Nur der Kabinettchef des Präsidenten, der Generaldirektor des Juristischen Dienstes und die Generalsekretärin erhielten Anfang Februar Zugang zu diesem Bericht. Außerdem erhielten auch die Juristen, die für die gerichtliche Weiterverfolgung der Verfahren im Zusammenhang mit diesen Untersuchungen zuständig waren, vertraulichen Zugang zu dem Bericht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004421/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Recipients and readers of Opinion 2/2012 of the OLAF Supervisory Committee

In response to question No 36 of the questions to the General Secretary of the Commission for the hearing in the Committee on Budgetary Control on 22 January 2013, the Secretariat answered that the Secretariat had not received a copy of the opinion of the OLAF Supervisory Committee. A draft version of the report had been sent to the Director-General of the OLAF on 21 December 2012 for comment. The final version of the opinion of the Supervisory Committee was sent to the President of the Commission.

1. At what point did the Secretariat receive a copy of this opinion?

2. Who in the Commission had or has access to this report? In what capacity? When?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2013)

By letter dated 29 January 2013, the Chairman of the OLAF Supervisory Committee transmitted to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission a copy of its Opinion 2/2012. In his letter the Chairman indicated that minor parts of the opinion were excluded because they were covered by Article 8 of Regulation EC 1073/1999. The letter stated clearly that the document should continue to be regarded as confidential, and should not be circulated, in the light of the ongoing judicial procedure at national level.

In order to respect the confidentiality requested by the Chairman, within the Commission the circulation of the letter and the attachment was strictly limited. Only the Head of Cabinet of the President, the Director General of the Legal Service and the Secretary General were given access to this report in early February. In addition the legal agents in charge of the judicial follow-up of proceedings linked to these investigations were also given confidential access to the report.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004422/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(18 april 2013)

Betreft: Duurzame voorziening fosfor

In de in 2011 door de Commissie voorgestelde routekaart voor grondstofefficiëntie wordt gesteld dat de duurzame toevoer van fosfor, een schaars en onvervangbaar goed voor het vruchtbaar maken van bodems, cruciaal is voor onze langetermijnvoedselvoorziening. De Commissie beloofde in dit voorstel de continuïteit van de voorziening van fosfor en mogelijke acties voor het duurzame gebruik ervan verder te beoordelen.

Op 13 maart beloofde Commissaris Potocnik een strategie om fosfor te recyclen en te beschermen. Europa is vrijwel volledig import-afhankelijk voor fosfor, en dit schaarse materiaal wordt vaak nog onvoldoende efficiënt gebruikt.

De enige producent van witte fosfor in Europa was het Nederlandse bedrijf Thermphos. Op 7 november 2011 diende deze fosforproducent een klacht in bij de Europese Commissie over het dumpen op de markt van witte fosfor door het bedrijf Kazhphosphate uit Kazachstan. De Europese Commissie gaf in een besluit op 13 februari aan dat deze klacht gegrond was, maar hier volgden geen verdere acties op.

Hiermee ging de Commissie in tegen haar eigen voornemen om de continuïteit van de voorziening van fosfor en het duurzame gebruik ervan in de toekomst zeker te stellen.

1. Welke maatregelen gaat de Commissie treffen om de continuïteit van duurzame fosforvoorziening, stimulering van recycling en gesloten ketens te borgen?

2. Is de Commissie bereid bij te dragen aan de ontwikkeling van een kenniscentrum zodat de expertise die aanwezig was in Europa's enige wittefosforproducent niet verloren gaat? Plant de Commissie eventueel nog andere acties om deze kennis te behouden?

3. Welke maatregelen wil de Commissie nemen om de importafhankelijkheid van Europa te beperken nu Europa zelf geen fosfor meer produceert?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(13 juni 2013)

Het door de Commissie aangekondigde verslag over het duurzaam gebruik van fosfor zal een reeks maatregelen uiteenzetten die genomen kunnen worden om de grondstofefficiëntie ten aanzien van fosfor te verbeteren en zodoende de recycling en de veiligheid van de fosforvoorziening te bevorderen.

De herziening van de meststoffenverordening waaraan momenteel wordt gewerkt zal naast andere doelstellingen gericht zijn op de totstandbrenging van een interne markt voor meststoffen die gerecycleerde fosfor bevatten.

Fosfaat zal in 2013 geëvalueerd worden in het kader van de herziening van de EU-lijst van kritieke grondstoffen. De in 2010 gepubliceerde lijst van kritieke grondstoffen is een belangrijk instrument gebleken voor de Commissie om bewustwording te creëren, prioritaire acties te bepalen en financieringsmogelijkheden open te stellen uit hoofde van het zevende kaderprogramma voor onderzoek en ontwikkeling. De herziene lijst dient begin 2014 door de Commissie vastgesteld te worden.

Onderzoek en innovatie ten aanzien van een efficiënter gebruik van fosfor vormt een ander onderdeel van het beleid voor een duurzamer gebruik van fosfor. In dit verband ontwikkelt de Commissie een Europees innovatiepartnerschap voor productiviteit en duurzaamheid in de landbouw, dat streeft naar een concurrerende en duurzame land- en bosbouw waarin met minder meer wordt bereikt en in harmonie met de omgeving wordt gewerkt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004422/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Sustainable supply of phosphorus

It is set out in the Resource Efficiency Roadmap put forward by the Commission in 2011 that the sustainable supply of phosphorus, a scarce and irreplaceable resource for making soil fertile, is vital for our long-term food supply. In this proposal the Commission pledged to continue the supply of phosphorus and to conduct a further review of possible actions to support its sustainable use.

On 13 March Commissioner Poto committed to a strategy for recycling and protecting phosphorus. Europe is almost entirely dependent on imports for phosphorus, and this scarce material is often still not being used as efficiently as it should be.

The only producer of white phosphorus in Europe was the Dutch company Thermphos. On 7 November 2011 the phosphorus producer submitted a complaint to the Commission regarding the dumping on the market of white phosphorus by the Kazakh company Kazhphosphate. In its decision of 13 February the Commission stated that there were grounds for this complaint, but no further action was taken.

In doing this the Commission went against its own decision to ensure continuity in the supply of phosphorus and its sustainable use in the future.

1. What measures will the Commission put in place to guarantee the continuity of a sustainable supply of phosphorus, incentives for recycling and closed chains?

2. Is the Commission prepared to contribute to the development of a centre of expertise so that the expertise of Europe's only white phosphorus producer is not lost? Is the Commission planning any further action to preserve this expertise?

3. What measures does the Commission intend to take to limit Europe's dependence on imports now that Europe is no longer producing any phosphorus itself?

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

The forthcoming Commission paper on the sustainable use of phosphorus will set out a range of actions that could be taken to improve resource efficiency in respect of phosphorus, thereby promoting recycling and improving the security of phosphorus supplies.

The revision of the Fertiliser Regulation, which is currently being prepared, will amongst other objectives aim at creating an internal market for fertilising materials containing recycled phosphorus.

Phosphate will be evaluated in the 2013 review of the EU critical raw materials list. Since its publication in 2010 the list of critical raw materials has proven to be an important tool for the Commission to raise awareness, determine priority actions and open up funding opportunities under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development. The revised list is to be adopted by the Commission in the beginning of 2014.

Research and innovation into using phosphorus more efficiently is another component of a policy for a more sustainable phosphorus use. In this respect, the Commission is developing a European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on agricultural productivity and sustainability which aims to foster competitive and sustainable agriculture and forestry that achieves more from less and works in harmony with the environment.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004423/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(18 april 2013)

Betreft: Faillissement Thermphos

Op 13 februari 2013 publiceerde de Europese Commissie haar besluit om geen maatregelen te nemen tegen de dumping van witte fosfor uit Kazachstan. Met dit besluit werd het faillissement van Europa's enige producent van witte fosfor in december onomkeerbaar. Eerder verzuimde de Commissie ook om voorlopige maatregelen te treffen die ervoor konden zorgen dat de productie van witte fosfor in Europa doorgang kon vinden.

In het genoemde besluit concludeerde de Europese Commissie dat er sprake was van dumping en dat dit heeft geleid tot schade, zowel voor de betrokken industrie als van het algemene belang van de Europese Unie (punt 190, 178 van besluit 2013/81/EU), maar dat de belangen van de gebruikers en importeurs zwaarder wegen dan het verlies van Europa's enige producent van witte fosfor.

Het faillissement van Thermphos heeft als gevolg dat er 500 banen verloren gaan en dat de kosten voor het opruimen van het terrein tussen de 70 en 120 miljoen bedragen. Deze gevolgen komen in hun geheel voor de rekening van de Provincie Zeeland en de Nederlandse gemeenschap.

1. Welke acties gaat de Commissie ondernemen om de gevolgen van de door haar vastgestelde dumping (onderdeel C van besluit 2013/81/EU, met name punt 48) te herstellen?

2. Hoe gaat de Commissie zorgen dat er een compensatie plaatsvindt voor de geleden schade?

3. In hoeverre acht de Commissie een doorstart van Thermphos mogelijk en op welke manier gaat zij hieraan bijdragen?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(7 juni 2013)

Overeenkomstig de anti-dumpingwetgeving van de EU moet voor het instellen van anti-dumpingmaatregelen aan een aantal voorwaarden worden voldaan: er moet worden vastgesteld dat er sprake is van schade, en dat er een oorzakelijk verband tussen beide bestaat. Het instellen van anti-dumpingrechten mag bovendien niet indruisen tegen het algemene belang van de Europese Unie. De beëindiging van dit onderzoek was gebaseerd op de beoordeling van de negatieve effecten van eventuele rechten op de gebruikers van witte fosfor en op een diepgaand onderzoek waarbij met de standpunten van alle betrokken partijen rekening is gehouden. Onder deze omstandigheden is vastgesteld dat het duidelijk niet in het belang van de Europese Unie was om anti-dumpingmaatregelen in te stellen en overeenkomstig de wettelijke bepalingen kunnen er derhalve geen anti-dumpingmaatregelen worden ingesteld.

In het kader van de anti-dumpingonderzoeken, handelt de Commissie in overeenstemming met de anti-dumpingbasisverordening van de EU, Verordening (EG) nr. 1225/2009 van de Raad van 30 november 2009 betreffende beschermende maatregelen tegen invoer met dumping uit landen die geen lid zijn van de Europese Gemeenschap ([1]). Deze wetgeving is in overeenstemming met de antidumpingovereenkomst van de Wereldhandelsorganisatie (WTO). Binnen dit juridische kader heeft de Commissie geen andere rechtsmiddelen of verplichtingen met betrekking tot de bedrijfstak van de Europese Unie en de activiteiten daarvan.

([1]) PB L 343 van 22.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004423/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(18 April 2013)

Subject: Collapse of Thermphos

On 13 February 2013 the Commission published its decision not to take any action against the dumping of white phosphorus from Kazakhstan. This decision made the collapse of Europe's only producer of white phosphorus in December irreversible. The Commission previously neglected to implement provisional measures which could have ensured the continuation of the production of white phosphorus in Europe.

In the aforementioned decision the Commission concluded that this was a case of dumping and that this had been damaging both to the industry concerned and to the overall interest of the European Union (Points 190, 178 of Decision 2013/81/EU), but that the interests of the consumers and importers carried greater weight than the loss of Europe's only producer of white phosphorus.

The collapse of Thermphos will lead to the loss of 500 jobs and costs for clearing the land amounting to between 70 and 120 million. These consequences will be fully felt by the province of Zeeland and Dutch society.

1. What steps will the Commission take to rectify the consequences of the dumping that it has brought about (Section C of Decision 2013/81/EU, and specifically Point 48)?

2. How will the Commission ensure that compensation is provided for the losses incurred?

3. To what extent does the Commission consider it possible to restart operations at Thermphos and how will it contribute to this?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(7 June 2013)

According to EU anti-dumping legislation, in order to impose anti-dumping measures, several conditions have to be fulfilled: the existence of dumping and injury needs to be established, as well as a causal link between them. In addition, any duties should not be against the Union's overall interest. The termination of this investigation was based on the assessment of the negative impact of possible duties on the users of white phosphorus further to an in-depth investigation which took into account the views expressed by all interested parties. Under these circumstances, it was concluded that it was clearly not in the Union's interest to adopt anti-dumping measures, and according to the legal provisions, therefore, no anti-dumping measures can be imposed.

In the context of anti-dumping investigations, the Commission acts within the EU's basic anti-dumping Regulation, Council Regulation (EC) No 1225/2009 of 30 November 2009 on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Community [1]. This legislation complies with the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Anti-dumping Agreement. Within this legal framework, the Commission has no other legal means or obligations with regard to the Union industry and their activities.

[1] OJ L 343, 22.12.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004424/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Ana Gomes (S&D), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D) und Elmar Brok (PPE)
(19. April 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Haftbefehle der ägyptischen Regierung gegen politische Aktivisten und Menschenrechtsaktivisten

Zwei Jahre nach der Revolution vom 25. Januar 2011 mitzuerleben, wie die ägyptische Regierung dieselben politischen Aktivisten verfolgt, die zum Sturz des undemokratischen Mubarak-Regimes beigetragen haben, und vor allem Aktivisten der Jugendbewegung des 6. April, ist paradox. Amnesty International zufolge wurden in den vergangenen zwei Wochen 33 Personen verhaftet und unter Anklage gestellt. Zu ihnen gehören auch der bekannteste Kabarettist Ägyptens, Bassem Jusuf, ein führender Aktivist der Jugendbewegung des 6. April, Ahmad Abdallah, der bekannte Blogger Alaa Abdel Fatah, die Menschenrechtsaktivistin Muna Seif und die bekannte Menschenrechtsanwältin Mahinur Masri.

Bei den Verhaftungen handelt es sich um einen ungerechtfertigten Einschüchterungsversuch aufgrund der beruflichen Tätigkeit und der politischen Überzeugungen der Angeklagten und damit um eine Verletzung des Rechts auf freie Meinungsäußerung in Ägypten. Äußerst besorgniserregend ist auch der Fall des Hassan Mustafa, der wegen politisch motivierter Aktivitäten zu zwei Jahren Gefängnis verurteilt wurde.

Die EU darf nicht zulassen, dass sich die Fehler der Vergangenheit wiederholen, sie muss klar Stellung beziehen und gegen diese Verstöße gegen die Demokratie in Ägypten vorgehen. Aus diesem Grund ersuchen wir die VP/HR um Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen:

1. Hat die VP/HR die genannten Fälle während ihres Besuchs in Ägypten am Sonntag, den 7. April 2013, gegenüber Präsident Mursi und den Mitgliedern der ägyptischen Regierung zur Sprache gebracht?

2. Hat die VP/HR die Oppositionsführer getroffen, um die Bemühungen zu bündeln und ihr Engagement für den Aufbau eines demokratischen Rechtsstaats, in dem die Gewaltenteilung und das Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung respektiert werden, zu unterstützen?

3. Hat die VP/HR die Haftbefehle verurteilt, die in Ägypten gegen politische Aktivisten und Menschenrechtsaktivisten erlassen wurden?

4. Das Parlament hat auf seiner Plenartagung im März 2013 über eine Entschließung abgestimmt, in der es die EU auffordert „den ägyptischen Behörden keine Budgethilfen zu gewähren, wenn keine entscheidenden Fortschritte hinsichtlich der Achtung der Menschenrechte und Grundfreiheiten, der demokratischen Staatsführung und der Rechtsstaatlichkeit gemacht werden". Wie setzt die VP/HR diese Empfehlung des Parlaments um?

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

Die HV/VP führte während ihres Besuchs in Kairo im April 2013 Gespräche mit Präsident Morsi, führenden Oppositionsangehörigen und Vertretern der Zivilgesellschaft. Bei allen Zusammenkünften wies sie darauf hin, wie wichtig es ist, eine auf Rechtsstaatlichkeit beruhende Zivilgesellschaft aufzubauen und dabei die Menschenrechtsprinzipien zu achten. Sie wiederholte außerdem erneut ihren Aufruf zum Dialog zwischen allen Parteien in Ägypten, damit weitere Fortschritte auf dem Weg zu einer vertieften und nachhaltigen Demokratie gemacht werden können.

Außerdem brachte die HV/VP in der Erklärung vom 12. Mai ihre Besorgnis hinsichtlich der Inhaftierung und Verfolgung von zivilgesellschaftlichen Aktivisten und Medienangehörigen zum Ausdruck und verurteilte dieses Vorgehen als beunruhigende Entwicklung mit Blick auf den Übergang des Landes zur Demokratie. Darüber hinaus erinnerte die HV/VP sämtliche am Übergang beteiligten Gruppen daran, dass nun Nachdruck auf Dialog, Toleranz und einen integrativen Prozess gelegt werden sollte, der zu der Stabilität führen könnte, die Ägypten so dringend braucht.

Was die Entschließung des EP vom März anbelangt, so ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass 2013 keine Budgethilfe für die ägyptischen Behörden bereitgestellt wurde.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004424/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Ana Gomes (S&D), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D) e Elmar Brok (PPE)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Mandati d'arresto emessi dal governo egiziano contro attivisti politici e dei diritti umani

A due anni dalla rivoluzione del 25 gennaio 2011, è un paradosso constatare che il governo egiziano perseguita gli stessi attivisti politici che hanno contribuito a rovesciare il regime non democratico di Mubarak, e in particolare gli attivisti del Movimento Gioventù 6 aprile. Secondo Amnesty International, nelle ultime due settimane, 33 persone sono state arrestate e accusate, in particolare: Bassem Youssef, il più famoso scrittore satirico d'Egitto; Ahmad Abdallah, attivista di primo piano del Movimento Gioventù 6 aprile; Alaa Abdel Fatah, famoso blogger; la sig.ra Mona Seif, attivista dei diritti umani e la sig.ra Mahinour Masri, famosa avvocato dei diritti umani.

Questi arresti costituiscono un atto ingiustificato di intimidazioni fondato sulle attività professionali e le convinzioni politiche degli imputati, e con ciò mina la libertà di espressione in Egitto. Un altro motivo di profonda preoccupazione è il caso di Hassan Mustapha, che ha davanti una pena detentiva di due anni per azioni di una certa matrice politica.

L'UE non deve stare a guardare gli errori del passato che si ripetono — deve parlare ed agire contro siffatte violazioni della democrazia in Egitto. Vorremmo dunque chiedere alla VP/HR quanto segue:

1. la VP/HR ha sollevato i casi di cui sopra con il Presidente Morsi e i membri del governo egiziano durante la sua visita in Egitto di domenica 7 aprile 2013?

2. La VP/HR ha incontrato i leader dell'opposizione, nell'ottica di unire gli sforzi e sostenere le loro iniziative nella costruzione di uno Stato democratico che rispetti lo Stato di diritto, la separazione dei poteri, e la libertà di espressione?

3. La VP/HR ha condannato i mandati d'arresto emessi contro gli attivisti politici e dei diritti umani in Egitto?

4. Nella plenaria di marzo 2013, il Parlamento ha votato una risoluzione che invita l'Unione europea «a non concedere alcun sostegno finanziario alle autorità egiziane, ove non si compia alcun progresso significativo quanto al rispetto dei diritti umani, delle libertà, della governance democratica e dello Stato di diritto». La VP/HR come sta attuando la raccomandazione del Parlamento?

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

Durante la sua visita al Cairo nell'aprile 2013, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha avuto diversi incontri con il presidente Morsi, con gli esponenti dell'opposizione e con i rappresentanti della società civile. In tutte queste occasioni, ha sottolineato l'importanza di costruire una società fondata sullo Stato di diritto e conforme ai principi dei diritti umani. Ha inoltre invitato nuovamente tutte le parti in Egitto a dialogare al fine di progredire ulteriormente verso una democrazia radicata e sostenibile.

Anche nella dichiarazione del 12 maggio, l'AR/VP ha espresso la propria preoccupazione per l'arresto e il perseguimento giudiziario degli attivisti della società civile e dei professionisti dei mezzi d'informazione e ha condannato tali eventi in quanto segnali preoccupanti nel contesto della transizione democratica del paese. Ha inoltre ricordato a tutte le parti coinvolte nella transizione che è necessario impegnarsi nel dialogo, nella tolleranza e in un processo globale che potrebbe portare alla stabilità di cui l'Egitto ha urgente bisogno.

Per quanto riguarda la risoluzione del Parlamento europeo di marzo, è importante tener presente che nel 2013 non è stata eseguita alcuna operazione di sostegno al bilancio a favore delle autorità egiziane.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004424/13
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter / Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Ana Gomes (S&D), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D) en Elmar Brok (PPE)
(19 april 2013)

Betreft: VP/HR — Arrestatiebevelen die door de Egyptische regering tegen politieke en mensenrechtenactivisten zijn uitgevaardigd

Het is twee jaar na de 25-januari-revolutie paradoxaal te zien hoe dezelfde politieke activisten die hebben geholpen het antidemocratische regime van Mubarak ten val te brengen, namelijk de activisten van de 6-april-beweging, thans door de Egyptische regering worden vervolgd. Volgens Amnesty International worden 33 mensen de laatste twee weken achtervolgd met aanhoudingen en beschuldigingen, waaronder Bassem Youssef, de meest bekende humorist van het land, Ahmad Abdallah, een vooraanstaande activist in de 6-april-beweging, Alaa Abdel Fatah, een bekend blogger, Mona Seif, een mensenrechtenactiviste, en Mahinour Masri, een bekend mensenrechtenadvocaat.

Het gaat hier om niet te rechtvaardigen intimidatie, die direct is ingegeven door hun beroepsactiviteiten en politieke overtuigingen, en die een bedreiging vormt voor de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Egypte. Zeer zorgwekkend is ook de zaak Hassan Mustapha die tot een gevangenisstraf van twee jaar dreigt te worden veroordeeld op politiek gemotiveerde beschuldigingen.

De EU moet niet haar fouten uit het verleden herhalen, maar haar stem verheffen en actie ondernemen tegen deze schendingen van de democratie in Egypte. Daarom leggen wij de VV/HV de volgende vragen voor:

1. Heeft de VV/HV deze gevallen aan de orde gesteld in haar gesprekken met president Morsi en leden van diens regering, tijdens haar bezoek aan Egypte op zondag 7 april?

2. Heeft de VV/HV met de oppositieleiders gesproken om krachten te bundelen en steun te geven aan hun initiatieven voor het opbouwen van een democratische staat waar de rechtsstaat, de scheiding der machten en vrijheid van meningsuiting worden gerespecteerd?

3. Heeft de VV/HV haar veroordeling uitgesproken over de arrestatiebevelen die tegen politieke en mensenrechtenactivisten in Egypte zijn uitgevaardigd?

4. In de plenaire vergadering van maart nam het Europees Parlement een resolutie aan waarin de EU dringend wordt gevraagd „geen enkele begrotingssteun aan de Egyptische autoriteiten te verlenen indien geen aanzienlijke vooruitgang is geboekt met betrekking tot de eerbiediging van mensenrechten en vrijheden, een democratisch bestuur en respect voor de regels van de rechtsstaat". Wat doet de VV/HV om invulling te geven aan deze aanbeveling van het EP?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(20 juni 2013)

Tijdens haar bezoek aan Caïro in april 2013 heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter gesprekken gevoerd met president Morsi, leiders van de oppositie en vertegenwoordigers van het maatschappelijke middenveld. Tijdens al deze vergaderingen heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter het belang benadrukt van de opbouw van een samenleving die is gebaseerd op de rechtsstaat en de naleving van de mensenrechtenbeginselen. Zij heeft eveneens alle partijen in Egypte opnieuw opgeroepen om de dialoog aan te gaan met het oog op verdere vooruitgang op de weg naar wezenlijke en duurzame democratie.

In haar verklaring van 12 mei heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter eveneens haar bezorgdheid geuit over de vrijheidsbeneming en vervolging van activisten uit het maatschappelijke middenveld en mensen die werkzaam zijn in de media, en heeft zij dergelijke acties veroordeeld als een verontrustende ontwikkeling in het kader van de democratische overgang in het land. De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter heeft alle partijen die bij de overgang zijn betrokken, er eveneens aan herinnerd dat de nadruk nu moet worden gelegd op dialoog, verdraagzaamheid en een inclusief proces dat kan leiden tot de stabiliteit waaraan Egypte dringend behoefte heeft.

Wat de resolutie van het Europees Parlement van maart betreft, moet worden opgemerkt dat de Egyptische autoriteiten in 2013 geen begrotingssteun hebben ontvangen.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004424/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Ana Gomes (S&D), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D) e Elmar Brok (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Mandados de prisão emitidos contra ativistas dos direitos políticos e humanos pelo Governo egípcio

Dois anos depois da revolução de 25 de janeiro de 2011, é paradoxal assistir à perseguição, pelo Governo egípcio, dos mesmos ativistas políticos que contribuíram para derrubar o regime não-democrático de Mubarak, e especialmente ativistas do Movimento de Juventude 6 de abril. Segundo a Amnistia Internacional, nas duas últimas semanas foram presas e acusadas 33 pessoas, nomeadamente: Bassem Youssef, o mais famoso satirista do Egito; Ahmad Abdallah, um ativista líder do Movimento de Juventude 6 de abril; Alaa Abdel Fatah, um famoso autor de blogues; Mona Seif, uma ativista dos direitos humanos; e Mahinour Masri, famosa advogada de direitos humanos.

Estas detenções constituem um ato injustificado de intimidação baseado nas atividades profissionais e convicções políticas dos acusados, minando assim a liberdade de expressão no Egito. Outro motivo de profunda preocupação é o caso de Hassan Mustapha, que enfrenta uma pena de prisão de dois anos com fundamento em ações politicamente motivadas.

A UE não deve assistir à repetição dos erros do passado — deve fazer ouvir a sua voz e tomar medidas contra estas violações da democracia no Egito. Assim, gostaríamos de perguntar à VP/AR o seguinte:

1. A VP/AR evocou os casos supracitados junto do Presidente Morsi e membros do Governo egípcio durante a sua visita ao Egito no domingo 7 de abril de 2013?

2. A VP/AR encontrou-se com os líderes da oposição a fim de conjugar esforços e apoiar as suas iniciativas para a construção de um Estado democrático que respeite o princípio de legalidade, a separação de poderes e a liberdade de expressão?

3. A VP/AR condenou os mandados de prisão emitidos contra ativistas políticos e dos direitos humanos no Egito?

4. Na sessão plenária de março de 2013, o Parlamento votou uma resolução exortando a UE «a não conceder qualquer apoio orçamental às autoridades egípcias se não forem efetuados importantes progressos no que se refere ao respeito das liberdades e dos direitos humanos, à governação democrática e ao Estado de Direito». De que forma está a VP/AR a implementar a resolução do Parlamento?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(20 de junho de 2013)

Durante a sua visita ao Cairo em abril de 2013, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente manteve conversações com o Presidente Morsi, com destacadas figuras da oposição e com representantes da sociedade civil. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente sublinhou, em todas as reuniões, a importância de construir uma sociedade baseada no respeito do Estado de direito e em conformidade com os princípios dos direitos humanos. Também instou de novo todas as partes no Egito a manterem o diálogo a fim de realizar mais progressos no sentido de uma democracia sólida e sustentável.

Na comunicação de 12 de maio, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente também manifestou preocupação com a detenção e acusação dos ativistas da sociedade civil e dos profissionais dos meios de comunicação social e condenou esses acontecimentos como preocupantes no contexto da transição democrática do país. A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente também recordou a todas as partes envolvidas na transição que a tónica deve agora incidir no diálogo, na tolerância e num processo inclusivo que possam conduzir o Egito à estabilidade de que carece urgentemente.

No que diz respeito à resolução de março do PE, é importante ter em conta que em 2013 não teve lugar qualquer operação de apoio orçamental às autoridades egípcias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004424/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Gomes (S&D), Marietje Schaake (ALDE), Franziska Katharina Brantner (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D) and Elmar Brok (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Arrest warrants issued against political and human rights activists by the Egyptian government

Two years after the revolution of 25 January 2011, it is a paradox to witness the Egyptian Government pursuing the same political activists who helped overthrow the non-democratic Mubarak regime, and in particular activists from the April 6 Youth Movement. According to Amnesty International, 33 people have been arrested and charged in the past two weeks, notably: Mr Bassem Youssef, Egypt's most famous satirist; Mr Ahmad Abdallah, a leading activist with the April 6 Youth Movement; Mr Alaa Abdel Fatah, a famous blogger; Ms Mona Seif, human rights activists; and Ms Mahinour Masri, a famous human rights lawyer.

These arrests constitute an unjustified act of intimidation based on the professional activities and political beliefs of the accused, thereby undermining freedom of expression in Egypt. Another cause for deep concern is the case of Mr Hassan Mustapha, who faces a two-year prison sentence on the grounds of politically-motivated actions.

The EU must not see the past's mistakes repeated — it must speak out and take action against these violations of democracy in Egypt. As such, we would like to ask the VP/HR the following questions:

1. Did the VP/HR raise the above cases with President Morsi and members of the Egyptian Government during her visit to Egypt on Sunday, 7 April 2013?

2. Did the VP/HR meet with the opposition leaders in order to combine efforts and support their initiatives in building a democratic state that respects the rule of law, the separation of powers, and freedom of expression?

3. Did the VP/HR condemn the arrest warrants issued against political and human rights activists in Egypt?

4. At the March 2013 plenary session, Parliament voted a resolution urging the EU 'not to grant any budgetary support to the Egyptian authorities if no major progress is made regarding respect of human rights, freedoms, democratic governance and the rule of law'. How is the VP/HR implementing Parliament's recommendation?

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

The HR/VP, during her visit to Cairo in April 2013, held discussions with President Morsi, leading opposition figures and representatives from civil society. In all meetings the HR/VP stressed the importance of building a society based on the rule of law and its compliance with human right principles. She also reiterated previous calls for dialogue among all parties in Egypt in order to make further progress towards deep and sustainable democracy.

Also in the statement of 12 May, the HR/VP expressed concern regarding the detention and prosecution of civil society activists and media professionals and condemned such events as a worrying development in the context of the democratic transition of the country. The HR/VP also reminded all parties involved in the transition that emphasis should now be put on dialogue, tolerance and an inclusive process that could lead to the stability Egypt urgently needs.

With regards to the March EP's resolution, it is important to bear in mind that in 2013 no budget support operation to the Egyptian authorities has taken place.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004425/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Batteriofagi: un'eccezionale scoperta per la cura delle infezioni batteriche

Scoperti agli inizi del XX secolo, i batteriofagi sono virus in grado di attaccare diverse specie di batteri: una volta infettata la cellula batterica, il DNA dei batteriofagi si replica fino a distruggere l'ospite. Nonostante l'accanito ricorso alla terapia fagica in alcune parti del mondo, lo sviluppo convenzionale e la produzione di massa degli antibiotici hanno portato a un generale rifiuto dei batteriofagi. A causa della comparsa di numerosi batteri resistenti a più classi di antibiotici, tuttavia, si torna a guardare con interesse alla terapia fagica.

Gli scienziati hanno ripreso a occuparsi dei batteriofagi, data la loro estrema specificità e la capacità di colpire soltanto i batteri dannosi, oltre che per il ridotto numero di effetti collaterali e l'impatto minimo sull'ambiente. Recenti studi sulla valutazione della terapia fagica su pazienti con infezioni suppurative e settiche hanno rivelato un tasso di successo del 91,3 % (137 pazienti su 150) nella cura delle infezioni suppurative e del 92,4 % (342 pazienti su 370) in quella delle infezioni settiche. Sebbene la genetica dei batteriofagi e la loro efficacia siano oggi ampiamente note, sono necessarie ulteriori indagini sulle analogie e sulle differenze negli effetti antibatterici *in vivo* e *in vitro* di questi virus. Ciò si deve alla diversa fisiologia dei batteri che infettano il corpo umano e di quelli che sono coltivati artificialmente in laboratorio.

Alla luce delle seguenti considerazioni:

— i batteriofagi sono in grado di tenere il passo di tutti i batteri che hanno il compito di distruggere e possono essere efficaci sia nelle malattie croniche che nelle infezioni batteriche;

— la terapia fagica sarebbe utile per la cura dei pazienti che presentano allergie agli antibiotici;

— è poco probabile che l'uomo possa mettere a punto antibiotici sempre nuovi, mentre i batteri continueranno probabilmente a sviluppare resistenza;

— la terapia fagica è meno costosa degli antibiotici;

potrebbe la Commissione chiarire se esiste la possibilità di incoraggiare ulteriori ricerche in questo campo, al fine di ottenere informazioni più dettagliate su tutti i tipi di batteriofagi e sui nuovi modi di combattere le infezioni?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2013)

La Commissione è pienamente consapevole della necessità di incoraggiare la ricerca mirante a sviluppare nuove terapie di trattamento delle infezioni batteriche, quale quella indicata dall'onorevole parlamentare. Il 15 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha pertanto pubblicato un piano d'azione per contrastare i rischi crescenti di resistenza agli antimicrobici ([1]) comprendente iniziative volte ad intensificare la ricerca contro tale fenomeno.

La ricerca sull'utilizzo dei batteriofagi per il trattamento delle infezioni batteriche rientra nelle attività sostenute dal PQ7 e comprende il progetto CONCORD ([2]), nell'ambito del quale si è svolto un esperimento pilota di terapia fagica per il trattamento dello «*S. aureus*» meticillino-resistente nei suini, i cui risultati sono attualmente in corso di valutazione.

Lo sviluppo di farmaci, vaccini e strategie mediche alternative resta un settore prioritario. Questo tipo di ricerca è stato specificamente sollecitato in un invito a presentare proposte nell'ambito del PQ7 ([3]) pubblicato nel 2012. A seguito di tale invito, la Commissione sta attualmente ultimando la messa a punto di una convenzione di sovvenzione per un progetto denominato PHAGOBURN finalizzato a valutare l'utilizzo della terapia fagica per il trattamento delle infezioni batteriche delle ustioni nel quadro di una sperimentazione clinica.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0748:FIN:IT:PDF
([2]) http://www.concord-mrsa.eu
([3]) PQ7: settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2007-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004425/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Bacteriophages: an outstanding discovery in the treatment of bacterial infections

Discovered in the late 1910s, bacteriophages are viruses which are able to infect various species of bacteria. Once they infect a bacterial cell, the bacteriophages' DNA replicates until it kills the host. Despite a stubborn enthusiasm for phage therapy in some parts of the world, the mainstream development and mass production of antibiotics has paved the way for the widespread rejection of bacteriophages. However, the field of phage therapy is once again gaining momentum as a result of the emergence of many multi-drug-resistant bacteria.

Scientists are again looking to bacteriophages, given that they are highly specific and only target harmful bacteria. Furthermore, they give rise to few side effects and have a minimal impact on the environment. Recent studies evaluating phage therapy on patients with suppurative and septic infections have shown success rates of 91.3% (137 out of 150 patients) in the treatment of suppurative infections, and success rates of 92.4% (342 out of 370) in the treatment of septic infections. Although significant knowledge about the genetics of bacteriophages and their effectiveness is now widely available, further investigation into the similarities and differences between the *in vivo* and *in vitro* antibacterial effect of bacteriophages is needed. This is due to the fact that the physiology of bacteria which infect the human body is not the same as that of bacteria which are grown artificially in laboratories.

Considering that:

— bacteriophages are capable of keeping pace with all of the bacteria which they are designed to kill, and can work well on chronic diseases and bacterial infections;

— phage therapy would be useful in the treatment of patients allergic to antibiotics;

— humans are unlikely to be able to come up with new antibiotics indefinitely, while bacteria will probably continue to develop resistance;

— phage therapy is less expensive than antibiotics,

could the Commission clarify whether there is a possibility of encouraging further research in this field with a view to discovering more detailed information about all types of bacteriophage and new ways of fighting infections?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

The Commission is fully aware of the need to encourage research that aims to develop novel therapies to treat bacterial infections, as described by the Honourable Member. Therefore, on 15 November 2011, the Commission issued an Action plan against the rising threats from antimicrobial resistance ([1]), containing actions aimed at reinforcing research to combat antimicrobial resistance.

Research on the use of bacteriophages to treat bacterial infections is part of the activities supported by FP7, and includes the CONCORD ([2]) project that carried out a phage therapy pilot experiment for the treatment of Methicillin-resistant 'S. aureus' in pigs, the results of which are currently under evaluation.

The development of drugs, vaccines and alternative medical approaches continues to be a priority area and this type of research was specifically asked for in an FP7 ([3]) call for proposals published in 2012. As a result of this call, the Commission is currently in the final stages of preparing a grant agreement for a project called PHAGOBURN that aims to evaluate the use of phage therapy to treat bacterial infections of burn wounds in a clinical trial.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0748:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.concord-mrsa.eu/
([3]) FP7: Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (2007-2013).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004426/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Relazione sui progressi della Turchia tra riforme fallite e stallo politico istituzionale: quale futuro per i negoziati

La relazione più recente sui progressi della candidatura della Turchia per entrare a far parte dell'Unione europea è stata presentata dalla Commissione nel 2012. Quest'ultima si basa su informazioni provenienti da diverse fonti (elaborati del governo turco, degli Stati membri e del Parlamento europeo così come di organizzazioni internazionali e non governative). In questo documento si evidenzia come la Turchia, sebbene si sia dimostrata pronta alla stesura di una nuova costituzione e abbia compiuto notevoli progressi in ambito militare ed economico, resta politicamente non in linea con criteri politici definiti per l'adesione all'UE.

Di fatto, il primo aprile è scaduto il termine dato alla «Commissione di conciliazione costituzionale» per presentare la bozza di una nuova legge fondamentale, tuttavia le posizioni restano ancora caratterizzate da forti divergenze, soprattutto sulla forma istituzionale della «nuova» Turchia. Mancano misure a favore della libertà di stampa, modifiche della legislazione antiterrorismo e sulla riduzione della soglia di sbarramento alle elezioni parlamentari: l'accordo sulla costituzione e sulla tutela di diritti fondamentali come quelli citati sarebbe quindi legato a doppio filo al destino di un compromesso pubblico che tarda ad arrivare. In seguito a tale pubblicazione, diverse sono state le proteste da parte delle autorità turche: in particolare, si è detto che la relazione sarebbe sbilanciata, in quanto metterebbe in luce solo gli aspetti negativi senza lasciar spazio a quelli positivi.

Considerando che:

— il processo di modernizzazione e democratizzazione del paese si trova ora in un'evidente fase di stallo;

— l'attuale linea di condotta dell'UE con la Turchia è incoerente se confrontata con quella di altri paesi;

— le riforme del sistema giuridico e dell'ordinamento politico della Turchia sono in ritardo rispetto alla tabella di marcia richiesta per completare il processo di adesione;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se ritenga che la Turchia sia ancora in grado di uniformarsi ai termini delle negoziazioni ad oggi ancora aperte?

2. Quali ulteriori provvedimenti considera necessari per dichiarare fallibili le trattative in corso dal momento che non vi è traccia di riforme radicali per il sistema giuridico e per la risoluzione della questione curda?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle questioni sollevate dall'onorevole parlamentare.

Nel dicembre 2012 il Consiglio ha ribadito l'importanza delle relazioni tra l'Unione europea e la Turchia, dando rilievo al fatto che tale paese ha posto la sua candidatura ad entrare nell'Unione e, in ragione della sua economia dinamica e posizione strategica, ne costituisce uno dei partner fondamentali. Negoziati di adesione attivi e credibili nel rispetto degli impegni dell'UE e delle condizioni poste, accanto a tutti gli altri aspetti delle relazioni UE-Turchia affrontate nelle presenti conclusioni, consentiranno di sviluppare al meglio il potenziale di tali relazioni.

L'Unione inoltre sostiene pienamente i colloqui in corso intesi a porre fine al terrorismo e alla violenza nella Turchia sudorientale, che hanno causato fin troppe vittime negli ultimi tre decenni. L'Unione accoglie con favore i grandi progressi avvenuti di recente in tale direzione nonché l'ampio sostegno pubblico della Turchia alla presente iniziativa. Per quanto riguarda la riforma del sistema giudiziario l'Unione è favorevole all'adozione del quarto pacchetto di riforme. Si tratta di importanti progressi verso il pieno rispetto dei diritti fondamentali in Turchia, in linea con la Convenzione europea sui diritti dell'uomo e le sentenze della Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo. L'Unione auspica una rapida attuazione del pacchetto, che consenta di affrontare in maniera adeguata i problemi che limitano de facto i diritti fondamentali, tra cui la libertà dei media, il diritto a un processo equo e il diritto di riunione, nonché l'adozione e la realizzazione di ulteriori riforme giudiziarie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004426/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Progress report for Turkey reveals failed reforms and political/institutional deadlock: what is the future for the negotiations?

The most recent progress report regarding Turkey's application to join the EU was presented by the Commission in 2012. It is based on information from a range of sources (papers from the Turkish Government, Member States and the European Parliament, as well as from international non-governmental organisations). This document reveals how Turkey, although it has shown itself ready to draft a new constitution and has made considerable progress in the military and economic fields, is still not in line with the political criteria set for joining the EU.

The time limit set for the 'Constitutional Conciliation Commission' to present the draft of a new basic law expired on 1 April 2013, but there are still great differences between the various positions, especially regarding the institutional form of the 'new' Turkey. There is a lack of measures to support freedom of the press, amend antiterrorism legislation and reduce the minimum threshold for parliamentary elections. Agreement on the constitution and the protection of fundamental rights, such as those mentioned above, appears to be dependent on a public compromise which is not forthcoming. Publication of the report was greeted with a range of protests from the Turkish authorities: in particular, the report was said to be biased, since it highlighted only the negative aspects without mentioning the positive ones.

Considering that:

— the modernisation and democratisation process in the country is now obviously in a state of deadlock;

— the EU's current course of action vis-à-vis Turkey is not consistent with that of other countries;

— the reforms of the legal and political system in Turkey are behind the schedule required to complete the accession process;

can the Commission state:

1. If it believes that Turkey is still able to conform to the terms of the current negotiations?

2. Which further measures it deems necessary to take in order to declare that current negotiations have failed, given that there is no sign of any sweeping reform of the legal system or of any resolution of the Kurdish issue?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of the issues raised by the Honourable Member.

In December 2012, the Council reaffirmed the importance it attaches to EU relations with Turkey. It stressed that Turkey is a candidate country and a key partner for the European Union considering its dynamic economy and strategic location. Active and credible accession negotiations which respect the EU's commitments and established conditionality, along with all the other dimensions of the EU Turkey relationship addressed in these conclusions, will enable the EU-Turkey relationship to achieve its full potential.

Furthermore, the EU fully supports the ongoing talks aimed at ending terrorism and violence in South-East Turkey, which has claimed far too many victims in the past three decades. The EU welcomes important recent developments in this regard as well as the broad public support in Turkey for this initiative. As regards judicial reform, the EU welcomes the adoption of the 4th judicial reform package. This is an important development towards full respect for fundamental rights in Turkey in line with the European Convention on Human Rights and the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. The EU is looking forward to the swift implementation of the package in order to properly address issues restricting fundamental rights in practice, including media freedom, the right to a fair trial and the right of assembly, as well as to the adoption and implementation of further judicial reforms.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004427/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Sanità greca agonizzante: come intervenire

La crisi economica in Grecia ha messo in ginocchio anche il settore sanitario; se prima della crisi le persone rimaste senza lavoro potevano ricevere un sussidio di disoccupazione e assistenza sanitaria per un anno, oggi la situazione è cambiata radicalmente. Nel luglio 2011 la Grecia ha, infatti, firmato l'accordo per ottenere prestiti dagli altri Stati e scongiurare il collasso economico. Con tale accordo si stabiliva che, una volta terminati i sussidi, la Grecia avrebbe dovuto pagare «di tasca propria» i servizi relativi all'assistenza sanitaria. I tagli imposti dai creditori internazionali hanno privato e continuano a privare i cittadini greci della copertura sanitaria e dell'accesso ai farmaci. In particolare, un segnale allarmante è dato dalla scarna fornitura di composti per i protocolli chemioterapici, una situazione che si protrae da mesi a causa del mancato pagamento alle imprese produttrici e delle insufficienti forniture di plasma. Queste ultime sono ormai distribuite in quantità ridotta, non potendo il Paese sostenerne le relative spese. Una simile situazione è preoccupante se si pensa che in Grecia si registrano in media tremila persone affette da talassemia, per le quali le trasfusioni sono necessarie se non addirittura vitali.

Considerato che:

— il tasso di disoccupazione ha raggiunto la soglia del 25 %;

— la stretta economica e finanziaria della crisi europea ha portato a ridurre sensibilmente il ricorso all'assistenza sanitaria;

— le condizioni di salute dei cittadini hanno subito un progressivo peggioramento, rendendo rischiose se non addirittura impossibili le donazioni di sangue;

— la situazione sanitaria sempre più allarmante ha contribuito a un aumento del tasso di suicidi, poiché solo tra il 2011 e il 2012 si contano 3 124 casi di persone che si sono tolte la vita;

— la tutela del diritto alla salute dei cittadini europei è garantita in primis dalla CEDU,

Quali azioni e misure intende la Commissione eventualmente adottare nel breve periodo per garantire il miglioramento della situazione sanitaria in Grecia?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2013)

La Commissione continuerà a sostenere la Grecia nei suoi sforzi per porre in atto un'ampia riforma del sistema sanitario greco al fine di garantire una maggiore equità nell'accesso a un'assistenza sanitaria di qualità elevata, come indicato nel Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality (memorandum di intesa sulle condizioni specifiche di politica economica), di concerto con la Banca centrale europea e il Fondo monetario internazionale.

A tal fine, la Commissione ha istituito nel luglio 2011 una task force per la Grecia che ha il compito di fornire assistenza tecnica alle autorità greche per aiutarle ad ottemperare al Memorandum di intesa.

Nel passato recente la task force ha sostenuto una serie di missioni di valutazione, relazioni e progetti di piani d'azione, in particolare in tema di prescrizioni elettroniche, fissazione dei prezzi e rimborso dei medicinali, definizione di un sistema estensivo di assistenza sanitaria di base, riforme relative alla gestione e alla struttura degli ospedali nonché all'ulteriore sviluppo dell'EOPYY (Servizio sanitario nazionale greco).

La task force aiuta inoltre le autorità greche a mettere a punto un piano di finanziamento con l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità, la quale potrebbe sostenere queste riforme e l'assistenza tecnica ad esse correlata. La task force continuerà le sue attività di sostegno in linea con il programma «Health in action» (Salute in azione) adottato dalla Grecia il 26 marzo 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004427/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Ailing Greek healthcare system: what measures should be taken?

The economic crisis in Greece has also brought the healthcare sector to its knees; while before the crisis, unemployed people could receive unemployment benefit and healthcare for a year, the situation today has changed dramatically. In July 2011, Greece signed an agreement to receive loans from other States and forestall an economic collapse. This agreement stipulated that, once the subsidies ended, Greece would have to pay for healthcare services 'out of its own pocket'. The cuts imposed by international creditors have deprived and continue to deprive Greek citizens of healthcare and access to drugs. One particularly alarming sign is the inadequate supply of compounds for chemotherapy protocols. This situation has lasted for months because of a lack of payments to manufacturers and insufficient supplies of plasma. These are now distributed in smaller quantities because the country is unable to bear the related costs. This is a worrying situation if you consider that, on average, there are three thousand people suffering from thalassaemia in Greece, for whom transfusions are necessary if not vital.

Given that:

— the rate of unemployment has grown to 25%;

— the economic and financial squeeze caused by the crisis in Europe has led to a considerable reduction in the use of healthcare facilities;

— the health of citizens has grown progressively worse, making blood donations risky, if not impossible;

— the increasingly worrying healthcare situation has contributed to a rise in the number of suicides: 3 124 people took their own life in 2011 and 2012 alone;

— protecting the right of European citizens to healthcare is enshrined first and foremost in the ECHR,

What possible steps and measures does the Commission intend to adopt in the short term to ensure that the healthcare situation in Greece improves?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

The Commission will continue to support Greece in its efforts to implement a comprehensive reform of the Greek healthcare system, aimed at improving equal access to and high quality of care delivery as set forth in the memorandum of understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality, in agreement with the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

For this purpose, the Commission has established a Task Force for Greece in July 2011 to provide technical assistance to the Greek authorities in compliance with the memorandum of understanding.

In the recent past, the Task force has supported a series of assessment missions, reports and draft action plans, notably on e-prescriptions; pricing and reimbursement of pharmaceuticals; establishing a comprehensive system for primary healthcare; reforms in hospital management and structures; and further development of the EOPYY (Greek National Health Service Organisation).

The Task Force is also helping the Greek authorities to set up a financing scheme with the World Health Organisation that could support these reforms and the related technical assistance. The task force will maintain its support activities, fully in line with the 'Health in action' programme that Greece adopted on 26 March 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004428/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Tecnica del sandblasting e silicosi: quali misure per proteggere i lavoratori

Schiarire il tessuto denim dei jeans è un'operazione che richiede un trattamento specifico, il c.d. *sandblasting*, ossia l'applicazione di getti di sabbia con aria compressa sulla stoffa. Tramite questo processo viene prodotta una grande quantità di polvere contenente particelle di biossido di silicio, con la conseguente contrazione da parte dei lavoratori di malattie quali la silicosi e altre patologie dell'apparato respiratorio.

L'uso di questa tecnica è vietato in Europa dal 1966, ma resta una solida realtà in paesi con manodopera a basso costo quali Indonesia, Cambogia, India, Pakistan e Bangladesh. Da tempo la *Clean Clothes Campaign* lotta per ottenere l'abolizione della sabbiatura nella produzione internazionale di jeans, ma non sono ancora stati raggiunti i risultati sperati. Per questo motivo a febbraio 2013 ha avuto luogo una protesta a Milano che ha preso di mira alcune case di moda che non hanno ancora aderito alla petizione contro il metodo della sabbiatura ma che sostengono di non avvalersi di tale tecnica per i loro prodotti.

Considerato che:

— in seguito ai divieti in alcuni paesi, ad esempio quello imposto in Turchia nel 2009, i produttori di jeans riescono sempre a trasferire i loro ordini verso altri paesi;

— i lavoratori, tra cui molti bambini, sono costretti a lavorare in condizioni pessime e le mascherine, per quanto insufficienti a contrastare l'inalazione di polvere, non vengono fornite loro;

— nel 70 % dei casi la silicosi porta alla morte;

può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Quali provvedimenti ritenga opportuni per cessare l'adozione della tecnica del *sandblasting* a livello europeo?

2. Se ritenga di dover intervenire in modo da far assumere alle aziende le loro responsabilità ed erogare adeguati risarcimenti ai lavoratori affetti da silicosi e alle loro famiglie?

3. Se consideri necessario promuovere campagne di sensibilizzazione a livello europeo, al fine di rendere i cittadini più consapevoli e sostenere pratiche e politiche di produzione, distribuzione e consumo più giuste e sostenibili?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2013)

La legislazione dell'UE in tema di salute e sicurezza professionali costituisce un quadro estensivo che copre la protezione dei lavoratori esposti *ad agenti chimici pericolosi. Le principali direttive applicabili all'esposizione dei lavoratori ad agenti chimici pericolosi, compresa la silice, sono le direttive 89/391/CEE* ([1]) *e 98/24/CE* ([2]). Inoltre, nel 2006 le parti sociali hanno sottoscritto un accordo di dialogo sociale multisettoriale sulle misure pratiche per gestire in modo efficace l'esposizione alla silice.

Per quanto è a conoscenza della Commissione, l'industria tessile dell'UE non usa più la tecnica del *sandblasting* nella produzione di indumenti.

([1]) Direttiva 89/391/CEE del Consiglio, del 12 giugno 1989, concernente l'attuazione di misure volte a promuovere il miglioramento della sicurezza e della salute dei lavoratori durante il lavoro, GU L 183 del 29.6.1989.

([2]) Direttiva 98/24/CE del Consiglio, del 7 aprile 1998, sulla protezione della salute e della sicurezza dei lavoratori contro i rischi derivanti da agenti chimici durante il lavoro, GU L 131 del 5.5.1998.

Il riconoscimento e l'indennizzo delle malattie professionali rientrano nelle responsabilità degli Stati membri. La silicosi figura sull'Elenco europeo delle malattie professionali allegato alla raccomandazione 670/2003/CE della Commissione ([3]), la quale raccomanda agli Stati membri di introdurre l'Elenco europeo nelle loro disposizioni legislative, regolamentari o amministrative relative alle malattie riconosciute scientificamente di origine professionale che possono dar luogo ad indennizzo e che devono costituire oggetto di misure preventive. La raccomandazione non è vincolante per gli Stati membri.

([3]) Raccomandazione della Commissione, del 19 settembre 2003, sull'elenco europeo delle malattie professionali, GU L 238 del 25.9.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004428/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Sandblasting and silicosis: what measures can be taken to protect workers?

Bleaching denim jeans requires a specific treatment known as sandblasting, which involves blasting the fabric with jets of sand using compressed air. The process generates a large quantity of dust containing silicon dioxide particles, and can result in workers contracting diseases such as silicosis and other disorders of the respiratory system.

The use of this technique has been banned in Europe since 1966, but it is still widely used in low labour cost countries such as Indonesia, Cambodia, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. For some time now, the Clean Clothes Campaign has fought to have sandblasting banned in the production of jeans around the world, but the expected results have not yet been achieved. For this reason a protest was held in Milan in 2013 against some fashion houses which have not yet signed up to the anti-sandblasting petition but claim not to use this technique for their products.

Given that:

— following bans in some countries, e.g. the one imposed in 2009 in Turkey, jeans producers have always managed to transfer their orders to other countries;

— the workers, many of whom are children, are forced to work in dire conditions and without face masks, however insufficient they may be in preventing dust inhalation;

— silicosis causes death in 70% of cases;

Can the Commission state:

1. Which measures it believes should be taken to ban the use of sandblasting throughout Europe.

2. Whether it believes it should intervene to force companies to assume their responsibilities and provide suitable compensation to workers suffering from silicosis and their families.

3. Whether it believes it is necessary to encourage awareness-building campaigns at European level, in order to make citizens more informed and support production, distribution and consumption practices and policies that are both fairer and more sustainable?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

EU occupational safety and health legislation is a comprehensive framework that covers the protection of workers exposed to hazardous chemicals. The key Directives applicable to workers' exposure to hazardous chemical agents, including silica, are Directives 89/391/EEC ([1]) and 98/24/EC ([2]). In addition, in 2006 the social partners signed a multi-sectoral social dialogue agreement on practical measures to manage exposure to silica effectively.

As far as the Commission is aware, the EU textile industry no longer uses sandblasting in garment production.

Recognition of and compensation for occupational diseases is a Member State responsibility. Silicosis is listed in the European schedule of occupational diseases annexed to Commission Recommendation 670/2003/EC ([3]), which recommends that the Member States introduce the European schedule as soon as possible into their national laws, regulations or administrative provisions concerning scientifically recognised occupational diseases liable for compensation and subject to preventive measures. The recommendation is not binding on the Member States.

([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]) Council Directive 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work, OJ L 131, 5.5.1998.
([3]) Commission Recommendation of 19 September 2003 concerning the European schedule of occupational diseases, OJ L 238, 25.9.2003.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004429/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Zeoliti da «fly ash» per depurare l'ambiente: una nuova possibilità per un ambiente più sano e benefici per la salute di tutti

Bonificare acque inquinate e terreni contaminati da metalli pesanti (nichel, piombo e manganese), o da composti organici presenti in concentrazioni elevate, è la sfida proposta e sviluppata dai ricercatori del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR) italiano. Le ricerche sono state condotte in USA, dove sono stati lavorati materiali di scarto quali il «fly ash», un residuo dei trattamenti di depolverizzazione e pulizia dei reflui gassosi ricco di inquinanti organici e inorganici, considerato come materiale pericoloso da smaltire in discarica, per il quale in molti Paesi si sta creando un grosso problema a danno dell'ambiente mondiale. Ad esempio, in Italia la metodica per determinare il Toc (carbonio organico totale) non tiene conto dell'esclusione del carbonio elementare, e questo fa sì che il valore di carbonio sia sovrastimato, ma la sovrastima del carbonio obbliga a spendere molto di più per le bonifiche e, per contro, impedisce lo smaltimento in discarica delle cosiddette «fly ash». In Olanda queste particelle sono utilizzate come filler nell'asfalto, mentre il metodo studiato dal CNR si basa sulla sintesi di zeoliti generate da «fly ash», minerale innovativo anti inquinamento sintetizzato dai rifiuti; le zeoliti sono minerali idrati di silicio, solitamente ottenuti con acqua distillata e utilizzati come setacci chimici, filtri per controllare gli odori e assorbenti per rimuovere elementi o molecole da acque contaminate. Il CNR ha studiato un sistema a basso costo energetico per generare zeoliti che, infatti, vengono sintetizzate impiegando acqua di mare a temperature inferiori a 45°: seguendo questo processo si ottengono maggiori quantità di zeolite rispetto a quanto si possa ricavare impiegando acqua distillata.

Considerato che:

— in diversi Paesi la stragrande maggioranza di «fly ash», dopo aver subito un processo di inertizzazione, viene esportata per la quasi totalità verso altri Paesi, destinata ad operazioni di messa in riserva, spesso in miniere di salgemma, o impiegata nell'asfalto;

può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Non ritiene opportuno vagliare lo studio condotto dal CNR affinché possano essere valutati eventuali margini di miglioramento in vista di un migliore smaltimento delle polveri?

2. Non ritiene che sarebbe utile per tutti i Paesi europei impiegare il «fly ash» come sintetizzatore di zeoliti che potrebbero apportare un'importante svolta nella depurazione delle acque e dei terreni nei quali la concentrazione di metalli pesanti e composti organici è elevata?

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

La Commissione non è a conoscenza della specifica ricerca cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato. In letteratura, tuttavia, non è del tutto nuovo l'uso di ceneri volanti per produrre zeolite ([1]).

Poiché questa tecnica di trattamento con ceneri volanti derivate dai processi industriali potrebbe essere riconosciuta come «tecnica emergente» o come «migliore tecnica disponibile», a norma della direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali, esortiamo i ricercatori a fornire tutte le informazioni pertinenti all'Ufficio europeo di prevenzione e di riduzione integrata dell'inquinamento (EIPPCB) della Commissione, affinché sia presa in considerazione nell'ambito della revisione del documento di riferimento sulle migliori tecniche disponibili (BREF) in materia di trattamento dei rifiuti che prenderà il via tra qualche mese.

Se invece la tecnica proposta deve essere ulteriormente sviluppata per andare incontro alle esigenze del mercato, potrebbe essere presentata nell'ambito dei futuri inviti a presentare proposte del programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione — Orizzonte 2020 (2014-2020).

([1]) Evaluation of zeolites synthesized from fly ash as potential adsorbents for wastewater containing heavy metals, Journal of Environmental Sciences, 21 (1), 2009, pagg. 127-136; Synthesis of zeolite from coal fly ashes with different silica-alumina composition, Fuel, 84 (2-3), gennaio-febbraio 2005, pagg. 299-304; Mechanism of zeolite synthesis from coal fly ash by alkali hydrothermal reaction, International Journal of Mineral Processing, 64 (1), febbraio 2002, pagg. 1-17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004429/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Fly ash zeolites to purify the environment: a new option for a cleaner environment and health benefits for everyone

Researchers at the Italian National Research Council (CNR) have taken up the challenge of cleaning polluted waters and soils contaminated with heavy metals (nickel, lead and manganese) or high concentrations of organic compounds. Research conducted in the USA has processed waste material such as fly ash, a residue from waste gas dedusting and cleaning processes, which is rich in organic and inorganic pollutants and considered too hazardous to be landfilled, thus creating a major problem in many countries that is harmful to the global environment. In Italy, the method used to determine TOC (Total Organic Carbon) does not take into account the exclusion of elemental carbon, which means that the carbon value is overestimated, as a result of which a lot more must be spent on decontamination and fly ash cannot be landfilled. In the Netherlands, these particles are used as a filler in asphalt, while the method developed by the CNR is based on synthesising the zeolites generated by fly ash, creating an innovative anti-pollution mineral synthesised from waste. Zeolites are minerals that contain hydrated silicon compounds, usually obtained with distilled water and used as molecular sieves, odour-controlling filters and absorbents to remove elements or molecules from polluted water. The CNR has designed a low energy system for generating zeolites which are actually synthesised using seawater at under 45°: this process produces greater quantities of zeolites than can be obtained by using distilled water.

Given that:

— in a range of countries, the vast majority of fly ash is first neutralised and then almost entirely exported to other countries for storage, often in halite mines, or used in asphalt;

could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it believe it would be worthwhile to examine the research conducted by the CNR in order to assess any potential improvements with a view to improving the disposal of dust?

2. Does it believe it would be useful for all EU countries to use fly ash as a means of synthesising zeolites, thus achieving a major breakthrough in soil and water decontamination where the concentration of heavy metals and organic compounds is very high?

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

The Commission is not aware of the specific research referred to by the Honourable Member. However, in the literature the use of fly ash for producing zeolite is not completely new ([1]).

As this technique of dealing with fly ashes from industrial processes could be a candidate to be recognised as an 'emerging technique' or a 'Best Available Technique' within the context of the Industrial Emissions Directive 2010/75/EU, we encourage the researchers to provide all relevant information on it to the Commission's European IPPC Bureau for its consideration in the context of the revision of the Best Available Techniques Reference Document (BREF) for Waste Treatment, which is planned to start later this year.

On the other hand, if the proposed technique still needs further development to get closer to the market, it could be considered for submission in the future calls for proposals that will be launched under the framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020 (2014-2020).

([1]) Evaluation of zeolites synthesized from fly ash as potential adsorbents for wastewater containing heavy metals, *Journal of Environmental Sciences*, Volume 21, Issue 1, 2009, pp. 127-136; Synthesis of zeolite from coal fly ashes with different silica-alumina composition, *Fuel*, Volume 84, Issues 2-3, January-February 2005, pp. 299-304; Mechanism of zeolite synthesis from coal fly ash by alkali hydrothermal reaction, *International Journal of Mineral Processing*, Volume 64, Issue 1, February 2002, pp. 1-17.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-004430/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(19 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Progresele înregistrate de Serbia în 2012

La data de 1 martie 2012, Serbia a obținut în mod formal statutul de candidat la aderarea la UE. În Raportul Comisiei privind progresele înregistrate de Serbia în 2012, se afirmă că Serbia continuă să îndeplinească în mod suficient criteriile politice. În ciuda acestei constatări, precum și a laudelor primite de Serbia în dialogul său cu Uniunea, persistă o serie de probleme, legate în special de protecția și promovarea drepturilor minorităților etnice. Raportul Comisiei constată că progresele în acest domeniu au fost limitate.

După cum se știe, în regiunea sârbă cunoscută sub numele de Valea Timocului, trăiește un număr important de etnici români. Aceștia nu se pot bucura în mod deplin de o serie de drepturi fundamentale, precum cel de a învăța în limba maternă.

Tot la data de 1 martie 2012, România și Serbia au semnat Protocolul celei de-a doua sesiuni a Comisiei Mixte Interguvernamentale privind minoritățile naționale. El conține o serie de angajamente în vederea protejării drepturilor minorităților naționale, începând cu reprezentarea parlamentară, autorizațiile de construire a unor biserici sau asigurarea dreptului la educație în limba maternă.

De asemenea, Protocolul precizează asumarea de către Serbia a conexiunii dintre aderarea la UE a acestui stat și criteriile politice de aderare de la Copenhaga, care includ și protecția minorităților naționale.

Din păcate, progresele înregistrate de Serbia în implementarea prevederilor protocolului sunt limitate până în acest moment și se rezumă, pe de o parte, la extinderea duratei unei transmisiuni TV în limba română difuzate de către o televiziune cu o acoperire relativ limitată de la 10 minute la 45 de minute, iar pe de alta la inițierea unui program educațional pilot în trei localități în care se va putea preda limba maternă la școală pentru etnicii români.

Cum vor condiționa aceste progrese limitate îndeplinirea criteriilor de la Copenhaga referitoare la protecția minorităților, de către Serbia, o condiție fundamentală pentru avansarea dialogului cu Uniunea?

De asemenea, ce mijloace are la dispoziție în acest moment Comisia pentru a monitoriza implementarea cât mai eficientă a măsurilor luate de autoritățile de la Belgrad în problematica minorităților naționale?

Poate fi condiționată deschiderea negocierilor de aderare cu Serbia de înregistrarea de progrese în acest domeniu?

Răspuns dat de dl Füle în numele Comisiei
(24 mai 2013)

Comisia monitorizează îndeaproape situația minorităților din Serbia, țară în care există în general un cadru juridic adecvat pentru protecția minorităților, care însă trebuie pus în aplicare cu mai multă eficacitate și consecvență pe tot teritoriul țării.

Raportul comun ([1]) al Comisiei și al Înaltului Reprezentant privind progresele realizate de Serbia, adoptat la 22 aprilie 2013, indică faptul că, în ultimele luni, Serbia a luat măsuri pentru a îmbunătăți punerea în aplicare a cadrului juridic pe tot teritoriul țării. În ceea ce privește estul Serbiei, s-au luat măsuri pentru a se produce și a se difuza pe plan local programe de televiziune în limba română și pentru a se redifuza programele postului de televiziune Vojvodina TV în limba română. S-au primit instrucțiuni oficiale în sensul introducerii, din anul școlar următor, a unei ore opționale de limba română, care să cuprindă și elemente de cultură, iar în aprilie 2013 au fost lansate clase-pilot în trei municipalități din Serbia. În raport se menționează totodată că nu a fost încă rezolvată problema serviciilor religioase, se ia însă notă de faptul că guvernul Serbiei a făcut apel la Biserica Ortodoxă Sârbă să poarte un dialog cu Biserica Ortodoxă Română.

([1]) JOIN (2013) 7: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/sr_spring_report_2013_en.pdf

Progresele înregistrate până acum se datorează în mare parte consultărilor care au avut loc în octombrie 2012 și din nou în martie 2013 sub auspiciile Înaltului Comisar pentru Minoritățile Naționale din cadrul Organizației pentru Securitate și Cooperare în Europa (OSCE). Înaltul Comisar s-a oferit să medieze în ceea ce privește chestiunea serviciilor religioase, iar Comisia speră ca acest lucru să conducă la mai multe rezultate pozitive.

Comisia va continua să monitorizeze îndeaproape progresele înregistrate în acest domeniu, în strânsă colaborare cu Înaltul Comisar pentru Minoritățile Naționale din cadrul OSCE, precum și cu organismele competente ale Consiliului Europei.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004430/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Progress recorded in Serbia in 2012

On 1 March 2012, Serbia received full candidate status for EU accession, the Commission report on its progress in 2012 pointing to a satisfactory record in meeting the political criteria. Despite this and the plaudits garnered by Serbia in its dialogue with the Union, a number of problems relating in particular to the protection and promotion of the rights of ethnic minorities remain unresolved, the Commission being forced to concede that progress in this area has been limited.

It is well known that the Timocka Krajina region of Serbia is home to a large number of ethnic Romanians, who are being deprived of a number of fundamental rights, including native-language teaching.

On March 2012, Romania and Serbia signed the protocol drawn up at the second meeting of the joint intergovernmental committee on national minorities containing a number of undertakings regarding the protection of national minority rights, including parliamentary representation, authorisation to build churches and entitlement to native-language teaching.

The protocol also specifies recognition by Serbia of the link between EU accession and compliance with the Copenhagen political accession criteria, including the protection of national minorities.

Unfortunately only limited progress has been made to date by Serbia in this respect, amounting to an increase from 10 to 45 minutes in the duration of a television broadcast in Romanian, reaching a relatively limited audience and the commencement of an educational pilot project in three localities providing native-language teaching for ethnic Romanian school pupils.

What are the implications of this limited progress in meeting the Copenhagen criteria for the protection of minorities by Serbia, a basic condition for the advancement of dialogue with the Union?

What resources does the Commission currently have available to monitor the effective implementation of the provisions adopted by the Belgrade authorities regarding national minorities?

Can negotiations for Serbian accession be made conditional on progress in this area?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2013)

The Commission closely follows the situation of minorities in Serbia where overall an appropriate legal framework providing for the protection of minorities is in place while its implementation needs to be applied more effectively and consistently throughout the country.

The Joint Report ([1]) of the Commission and the High Representative on Serbia's progress adopted on 22 April 2013 indicates that, in recent months, Serbia has taken steps to improve the implementation of the legal framework throughout its territory. With regard to Eastern Serbia, measures have been implemented to locally produce and broadcast television (TV) programmes in Romanian and re-broadcast Vojvodina TV programmes in Romanian. Official instructions have introduced an optional Romanian language class with elements of culture as from the next school year and pilot classes have started in April 2013 in three Serbian municipalities. The report also mentions that the issue of religious services remains to be resolved but took note that the Serbian Government has called on the Serbian Orthodox Church to engage in a dialogue with the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Progress recorded so far owes a lot to consultations under the auspices of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner on National Minorities held in October 2012 and again in March 2013. The High Commissioner has offered to mediate on the issue of religious services and the Commission expects this to bring about additional results.

The Commission will continue to closely monitor progress in this area in close cooperation with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, as well as Council of Europe expert bodies.

([1]) JOIN (2013) 7: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/sr_spring_report_2013_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004431/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Accesión de Bulgaria y Rumanía al Tratado de Schengen

La aprobación del Tratado de Schengen sirvió, junto a otros elementos normativos, como base para la construcción y fortaleza de la Unión Europea. Esta zona cubre una población de aproximadamente 400 millones de personas y 4 312 099 km² de superficie.

En el año 2007, Bulgaria y Rumanía accedieron como miembros de pleno derecho a la Unión Europea y sin embargo, desde entonces está pendiente su accesión al Área de Schengen. Se han realizado informes de evaluación para conocer su grado de cumplimiento en relación con el nivel de protección de datos, el Sistema de Información de Schengen, la cooperación policial, la emisión de visados y el control de las fronteras terrestres, aéreas y marítimas.

Siendo todos estos informes favorables, el Parlamento Europeo votó a favor de su entrada en el Área de Schengen en junio de 2011, pero aún estamos pendientes de que el Consejo se pronuncie favorablemente.

Ante esta situación, y ante la posibilidad de veto en el seno del Consejo por algunos Estados miembros, ¿qué pasos tiene pensados dar la Comisión para garantizar la entrada de Bulgaria y Rumania en el Área de Schengen?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004432/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Accesión de Bulgaria y Rumanía al Tratado de Schengen

La aprobación del Tratado de Schengen sirvió, junto a otros elementos normativos, como base para la construcción y fortaleza de la Unión Europea. Esta área cubre una población de aproximadamente 400 millones de personas y 4 312 099 km² de superficie.

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Siendo todos estos informes favorables, el Parlamento Europeo votó a favor de su entrada en el Área de Schengen en junio de 2011, pero aún estamos pendientes de que el Consejo se pronuncie favorablemente.

Ante esta situación, ¿puede la Comisión informarnos del punto en el que se encuentran estas negociaciones?

Respuesta conjunta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de mayo de 2013)

Las Actas de Adhesión de Bulgaria y de Rumania establecen que las disposiciones del acervo de Schengen solo se aplicarán plenamente en estos dos Estados miembros después de una evaluación y una decisión del Consejo a tal efecto, previa consulta al Parlamento Europeo. La Comisión no tiene un papel oficial en este proceso.

Tras el debate sobre la situación actual de la adhesión de Bulgaria y de Rumania a Schengen mantenido en la sesión del Consejo de Justicia y Asuntos de Interior (JAI), celebrada los días 7 y 8 de marzo de 2013, el ministro irlandés que ocupaba la Presidencia de turno declaró: «El Consejo volverá a tratar el tema de la adhesión de Rumanía y de Bulgaria a Schengen como solicitó el Consejo Europeo en diciembre de 2012. Recuerda el resultado de la sesión del Consejo Europeo de diciembre de 2012 así como las conclusiones pertinentes de los Consejos Europeos anteriores y del Consejo JAI. El Consejo ha decidido tratar de nuevo este tema a finales de 2013 con miras a considerar el camino por seguir basándose en un planteamiento en dos etapas.»

La Comisión sigue apoyando la adhesión de los dos Estados miembros al Espacio de Schengen y seguirá desempeñando su función de mediadora para alcanzar un acuerdo entre los Estados miembros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004431/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Schengen Agreement

Together with other legal instruments, the adoption of the Schengen Agreement formed the basis on which the European Union was built and developed. The Schengen Area covers 4 312 099 square kilometres and includes within it approximately 400 million people.

Bulgaria and Romania became full members of the European Union in 2007, and yet their accession to the Schengen Area has still not taken place. Assessment reports have been carried out to pinpoint their levels of compliance in the following areas: data protection, the Schengen information system, police cooperation, issuance of visas and control of land, sea and air borders.

Positive assessments were given in all of the reports, leading the European Parliament to vote in favour of Bulgaria and Romania's entry into the Schengen Area in June 2011. However, we are still awaiting approval from the Council.

Given that certain Member States might use their veto at the Council, what steps does the Commission plan to take in order to ensure that Bulgaria and Romania join the Schengen Area?

Question for written answer E-004432/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Schengen Agreement

Together with other legal instruments, the adoption of the Schengen Agreement formed the basis on which the European Union was built and developed. The Schengen Area covers 4 312 099 square kilometres and includes within it approximately 400 million people.

Bulgaria and Romania became full members of the European Union in 2007, and yet their accession to the Schengen Area has still not taken place. Assessment reports have been carried out to pinpoint their levels of compliance in the following areas: data protection, the Schengen information system, police cooperation, issuance of visas and control of land, sea and air borders.

Positive assessments were given in all of the reports, leading the European Parliament to vote in favour of Bulgaria and Romania's entry into the Schengen Area in June 2011. However, we are still awaiting approval from the Council.

Can the Commission give an update on what stage these accession negotiations have reached?

Joint answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2013)

Bulgaria's and Romania's Acts of Accession determine that the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* shall fully apply in these two Member States only following an evaluation and a Council decision to that effect, after consultation of the European Parliament. The Commission has no formal role in this process.

After the state of play discussion on Bulgaria's and Romania's Schengen accession at the 7 and 8 March 2013 meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council, the Irish Minister holding the rotating presidency concluded: 'The Council reverted to the issue of the Schengen accession of Romania and Bulgaria, as requested by the European Council in December 2012. It recalled the outcome of the European Council meeting in December 2012 as well as all relevant conclusions of previous European Councils and of the JHA Council. The Council decided to address this issue again by the end of 2013 with a view to considering the way forward on the basis of a two-step approach.'

The Commission continues to support the two Member States' accession to the Schengen area and will continue using its role as facilitator to reach an agreement among Member States.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004433/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Dispersión geográfica

El artículo 174, párrafo segundo, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea señala que: «la Unión se propondrá, en particular, reducir las diferencias entre los niveles de desarrollo de las diversas regiones y el retraso de las regiones menos favorecidas».

Castilla y León es la región más extensa de España y la segunda más extensa de la UE, ya que con un territorio de más de 94 000 kilómetros cuadrados, 2 558 463 habitantes y 2 248 municipios, y el 26 % de la población reside en municipios de menos de 2 000 habitantes.

¿Podría la Comisión indicar si se tendrá en cuenta el criterio de la dispersión geográfica como un factor de bajo nivel de desarrollo? ¿Qué medidas va a tomar la Comisión para reducir estas diferencias en los niveles de desarrollo de las diversas regiones?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004434/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Despoblación geográfica

La crisis está afectando a muchos sectores, pero sobre todo a ciertas regiones que están viendo como tienen una continuada pérdida de habitantes, ya que se marchan a otras regiones, ciudades e incluso países en busca de trabajo y mejores condiciones de vida.

España está entre los países de la UE con mayor despoblación en las zonas rurales. Entre las desventajas demográficas de la región de donde soy yo, Castilla y León, también está la creciente despoblación.

El título XIII del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea trata de la cohesión económica, social y territorial y de cómo promover un desarrollo armonioso del conjunto de la Unión. ¿Podría la Comisión indicar qué medidas va a tomar para solucionar el problema de la despoblación en este tipo de regiones?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de junio de 2013)

El artículo 174 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea trata en particular de las regiones afectadas por desventajas naturales o demográficas graves y permanentes.

La Comisión, en el Libro Verde sobre la cohesión territorial, de 6 de octubre de 2008, destaca que la escasa densidad de población constituye un obstáculo importante al desarrollo de las regiones.

En estas circunstancias, la propuesta de Reglamento del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, por el que se establecen disposiciones comunes relativas al Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional, al Fondo Social Europeo, al Fondo de Cohesión, al Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural y al Fondo Europeo Marítimo y de la Pesca, prevé que el porcentaje de financiación de los Fondos en un eje prioritario podrá modularse en función de la inclusión de zonas afectadas por desventajas naturales o demográficas graves y permanentes, como las zonas de densidad de población baja (menos de 50 habitantes por km^2) y muy baja (menos de 8 habitantes por km^2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004433/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Geographical dispersion

The second paragraph of Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that 'the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions'.

Castilla y León is the largest region in Spain and the second largest in the European Union, covering an area of over 94 000 km^2. The region has 2 248 municipalities and a population of 2 558 463, of whom 26% live in municipalities with fewer than 2 000 inhabitants.

Is geographical dispersion considered a factor in low levels of development? What action does the Commission intend to take in order to reduce these disparities between levels of development in the various regions?

Question for written answer E-004434/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Geographical depopulation

The crisis is affecting many sectors, but particularly certain regions which are experiencing a continuous decline in inhabitants, as they are moving to other regions, cities and even countries in search of jobs and better living conditions.

Spain is one of the countries with the highest rate of depopulation in rural areas in the EU. Growing depopulation is one of the demographic constraints facing the region where I am from, Castilla y León.

Title XVIII of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union deals with economic, social and territorial cohesion and how to promote its overall harmonious development across the Union. Can the Commission state what measures it intends to take to resolve the problem of depopulation in such regions?

(Version française)

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

L'article 174 du Traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union Européenne traite particulièrement sur les régions qui souffrent de handicaps naturels ou démographiques graves et permanents.

La Commission, dans le Livre Vert du 6 octobre 2008 sur la cohésion territoriale, souligne que la faible densité de population constitue un obstacle majeur au développement des régions.

Dans ces conditions, la proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil portant dispositions générales applicables au Fonds européen de développement régional, au Fonds social européen, au Fonds de cohésion, au Fond européen agricole de développement rural et au Fonds européen maritime et de la pêche prévoit que le taux de cofinancement des Fonds dans un axe prioritaire pourra être modulé en fonction de la couverture de zones souffrant de handicaps naturels ou démographiques graves et permanents telles que les zones à densité de population faible (moins de 50 habitants par km^2) et très faible (moins de 8 habitants par km^2).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004435/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Directiva del Consejo 2004/113/CE

El objetivo de la Directiva del Consejo 2004/113/EC es crear un marco para combatir la discriminación sexual en relación con el acceso a los bienes y servicios y su suministro, con vistas a que en los Estados miembros se aplique el principio de igualdad de trato entre hombres y mujeres.

El uso del género como factor para calcular primas y beneficios en los seguros es una cuestión controvertida. En su sentencia del 1 de marzo de 2011, el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea expuso que el artículo 5, apartado 2, de la Directiva citada anteriormente es contrario al acuerdo sobre la igualdad de trato entre hombres y mujeres.

Teniendo en cuenta esta sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia ¿podría señalar la Comisión si ha elaborado algún tipo de informe para valorar el impacto de dicha sentencia sobre la igualdad de trato entre hombres y mujeres?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión publicó en 2011 las Directrices sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 2004/113/CE del Consejo a los seguros, a la luz de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea en el asunto C-236/09 (Test-Achats) ([1]).

La Comisión presentará en 2014 su informe sobre la ejecución de la Directiva 2004/113/CE en los distintos Estados miembros. Dicho informe incluirá un análisis de la ejecución de la sentencia Test-Achats en los Estados miembros.

([1]) Directrices sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 2004/113/CE del Consejo a los seguros, a la luz de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea en el asunto C-236/09 (Test-Achats) — DO C 11 de 13.1.2012, pp. 1-11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004435/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Council Directive 2004/113/EC

The purpose of Council Directive 2004/113/EC is to lay down a framework for combating discrimination based on sex in access to and supply of goods and services, with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment between men and women.

The use of sex as a factor in the calculation of premiums and benefits for the purposes of insurance is a controversial issue. In its judgment of 1 March 2011, the Court of Justice of the European Union stated that Article 5(2) of the aforementioned Directive is not in line with the agreement on equal treatment between men and women.

Bearing in mind the judgment of the Court of Justice, can the Commission indicate whether it has drawn up any kind of report to evaluate the impact of this judgment on equal treatment between men and women?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2013)

La Commission a publié en 2011 des lignes directrices sur l'application de la directive 2004/113/CE du Conseil dans le secteur des assurances, à la lumière de l'arrêt de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne dans l'affaire C-236/09 (Test-Achats) ([1]).

La Commission présentera en 2014 son rapport sur la mise en œuvre de la directive 2004/113/CE dans les différents États membres. Ce rapport inclura une analyse de la mise en œuvre de l'arrêt Test-Achats dans les États membres.

([1]) Lignes directrices sur l'application de la directive 2004/113/CE du Conseil dans le secteur des assurances, à la lumière de l'arrêt de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne dans l'affaire C-236/09 (Test-Achats) — JO n°C 011 du 13/01/2012, pp. 0001-0011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004436/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Directiva del Consejo 2004/113/CE

La Directiva del Consejo 2004/113/CE, que implementa el principio de igualdad de trato entre hombres y mujeres en el acceso al suministro de bienes y servicios, entró en vigor el 21 de diciembre de 2004. Los Estados miembros tenían tiempo hasta el 21 de diciembre de 2007 para implementarla, y, en último lugar, la Comisión debía realizar un informe de evaluación al respecto a partir de la implementación en todos los Estados miembros.

Debido a la importancia que tienen los informes de evaluación para identificar las posibles lagunas y así proponer soluciones, ¿cuándo tiene previsto la Comisión realizar dicho informe?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de mayo de 2013)

La Comisión presentará en 2014 un informe sobre la implementación de la Directiva 2004/113/CE en los diferentes Estados miembros. En este informe, la Comisión evaluará la necesidad de proponer que se introduzcan posibles modificaciones en dicha Directiva, si así procede.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004436/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Council Directive 2004/113/EC

Council Directive 2004/113/EC, implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services, entered into force on 21 December 2004. The Member States had until 21 December 2007 to implement this directive and, lastly, the Commission had to draw up an evaluation report in this regard based on implementation in all of the Member States.

Given the importance of evaluation reports for identifying possible shortcomings and proposing solutions for these, when does the Commission intend to produce this report?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2013)

La Commission présentera en 2014 un rapport sur la mise en œuvre de la directive 2004/113/CE dans les différents États membres. Dans ce rapport, la Commission évaluera la nécessité de proposer, si nécessaire, d'éventuels amendements à la directive 2004/113.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004437/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Respeto de los derechos fundamentales en la red

El incremento del uso de las nuevas tecnologías supone también, de un modo paralelo, un incremento de incidentes en la red. Uno de los que suceden con asiduidad es la vulneración de los derechos fundamentales de otros ciudadanos.

En una consulta pública en 2011, el 57 % de los encuestados aseguraron que habían experimentado problemas de ciberseguridad. También se constató que este tipo de delitos se está incrementando y sofisticando, lo que impone la necesidad de reforzar las herramientas para combatirlo.

Debido a que los sistemas de información están interconectados y no conocen fronteras, la lucha por el respeto de los derechos fundamentales en la red debe hacerse a escala europea.

Por la misma razón, la Comisión decidió formular recomendaciones para reforzar el marco legal en este campo e incrementar las capacidades de respuesta y coordinación en los Veintisiete, por medio de un mecanismo de cooperación e intercambio de información.

A fin de asegurar de una manera más efectiva el respeto de los derechos fundamentales *online*, ¿tiene previsto realizar la Comisión algún tipo de iniciativa legislativa de obligado cumplimiento en los Estados miembros?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de junio de 2013)

Con el fin de que el ciberespacio siga manteniendo su carácter abierto y libre, las mismas normas, principios y valores que la UE defiende en el mundo real deberían aplicarse también al mundo virtual. La protección de los derechos fundamentales en el ciberespacio es necesaria y su consecución requiere protección y seguridad. La Comisión Europea ha propuesto dos iniciativas legislativas relativas a la lucha contra la delincuencia informática y la ciberseguridad.

La primera de ellas, la propuesta de Directiva relativa a los ataques contra los sistemas de información ([1]), responde al creciente número de ataques a gran escala que sufren las empresas pero también, cada vez más, los gobiernos, como así pusieron de manifiesto los ataques informáticos de los que fue víctima Estonia en el año 2007. Esta propuesta considera delito tanto el uso como la producción y venta de herramientas (tales como los *botnets*) cuyo fin es atacar sistemas de información. En junio de 2012, el Consejo y el PE alcanzaron un acuerdo sobre un texto transaccional cuya adopción continúa pendiente debido a su vinculación con los debates interinstitucionales que giran en torno al paquete legislativo de Schengen.

La segunda propuesta de Directiva, la más reciente, se refiere a las medidas encaminadas a garantizar un elevado nivel común de seguridad de las redes y de la información en la Unión ([2]), y tiene como finalidad aumentar la seguridad de internet y de las redes y sistemas de información privados que sustentan el funcionamiento de las sociedades y economías de la UE. A fin de alcanzar dicho objetivo, es necesario, por una parte, instar a los Estados miembros a estar más preparados e incrementar la cooperación entre ellos, y, por otra, exigir a los operadores de infraestructuras críticas y a las administraciones públicas que adopten las medidas oportunas para gestionar los riesgos de seguridad y notificar los incidentes graves a las autoridades nacionales competentes.

Ambas Directivas garantizarán el respeto de los derechos fundamentales en línea, lo cual exige que previamente existan una mayor preparación y una lucha más eficaz contra la delincuencia informática.

([1]) COM(2010) 517 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 48 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004437/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Respect for fundamental rights online

The increase in the use of new technologies also represents a parallel increase in online incidents. One incident which occurs frequently is the breach of other citizens' fundamental rights.

In a public consultation in 2011, 57% of respondents stated that they had experienced problems with cyber-security. It was also stated that this kind of crime is on the rise and is becoming more sophisticated, highlighting the need to strengthen tools to combat it.

Given that information systems are interconnected and are not restricted by borders, the fight for respect for fundamental rights online should be tackled at European level.

For the same reason, the Commission decided to make recommendations to strengthen the legal framework in this area and increase response and coordination capacities in the EU-27 using a cooperation and information exchange mechanism.

In order to ensure, as effectively as possible, respect for fundamental rights online, does the Commission intend to launch any legislative initiatives that would be binding on Member States?

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

For cyberspace to remain open and free, the same norms, principles and values that the EU upholds offline, should also apply online. Fundamental rights need to be protected in cyberspace; this requires safety and security. The European Commission has proposed two legislative initiatives on the fight against cybercrime and in the field of cybersecurity.

The draft Directive on attacks against information systems ([1]) addresses the growing number of large-scale cyber attacks against businesses but also increasingly governments, as the example of cyber attacks against Estonia in 2007 demonstrated. The proposal criminalises the use as well as the production and sale of tools (such as 'botnets') to commit attacks against information systems. The Council and the EP reached a political agreement on a compromise text in June 2012; adoption is pending due to the linkage to interinstitutional discussions on the Schengen governance package.

The recently-proposed Directive concerning measures to ensure a high common level of network and information security across the Union ([2]) focuses on improving the security of the Internet and the private networks and information systems underpinning the functioning of EU societies and economies. This will be achieved by requiring the Member States to increase their preparedness and improve their cooperation with each other, and by requiring operators of critical infrastructures as well as public administrations to adopt appropriate steps to manage security risks and report serious incidents to the national competent authorities.

Both directives would ensure respect for fundamental rights online. Better resilience and a more effective fight against cybercrime are pre-conditions for safeguarding such rights.

([1]) COM(2010) 517 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 48 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004438/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Directiva 2011/36/UE relativa a la prevención y lucha contra la trata de seres humanos y a la protección de las víctimas

La Directiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 2011, regula la prevención y lucha contra la trata de seres humanos y la protección de las víctimas y el plazo para su incorporación al Derecho nacional de los Estados miembros expiró el pasado 6 de abril.

La trata de seres humanos, que está considerada como una de las infracciones penales más graves a escala mundial, se ha cobrado 24 000 víctimas en la Unión Europea y 1,8 millones en todo el mundo. Constituye una violación de los derechos humanos y una forma moderna de esclavitud. La nueva Directiva adoptada por la Unión Europea establece normas mínimas comunes relativas a la definición de las infracciones penales y de las sanciones en el ámbito de la trata de seres humanos.

No obstante, entre 2008 y 2010 el tráfico de personas en la EU aumentó en un 18 % y afectó, en particular, a mujeres que fueron utilizadas para el comercio sexual. Sin embargo, las detenciones de sospechosos han disminuido un 13 % en ese período.

Este problema radica, fundamentalmente, en que solamente seis Estados miembros han aplicado dicha Directiva hasta la fecha. ¿Podría la Comisión indicar qué medidas piensa tomar para intentar conseguir erradicar esta tendencia tan alarmante?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2013)

El plazo de transposición de la Directiva 2011/36/UE ([1]) terminó el 6 de abril de 2013. Hasta ahora, nueve Estados miembros han notificado la plena incorporación de la misma a su ordenamiento jurídico. La Comisión está analizando la información transmitida por los Estados miembros y ha puesto en marcha el procedimiento por falta de comunicación contra los que no han procedido a esa incorporación. La Comisión seguirá evaluando el grado de cumplimiento de la Directiva, incluida la posibilidad de incoar un procedimiento de infracción.

La trata de seres humanos evoluciona con los cambios socioeconómicos y las circunstancias (geo)políticas. Tiene sus raíces en la vulnerabilidad frente a la pobreza, la falta de cultura democrática, las desigualdades entre hombres y mujeres y la violencia contra las mujeres, las situaciones bélicas y posbélicas, la falta de integración social, la falta de oportunidades y empleo, la falta de acceso a la educación, el trabajo infantil y la discriminación. Otras causas que pueden mencionarse son una industria del sexo floreciente y la consiguiente demanda de servicios sexuales. Al mismo tiempo, la demanda de mano de obra y productos baratos también se consideran factores.

La política de la Comisión ([2]) se caracteriza por un planteamiento global e integrado centrado en los derechos humanos y la perspectiva de género, que no solo presta atención a la dimensión represiva, sino que tiene por objeto prevenir la delincuencia y garantizar que las víctimas de la trata de seres humanos puedan recuperarse y reintegrarse en la sociedad.

La Comisión hace hincapié en la necesidad de que todos los Estados miembros cumplan sus obligaciones en virtud del Derecho de la UE y, por lo tanto, incorporen la Directiva a su ordenamiento jurídico completamente y sin demora. Si se aplica plena y oportunamente, la Directiva puede cambiar de verdad las vidas de las víctimas.

([1]) Directiva 2011/36/UE, relativa a la prevención y lucha contra la trata de seres humanos y a la protección de las víctimas.
([2]) Estrategia de la UE para la erradicación de la trata de seres humanos (2012-2016), COM(2012) 286 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004438/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims

Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 deals with preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and the time frame for its transposition into the national law of the Member States expired on 6 April.

Trafficking in human beings, which is considered one of the most serious criminal offences worldwide, has affected 24 000 victims in the European Union, and 1.8 million throughout the world. It is a violation of human rights and a modern form of slavery. The new Directive adopted by the EU establishes common minimum rules concerning the definition of criminal offences and sanctions in the area of trafficking in human beings.

However, between 2008 and 2010, trafficking in human beings in the EU increased by 18% and affected, in particular, women who were used for the sex trade, yet arrests of suspects fell by 13% in this period.

The root of this problem lies, fundamentally, in the fact that so far only six Member States have applied this directive. Can the Commission state what measures it intends to take to try to eradicate this worrying trend?

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

The deadline for the transposition of Directive 2011/36/EU ([1]) expired on 6 April 2013. So far, nine Member States have notified full transposition. The Commission is analysing information transmitted by Member States, and has launched the process of non-communication with those that have not notified transposition. The Commission will further assess the level of compliance with the directive, including the possibility of initiating infringement proceedings.

Trafficking in human beings evolves with changing socioeconomic and (geo-)political circumstances. It is 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. Other causes include a booming sex industry and the consequent demand for sexual services. At the same time demand for cheap labour and products are also considered as factors.

The Commission's policy ([2]) is characterised by a comprehensive and integrated approach that is human-rights centred and gender-specific; focusing not only focus only on repression but aims at preventing the crime, and ensuring that victims of trafficking are given an opportunity to recover and to re-integrate into society.

The Commission stresses the need for all Member States to fulfil their obligations under EC law and, therefore, to transpose the directive into national law fully and swiftly. If implemented fully and in a timely manner, the directive has a potential to make a real difference to the lives of victims.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.
([2]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016, COM(2012) 286 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004439/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Conservación de datos

Debido al rápido y constante cambio en el uso de las nuevas tecnologías relativas a las comunicaciones electrónicas y el consiguiente tratamiento de un número cada vez mayor de datos personales, se debe revisar cuanto antes el marco vigente en materia de conservación de datos.

Con esta premisa, la Directiva vigente nació con el objetivo de armonizar las disposiciones de los Estados miembros relativas a la conservación de datos con el fin de garantizar su disponibilidad con fines de investigación, detección y enjuiciamiento de delitos graves, como el terrorismo y la delincuencia organizada. Dicha armonización es necesaria, porque las investigaciones y la experiencia práctica han demostrado la ineficiencia de la fragmentación mediante normas nacionales.

A la vista de lo necesarios y útiles que son dichos datos para la lucha contra todo tipo de delitos, ¿cuándo va a proponer la Comisión la revisión del marco vigente en materia de conservación de datos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de junio de 2013)

Como declaró la comisaria Malmström en el debate celebrado el 23 de octubre de 2012 en el Parlamento Europeo, y respondiendo a la pregunta escrita E-9778/2012, la Comisión cree que existe una serie de puntos de la Directiva sobre la conservación de datos (Directiva 2006/24/CE, DO L 105 de 13.4.2006, pp. 54-63) que requieren mejoras y que cualquier revisión de esta debe garantizar que la información conservada se utilice exclusivamente para los fines establecidos en esa Directiva y no para otros fines que permite actualmente la Directiva sobre la privacidad y las comunicaciones electrónicas ([1]). Por lo tanto, la Comisión tiene la intención de proponer una revisión de la Directiva sobre la conservación de datos al mismo tiempo que una futura propuesta sobre la revisión de la Directiva sobre la privacidad y las comunicaciones electrónicas. Esta propuesta no tiene calendario por el momento. Cualquier propuesta de reforma de esta última Directiva deberá tener en cuenta el resultado de las negociaciones sobre la reforma del régimen de protección de datos de la UE, que se está debatiendo en el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo.

([1]) Directiva 2002/58/CE, de 12 de julio de 2002 (DO L 201 de 31.7.2002).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004439/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Data retention

Given the rapid and constant changes in the use of new electronic communications technologies and the resulting processing of more and more personal data, the existing framework on data retention should be reviewed as soon as possible.

With this in mind, the current Directive was established with the aim of harmonising provisions in the Member States with regard to data retention so as to ensure its availability for the investigation, detection and prosecution of serious crimes, such as terrorism and organised crime. Such harmonisation is needed, as investigations and practical experience have shown the ineffectiveness of differing national legislation.

Given how essential and useful these data are for the fight against all kinds of crime, when will the Commission propose to review the existing framework on data retention?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2013)

As stated by Commissioner Malmström during the debate in the European Parliament on 23 October 2012, and in response to Written Question E-9778/2012, the Commission considers that there are a number of areas in the data retention directive (Directive 2006/24/EC) OJ L 105, 13.4.2006, pp. 54-63) that call for improvement, and that any revision of this directive should ensure that retained data will be used exclusively for the purposes set out in this directive, and not for other purposes, as currently allowed by the E-Privacy Directive ([1]). The Commission therefore aims to propose a revision of the Data Retention Directive at the same time as a future proposal on revision of the E-Privacy Directive. There is no timetable at present for this proposal. Any proposal on reforming the E-Privacy Directive will need to take into account the result of the negotiations on the reform of the EU data protection regime, which is currently before the European Parliament and the Council.

([1]) Directive 2002/58/EC of 12 July 2002. OJ L 201, 31.7.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004441/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sajjad Karim (ECR)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Violence against minority Muslim populations in Burma/Myanmar

I would like to draw the Commission's attention to the increasing sectarian violence against minority Muslim populations that is taking place in Burma/Myanmar.

The situation facing the Rohingya people has previously been discussed in this Parliament. I would now like to draw the Commission's attention to the recent spate of religious violence directed against other Muslim communities across the country, in particular an incident last month, in the town of Meiktila, in which at least 20 Muslim boys were kidnapped and hacked to death, with their bodies subsequently being soaked in petrol and set alight.

In light of this violence, which has resulted in the wholesale destruction of Muslim neighbourhoods and the death, torture or displacement of their inhabitants, I would like to ask what steps the Commission and the EEAS are taking to end this oppression, and what action is being taken to provide assistance to such persecuted populations across Burma/Myanmar?

I also ask what the EEAS is doing to ensure that the goal underpinning the provision of financial assistance to Burma/Myanmar — to 'help create a legitimate, civilian government to pursue the social and economic development of the country, respecting human rights and rebuilding relations with the international community' — is being met, both economically and politically?

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

The EU follows with great concern all incidents of inter-communal violence in Myanmar, as well as the critical situation of the Rohingyas in Rakhine State. These issues have been raised with the authorities and other stakeholders — most recently during the visit of the EU's Special Representative for Human Rights to Myanmar — in order to promote peaceful solutions.

EU humanitarian assistance focuses particularly on areas occupied by ethnic minorities such as Rakhine State (internally displaced (IDPs) in 2012 and the Rohingya population in general), the eastern border area with Thailand and Kachin State. EU Development cooperation also supports ethnic minorities and IDPs, including for programmes supporting reconciliation.

As stated in the April 2013 Council conclusions, the EU will use all means and mechanisms at its disposal to support Myanmar's political, economic and social transition — thus aiming to meet the goal quoted by the Honourable Member. This includes continued dialogue with authorities and national stakeholders in close coordination with international partners underpinned by the deployment of the whole range of the EU's financial instruments: development cooperation, complemented and supported by actions under the Instrument for Stability, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, the Non-State Actors Programme, as well as humanitarian actions. Interventions (planned and ongoing) focus on key priorities such as peace, reconciliation, non-discrimination of ethnic and religious minorities, capacity building of government and civil society, media, but also trade, investment and private sector development.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004442/13
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(19 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Pedeapsa cu moartea în cazul delincvenților juvenili

Legislația internațională în materie de drepturile omului interzice, fără excepție, utilizarea pedepsei cu moartea pentru crimele comise de persoane care nu au împlinit vârsta de 18 ani. În pofida acestui fapt, în anumite state din lume, delincvenții copii sunt încă executați, fără intervenția comunității internaționale, cu alte cuvinte fără ca statele respective să fie avertizate, sancționate sau pedepsite.

În ultimii cinci ani, țări care au semnat și ratificat Convenția ONU cu privire la drepturile copilului, precum Iran, Yemen și Arabia Saudită, au continuat să aplice pedeapsa cu moartea în cazul minorilor, făcând încă o dată dovada faptului că nu-și respectă angajamentele asumate în temeiul legislației și tratatelor internaționale.

Zeci de persoane condamnate la moarte așteaptă să fie executate în închisori, în ciuda faptului că, în conformitate cu certificatele lor de naștere, erau minori în momentul comiterii infracțiunilor. Din păcate, procurorii au decis în prea multe rânduri să ignore certificatele de naștere și probele rezultate în urma examinărilor medico-legale care determinau vârsta inculpaților.

Abolirea pedepsei cu moartea și respectarea drepturilor omului au reprezentat întotdeauna priorități importante ale Uniunii Europene.

Care este strategia Comisiei pentru reducerea numărului de execuții ale delincvenților juvenili și eliminarea acestora în țările unde încă se mai aplică pedeapsa cu moartea? În cazul în care negocierile diplomatice nu dau rezultate, va solicita Comisia sancțiuni la adresa țărilor care încalcă dispozițiile internaționale în acest domeniu?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton, Înalt Reprezentant/Vicepreședinte în numele Comisiei
(6 iunie 2013)

UE se ocupă într-un mod foarte activ de problema pe care o reprezintă, în general, pedeapsa cu moartea, pe baza poziției principiale a UE împotriva pedepsei cu moartea, și, în particular, pedeapsa cu moartea în cazul minorilor. În orientările UE privind pedeapsa cu moartea se specifică explicit că execuția minorilor este o încălcare a standardelor minime internaționale.

Acțiunile diplomatice care se adresează țărilor terțe variază de la acțiuni diplomatice cu un caracter public mai pronunțat (cum ar fi declarațiile) și discuții purtate în cadrul unor reuniuni la toate nivelurile, până la acțiuni mai puțin vizibile, precum întreprinderea unor demersuri în țara în cauză, la Bruxelles și în altă parte. Tipul de acțiune se alege întotdeauna pe baza unei evaluări în cadrul căreia se determină ce acțiune ar fi cea mai eficace pentru obținerea rezultatelor preconizate.

În unele țări există dispoziții legislative prin care minorii sunt protejați împotriva pedepsei cu moartea, însă lipsa unor documente de identitate oficiale îngreunează sarcina de verificare a vârstei. În astfel de situații, pe lângă acțiunea diplomatică, UE poartă dialoguri cu autoritățile în vederea consolidării capacităților instituționale și administrative. Acesta este cazul Yemenului, unde UE, alături de UNICEF și Ministerul Justiției, acționează în direcția unui sistem de justiție pentru minori în interesul acestora. De asemenea, UE finanțează un proiect de îmbunătățire a registrului de stare civilă, ajutând astfel minorii să își dovedească vârstă.

În fine, atunci când dialogul nu este posibil și când mijloacele diplomatice au fost epuizate, UE impune sancțiuni, precum în cazul Iranului, unde 87 de cetățeni iranieni sunt sancționați ca urmare a unor grave încălcări ale drepturilor omului.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004442/13
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Death penalty for juveniles

International human rights legislation prohibits, without exception, the use of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons under the age of eighteen. Despite this fact, there are nations throughout the world that still execute child offenders without the intervention of the international community, in terms of warning, sanction and punishment.

Countries which have signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, such as Iran, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, have in the past five years continued to impose the death penalty on minors, once again demonstrating their lack of commitment to and respect for international legislation and treaties.

Dozens are awaiting execution under death sentences in prisons, despite possessing birth certificates which demonstrate that they were minors at the time that the crimes were committed. Unfortunately, public prosecutors have decided all too frequently to ignore birth certificates and evidence from forensic examinations determining the age of culprits.

The abolition of the death penalty and the respect of human rights have always been important priorities of the European Union.

What is the Commission's strategy for reducing and eliminating the execution of juveniles in countries where the death penalty exists? Should diplomatic negotiations fail to yield results, will the Commission call for sanctions against countries in breach of international provisions on this matter?

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

The EU is very actively addressing the issue of death penalty in general, based upon the EU's principled position against the death penalty, and for juveniles in particular. The EU Guidelines on Death Penalty explicitly stipulate that the execution of minors is a violation of international minimum standards.

The diplomatic actions undertaken towards the third countries range from the more public ones (e.g. statements) over discussions in meetings at all levels, to less visible action, such as demarches, in the country concerned, in Brussels, and elsewhere. The choice of action is always based upon an assessment of what action would be the most effective as to the expected outcome.

In some countries, there are legislative provisions to protect minors from the death penalty, but the absence of formal ID documents makes age verification difficult. In such situations, in addition to diplomatic action, the EU engages with the authorities to reinforce the institutional and administrative capacities. This is the case of Yemen, where the EU, together with the Unicef and the Ministry of Justice works towards a child-friendly juvenile justice system. The EU is also financing a project to improve the civil registry, thus enabling juveniles to prove their age.

Finally, where dialogue is not possible and diplomatic means are exhausted, the EU imposes sanctions, such as in the case of Iran, where 87 Iranian individuals are sanctioned on the basis of serious violations of human rights.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004443/13
à la Commission
Isabelle Thomas (S&D)
(19 avril 2013)

Objet: Merlan bleu dans les eaux de l'Union européenne

Au-delà des accords sur les possibilités de pêche entre l'Union européenne et la Norvège, un certain nombre d'arrangements existent avec cet État tiers. En effet, des discussions entre la Commission et la Norvège, en amont des négociations relatives aux accords de pêche, permettent à la Norvège, dont les eaux sont pauvres en merlan bleu adultes, de venir pêcher une partie de son quota dans les eaux de l'Union européenne. Un accès réciproque, et réputé équivalent, est dans le même temps octroyé par la Norvège aux navires de l'Union pour qu'ils puissent également pêcher une partie de leurs quotas de merlan bleu dans les eaux norvégiennes.

À l'inverse, lorsque la Norvège offre la possibilité aux navires de l'Union d'accéder à ses eaux pour y pêcher une partie de leurs quotas de hareng atlanto-scandien, possibilité d'accès consentie par la Norvège depuis 2007, elle exige en contrepartie une réduction des quotas de l'Union pour cette espèce. Comme ces possibilités d'accès aux eaux norvégiennes ou européennes sont négociées sans lien direct avec les accords annuels d'échange des quotas, il paraît important que l'économie des résultats de ces discussions soit des plus transparentes pour les autres institutions.

Ainsi, la Commission peut-elle préciser:

1. Quelles ont été les quantités de merlan bleu pêchées par la flotte norvégienne dans les eaux de l'Union et par la flotte de l'Union dans les eaux norvégiennes au cours de chacune des années 2000 à 2012 dans le cadre des accords bilatéraux d'accès réciproques?

2. Quelles quantités de hareng atlanto-scandien ont été pêchées par la flotte de l'Union dans les eaux norvégiennes au cours des années 2000 à 2012? Au cours des mêmes années, quelles ont été successivement les parts du TAC de hareng atlanto-scandien allouées à l'Union?

3. Quelle est la base juridique des accords bilatéraux entre la Commission et la Norvège qui sont conclus indépendamment des négociations annuelles sur les possibilités de pêche?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Damanaki au nom de la Commission
(1^er^ juillet 2013)

1. La Commission procède à l'envoi des données concernant la période 2006-2012 directement à l'Honorable Parlementaire et au secrétariat du Parlement.

Avant 2006, aucun accord n'avait été dégagé entre les États côtiers au sujet du merlan bleu, y compris du point de vue des droits d'accès de la Norvège aux eaux de l'Union européenne. Jusqu'à 2005, la Norvège a bénéficié d'un accès sur la base des quotas réciproques accordés par l'Union dans le cadre des accords de pêche bilatéraux annuels.

2. La Commission procède à l'envoi des informations directement à l'Honorable Parlementaire et au secrétariat du Parlement.

3. Les accords bilatéraux conclus entre l'UE et la Norvège font partie intégrante du paquet global d'accords passés entre les États côtiers, qu'il s'agisse du merlan bleu ou du hareng altlanto-scandinave (hareng norvégien à frai printanier). Ces accords donnant accès sont donc directement liés aux parts de quotas convenues pour ces stocks et en conséquence, ils ne peuvent pas être considérés isolément. Une fois qu'ils ont fait l'objet de négociations entre les États côtiers, ils sont recommandés aux autorités compétentes en vue de leur adoption. En ce qui concerne l'UE, c'est le Conseil qui décide s'il convient ou pas d'adopter ces recommandations. Les décisions prises à ce sujet sont consignées dans le règlement sur les possibilités de pêche annuelles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004443/13
to the Commission
Isabelle Thomas (S&D)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Blue whiting in EU waters

In addition to agreements on fishing opportunities between the European Union and Norway as a third country, a number of other arrangements are in place with the country. Discussions between the Commission and Norway, ahead of the talks on fishing agreements, mean that Norway, whose waters contain low stocks of blue whiting, can come and fish part of its quota in EU waters. At the same time, Norway grants reciprocal, and supposedly equivalent, access to EU vessels so that they can also fish part of their blue whiting quotas in Norwegian waters.

Conversely, when Norway grants EU vessels the opportunity to access its waters to fish part of their Atlanto-Scandian herring quotas, an opportunity granted by Norway since 2007, it requires the EU to reduce its quotas for that species in return. As these opportunities for access to Norwegian or EU waters are negotiated with no direct link to the annual agreements on the exchange of quotas, it is important that the results-based economy of these discussions is highly transparent for the other institutions.

1. What quantities of blue whiting were fished by the Norwegian fleet in EU waters and by the EU fleet in Norwegian waters every year from 2000 to 2012 under the bilateral agreements on reciprocal access?

2. What quantities of Atlanto-Scandian herring were fished by the EU fleet in Norwegian waters between 2000 and 2012? Over the same period, what portions of the total allowable catches of Atlanto-Scandian herring was the EU granted in successive years?

3. What is the legal basis for the bilateral agreements between the Commission and Norway which are concluded independently of the annual talks on fishing opportunities?

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

1. The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat the data concerning the period 2006-2012.

Prior to 2006, there was no arrangement agreed between the Coastal States on blue whiting, including access by Norway to EU waters. During the years up to 2005, any access given to Norway was on the basis of reciprocal quotas granted by the Union in the context of the annual bilateral fisheries arrangements.

2. The information is sent by the Commission directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

3. The bilateral arrangements between the EU and Norway are agreed as an integral part of the overall package of arrangements between the Coastal States, whether it be for blue whiting or Atlanto-Scandian (Norwegian spring-spawning) herring. These access arrangements are therefore directly linked to the quota shares agreed for those stocks and consequently the access arrangements may not be viewed in isolation. These arrangements, once negotiated at Coastal State level are recommended to the appropriate authorities for their adoption. In the case of the EU, it is the Council which decides whether or not to adopt these recommendations, the results of which are included in the annual fishing opportunities regulation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004444/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Disoccupazione giovanile in Italia ed Europa

I dati Istat ed Eurostat sulla disoccupazione in Italia rilevano che l'11,7 % degli italiani è attualmente disoccupato, fra di essi la percentuale dei giovani senza un lavoro è del 38,7 %, con un incremento del 6,4 % rispetto al gennaio 2012.

Attualmente, nel nostro paese 2,8 milioni di persone sono senza un posto fisso: 2.375.000 con un contratto a termine, mentre 433.000 sono i collaboratori, questi dati risultano più elevati rispetto alle rilevazioni sugli stessi settori rispettivamente del 1993 e del 2004.

Dal «Rapporto UE 2012 sull'occupazione e gli sviluppi sociali» emerge che l'Italia, insieme ad altri paesi quali Spagna, Grecia, Malta e i paesi Baltici, è ad alto rischio di entrare nella povertà e con poche vie di fuga.

Può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. è a conoscenza dei dati sopra esposti?

2. come intende agire per supportare il mercato del lavoro in Italia ed in Europa?

3. come aiuterà i suoi giovani cittadini ad inserirsi sia nel mondo del lavoro sia nella società senza dover ricorrere al supporto delle famiglie?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(14 giugno 2013)

La Commissione è consapevole delle allarmanti condizioni in cui versano i giovani della crescente disoccupazione di cui sono vittime, in particolare in Italia.

Essa ha adottato varie misure per risolvere questo problema, tra cui il Pacchetto per l'occupazione giovanile ([1]) (*Youth Employment Package* — YEP), del dicembre 2012. Lo YEP punta ad agevolare la transizione dallo studio al lavoro (per esempio, grazie a un programma dal titolo «Alleanza UE per l'apprendistato» (EU Alliance for Apprenticeships) lanciato nel luglio 2013), promuovendo la mobilità all'interno della UE e istituendo una Garanzia per la gioventù (*Youth Guarantee*) destinata a giovani fino a 25 anni d'età. La Commissione si compiace per l'adozione, avvenuta nell'aprile 2013, della raccomandazione del Consiglio ([2]) che «istituisce una Garanzia per la gioventù», seguirà da vicino la sua attuazione e garantirà che le varie iniziative, avviate nel quadro della Garanzia per la gioventù dagli Stati membri,e quindi anche dall'Italia, siano finanziate da fondi della UE.

Oltre a quanto deciso nel corso del Consiglio europeo del 7-8 febbraio 2013, la Commissione ha anche adottato una comunicazione relativa a una Iniziativa a favore dell'occupazione giovanile (*Youth Employment Initiative* — YEI) ([3]). La YEI aiuterà le regioni della UE aventi un tasso di disoccupazione giovanile superiore al 25 % ad attuare lo YEP e, in particolare, la Garanzia per la gioventù.

La Commissione sta inoltre analizzando i progressi ottenuti in risposta alle raccomandazioni specifiche per paese, inviate all'Italia. Nel quadro del Semestre europeo 2013, essa aveva proposto di inviare all'Italia una raccomandazione specifica per paese sulla lotta alla disoccupazione giovanile.

La Commissione ha infine attivato, negli Stati membri che, come l'Italia, denunciano elevati livelli di disoccupazione giovanile, una serie di cosiddetti «gruppi d'azione». Insieme alla Commissione, l'Italia ha individuato una serie di iniziative tese a promuovere l'occupazione giovanile e l'imprenditorialità giovanile in Italia.

La Commissione segue da vicino l'attuazione di queste iniziative ([4]).

([1]) COM(2012)727-728-729 del 5.12.2012.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st07/st07123.en13.pdf
([3]) COM(2013)145 del 12.3.2013.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/barroso/report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004444/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Youth unemployment in Italy and Europe

According to Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) figures on unemployment in Italy, 11.7% of Italians are currently unemployed. Within that figure, 38.7% of young people are unemployed, an increase of 6.4% compared with January 2012.

At present, 2.8 million people in Italy are without a full-time job: 2.375 million people have a fixed-term contract, while 433 000 are contractors. These figures are higher compared with the findings of surveys from 1993 and 2004 on the same sectors.

According to the EU's 2012 report on employment and social developments, Italy, along with countries such as Spain, Greece, Malta and the Baltic countries, is at high risk of slipping into poverty with little chance of escape.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above figures?

2. What action will it take to support the labour market in Italy and in Europe?

3. How will it help young people in the EU to join both the world of work and society without having to rely on support from their families?

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

The Commission is aware of the alarming situation of young people and of growing unemployment within their ranks, particularly in Italy.

It has taken several measures in order to tackle this challenge, including the Youth Employment Package ([1]) (YEP) of December 2012. YEP focuses on facilitating transition from education to work (including through the launch of an EU Alliance for Apprenticeships in July 2013), promoting intra-EU mobility and establishing a Youth Guarantee for young people up to 25. The Commission welcomes the adoption of the Council Recommendation ([2]) on 'establishing a Youth Guarantee' in April 2013. It will monitor its implementation and ensure that EU funding be used for setting up Youth Guarantee schemes in the Member States, including in Italy.

Further to the European Council of 7-8 February 2013, the Commission adopted a communication on a Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) ([3]). The YEI will help EU regions with a youth unemployment rate above 25% implement the YEP, and in particular the Youth Guarantee.

Furthermore, the Commission is monitoring progress in response to the country-specific Recommendations addressed to Italy. As part of the 2013 European Semester, it has proposed addressed a country-specific recommendation on tackling youth employment to Italy.

Finally, the Commission has put in place 'action teams' in Member States with high levels of youth unemployment, including Italy. Together with the Commission, Italy has identified a series of measures aimed at promoting youth employment and youth entrepreneurship in Italy.

The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of those measures ([4]).

([1]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 05.12.2012.
([2]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st07/st07123.en13.pdf
([3]) COM(2013) 145 of 12.03.2013.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/barroso/report_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004445/13
aan de Commissie
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(19 april 2013)

Betreft: Crisis in de binnenvaart

De afgelopen dagen hebben in diverse Europese landen protesten en stakingen van binnenvaartschippers laten zien. Overcapaciteit en een gebrek aan perspectief voor binnenvaartondernemers lijken belangrijke drijfveren voor deze acties. Het gaat al sinds 2009 slecht met de binnenvaart en de situatie voor de nabije toekomst lijkt er ook niet rooskleurig uit te zien.

1. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de huidige situatie van de binnenvaartsector?

2. Deelt de Commissie mijn opvatting dat de binnenvaart in een structurele crisis in de zin van Richtlijn 96/75/EG terecht is gekomen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie met mij van mening dat het laatst uitgevoerde onderzoek naar een „ernstige verstoring van de markt" uit 2010 met spoed opnieuw moet worden uitgevoerd, omdat de crisis in de binnenvaart zich evident heeft verdiept, en de lange termijn perspectieven zijn verslechterd onder meer door het uitstel van het Seine-Schelde traject? Zo nee, waarom niet? Zo ja, is zij van plan op heel korte termijn een werkgroep in te stellen om een hernieuwd onderzoek uit te voeren?

4. Indien die werkgroep concludeert dat er sprake is van een crisis in de binnenvaart, zal de Commissie dan het verzoek van een lidstaat honoreren — als die lidstaat een verzoek indient om de binnenvaart in structurele crisis te verklaren — waardoor verschillende steunmaatregelen voor de binnenvaart beschikbaar komen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. Welke maatregelen neemt de Commissie verder om de binnenvaartsector nieuwe kansen te bieden?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(6 juni 2013)

1. De Commissie beschouwt de binnenvaartsector als een belangrijke pijler van het Europese vervoersbeleid. Vervoer over de binnenwateren staat hoog op de agenda in belangrijke beleidsinitiatieven voor transversaal transport zoals het trans-Europese vervoersnetwerk ([1]), de financieringsfaciliteit voor Europese verbindingen ([2]) en het initiatief „Schone energie voor het vervoer" ([3]). De sector heeft een groot intrinsiek potentieel maar heeft het moeilijk om dit potentieel te benutten.

2, 3 en 4. Overeenkomstig Richtlijn 96/75/EG is het aan de lidstaten om in geval van ernstige verstoring van de markten passende maatregelen te verzoeken. Een dergelijk verzoek van lidstaten moet gebaseerd zijn op een beoordeling van de economische situatie en moet vergezeld gaan van de nodige informatie. De Commissie heeft tot dusver nog geen dergelijke verzoeken ontvangen. Indien een lidstaat een dergelijk verzoek indient, zal de Commissie dit op basis van de verstrekte informatie onderzoeken overeenkomstig Richtlijn 96/75/EG.

5. Tijdens de volgende vergadering van het Binnenvaartcomité op 27 mei 2013 zal de Commissie een uitwisseling van informatie tussen de lidstaten organiseren over de economische situatie van de sector. Bovendien onderzoekt de Commissie op dit moment, in het kader van de voorbereidingen voor het aanstaande NAIADES II-actieprogramma, dat naar verwachting in de komende maanden zal worden goedgekeurd en aan het Europees Parlement zal worden voorgelegd, mogelijke maatregelen zoals regelgevende maatregelen, coördinatie van onderzoek en het gebruik van financiële instrumenten om de kwaliteit van de binnenvaart te verbeteren. In deze analyse wordt rekening gehouden met de huidige macro-economische omstandigheden en wordt erkend dat er in de huidige context van de open vervoersmarkt slechts een beperkte overheidsinterventie in de markt mogelijk is zonder de mededinging te vervalsen.

([1]) COM(2011) 650.
([2]) COM(2011) 665.
([3]) COM(2013) 17 en COM(2013) 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004445/13
to the Commission
Peter van Dalen (ECR)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Inland waterways crisis

Various countries in Europe have seen protests and strikes by inland waterway operators in recent days. Over-capacity and a lack of prospects for inland waterway carriers seem to be important factors driving them to these actions. The situation in the inland waterways sector has already been deteriorating since 2009, and the outlook does not seem promising for the near future either.

1. What is the Commission's view of the current situation in the inland waterways sector?

2. Does the Commission share my view that the inland waterways sector has ended up in a structural crisis, as specified by Directive 96/75/EC? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree with me that the last survey carried out into a 'serious market disturbance' in 2010 must be carried out again as a matter of urgency because the inland waterways crisis has obviously deepened and the long-term prospects have deteriorated, which is also due to the Seine-Scheldt section being postponed? If not, why not? If so, does it intend to set up a working group in the very near future to carry out an analysis again?

4. If this working group reaches the conclusion that the inland waterways sector is in crisis, will the Commission then comply with the request from a Member State — if this Member State submits a request for the inland waterways sector to be declared as being in a structural crisis — as a result of which various support measures will be made available for the inland waterways sector? If not, why not?

5. What further measures will the Commission take in terms of offering the inland waterways sector new opportunities?

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

1. The Commission considers the inland waterway transport sector to be an important pillar of the European transport policy. Inland waterway transport is high on the agenda in key transversal transport policy initiatives, such as the trans-European transport network ([1]), the Connecting Europe Facility ([2]) and the Clean Power for Transport initiative ([3]). The sector has significant intrinsic potential, but faces difficulties to realise this potential.

2, 3 and 4. In accordance with Directive 96/75/EC, it is up to Member States to request for suitable measures in the event of serious market disturbance. Any requests by Member States must be based on an assessment of the economic situation and accompanied by all the information needed for it. The Commission has not received such requests so far. If such a request is introduced by a Member State, the Commission will examine it in accordance with Directive 96/75/EC on the basis of the information provided.

5. The Commission will organise an exchange of information between Member States on the economic situation of the sector at the occasion of the next Inland Waterway Transport Committee on 27 May 2013. Moreover as part of the preparation of the forthcoming NAIADES II action programme due to be adopted and presented to the European Parliament in the coming months, the Commission is examining possible measures such as regulatory measures, research coordination and the use of financial instruments to improve the quality of inland navigation. This analysis takes into account the current macroeconomic circumstances and acknowledges that in the current context of open transport markets, there are limits to the possibilities of public intervention in the market without unduly distorting competition.

([1]) COM(2011) 650.
([2]) COM(2011) 665.
([3]) COM(2013) 17 & 18.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004446/13
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(19 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Combaterea șomajului în UE

Șomajul în Uniunea Europeană a atins în februarie 2013 alarmanta rată de 10,9 %. Numărul angajaților a scăzut cu 0,4 % la nivelul UE și cu 0,8 % în zona euro în al patrulea trimestru din 2012, comparativ cu aceeași perioadă din 2011.

Peste 26,338 milioane de oameni din Uniunea Europeană se află în imposibilitatea de a-și utiliza competențele pentru a produce bunuri economice și nu pot asigura un nivel de subzistență familiilor lor.

O astfel de rată a șomajului nu are numai efecte economice foarte grave, ci mai ales consecințe psihologice dramatice și, nu de puține ori, afectează sănătatea celor rămași fără locuri de muncă.

Șomajul alimentează izolarea socială, generează raporturi familiale tensionate, violență domestică, alcoolism sau necromanie.

Care este strategia Comisiei privind reintegrarea pe piață a celor 8,2 % de cetățeni ai UE cu vârste cuprinse între 25 și 64 de ani care nu beneficiază de o educație de nivel terțiar?

Cum abordează Comisia necesitatea de a crea noi locuri de muncă în perioada financiară 2014-2020? Care sunt măsurile concrete luate de Comisie pentru combaterea șomajului?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(11 iunie 2013)

Abordarea nivelului intolerabil de șomaj în Europa necesită o strategie integrată. Odată cu pachetul privind ocuparea forței de muncă ([1]), Comisia a promovat măsuri pentru a stimula cererea de locuri de muncă, în special în sectoarele generatoare de locuri de muncă, precum sănătatea, TIC și economia ecologică, pentru a investi în îmbunătățirea competențelor lucrătorilor și pentru a valorifica pe deplin potențialul pieței forței de muncă din UE. Programul YEP ([2]) a propus măsuri specifice de stimulare a capacității de inserție profesională a tinerilor, inclusiv „garanția pentru tineret", în timp ce Consiliul European a alocat 6 miliarde EUR programului YEI ([3]) în sprijinul YEP.

În plus, Comunicarea Comisiei privind „Reorganizarea învățământului" ([4]) stabilește o agendă cuprinzătoare pentru reformarea sistemelor de educație și (de) formare, pentru o mai bună corelare a competențelor cu nevoile de pe piața forței de muncă. Aceste eforturi și strategii sunt completate de SIP ([5]), care oferă orientări pentru reformarea sistemelor de protecție socială ale statelor membre cu un accent mai mare pe investiții în capitalul uman și în coeziunea socială.

CFM ([6]), inclusiv investițiile în capitalul uman, infrastructura socială, de sănătate și de educație, efectuate de ESIF ([7]), va reprezenta o oportunitate suplimentară pentru a spori efortul european în materie de creștere economică și creare de locuri de muncă. Comisia a propus ca o cotă minimă de 25 % din bugetul alocat pentru politica de coeziune să fie dedicată FSE.

De asemenea, sunt necesare acțiuni la nivel național. Statele membre trebuie să își coreleze politicile privind piața muncii cu obiectivele strategice ale AAC 2013 ([8]), prin urmărirea unei consolidări bugetare diferențiate și favorabile creșterii economice, promovarea creșterii și a competitivității, precum și prin combaterea șomajului și a consecințelor sociale ale crizei. La 29 mai, Comisia a adoptat propuneri de recomandări specifice fiecărei țări care urmează să fie adoptate de către Consiliu.

([1]) COM (2012) 173 din 18 aprilie 2012.
([2]) Pachetul privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor, COM(2012) 727-728-729 din 5 decembrie 2012.
([3]) Inițiativa privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor.
([4]) COM(2012) 669 final, 21.11.2012.
([5]) Pachet de măsuri privind investițiile sociale COM (2013) 83 final februarie 2013.
([6]) Cadrul financiar multianual.
([7]) Fondurile structurale europene și de investiții.
([8]) Analiza anuală a creșterii, COM (2012) 750 din 28 noiembrie 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004446/13
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(19 April 2013)

Subject: Tackling unemployment in the EU

The unemployment rate in the European Union reached an alarming 10.9% this February. The number of people in work fell by 0.4% across the EU and by 0.8% in the euro area during the fourth quarter of 2012, compared to the same period in 2011.

More than 26 338 million people in the European Union are unable to use their skills to produce economic assets and cannot provide a living at subsistence level for their families.

Such a high rate of unemployment not only has an extremely severe economic impact, but also has, in particular, drastic psychological repercussions, and it frequently affects the health of the jobless.

Unemployment fuels social isolation and causes tension in family relations, domestic violence, alcoholism or necromania.

What strategy is the Commission adopting in terms of reintegrating into the market the 8.2% of EU citizens aged between 25 and 64 who do not have the benefit of tertiary-level education?

How is the Commission tackling the need to create new jobs during the 2014-2020 financial period? What specific measures have been taken by the Commission to tackle unemployment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

Tackling the intolerable unemployment levels in Europe requires an integrated strategy. With the Employment Package ([1]) the Commission has promoted measures to stimulate job demand, notably in job-rich sectors such as healthcare, ICT and the green economy, invest in workers' skills upgrading and exploit the full potential of the EU labour market. The YEP ([2]) proposed specific measures to boost the employability of young people, including the Youth Guarantee, while European Council earmarked EUR 6 billion as the YEI ([3]) to support the YEP.

Furthermore, the Commission's Communication on 'Rethinking Education' ([4]) sets out a comprehensive agenda for reforming education and training systems to better match skills with labour market needs. These efforts and strategies are complemented by the SIP ([5]), which provides guidance for refroming the Member States' welfare systems with a stronger focus on investing in human capital and social cohesion.

The MFF ([6]), including investments in human capital, social, health and education infrastructure by the ESIF ([7]) will represent a further opportunity to increase European effort for growth and jobs. The Commission proposed that a minimum share of 25% of the budget allocated to the Cohesion policy was dedicated to the ESF.

Action is also needed at the national level. Member States are to connect their labour market policies to the strategic objectives of the 2013 AGS ([8]): pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation; promoting growth and competitiveness; tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis. On 29 May, the Commission has adopted proposals for country-specific recommendations to be adopted by the Council.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 of 18 April 2012.
([2]) Youth Employment Package, COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 5 December 2012.
([3]) Youth Employment Initiative.
([4]) COM(2012) 669 final of 21.11.2012.
([5]) Social Investment Package COM(2013) 83 final February 2013.
([6]) Multiannual Financial Framework.
([7]) European Structural and Investment Funds.
([8]) Annual Growth Survey, COM(2012) 750 of 28 November 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004447/13
to the Council
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU Environment Ministers meeting in Dublin — clean air and environmental policy

The UK Government is expected to lobby for weaker public health protection at the EU Environment Ministers meeting in Dublin this week.

The recently released 2013 World Health Organisation (WHO) study requested by Commissioner Potočnik, on a review of the health aspects of pollution, presented considerable evidence that:

— There are associations between annual mortality rates and levels of fine particles (PM2.5) which are below the current air quality guidelines (AQG), fixed at 10 micrograms per cubic metre ($\mu g/m^3$), and;

— Long-term exposures to ozone (O_3) can lead to respiratory mortality and death among people with predisposing chronic conditions.

This report also draws attention to the WHO's June 2012 classification of diesel exhaust fumes as a class one carcinogen for humans.

Considering that air pollution near London's busiest roads is twice or three times that of WHO guidelines and legal limits; that levels of NO_2 in London are the highest of any capital city in Europe; and that the UK has the highest proportion of zones exceeding the NO_2 annual limit value plus margin of tolerance of any country in Europe and;

Given that the WHO recommends:

— a revision of the air quality guidelines (AQGs) for particulate matter by 2015 and;

— the development of AQGs for long-term average ozone concentrations;

Could the Council undertake to protect current environmental standards in EU policy, ensuring that it will in no way weaken environmental protection or lessen clean air and pollution targets for Member States?

Reply
(10 June 2013)

As the Honourable Member knows, the Commission, as guardian of the Treaties, is responsible for overseeing Member States' application of Union law.

The recent meeting in Dublin, referred to in the question, registered broad awareness among Member States of the serious health and environmental risks that certain pollutants pose, especially in major cities where density of economic activities and population lead to higher concentrations of air pollutants (particulate matters, ozone, nitrogen dioxide). However, as the Honourable Member is also aware, it is not for informal meetings of EU ministers to take formal decisions on EU policy and law.

A high level of protection remains one of the key objectives of the EU's environmental action. The Council will examine with great attention any new proposal from the Commission on air pollution and, more broadly, air quality.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004448/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Quita en participaciones preferentes y deuda subordinada perpetua en NCG Banco

El pasado 22 de marzo el Fondo de Restructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) emitió una comunicación con su decisión definitiva sobre las quitas aplicables a los mecanismos híbridos de deuda, también conocidos como participaciones preferentes. Se fija una quita para las participaciones preferentes del grupo NCG Banco del 43 % y de entre un 41 %y un 22 % para la deuda subordinada.

Dicha decisión se adoptó con la intención de aplicar lo acordado en el Memorando de Entendimiento del Rescate Financiero entre la Unión Europea y el Gobierno de España. Este acuerdo, firmado el 20 de julio de 2012, prevé la elaboración de normas para garantizar la responsabilidad subordinada de estos mecanismos de deuda. Esta responsabilidad subordinada supone garantizar el derecho de los acreedores sobre los fondos que posean las entidades financieras españolas, así como sobre los fondos de cierto tipo de clientes que hayan asumido riesgo subsidiario con la entidad. Entre estos clientes se encuentran los titulares de participaciones preferentes de NCG Banco.

Este banco comercializó participaciones recabando millones de euros para las ampliaciones de capital. NCG Banco es un banco originario de Galicia creado en 2011, producto de la fusión de varias cajas de ahorro, que tiene más de 3 millones de clientes. Las operaciones de preferentes, que durante años permitieron la expansión del sistema financiero español, se llevaron a cabo bajo un supuesto fraude de ley (Art. 6 y 7 del Código Civil) al conocer y no hacer cumplir la normativa vigente recogida en la Directiva 2004/39/CE, que especifica los derechos del consumidor de este tipo de productos financieros, así como la normativa de la CNMV que regula la adquisición de este tipo de productos. En el Derecho civil de España el «vicio de consentimiento» es suficiente para invalidar cualquier contrato (Art. 1265 del Código Civil). Recientemente se han producido las primeras sentencias que anulan dichos contratos, por ejemplo sobre preferentes firmadas por menores, etc. En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-009392/2012, la Comisión sostuvo que incumben al sistema judicial español las acusaciones sobre la invalidez de los contratos.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de las primeras sentencias que el sistema judicial español está emitiendo sobre este asunto? ¿Qué consecuencias cree que acarrearán para cumplir los requisitos del Memorando de Entendimiento? Ante la posible invalidez de muchos contratos de participaciones preferentes de NCG Banco que se verían afectadas por el Memorando de Entendimiento, reduciendo las cantidades fijadas en la quita, ¿cómo piensa actuar? ¿Cuántos ahorradores se verán afectados por las quitas en este banco?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004449/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Quita en participaciones preferentes y deuda subordinada perpetua en Catalunya Banc

El pasado 22 de marzo el Fondo de Restructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) emitió una comunicación con su decisión definitiva sobre las quitas aplicables a los mecanismos híbridos de deuda, también conocidas como participaciones preferentes, fijando una quita para las participaciones preferentes del grupo Catalunya Banc del 61 % y de entre 40 % y un 15 % para la deuda subordinada.

Dicha decisión se llevó a cabo con la intención de aplicar lo acordado en el Memorando de Entendimiento del Rescate Financiero entre la Unión Europea y el Gobierno de España. Este acuerdo, firmado el 20 de julio de 2012, prevé la creación de normas para garantizar la responsabilidad subordinada de estos mecanismos de deuda. Esta responsabilidad subordinada supone garantizar el derecho de los acreedores sobre los fondos que posean las entidades financieras españolas, así como sobre los fondos de cierto tipo de clientes que hayan asumido riesgo subsidiario con la entidad. Entre estos clientes se encuentran los titulares de participaciones preferentes de Catalunya Banc.

Este banco comercializó participaciones recabando millones de euros para las ampliaciones de capital. Catalunya Banc es un banco originario de Cataluña creado en 2010, producto de la fusión de varias cajas de ahorro, que tiene más de 4 millones de clientes. Las operaciones de preferentes, que durante años permitieron la expansión del sistema financiero español, se llevaron a cabo bajo un supuesto fraude de ley (Art. 6 y 7 del Código Civil) al conocer y no hacer cumplir la normativa vigente recogida en la Directiva 2004/39/CE, que especifica los derechos del consumidor de este tipo de productos financieros, así como la normativa de la CNMV que regula la adquisición de este tipo de productos. En el Derecho civil de España el «vicio de consentimiento» es suficiente para invalidar cualquier contrato (Art. 1265 del Código Civil). Recientemente se han producido las primeras sentencias que anulan dichos contratos, por ejemplo sobre preferentes firmadas por menores, etc. En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-009392/2012, la Comisión sostuvo que incumben al sistema judicial español las acusaciones sobre la invalidez de los contratos.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de las primeras sentencias que el sistema judicial español está emitiendo sobre este asunto? ¿Qué consecuencias cree que acarrearán para cumplir los requisitos del Memorando de Entendimiento? Ante la posible invalidez de muchos contratos de participaciones preferentes de Catalunya Banc que se verían afectadas por el Memorando de Entendimiento, reduciendo las cantidades fijadas en la quita, ¿cómo piensa actuar? ¿Cuántos ahorradores se verán afectados por las quitas en este banco?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004450/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Quita en participaciones preferentes y deuda subordinada perpetua en BFA-Bankia

El pasado 22 de marzo el Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) emitió una comunicación con su decisión definitiva sobre las quitas aplicables a los mecanismos híbridos de deuda, también conocidos como participaciones preferentes. Se fija una quita para las participaciones preferentes del grupo BFA-Bankia del 38 % y de entre un 36 % y un 13 % para la deuda subordinada.

Dicha decisión se adoptó con la intención de aplicar lo acordado en el Memorando de Entendimiento del Rescate Financiero entre la Unión Europea y el Gobierno de España. Este acuerdo, firmado el 20 de julio de 2012, prevé la elaboración de normas para garantizar la responsabilidad subordinada de estos mecanismos de deuda. Esta responsabilidad subordinada supone garantizar el derecho de los acreedores sobre los fondos que posean las entidades financieras españolas, así como sobre los fondos de cierto tipo de clientes que hayan asumido riesgo subsidiario con la entidad. Entre estos clientes se encuentran los titulares de participaciones preferentes de BFA-Bankia.

Este banco comercializó participaciones recabando millones de euros para las ampliaciones de capital. BFA-Bankia es un banco creado en 2010, producto de la fusión de varias cajas de ahorro de todo el territorio español, que tiene más de 12 millones de clientes. Las operaciones de preferentes, que durante años permitieron la expansión del sistema financiero español, se llevaron a cabo bajo un supuesto fraude de ley (Art. 6 y 7 del Código Civil) al conocer y no hacer cumplir la normativa vigente recogida en la Directiva 2004/39/CE, que especifica los derechos del consumidor de este tipo de productos financieros, así como la normativa de la CNMV que regula la adquisición de este tipo de productos. En el Derecho civil de España el «vicio de consentimiento» es suficiente para invalidar cualquier contrato (Art. 1265 del Código Civil). Recientemente se han producido las primeras sentencias que anulan dichos contratos, por ejemplo sobre preferentes firmadas por menores, etc. En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-009392/2012, la Comisión sostuvo que incumben al sistema judicial español las acusaciones sobre la invalidez de los contratos.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de las primeras sentencias que el sistema judicial español está emitiendo sobre este asunto? ¿Qué consecuencias cree que acarreará para cumplir los requisitos del Memorando de Entendimiento? Ante la posible invalidez de muchos contratos de participaciones preferentes de BFA-Bankia que se verían afectadas por el Memorando de Entendimiento, reduciendo las cantidades fijadas en la quita, ¿cómo piensa actuar? ¿Cuántos ahorradores se verán afectados por las quitas en este banco?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004451/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Quita en participaciones preferentes y deuda subordinada perpetua en Banco Gallego

El pasado 22 de marzo el Fondo de Restructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) emitió una comunicación con su decisión definitiva sobre las quitas aplicables a los mecanismos híbridos de deuda, también conocidos como participaciones preferentes. Se fija una quita para las participaciones preferentes del grupo Banco Gallego del 50 % y de entre un 39 %y un 11 % para la deuda subordinada.

Dicha decisión se adoptó con la intención de aplicar lo acordado en el Memorando de Entendimiento del Rescate Financiero entre la Unión Europea y el Gobierno de España. Este acuerdo, firmado el 20 de julio de 2012, prevé la elaboración de normas para garantizar la responsabilidad subordinada de estos mecanismos de deuda. Esta responsabilidad subordinada supone garantizar el derecho de los acreedores sobre los fondos que posean las entidades financieras españolas, así como sobre los fondos de cierto tipo de clientes que hayan asumido riesgo subsidiario con la entidad. Entre estos clientes se encuentran los titulares de participaciones preferentes de Banco Gallego.

Este banco comercializó participaciones recabando millones de euros para las ampliaciones de capital. NCG Banco es un banco originario de Galicia, creado en 1991, que empleó las preferentes para sus ampliaciones de capital. Las operaciones de preferentes, que durante años permitieron la expansión del sistema financiero español, se llevaron a cabo bajo un supuesto fraude de ley (Art. 6 y 7 del Código Civil) al conocer y no hacer cumplir la normativa vigente recogida en la Directiva 2004/39/CE, que especifica los derechos del consumidor de este tipo de productos financieros, así como la normativa de la CNMV que regula la adquisición de este tipo de productos. En el Derecho civil de España el «vicio de consentimiento» es suficiente para invalidar cualquier contrato (Art. 1265 del Código Civil). Recientemente se han producido las primeras sentencias que anulan dichos contratos, por ejemplo sobre preferentes firmadas por menores, etc. En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-009392/2012, la Comisión sostuvo que incumben al sistema judicial español las acusaciones sobre la invalidez de los contratos.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de las primeras sentencias que el sistema judicial español está emitiendo sobre este asunto? ¿Qué consecuencias cree que acarrearán para cumplir los requisitos del Memorando de Entendimiento? Ante la posible invalidez, de muchos contratos de participaciones preferentes de Banco Gallego que se verían afectadas por el Memorando de Entendimiento, reduciendo las cantidades fijadas en la quita, ¿cómo piensa actuar? ¿Cuántos ahorradores se verán afectados por las quitas en este banco?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004452/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Quita en participaciones preferentes y deuda subordinada en Liberbank

El pasado 8 de abril el Fondo de Restructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) emitió una comunicación con su decisión definitiva sobre las quitas aplicables a los mecanismos híbridos de deuda, también conocidos como participaciones preferentes. Se fija una quita media para las participaciones preferentes y deuda subordinada del grupo Liberbank de más de un 61 %.

Dicha decisión se adoptó con la intención de aplicar lo acordado en el Memorando de Entendimiento del Rescate Financiero entre la Unión Europea y el Gobierno de España. Este acuerdo, firmado el 20 de julio de 2012, prevé la elaboración de normas para garantizar la responsabilidad subordinada de estos mecanismos de deuda. Esta responsabilidad subordinada supone garantizar el derecho de los acreedores sobre los fondos que posean las entidades financieras españolas, así como sobre los fondos de cierto tipo de clientes que hayan asumido riesgo subsidiario con la entidad. Entre estos clientes se encuentran los titulares de participaciones preferentes de Liberbank.

Este banco comercializó participaciones recabando millones de euros para las ampliaciones de capital. Liberbank es un banco creado en 2011, producto de la fusión de varias cajas de ahorro de diferentes puntos de España. Todas estas operaciones, que durante años permiten la expansión del sistema financiero español, se llevaron a cabo bajo un supuesto fraude de ley (Art. 6 y 7 del Código Civil) al conocer y no hacer cumplir la normativa vigente recogida en la Directiva 2004/39/CE, que especifica los derechos del consumidor de este tipo de productos financieros, así como la normativa de la CNMV que regula la adquisición de este tipo de productos. En el Derecho civil de España el «vicio de consentimiento» es suficiente para invalidar cualquier contrato (Art. 1265 del Código Civil). Recientemente se han producido las primeras sentencias que anulan dichos contratos, por ejemplo sobre preferentes firmadas por menores, etc. En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-009392/2012, la Comisión sostuvo que incumben al sistema judicial español las acusaciones sobre la invalidez de los contratos.

¿Es consciente la Comisión de las primeras sentencias que el sistema judicial español está emitiendo sobre este asunto? ¿Qué consecuencias cree que acarrearán para cumplir los requisitos del Memorando de Entendimiento? Ante la posible invalidez de muchos contratos de participaciones preferentes de Liberbank que se verían afectadas por el Memorando de Entendimiento, reduciendo las cantidades fijadas en la quita, ¿cómo piensa actuar? ¿Cuántos ahorradores se verán afectados por las quitas en este banco?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión

(19 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de las supuestas ventas abusivas de acciones preferentes en varios bancos españoles y de los procedimientos judiciales que examinan algunas de estas transacciones. La Comisión no ve actualmente ningún riesgo derivado de tales procedimientos para la ejecución del programa destinado al sector financiero español y, en consecuencia, no hay necesidad de dar una respuesta a los mismos. Si se diera cualquier incidencia negativa importante, la Comisión la valoraría y adoptaría medidas correctoras.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004448/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Haircuts on preference shares and perpetual subordinated debt at NCG Banco

On 22 March 2013 the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) issued a press release containing its final decision on haircuts for hybrid debt instruments, also known as preference shares. It agreed on haircuts of 43% and of between 22% and 41% respectively for holders of preference shares and subordinated debt issued by the NCG Banco group.

The FROB adopted its decision in order to apply the terms of the memorandum of understanding on financial-sector policy conditionality (MoU) concluded between the Union and the Spanish Government. Signed on 20 July 2012, the MoU provides for the introduction of rules to guarantee subordinated liability for these kinds of debt instruments. Subordinated liability means safeguarding the rights of creditors over the funds held by the Spanish banks, and over the funds of certain types of clients who have taken a subsidiary risk with a bank. These include the holders of preference shares issued by NCG Banco.

The latter sold shares worth millions of euros in order to increase its capital. Originally a Galician bank, NCG Banco was established in 2011 following a merger between various savings banks and has more than 3 million clients. However, these preference share deals, which over a number of years facilitated the expansion of Spain's financial sector, were allegedly carried out in breach of Spanish law (Articles 6 and 7 of the Civil Code). This is because the banks were aware of but failed to comply with current legislation as laid down in Directive 2004/39/EC, which details the rights of consumers of these types of financial products, and with the rules of Spain's Stock Market Authority (CNMV), which regulates the purchase of such products. According to Article 1265 of Spain's Civil Code, 'defects of consent' are sufficient grounds for invalidating any kind of contract. The courts recently handed down the first rulings invalidating these kinds of contracts, including preference share contracts signed by minors. In its answer to my Question E-009392/2012, the Commission said that it is for the Spanish judicial system to investigate allegations that these contracts are invalid.

Is the Commission aware of the first rulings issued on this subject by the Spanish courts? What does it think will be the impact in terms of implementing the MoU? Bearing in mind that many NCG Banco preference share contracts affected by the MoU could be declared invalid (a scenario which would lead to a reduction in the amounts targeted for haircuts), how does the Commission plan to respond? How many investors would be affected by haircuts on products issued by NCG Banco?

Question for written answer E-004449/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Haircuts on preference shares and perpetual subordinated debt at Catalunya Banc

On 22 March 2013 the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) issued a press release containing its final decision on haircuts for hybrid debt instruments, also known as preference shares. It agreed on haircuts of 61% and of between 15% and 40% respectively for holders of preference shares and subordinated debt issued by the Catalunya Banc group.

The FROB adopted its decision in order to apply the terms of the memorandum of understanding on financial-sector policy conditionality (MoU) concluded between the Union and the Spanish Government. Signed on 20 July 2012, the MoU provides for the introduction of rules to guarantee subordinated liability for these kinds of debt instruments. Subordinated liability means safeguarding the rights of creditors over the funds held by the Spanish banks, and over the funds of certain types of clients who have taken a subsidiary risk with a bank. These include the holders of preference shares issued by Catalunya Banc.

The bank, which was established in Catalonia in 2010 following a merger between various savings banks and which has more than four million clients, sold shares worth millions of euros in order to increase its capital. However, these preference share deals, which over a number of years facilitated the expansion of Spain's financial sector, were allegedly carried out in breach of Spanish law (Articles 6 and 7 of the Civil Code). This is because the banks were aware of but failed to comply with current legislation as laid down in Directive 2004/39/EC, which details the rights of consumers of these types of financial products, and with the rules of Spain's Stock Market Authority (CNMV), which regulates the purchase of such products. According to Article 1265 of Spain's Civil Code, 'defects of consent' are sufficient grounds for invalidating any kind of contract. The courts recently handed down the first rulings invalidating these kinds of contracts, including preference share contracts signed by minors. In its answer to my Question E-009392/2012, the Commission said that it is for the Spanish judicial system to investigate allegations that these contracts are invalid.

Is the Commission aware of the first rulings issued on this subject by the Spanish courts? What does it think will be the impact in terms of implementing the MoU? Bearing in mind that many Catalunya Banc preference share contracts affected by the MoU could be declared invalid (a scenario which would lead to a reduction in the amounts targeted for haircuts), how does the Commission plan to respond? How many investors would be affected by haircuts on products issued by Catalunya Banc?

Question for written answer E-004450/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Haircuts on preference shares and perpetual subordinated debt at BFA-Bankia

On 22 March 2013 the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) issued a press release containing its final decision on haircuts for hybrid debt instruments, also known as preference shares. It agreed on haircuts of 38% and of between 13% and 36% respectively for holders of preference shares and subordinated debt issued by the BFA-Bankia group.

The FROB adopted its decision in order to apply the terms of the memorandum of understanding on financial-sector policy conditionality (MoU) concluded between the Union and the Spanish Government. Signed on 20 July 2012, the MoU provides for the introduction of rules to guarantee subordinated liability for these kinds of debt instruments. Subordinated liability means safeguarding the rights of creditors over the funds held by the Spanish banks, and over the funds of certain types of clients who have taken a subsidiary risk with a bank. These include the holders of preference shares issued by BFA-Bankia.

The latter sold shares worth millions of euros in order to increase its capital. BFA-Bankia was established in 2010 following a merger between various Spanish savings banks and has more than 12 million clients. However, these preference share deals, which over a number of years facilitated the expansion of Spain's financial sector, were allegedly carried out in breach of Spanish law (Articles 6 and 7 of the Civil Code). This is because the banks were aware of but failed to comply with current legislation as laid down in Directive 2004/39/EC, which details the rights of consumers of these types of financial products, and with the rules of Spain's Stock Market Authority (CNMV), which regulates the purchase of such products. According to Article 1265 of Spain's Civil Code, 'defects of consent' are sufficient grounds for invalidating any kind of contract. The courts recently handed down the first rulings invalidating these kinds of contracts, including preference share contracts signed by minors. In its answer to my Question E-009392/2012, the Commission said that it is for the Spanish judicial system to investigate allegations that these contracts are invalid.

Is the Commission aware of the first rulings issued on this subject by the Spanish courts? What does it think will be the impact in terms of implementing the MoU? Bearing in mind that many BFA-Bankia preference share contracts affected by the MoU could be declared invalid (a scenario which would lead to a reduction in the amounts targeted for haircuts), how does the Commission plan to respond? How many investors would be affected by haircuts on products issued by BFA-Bankia?

Question for written answer E-004451/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Haircuts on preference shares and perpetual subordinated debt at Banco Gallego

On 22 March 2013 the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) issued a press release containing its final decision on haircuts for hybrid debt instruments, also known as preference shares. It agreed on haircuts of 50% and of between 11% and 39% respectively for holders of preference shares and subordinated debt issued by the Banco Gallego group.

The FROB adopted its decision in order to apply the terms of the memorandum of understanding on financial-sector policy conditionality (MoU) concluded between the Union and the Spanish Government. Signed on 20 July 2012, the MoU provides for the introduction of rules to guarantee subordinated liability for these kinds of debt instruments. Subordinated liability means safeguarding the rights of creditors over the funds held by the Spanish banks, and over the funds of certain types of clients who have taken a subsidiary risk with a bank. These include the holders of preference shares issued by Banco Gallego.

Established in Galicia in 1991, Banco Gallego sold preference shares worth millions of euros in order to increase its capital. However, these preference share deals, which over a number of years facilitated the expansion of Spain's financial sector, were allegedly carried out in breach of Spanish law (Articles 6 and 7 of the Civil Code). This is because the banks were aware of but failed to comply with current legislation as laid down in Directive 2004/39/EC, which details the rights of consumers of these types of financial products, and with the rules of Spain's Stock Market Authority (CNMV), which regulates the purchase of such products. According to Article 1265 of Spain's Civil Code, 'defects of consent' are sufficient grounds for invalidating any kind of contract. The courts recently handed down the first rulings invalidating these kinds of contracts, including preference share contracts signed by minors. In its answer to my Question E-009392/2012, the Commission said that it is for the Spanish judicial system to investigate allegations that these contracts are invalid.

Is the Commission aware of the first rulings issued on this subject by the Spanish courts? What does it think will be the impact in terms of implementing the MoU? Bearing in mind that many Banco Gallego preference share contracts affected by the MoU could be declared invalid (a scenario which would lead to a reduction in the amounts targeted for haircuts), how does the Commission plan to respond? How many investors would be affected by haircuts on the products issued by Banco Gallego?

Question for written answer E-004452/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Haircuts on preference shares and subordinated debt at Liberbank

On 8 April 2013 the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) issued a press release containing its final decision on haircuts for hybrid debt instruments, also known as preference shares. It agreed on an average haircut of more than 61% for holders of preference shares and subordinated debt issued by the Liberbank group.

The FROB adopted its decision in order to apply the terms of the memorandum of understanding on financial-sector policy conditionality (MoU) concluded between the Union and the Spanish Government. Signed on 20 July 2012, the MoU provides for the introduction of rules to guarantee subordinated liability for these kinds of debt instruments. Subordinated liability means safeguarding the rights of creditors over the funds held by the Spanish banks, and over the funds of certain types of clients who have taken a subsidiary risk with a bank. These include the holders of preference shares issued by Liberbank.

The latter sold shares worth millions of euros in order to increase its capital. Liberbank was established in 2011 following a merger between various Spanish savings banks. However, these deals, which over a number of years facilitated the expansion of Spain's financial sector, were allegedly carried out in breach of Spanish law (Articles 6 and 7 of the Civil Code). This is because the banks were aware of but failed to comply with current legislation as laid down in Directive 2004/39/EC, which details the rights of consumers of these types of financial products, and with the rules of Spain's Stock Market Authority (CNMV), which regulates the purchase of such products. According to Article 1265 of Spain's Civil Code, 'defects of consent' are sufficient grounds for invalidating any kind of contract. The courts recently handed down the first rulings invalidating these kinds of contracts, including preference share contracts signed by minors. In its answer to my Question E-009392/2012, the Commission said that it is for the Spanish judicial system to investigate allegations that these contracts are invalid.

Is the Commission aware of the first rulings issued on this subject by the Spanish courts? What does it think will be the impact in terms of implementing the MoU? Bearing in mind that many Liberbank preference share contracts affected by the MoU could be declared invalid (a scenario which would lead to a reduction in the amounts targeted for haircuts), how does the Commission plan to respond? How many investors would be affected by the haircuts on products issued by Liberbank?

Joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission

(19 June 2013)

The Commission is aware of alleged mis-selling in preferential shares in a number of Spanish banks and is aware of judicial procedures examining some of these transactions. The Commission sees at current no risk to the implementation of the Spanish financial-sector programme stemming from these proceedings and therefore no need to device any response to these. Should any materially adverse impact arise, the Commission will assess it and take corrective action.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004453/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Artículo erróneo de Reinhart y Rogoff

En su respuesta a mi anterior pregunta E-000884/2013, que versaba sobre los posibles errores analíticos del FMI que habían podido ser asumidos por la Comisión, el Vicepresidente de la Comisión y Comisario de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios y Euro defendía el trabajo de revisión científica de su evaluación del impacto de la austeridad en el crecimiento y en la realidad económica de los Estados miembros, sosteniendo que la Comisión empleaba sus datos y conclusiones propias para elaborar su política económica.

Recientemente se ha publicado una revisión crítica del artículo académico de 2010 titulado «Growth in a Time of Debt» de los profesores de Harvard Carmen M. Reinhart y Kenneth S. Rogoff; en dicha revisión se ha demostrado que los cálculos que justificaban su visión sobre el impacto de la deuda en el crecimiento se basaban en hojas erróneas de Excel. Este artículo, al haberse publicado en una revista de gran impacto académico, sirvió para justificar la reducción del gasto público y la política de austeridad como única solución a la crisis económica en los Estados miembros. Este artículo ha sido citado en seis de las siete últimas revisiones económicas publicadas por la Comisión desde 2010.

Incluso en una carta personal de 13 de febrero de 2013 (ARES(2013) 185796), que el Vicepresidente de la Comisión y Comisario de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios y Euro dirigió a los ministros de Economía de los Estados miembros y presidentes de importantes instituciones económicas, el Sr. Rehn citó conclusiones extraídas directamente de este artículo: «Está ampliamente admitido, basado en estudios académicos serios, que cuando los niveles de deuda pública suben por encima del 90 %, tienden a tener un impacto negativo en el dinamismo económico», para justificar la continuidad de la política de austeridad en la Unión Europea. Pese al hecho de que la Comisión utilice sus propios datos, este artículo parece haber impactado fuertemente en sus estudios económicos.

¿Se ha basado la Comisión en dicho artículo, sin revisarlo, para justificar su política de austeridad? ¿Va a considerar la Comisión la posibilidad de retractarse de las afirmaciones sobre la política económica basadas en las conclusiones de este artículo con errores de Excel? ¿De qué mecanismos dispondrá la Comisión para revisar toda su política económica de cara al claro apoyo expresado en artículos académicos erróneos para justificar la austeridad? ¿Asumirá la responsabilidad por justificar sus políticas sin revisar los artículos en los que basa las opiniones que afectan a la vida de millones de europeos? ¿Reconsiderará la Comisión los efectos del nivel de deuda pública sobre el crecimiento y, por tanto, su política de austeridad? ¿Piensa retractarse de las conclusiones esgrimidas en la citada carta?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión no hace comentarios sobre documentos escritos por investigadores o particulares.

La Comisión recuerda a Su Señoría que la política presupuestaria en la Unión Europea está regulada por el Pacto de Estabilidad y Crecimiento, el marco fiscal regulado basado en el Tratado. Este último contiene disposiciones relativas a la deuda y el déficit. Por lo tanto, la acción de la Comisión en relación con la aplicación del marco de política fiscal común se ajusta plenamente a los principios del Pacto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004453/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Reinhart and Rogoff's misleading article

In his response to my previous Question E-000884/2013, regarding the possible analytical errors of the IMF for which the Commission could have taken responsibility, the Vice-President of the European Commission and the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro defended the scientific review of evaluations of the impact of austerity on growth and on the economic reality of Member States, arguing that the Commission used its own data and findings to develop its economic policy.

A critical review of the 2010 academic article entitled 'Growth in a Time of Debt' by Harvard professors Carmen M. Reinhart and Kenneth S. Rogoff has recently been published; this review shows that the calculations justifying their views on the impact of debt on growth were based on erroneous Excel sheets. This article, having been published in a high-impact academic journal, was used to justify public spending cuts and austerity measures as the only solution to the economic crisis in the Member States. This article has been cited in six of the last seven economic reviews published by the Commission since 2010.

Even in a personal letter dated 13 February 2013 (ARES(2013) 185796), which the Vice-President of the European Commission and the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro sent to the finance ministers of Member States and to the chairs of major economic institutions, Mr Rehn cited the findings taken directly from this article: 'It is widely acknowledged, based on serious academic research, that when public debt levels rise above 90% they tend to have a negative impact on economic dynamism' to justify the continuation of austerity measures in the European Union. Despite the fact that the Commission uses its own data, this article appears to have had a major influence on its economic studies.

Has the Commission relied on this article, without checking it, to justify its policy of austerity? Will the Commission consider retracting statements on economic policy based on the findings of this article which contains errors in Excel? What mechanisms will be available to the Commission to review its entire economic policy in view of the clear support expressed in misleading academic articles to justify austerity? Will it assume responsibility for justifying its policies without checking the articles on which opinions that affect the lives of millions of Europeans are based? Will the Commission reconsider the effects of public debt on growth and, therefore, its policy of austerity? Does it intend to retract the conclusions put forward in this letter?

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

The Commission does not comment on papers written by researchers or private individuals.

The Commission reminds to the honourable Member that budgetary policy in the European Union is regulated by the Stability and Growth Pact, the rule-based fiscal framework grounded in the Treaty. The latter contains contains provisions on debt and deficit. Thus the action by the Commission regarding the application of the common fiscal policy framework is entirely guided by the principles of the Pact.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004454/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Juicio a Efraín Ríos Montt

El pasado 19 de marzo se inició en Guatemala el debate oral y público del juicio contra el general José Efraín Ríos Montt por los cargos de genocidio y crímenes contra la humanidad. Numerosas organizaciones de la sociedad civil se han personado en la acusación y el mundo entero se encuentra a la espera de un juicio limpio que haga justicia a los innumerables crímenes cometidos durante la dictadura de los años 1982 y 1983.

El general guatemalteco ha esquivado su enjuiciamiento desde que, en 2005, un juez español emitiera una orden internacional de captura sobre su persona por los crímenes contra la humanidad cometidos durante la dictadura. Para evitar su captura, Ríos Montt se presentó como candidato al Parlamento guatemalteco, obteniendo su escaño y, por tanto, la inmunidad parlamentaria a la que el cargo da acceso. El 14 de enero del pasado año terminó su cargo en el Parlamento y 10 días después fue formalmente acusado de genocidio y crímenes contra la humanidad por primera vez en Guatemala; desde entonces, se está desarrollando un arduo proceso judicial.

Los abogados del general han interpuesto todo tipo de recursos al proceso que, pese a haberlo retrasado, no han conseguido invalidar un juicio que la sociedad guatemalteca —e incluso las Naciones Unidas— está siguiendo con expectación. Se trata del primer juicio contra un antiguo Jefe de Estado en el país y esto debe sentar precedente para el enjuiciamiento de todos los criminales durante la larga guerra civil que sufrió el país. Por ello, el proceso reviste una importancia fundamental y la imparcialidad con la que se pueda desarrollar este juicio demostrará la independencia del poder judicial en el país centroamericano.

¿Está la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante dando seguimiento al citado juicio a Efraín Ríos Montt por genocidio y crímenes de lesa humanidad?

¿Qué opinión tiene la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante sobre el mismo?

¿Está exigiendo la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que sean juzgados todos los militares guatemaltecos que hayan cometido crímenes de lesa humanidad durante todo el proceso de la guerra civil en el país?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004455/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Anulación del juicio a José Efraín Ríos Montt

El pasado jueves 18 de abril, la jueza guatemalteca Carol Patricia Flores ordenó la anulación del juicio contra el general José Efraín Ríos Montt y el también general José Mauricio Rodríguez por los cargos de genocidio y crímenes contra la humanidad. La sociedad guatemalteca necesita un juicio limpio que haga justicia por los innumerables crímenes cometidos durante la dictadura de los años 1982 y 1983.

La decisión de la anulación del juicio ha provocado el profundo rechazo de la fiscalía y la acusación particular, y vuelve a poner en entredicho a un sistema judicial que no ha permitido esclarecer ninguno de los crímenes de guerra cometidos en el país. La causa de la anulación del juicio se debe a una orden de la Corte Constitucional, pero el juicio ha destapado copiosa información que implica a numerosos altos cargos del ejército y el Estado, entre ellos el actual presidente, Otto Pérez Molina. Esta puede haber sido la causa por la que el sistema judicial ha detenido el proceso. Se necesitan garantías que confirmen la imparcialidad del sistema judicial, y esta anulación, pese a atenerse a derecho, vuelve a poner en duda dicha imparcialidad al no avanzar en las implicaciones ni imputar a todos los criminales de la guerra civil guatemalteca. Mi pasada pregunta con respecto a dicho juicio pedía su seguimiento, por las dudas que pendían sobre dicho proceso; una vez confirmadas estas dudas, la UE debe exigir un juicio imparcial.

Un grupo de influyentes ciudadanos participantes en la elaboración de los tratados de paz ha firmado el documento «Traicionar la paz y dividir a Guatemala», que sostiene que el juicio implica «serios peligros para el país». Si este proceso judicial se ve interrumpido pondrá en tela de juicio el compromiso del Estado de Guatemala con los derechos humanos, violará la cláusula segunda del Acuerdo de Asociación de la UE con la Región Centroamericana y, por tanto, supondrá un argumento de peso para cancelar dicho Acuerdo de Asociación con el país.

¿Ha expresado la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante su preocupación por el desarrollo imparcial del citado juicio? ¿Qué opinión le merece el comunicado «Traicionar la paz y dividir a Guatemala»? ¿Y sus firmantes? ¿Qué opinión tiene sobre la aparición del nombre de Otto Pérez Molina en el juicio? ¿Considera que debería imputársele ante tan graves acusaciones? ¿Considera que se debe suspender el proceso de ratificación del Acuerdo de Asociación con la Región Centroamericana hasta que el Gobierno pueda garantizar la efectiva persecución de las violaciones de los derechos humanos y su juicio imparcial?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005453/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(16 de mayo de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Condena Ríos Montt y posible vinculación del Presidente Pérez Molina

El pasado 11 de mayo se condenó a 80 años de prisión al exdictador guatemalteco Efraín Ríos Montt por los delitos de genocidio y crímenes contra la humanidad. Dicha sentencia ha supuesto un avance en el cumplimiento de los derechos humanos en dicho país pero, sin embargo, a lo largo del proceso se presentaron testimonios que vinculaban a Otto Pérez Molina, actual Presidente del país, con los crímenes por los que se ha condenado al exdictador.

La aparición del actual Presidente del país durante el proceso ha tenido un fuerte impacto en la opinión pública y en la comunidad internacional, que deberá exigir que el sistema judicial guatemalteco inicie una investigación imparcial para esclarecer si Otto Pérez Molina estuvo verdaderamente implicado en crímenes contra la humanidad. Durante el testimonio de un testigo exmilitar se incriminó directamente al actual Presidente del país en la participación en el genocidio de los indígenas Ixiles.

Esta condena es un importantísimo paso hacia el fin de la impunidad de los crímenes contra la humanidad en Centroamérica, pero si no continúa el procesamiento de los culpables de los terribles crímenes cometidos en Guatemala se continuará en la impunidad. Los culpables de los terribles crímenes de los militares guatemaltecos no pueden ser investigados de forma parcial, y se debe esclarecer la responsabilidad de todos los participantes en el genocidio guatemalteco.

¿Está la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante informada de la existencia del testimonio que podría incriminar al Presidente guatemalteco Otto Pérez Molina en el genocidio de los indígenas Ixiles?

¿Considera que el actual Presidente debe ser investigado por los testimonios que le imputarían responsabilidad en el citado genocidio?

¿Exigirá al sistema judicial guatemalteco que se investigue al Presidente para terminar con la impunidad de los crímenes contra la humanidad en el país centroamericano?

Respuesta conjunta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de junio de 2013)

El pasado 18 de abril, el portavoz de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta emitió una declaración en relación con el juicio contra el antiguo Jefe de Estado de facto de Guatemala, Efraín Ríos Montt, en el que se subrayaba la importancia de este juicio para dicho país. La Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta está convencida de que la celebración de juicios justos, imparciales e independientes constituye la piedra angular de cualquier sistema judicial. Por esa razón, la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta considera fundamental que la justicia guatemalteca haya decidido conocer de este asunto.

La Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta seguirá atentamente el desarrollo de este juicio y se mantendrá en estrecho contacto con las autoridades y las organizaciones civiles interesadas. La Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta ha pedido a todas las partes que se comprometan a promover de manera constructiva el diálogo y la reconciliación frente al clima, cada vez más polarizado, que planea sobre este juicio, haciendo al mismo tiempo hincapié en la importancia de que el Estado proteja convenientemente a todas las personas que participen en el juicio, sea en calidad de testigos, miembros de la defensa o en su condición de autoridades fiscales o judiciales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004454/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — The trial of Efraín Ríos Montt

On 19 April, the oral and public debate began in Guatemala at the trial against General José Efraín Ríos Montt on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity. Numerous civil society organisations have appeared for the prosecution and the whole world eagerly awaits a fair trial achieving justice for the countless crimes committed during the 1982-1983 dictatorship.

The Guatemalan general has avoided prosecution ever since a Spanish judge issued an international arrest warrant in 2005 for crimes against humanity committed during the dictatorship. To avoid being captured, Ríos Montt ran for and won a seat in the Guatemalan Parliament, thus enjoying immunity from prosecution. On 14 January last year, his term in Parliament came to an end and 10 days later he was formally charged with genocide and crimes against humanity for the first time in Guatemala; since then, legal proceedings have been making arduous progress.

The general's lawyers have lodged all sorts of appeals which, although having managed to delay matters, they have failed to invalidate a trial which Guatemalan society, and even the United Nations, is following expectantly. This is the first trial of a former Head of State in the country and should set a precedent for the prosecution of all criminals during the long civil war that shook the country. The trial is therefore of fundamental importance and the impartiality that can be adopted in this trial will demonstrate the independence of the judiciary in this Central American country.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative following the progress of the trial against Efraín Ríos Montt for genocide and crimes against humanity?

What is the Vice-President/High Representative's opinion on this matter?

Is the Vice-President/High Representative demanding that all Guatemalan military who committed crimes against humanity during the many years of civil war in that country be brought to trial?

Question for written answer E-004455/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Suspension of the José Efraín Ríos Montt trial

Last Thursday 18 April, the Guatemalan judge, Carol Patricia Flores, ordered that the trial against General José Efraín Ríos Montt and also General José Mauricio Rodríguez, on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity, be suspended. Guatemalan society needs a fair trial that achieves justice for the countless crimes committed during the 1982-1983 dictatorship.

The decision to suspend the trial has been strongly denounced by both public and private prosecutors, and again calls into question a judicial system that has failed to shed any light on the war crimes committed in this country. The reason for suspending the trial was due to a Constitutional Court order, but the trial has uncovered a wealth of information implicating numerous senior members of the army and State, including the current president, Otto Pérez Molina. This may have been why the judiciary stopped the trial. Guarantees are needed to verify the judicial system's impartiality, and this suspension, although adhering to the law, again calls into question this impartiality since no headway is being made regarding these implications and no charges are being brought against the criminals of the Guatemalan civil war. My last question regarding this trial called for it to be monitored given the misgivings over it; once these misgivings have been confirmed, the EU should demand a fair trial.

A group of influential citizens involved in drawing up the peace treaties has signed the document '*Traicionar la paz y dividir a Guatemala*' ['Betraying the peace and dividing Guatemala'], which argues that the trial entails 'serious dangers for the country'. If this trial is to be stopped, it will impugn the State of Guatemala's commitment to human rights, it will violate the second clause of the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America and there will then be a strong case for cancelling the Association Agreement with this country.

Has the Vice-President/High Representative expressed her concern over the impartiality of this trial? What is her view of the document 'Betraying the peace and dividing Guatemala'? And of its signatories? What does she think about Otto Pérez Molina's name being mentioned in the trial? Does she think that he should be charged in the light of such serious allegations? Does she consider that the ratification process of the Association Agreement with the Central American countries should be suspended until the government can guarantee effective prosecution for human rights violations and a fair trial?

Question for written answer E-005453/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(16 May 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Ríos-Montt verdict and possible link with President Molina Pérez

On 11 May 2013, the Guatemalan former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt was sentenced to 80 years imprisonment for genocide and crimes against humanity. This verdict is a sign of progress in the defence of human rights in Guatemala. However, during the trial witnesses gave evidence linking the country's current president, Otto Pérez Molina, to the crimes for which the former dictator has been sentenced.

The implication of the current president during the trial has had a major impact on public opinion and the international community, which must demand that the Guatemalan legal system launch an impartial investigation to establish whether Otto Pérez Molina was in fact involved in crimes in against humanity. During the trial, a former member of the armed forces gave evidence directly implicating the current President of Guatemala in the genocide of the indigenous Ixil Maya.

This sentence is a major step towards ending impunity for crimes against humanity in Central America, but if the process of bringing to trial those responsible for the appalling crimes committed in Guatemala does not continue, impunity will prevail. Investigation of those responsible for the terrible crimes committed by the Guatemalan military must not be partial. The responsibility of all those who took part in the Guatemalan genocide must be established.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the existence of evidence that could incriminate Guatemalan President Otto Pérez Molina in the genocide of the Ixil Maya?

Does she consider that the President of Guatemala should be investigated on the basis of witness statements charging him with responsibility for the abovementioned genocide?

Will she demand that the Guatemalan legal system investigate the President in order to put an end to the impunity of crimes against humanity in that country?

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

On 18 April the spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement regarding the trial against former de facto head of state Rios Montt, highlighting the importance of the trial for Guatemala. The HR/VP is convinced that independent, impartial and fair trials constitute the corner stone of any justice system. That is why the HR/VP considers it fundamental that the national judiciary system has taken on the case.

The HR/VP will continue to monitor this trial and stay in close contact with both the authorities and civil society organisations involved. She has asked all parties to engage constructively in promoting dialogue and reconciliation, in response to a climate of increasing polarisation around this trial, whilst at the same time she has stressed the importance that all persons involved in the trial, albeit as witness, defence, prosecuting and judicial authorities are duly protected by the state.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004456/13
a la Comisión
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE) y Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Negociaciones del acuerdo de libre comercio con Tailandia

Recientemente se lanzaron oficialmente las negociaciones para que Tailandia y la Unión Europea alcancen un acuerdo de libre comercio. Se trata de un acuerdo que ofrece grandes oportunidades y expectativas para ambos mercados. Sin embargo, desde el punto de vista defensivo, algunos sectores de la Unión Europea —como el sector conservero de pescados y mariscos— se verán gravemente afectados.

España representa el 69 % de la producción comunitaria de conservas de atún. Es el segundo productor de latas de atún a nivel mundial, precisamente después de Tailandia. Este sector es uno de los principales motores económicos de la Comunidad Autónoma de Galicia, que genera el 85 % de la producción española y da trabajo a 12 000 trabajadores, el 79 % de ellos mujeres.

Por su parte, Tailandia es un importantísimo productor mundial de transformados de pescados y mariscos. Se trata del primer productor mundial de conservas de atún y es el principal competidor de la industria española y comunitaria.

En consecuencia, el acuerdo de libre comercio de la Unión Europea con Tailandia puede suponer una grave amenaza para el sector conservero español y gallego. ¿Es consciente la Comisión de ello?

Además, se formulan a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Qué sectores considerará sensibles la Comisión en las negociaciones? ¿Considerará sector sensible el de los transformados de pescados y mariscos y, especialmente, las conservas de atún?

2. ¿Qué posición piensa adoptar en las negociaciones sobre los transformados de pescados y mariscos para minimizar los efectos negativos —económicos y para el empleo— en el sector?

3. La industria europea cumple estrictos estándares y legislación en materia social, laboral, higiénico-sanitaria y medioambiental. ¿Qué nivel de exigencia sobre estos estándares pedirá la Comisión a Tailandia?

4. El acuerdo debe respetar estrictamente el cumplimiento de las normas de origen, sin excepciones. ¿Coincide la Comisión en que bajo ningún concepto puede repetirse el lamentable precedente de Papúa Nueva Guinea?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión Europea es perfectamente consciente de la importancia de la industria conservera de pescados y mariscos de la UE y, concretamente, de la española en el marco del comercio bilateral con un gran operador en el sector del atún en conserva como es Tailandia. Un ambicioso y equilibrado acuerdo de libre comercio entre la Unión Europea y Tailandia, que tenga en cuenta, entre otras cosas, un sector tan sensible como el de la industria conservera de pescados y mariscos, aportará importantes beneficios a la economía de la UE en su conjunto.

En las negociaciones del acuerdo de libre comercio la UE pretende lograr un equilibrio entre las necesidades de sus proveedores de materias primas, sus productores, sus consumidores y sus intereses en materia de importación y exportación. En este contexto, se prestará especial atención a las normas de origen. Como ha afirmado en varias ocasiones la Comisión, la excepción que se pretende aplicar al grupo de países ACP del Pacífico, incluida Papúa Nueva Guinea, tiene por objeto abordar las circunstancias especialmente difíciles de la región con el fin de fomentar el desarrollo local y contribuir a la erradicación de la pobreza, así como a la progresiva integración de los Estados ACP en la economía regional y mundial.

El sector pesquero de la UE ha tenido la posibilidad por medio de un cuestionario específico de facilitar a la Comisión Europea información que le permitirá establecer prioridades y tomar decisiones durante el proceso de negociación.

Por lo que se refiere a la higiene y a las medidas sanitarias y fitosanitarias, una vez firmado el acuerdo de libre comercio, Tailandia tendrá que seguir cumpliendo las estrictas normas actualmente en vigor que establece la legislación de la UE. De ningún modo podrá rebajar el acuerdo de libre comercio esas normas. Por otra parte, la Comisión seguirá estableciendo estrictas disposiciones en materia de comercio y desarrollo sostenible y respetando sus compromisos a nivel internacional en materia de Derecho del trabajo y en materia de normativa medioambiental.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004456/13
to the Commission
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE) and Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with Thailand

Negotiations have recently been officially launched for Thailand and the European Union to achieve a Free Trade Agreement. This agreement would provide huge opportunities and prospects for both markets. However, from a defensive standpoint, some industries in the European Union — such as the seafood canning industry — would be seriously affected.

Spain accounts for 69% of the Community production of canned tuna. It is the second largest producer of canned tuna in the world, after Thailand. This industry is one of the main driving forces behind the economy of the Autonomous Community of Galicia, generating 85% of Spanish production and employing 12 000 workers, 79% of them women.

For its part, Thailand is a major producer of processed seafood. It is the world's leading producer of canned tuna and is Spain's and the Community's main competitor in this industry.

The EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement could therefore pose a considerable threat to the Spanish and Galician canning industry. Is the Commission aware of this?

In addition, I would like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Which industries will the Commission consider sensitive in the negotiations? Will it consider the processed seafood industry and in particular the canned tuna industry sensitive?

2. What position will it take in the negotiations on processed seafood to minimise the negative effects on the economy and jobs in the industry?

3. European industry meets strict standards and legislation on social, labour, hygiene and sanitation and environmental matters. What level of demand will the Commission require of Thailand regarding these standards?

4. The agreement must strictly comply with the rules of origin, with no exception. Does the Commission agree that under no circumstances can the unfortunate precedent of Papua New Guinea be repeated?

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

The European Commission is indeed aware of the importance of the EU — and especially Spanish — seafood canning industry, in particular in the context of bilateral trade with a large player in the canned tuna sector such as Thailand. An ambitious and balanced free trade agreement between the EU and Thailand which takes into account the sensitive nature of the seafood canning industry among others will bring substantial benefits for the EU economy as a whole.

In its Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, the EU seeks to strike a balance between the needs of its suppliers of raw material, its producers, its consumers and its import/export interests. In that context, particular attention will be given to rules of origin. As has been stated several times by the Commission, the derogation for the Pacific ACP group of countries, including Papua New Guinea, is aimed at addressing the particular difficult circumstances of the region, in order to boost local development and contribute to poverty eradication and the gradual integration of the ACP states into the regional and world economies.

The EU fisheries sector has been given the opportunity, by means of a specific questionnaire, to provide the European Commission information to enable it to establish priorities and take decisions throughout the negotiating process.

As to hygiene and sanitary and phytosanitary measures, with the FTA Thailand has to continue meeting the current high standards set in the EU legislation. The FTA will not lower these standards. The Commission will also pursue robust provisions on trade and sustainable development, including commitments to the internationally recognised core labour standards and environmental rules.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004457/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Programa «Garantía Juvenil» y discapacidad

El Consejo de Ministros de Empleo de la UE del pasado 28 de febrero de 2013 aprobó la «Garantía Juvenil», una medida destinada a facilitar el acceso de los menores de 26 años al mercado laboral, y que estará financiada con 6 000 millones de los Fondos Estructurales para el periodo 2014-2020.

Considerando que el principio central subyacente a la garantía juvenil es garantizar la igualdad de oportunidades para la juventud en el mercado laboral,

Considerando que varios de los once objetivos temáticos de la nueva Programación de Fondos que los Estados miembros deben seleccionar están directamente relacionados con la integración de las personas con discapacidad, como la promoción del empleo y favorecer la movilidad laboral (objetivo 8),

Considerando que el Fondo Social Europeo es el instrumento financiero principal de la UE para fomentar el empleo, la inclusión social y la igualdad de oportunidades,

Considerando que un insuficiente acceso al mercado laboral de las personas con discapacidad puede significar que se encuentren en situaciones socialmente vulnerables y expuestas a serios riesgos de discriminación, pobreza y exclusión social,

Considerando que el artículo 27 de la Convención de Naciones Unidas sobre las Personas con Discapacidad incluye el derecho a tener la oportunidad de ganarse la vida mediante un trabajo libremente elegido o aceptado en un mercado y un entorno laborales que sean abiertos, inclusivos y accesibles,

1. ¿Qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para fomentar el empleo de las personas con discapacidad, y en concreto de los jóvenes con discapacidad?

2. ¿Contempla la iniciativa «Garantía Juvenil» medidas orientadas a la incorporación de los jóvenes con discapacidad al mercado laboral?

3. ¿En base a qué criterios se financiará este programa? ¿Se incluye entre esos criterios la formación de personas con discapacidad?

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

1) La Comisión, en la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad, aborda la situación de desempleo en la que se encuentran las personas con discapacidad, por medio de una serie de medidas que se incluyen en la lista de acciones (2010-2015). Por otro lado, las recomendaciones específicas por país formuladas en el contexto del Semestre Europeo se refieren a medidas destinadas a impulsar la inclusión en el mercado de trabajo y la empleabilidad de quienes más alejados están de dicho mercado.

2) En la Recomendación del Consejo sobre el establecimiento de la Garantía Juvenil ([1]) se pide a los Estados miembros que, a la hora de elaborar sus programas, tengan en cuenta que los jóvenes no constituyen un grupo homogéneo. Se les pide, entre otras cosas, que diseñen estrategias eficaces para llegar, por ejemplo, a los jóvenes vulnerables que afrontan múltiples obstáculos y, en este mismo contexto, que tengan en cuenta los antecedentes diversos de los jóvenes, condicionados, en particular, por la discapacidad.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/es/13/st06/st06944.es13.pdf

3) La Iniciativa de Empleo Juvenil, creada por el Consejo Europeo de 8 de febrero ([2]), apoyará las medidas establecidas en el paquete de empleo juvenil y, en particular, la Garantía Juvenil. Cuenta con un presupuesto de 6 000 millones de euros para el período 2014-2020 y se ejecutará a través de programas del FSE. Dichos programas estarán diseñados y gestionados por las autoridades nacionales, incluida la determinación de los criterios de selección de los beneficiarios (por ejemplo, por lo que respecta a la discapacidad). Las acciones financiadas estarán en consonancia con la estrategia y los objetivos del programa, que tendrá en cuenta las recomendaciones específicas por país pertinentes y el programa nacional de reforma.

([2]) Doc. EUCO 37/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004457/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: 'Youth Guarantee' programme and disability

On 28 February 2013, the EU Council of Employment Ministers approved the Youth Guarantee, a measure intended to facilitate access to the labour market for young people below the age of 26, which is to be financed with EUR 6 billion of Structural Funds for the period 2014-2020.

Given that the central underlying principle of the youth guarantee is to ensure equal opportunities for young people in the labour market;

Given that several of the 11 thematic objectives of the new Programming of Funds which Member States must select are directly linked to the integration of persons with disabilities, such as promoting employment and supporting labour mobility (objective 8);

Given that the European Social Fund is the EU's main financial instrument for supporting employment, social inclusion and equal opportunities;

Given that insufficient access to the labour market for persons with disabilities can mean that they find themselves in socially vulnerable situations and exposed to serious risks of discrimination, poverty and social exclusion;

Given that Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible,

1. What measures does the Commission intend to adopt to promote the employment of persons with disabilities, and specifically young persons with disabilities?

2. Does it believe that the measures of the 'Youth Guarantee' initiative are geared towards the integration of young persons with disabilities into the labour market?

3. What criteria will be used to finance this programme? Do these criteria include training for persons with disabilities?

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

1. In the European Disability Strategy the Commission tackles the employment situation of people with disabilities through a number of measures included in the accompanying list of actions (2010-2015). Also, country specific recommendations in the context of the European Semester concern measures to foster labour market inclusion and employability of those furthest from the labour market.

2. The Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee ([1]) calls on Member States to consider in designing their schemes that young people are not a homogenous group. It calls, *inter alia*, for effective outreach strategies, e.g. for young vulnerable people facing multiple barriers, and emphasises in this context the need to take into consideration the young peoples' diverse backgrounds, due in particular also to disability.

3. The Youth Employment Initiative, as created by the European Council of 8 February ([2]), 'will act in support of measures set out in the youth employment package and in particular to support the Youth Guarantee'. It comprises EUR 6 billion for the period 2014-2020 and will be implemented through ESF programmes. These are designed and managed by the national authorities, including the identification of criteria for selecting the beneficiaries (e.g. related to disability). The supported actions shall be in line with the strategy and objectives of the programme, which shall take into account relevant country-specific recommendations and the National Reform Programme.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st06/st06944.en13.pdf
([2]) EUCO 37/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004458/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha contra los paraísos fiscales

Recientemente he sabido que varios Gobiernos de la UE, entre ellos España, Gran Bretaña, Italia, Francia y Alemania, han firmado acuerdos entre ellos para facilitarse información fiscal siguiendo el esquema existente en los Estados Unidos, en concreto, en la Ley de cumplimiento tributario de las cuentas extranjeras (FACTA). Esos mismos países han firmado ya, individualmente, acuerdos bilaterales con los Estados Unidos con el mismo objetivo.

Siendo la lucha contra el fraude fiscal un asunto primordial, ¿no considera la Comisión que debe promover con rapidez una acción coordinada, conjunta y única, no fraccionada, en nombre de todos los países europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de junio de 2013)

La Comisión ha acogido con interés la iniciativa adoptada por cinco Estados miembros, y respaldada por varios otros, de colaborar en el establecimiento de un sistema piloto de intercambio multilateral basado en el modelo convenido con Estados Unidos para los acuerdos FATCA. Esta iniciativa demuestra que existe entre los Estados miembros un fuerte consenso en torno a la necesidad de una mayor cooperación a través del intercambio automático de información.

La Comisión comparte la opinión de Su Señoría de que, dentro de la Unión, los progresos en este ámbito deben venir impulsados por una actuación a nivel de la UE, puesto que, de esta forma, se garantizará que el intercambio automático de información se lleve a cabo de manera coherente. Por este motivo, tal como se anunció en la reunión del Consejo Ecofin de 14 de mayo de 2013 y se mencionó en las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo de 22 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión propondrá en junio de este año una serie de modificaciones de la Directiva 2011/16/UE ([1]). Las modificaciones tienen por objeto ampliar el ámbito del intercambio automático de información entre los Estados miembros, a fin de incluir en él las rentas financieras y otros elementos que no están cubiertos por las actuales disposiciones de la UE al respecto.

([1]) DO L 64 de 11.3.2011, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004458/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Fight against tax havens

I have recently discovered that several EU governments, including Spain, Great Britain, Italy, France and Germany, have signed agreements with each other to obtain tax information following the arrangement that exists in the United States, namely the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA). Those same countries have already individually signed bilateral agreements with the United States for the same purpose.

As the fight against tax evasion is a major issue, does the Commission not think that it should be quick to promote a coordinated, joint and single action, which is all-inclusive, on behalf of all European countries?

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

The Commission has noted with interest the initiative launched by five Member States, and supported by several others, to work on a pilot multilateral exchange facility using the model agreed with the US for FATCA agreements as a basis. This initiative shows that there is strong consensus among Member States on the need for a greater level of cooperation via automatic exchange of information.

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that, within the EU, progress in this area should be made through action at EU level, as this would ensure that the automatic exchange of information takes place in a coherent manner. It is for this reason that, as announced at the Ecofin meeting of 14 May 2013 and as mentioned in the European Council conclusions of 22 May 2013, the Commission will propose in June this year amendments to Directive 2011/16/EU ([1]). The amendments are aimed at broadening the scope of automatic exchange of information between the Member States so as to cover financial income and other items that are not covered by existing EU arrangements on automatic exchange of information.

([1]) OJ L 64 11.3.2011, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004459/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(22 de abril de 2013)

Asunto: Los riesgos del mercado Bitcoin

Sin duda, la Comisión Europea conocerá la difusión que está teniendo como moneda virtual el Bitcoin, creado ya hace algunos años. Frente a otros instrumentos de cambio virtuales, este se ha extendido con gran celeridad. Junto a la preocupación por otorgar necesarias garantías a su adquisición y utilización, las noticias sobre los movimientos especulativos acaecidos en las últimas semanas han generado cierta alarma. A título de ejemplo, la Comisión recordará que, frente a una normal cotización de quince dólares, en unos días el cambio pasó a más de cien dólares, y a principios de abril superó los doscientos, para caer posteriormente de manera precipitada hasta los cincuenta.

1. ¿Ha puesto en marcha la Comisión algún estudio sobre esta moneda virtual y su incidencia en el comercio electrónico?

2. ¿Piensa facilitar alguna información para proteger a los consumidores europeos?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de julio de 2013)

1. Las monedas virtuales y, especialmente, los *bitcoins* han recibido recientemente cierta atención de los medios de comunicación. No obstante, los importes de estas monedas virtuales en circulación son bastante marginales en comparación con el valor de las monedas y billetes en euros en circulación y, por lo tanto, el porcentaje de la población que las utiliza se puede considerar bajo. Como se trata de un moneda muy volátil, es probable que atraiga a más inversores que consumidores, que suelen ser reacios al riesgo.

El Banco Central Europeo sigue de cerca la evolución de las monedas virtuales, ya que esto entra en el ámbito de sus competencias de supervisión. El año pasado, el BCE publicó un informe en el que indicaba que, por el momento, las monedas virtuales no planteaban riesgos para la estabilidad financiera o de los precios, pero que la Comisión seguirá observando la situación en ese mercado.

2. La Comisión comparte la opinión del BCE de que, en esta fase y en las circunstancias actuales, no es necesario considerar una intervención reguladora. No obstante, la Comisión es consciente de que este sector evoluciona con rapidez y seguirá vigilando de cerca la situación. En el caso de que las monedas virtuales se conviertan en un fenómeno extendido, puede resultar apropiado estudiar la forma de que estos nuevos producto entren en el ámbito de la normativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004459/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: The risks of the Bitcoin market

The Commission will undoubtedly know about the ongoing circulation of the virtual currency, the Bitcoin, which was created a few years ago. Unlike other virtual exchange instruments, it has spread very quickly. Together with concerns for guarantees to be provided for its purchase and use, news about speculative movements taking place in recent weeks has caused some alarm. For example, the Commission will recall that, compared to a standard value of USD 15, in just a few days the rate shot up to over USD 100, and in early April it was over USD 200, then falling sharply to USD 50.

1. Has the Commission launched a study on this virtual currency and its impact on ecommerce?

2. Will it consider providing some information to protect European consumers?

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

1. Recently, virtual currencies, and more particularly Bitcoins, have received certain media attention. However, the amounts of these virtual currencies in circulation are rather marginal compared to the value of euro coins and notes in circulation and the percentage of the population using such currencies can thus be considered low. Considering that it is a very volatile currency, it is also likely to more attract investors than consumers, which tend to be more risk-aversive.

The developments with regard to virtual currencies are closely followed by the European Central Bank, as this falls within its sphere of oversight competences. Last year, the ECB issued a report stating that for the time being virtual currencies do not appear to pose risk for price or financial stability, but that it will continue to monitor the situation on this market.

2. The Commission shares the opinion of the ECB that at this stage and under the current circumstances there would not appear to be any need to consider regulatory intervention. However, the Commission appreciates that this sector evolves quickly and will continue to monitor the situation closely. In case virtual currencies become a more widespread phenomenon, it may become appropriate to consider ways of bringing these new products within the scope of regulation.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004462/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο για Εγκλήματα στον Κυβερνοχώρο

Στο πλαίσιο της ευρωπαϊκής προσπάθειας για την καταπολέμηση της εγκληματικότητας στον κυβερνοχώρο δημιουργήθηκε πρόσφατα το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο για Εγκλήματα στον Κυβερνοχώρο (EC3) στο πλαίσιο της Europol.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια τα πρώτα στοιχεία που προκύπτουν από τη λειτουργία του κέντρου; Ποια εγκλήματα εντοπίζονται να παρουσιάζουν την μεγαλύτερη συχνότητα και ποια κράτη μέλη φαίνεται να δραστηριοποιούνται και να αξιοποιούν καλύτερα τη λειτουργία του κέντρου;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο για Εγκλήματα στον Κυβερνοχώρο (EC3), που δρομολογήθηκε στις 11 Ιανουαρίου 2013 στο πλαίσιο της Europol, δημιουργήθηκε ως ο βραχίονας της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση του εγκλήματος στον κυβερνοχώρο. Προτού δημιουργηθεί το EC3, η Ευρωπόλ είχε ήδη αρχίσει να δέχεται ετησίως πάνω από δέκα χιλιάδες αιτήσεις για βοήθεια από τα κράτη μέλη στον τομέα του εγκλήματος στον κυβερνοχώρο. Βασικό καθήκον του EC3 είναι η παροχή καλύτερης επιχειρησιακής υποστήριξης σε μεγαλύτερο αριθμό εθνικών ερευνών. Προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί η βέλτιστη σχέση κόστους-αποτελεσματικότητας και η προστιθέμενη αξία του έργου του EC3, τρεις βασικοί τύποι του ηλεκτρονικού εγκλήματος έχουν οριστεί ως τομείς προτεραιότητας: ηλεκτρονική επίθεση, σεξουαλική κακοποίηση παιδιών που περνά στο διαδίκτυο, και απάτη σε πληρωμές με πιστωτικές κάρτες.

Μετά από μόλις πέντε μήνες ύπαρξης, το EC3 έχει ήδη συμβάλει στην εξάρθρωση μεγάλων εγκληματικών συμμοριών στην Ισπανία (περίπτωση ηλεκτρονικής επίθεσης) και στη Ρουμανία (περίπτωση απάτης με πληρωμές με πιστωτικές κάρτες). Το EC3 παρέχει επίσης συνεχή υποστήριξη σε μια σειρά από άλλες, υψηλού προφίλ επιχειρήσεις, μερικές από τις οποίες εμπλέκουν μέχρι και 20 κράτη μέλη. Στα πρώτα στάδια της ανάπτυξης του EC3, τα επιτεύγματα αυτά είναι άκρως ενθαρρυντικά. Μια πληρέστερη εικόνα και λεπτομερέστερα στοιχεία σχετικά με τις έρευνες που πραγματοποιούνται με την υποστήριξη του EC3 θα είναι διαθέσιμα προς το τέλος τρέχοντος έτους.

Πέραν του κεντρικού καθήκοντος συνδρομής και συντονισμού των διασυνοριακών ερευνών, το EC3 στοχεύει στο συνδυασμό των διαφόρων προσεγγίσεων αντιμετώπισης του εγκλήματος στον κυβερνοχώρο και στη συλλογή και επεξεργασία, από ένα ευρύ φάσμα πηγών, δεδομένων που σχετίζονται με το έγκλημα στον κυβερνοχώρο. Στη βάση της αυξημένης αυτής ροής πληροφοριών, το EC3 επιφορτίσθηκε με τη σύνταξη και δημοσίευση στρατηγικής ανάλυσης, η οποία ενσωματώθηκε ιδίως στις εκθέσεις SOCTA ([1]) και i-OCTA ([2]), και με την υποβολή εξειδικευμένων εκθέσεων σχετικά με τις νέες τάσεις και απειλές.

([1]) Εκτίμηση απειλής του σοβαρού και οργανωμένου εγκλήματος στην ΕΕ (2013): https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta

([2]) Εκτίμηση απειλής του σοβαρού και οργανωμένου εγκλήματος στο Διαδίκτυο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004462/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: European Cybercrime Centre

As part of EU efforts to combat cybercrime, a European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) was recently set up within Europol.

Will the Commission say:

What do initial data provided by the Centre show? Which crimes have been identified as being the most common and which Member States appear to be acting on this data and making best use of the Centre?

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

The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3), launched on 11 January 2013 within Europol, is conceived as the EU focal point in the fight against cybercrime. Before EC3 was set-up, Europol was already responding to over ten thousand requests for assistance from Member States in the area of cybercrime each year. EC3's core task is to provide better operational support to a larger number of national investigations. To ensure optimal cost-efficiency and added value of EC3's work, three major types of cybercrime have been defined as priority areas: intrusion, child sexual abuse online, and payment card fraud.

After only five months in existence, EC3 has already contributed to the successful dismantling of major criminal gangs in Spain (intrusion case) and in Romania (case payment card fraud case). EC3 is also providing ongoing support to a number of other high-profile operations, some of them involving up to 20 Member States. In the early stages of EC3's development, these achievements are very encouraging. A more comprehensive picture and more detailed data on the investigations conducted with the support of EC3 will become available towards the end of this year.

Beyond this central task of assisting in and coordinating cross-border investigations, the EC3 aims to integrate the various approaches towards tackling cybercrime and to gather and process cybercrime-related data from a wide array of sources. On the basis of this increased flow of information, EC3 is tasked with compiling and publishing strategic analysis, published notably in the SOCTA ([1]) and i-OCTA reports ([2]), and to deliver specialised reports on new trends and threats.

([1]) EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (2013): https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta.

([2]) Internet- Organised Crime Threat Assessment.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005262/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13. Mai 2013)

Betrifft: Bekämpfung von Menschenhandel

Eine umfassende EU-Studie zum Thema Menschenhandel kam zu dem Schluss, dass die offizielle Zahl der Opfer von Menschenhandel zwischen 2008 und 2010 um gut 18 % gestiegen ist. Im gleichen Zeitraum ist die Zahl der verurteilten Menschenhändler um ca. 13 % gesunken. Dies mag wohl unter anderem auch daran liegen, dass bis dato nicht alle EU-Staaten die EU-Richtlinie vom März 2011 gegen Menschenhandel umgesetzt haben.

1. Welche EU-Staaten haben bis dato die EU-Richtlinie vom März 2011 gegen Menschenhandel umgesetzt?

2. Bei welchen Staaten wurde zeitgleich mit der sozusagen erfolgten „Ausdehnung der Strafbarkeit des Menschenhandels" dabei auch eine Verschärfung des Strafrechts eingeführt?

3. Und bei welchen EU-Mitgliedstaaten steht dies noch zur Diskussion?

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

Die Europäische Kommission legt besonderes Augenmerk auf die Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2011/36/EU zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung des Menschenhandels und zum Schutz seiner Opfer. Die Frist für die Umsetzung lief am 6. April 2013 aus. Wenn sie vollständig umgesetzt ist, kann die Richtlinie das Leben der Opfer wirklich verändern und mehr Verurteilungen herbeiführen.

Bisher haben elf Mitgliedstaaten (Tschechische Republik, Estland, Lettland, Litauen, Ungarn, Polen, Rumänien, Finnland, Schweden, das Vereinigte Königreich und Kroatien) die vollständige und drei Mitgliedstaaten (Belgien, Bulgarien, Slowenien) eine teilweise Umsetzung mitgeteilt. Die Kommission prüft die von diesen Mitgliedstaaten übermittelten Informationen. Alle Bestimmungen der Richtlinie, einschließlich der strafrechtlichen Vorschriften, werden geprüft.

Die Kommission trifft alle notwendigen Maßnahmen, um die korrekte Anwendung des EU-Rechts im Einklang mit ihrer Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge zu gewährleisten. Dazu leitet sie gegebenenfalls auch Vertragsverletzungsverfahren ein.

Dreizehn Mitgliedstaaten, die am 29. Mai 2013 noch keine Umsetzungsmaßnahmen notifiziert hatten, erhielten Fristsetzungsschreiben (Artikel 258). Die Liste ist online abrufbar online.

Für den Rückgang der Zahl der Verurteilungen in den Jahren 2008-2010, der aus einer ersten Analyse des EU Statistical Data Reportersichtlich ist, kann es mehrere Gründe geben. Insbesondere spielt eine Rolle, dass die Verfolgung und Verurteilung einiger Fälle von Menschenhandel auf der Grundlage anderer Bestimmungen der in den Mitgliedstaaten geltenden Rechtsakte erfolgt als den Rechtsvorschriften für den Menschenhandel.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004463/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αδυναμία σύλληψης και φυλάκισης διακινητών θυμάτων εμπορίας ανθρώπων

Σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα στοιχεία που έδωσε η Επιτροπή στη δημοσιότητα, 23 632 άνθρωποι έπεσαν ή εικάζεται ότι έπεσαν θύματα εμπορίας ανθρώπων στην ΕΕ κατά τη διάρκεια της περιόδου 2008-2010. Στην ίδια έκθεση τονίζεται ότι, μολονότι ο αριθμός των θυμάτων εμπορίας ανθρώπων προς την ΕΕ αυξήθηκε κατά 18% από το 2008 έως το 2010, λιγότεροι διακινητές καταλήγουν στη φυλακή, δεδομένου ότι οι καταδίκες μειώθηκαν κατά 13% την ως άνω περίοδο.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει στοιχεία ή αιτιολογημένες γνώμες από τα κράτη μέλη για τον λόγο καθυστέρησης μεταφοράς της οδηγίας της ΕΕ για την καταπολέμηση της εμπορίας ανθρώπων (2011/36/ΕΕ);

2. Ποίοι άλλοι παράγοντες κατά την γνώμη της Επιτροπής ευθύνονται για το γεγονός ότι λιγότεροι — από ό,τι στο παρελθόν — διακινητές καταλήγουν στη φυλακή;

Κοινή απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(15 Ιουλίου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δίνει ιδιαίτερη προσοχή στη μεταφορά της οδηγίας 2011/36/ΕΕ για την πρόληψη και την καταπολέμηση της εμπορίας ανθρώπων και για την προστασία των θυμάτων. Η προθεσμία για την μεταφορά έληξε στις 6 Απριλίου 2013. Εάν εφαρμοστεί πλήρως, η οδηγία έχει τη δυνατότητα να συμβάλει ουσιαστικά στην ποιότητα ζωής των θυμάτων, καθώς και να αυξήσει τον αριθμό των καταδικαστικών αποφάσεων.

Μέχρι σήμερα έντεκα κράτη μέλη (Τσεχική Δημοκρατία, Εσθονία, Λετονία, Λιθουανία, Ουγγαρία, Πολωνία, Ρουμανία, Φινλανδία, Σουηδία, Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο και Κροατία) έχουν κοινοποιήσει πλήρη μεταφορά στο εθνικό δίκαιο και τρία (Βέλγιο, Βουλγαρία, Σλοβενία) μερική. Η Επιτροπή θα προβεί σε ανάλυση των στοιχείων που διαβιβάστηκαν από τα εν λόγω κράτη μέλη. Το σύνολο των διατάξεων της οδηγίας θα εξεταστεί, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των διατάξεων του ποινικού δικαίου.

Η Επιτροπή θα λάβει όλα τα αναγκαία μέτρα για τη διασφάλιση της ορθής εφαρμογής του κοινοτικού δικαίου σύμφωνα με τον ρόλο που της έχει ανατεθεί δυνάμει των Συνθηκών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της θέσπισης διαδικασιών επί παραβάσει, εάν αυτό κριθεί αναγκαίο.

Προειδοποιητικές επιστολές (Άρθρο 258) απεστάλησαν σε δεκατρία κράτη μέλη που δεν κοινοποίησαν τη μεταφορά στις 29 Μαΐου 2013. Ο κατάλογος είναι διαθέσιμος διαδικτυακά.

Σχετικά με τη μείωση του αριθμού των καταδικών κατά τα έτη 2008-2010, από την πρώτη ανάλυση της στατιστικής έκθεσης δεδομένων της ΕΕ προκύπτει ότι, είναι ποικίλοι οι ενδεχόμενοι λόγοι για τους οποίους συμβαίνει αυτό, μεταξύ των οποίων και το γεγονός ότι ορισμένες υποθέσεις υπευθύνων εμπορίας ανθρώπων διώκονται και καταδικάζονται με βάση διαφορετικές διατάξεις νομοθετικών πράξεων που ισχύουν στα κράτη μέλη από εκείνες που αφορούν την εμπορία ανθρώπων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004463/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Failure to arrest and imprison traffickers in human beings

According to recently published Commission figures, 23 632 people fell — or are suspected of having fallen — victim to traffickers in human beings in the EU during 2008-2010. The same report stresses that, while the number of victims of trafficking to the EU increased by 18% over the same period, fewer traffickers have ended up in jail, because the number of convictions fell by 13% over this period.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any data or reasoned opinions from Member States on the reasons for the late transposition of the EU Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings (2011/36/EU)?

2. What other factors, in its opinion, are responsible for the fact that fewer traffickers end up in jail than before?

Question for written answer E-005262/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(13 May 2013)

Subject: Combating trafficking in human beings

An extensive EU study on the subject of trafficking in human beings came to the conclusion that the official number of victims of people trafficking rose by a good 18% between 2008 and 2010. The number of people prosecuted for people trafficking offences declined by about 13% in the same period. This may be partly due to the fact that, to date, not all EU Member States have transposed the EU Directive against Trafficking in Human Beings of March 2011.

1. Which EU Member States have not to date transposed the EU Directive against Trafficking in Human Beings of March 2011?

2. Which Member States tightened up criminal law provisions at the same time as widening the criminality of trafficking in human beings?

3. In which EU Member States is this still under discussion?

Question for written answer E-005493/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(17 May 2013)

Subject: Implementation of 2011 Directive against human trafficking

Human trafficking is a problem across all Member States and it is clear the EU must do more to eradicate this atrocity. The deadline for implementation of the Human Trafficking Directive expired on 6 April 2013.

Has the Commission commenced formal proceedings against any Member State for non-implementation?

Joint answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 2013)

The European Commission is paying particular attention to the transposition of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. The deadline for the transposition expired on 6 April 2013. If fully implemented, the directive has a potential to make a real difference to the lives of victims and also increase number of convictions.

To date eleven Member States (Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Finland, Sweden, UK and Croatia) have notified full transposition and three (Belgium, Bulgaria, Slovenia) partial transposition. The Commission will analyse the information transmitted by these Member States. All the provisions of the directive will be examined, including criminal law provisions.

The Commission will take all necessary measures to ensure the correct application of EC law, in accordance with its role under the Treaties, including by launching infringement procedures where necessary.

Letters of formal notice (Article 258) were sent to thirteen Member States who had not notified transposition on 29 May 2013. The list is available online.

On the decrease of the number of convictions in years 2008-2010, based on the first analysis of the EU Statistical Data Report, there might be various reasons for this, including the fact that some trafficking cases are prosecuted and convicted on the basis of other provisions of the legislative acts in force in Member States than those concerned with trafficking in human beings.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004464/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανισότητα κατανομής πλούτου στα ευρωπαϊκά νοικοκυριά

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Επιτροπή, με βάση τα τελευταία στοιχεία, σε ποια κράτη μέλη παρατηρείται η μεγαλύτερη ανισοκατανομή πλούτου στα νοικοκυριά; Πόσες φορές μεγαλύτερο είναι το ποσοστό πλούτου ανάμεσα στο 20% πλουσιότερο κομμάτι της κοινωνίας των κρατών αυτών σε σχέση με το 20% των φτωχότερων; Λαμβάνονται από τα κράτη μελή επαρκείς πολιτικές πρωτοβουλίες για τη μείωση των σχετικών ανισοτήτων;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(27 Ιουνίου 2013)

Το ευρωπαϊκό στατιστικό σύστημα δεν περιλαμβάνει συλλογή στατιστικών στοιχείων σχετικά με τον πλούτο. Ωστόσο, η πρόσφατη «Έρευνα του ευρωσυστήματος για τα οικονομικά των νοικοκυριών και την κατανάλωση» («Eurosystem Household Finance and Consumption Survey») ([1]) που διεξήγαγε η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα στην ευρωζώνη επιχειρεί να καλύψει το εν λόγω κενό. Το κατώτερο 20% των νοικοκυριών ως προς τον πλούτο συχνά δείχνει αρνητικό μέσο καθαρό πλούτο, ως εκ τούτου, ο υπολογισμός ποσοστού έως το ανώτατο 20% είναι προβληματικός. Μια άλλη εναλλακτική λύση που χρησιμοποιείται ευρύτατα για να εξεταστεί η ανισότητα είναι ο λόγος του μέσου προς τον διάμεσο καθαρό πλούτο των νοικοκυριών. Αυτό δείχνει ότι η ανισότητα πλούτου είναι η υψηλότερη στην Αυστρία και τη Γερμανία. Η αξιοπιστία των αποτελεσμάτων αυτής της πρωτοπόρου έρευνας εξακολουθεί να τελεί υπό έλεγχο.

Η κρίση και οι μεγάλες προσπάθειες δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης σε πολλά κράτη μέλη προκάλεσαν ανησυχίες σχετικά με την προοπτική αύξησης των ανισοτήτων. Ενώ τα κράτη μέλη έχουν τον πρωταρχικό ρόλο στο ζήτημα αυτό, δεν έχουν όλα διαθέσιμες τις αναγκαίες επενδύσεις για να ικανοποιήσουν τις ανάγκες των ανθρώπων. Οι στρατηγικές που εγκρίθηκαν από τα κράτη μέλη για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας των δημόσιων οικονομικών πρέπει να εφαρμόζονται κατά τρόπο ώστε να υποστηρίζεται τόσο η ανάπτυξη και η απασχόληση όσο και η κοινωνική δικαιοσύνη, όπως ορίζεται στη στρατηγική «Ευρώπη 2020».

Η Επιτροπή συνιστά στα κράτη μέλη να ενισχύσουν τις ενεργητικές πολιτικές για την αγορά εργασίας και να μετατοπίσουν τη συνολική φορολογική επιβάρυνση προς φορολογικές βάσεις που είναι λιγότερο βλαπτικές για την ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία απασχόλησης και να καταστήσουν τα φορολογικά συστήματα πιο δίκαια και πιο αποδοτικά. Περαιτέρω, η δέσμη μέτρων για τις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις του Φεβρουαρίου του 2013 δίνει οδηγίες στα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με το πώς να δώσουν περισσότερη έμφαση στις κοινωνικές επενδύσεις σε ανθρώπινο δυναμικό και κοινωνική συνοχή στο πλαίσιο των μεταρρυθμίσεων κοινωνικής πολιτικής.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/other/ecbsp2en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004464/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Inequitable distribution of wealth among European households

Can the Commission state, on the basis of the latest figures, in which Member States inequality in household wealth is greatest? How many times more wealthy is the richest 20% in these States compared to the poorest 20%? Are Member States taking sufficient political initiatives to reduce these inequalities?

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

The European Statistical System does not include collection of statistics on wealth. Yet the recent 'Eurosystem Household Finance and Consumption Survey' ([1]) run by the European Central Bank in the eurozone attempts to fill that gap. The bottom 20% of households by wealth often shows negative average net wealth, hence calculating a ratio to the top 20% is problematic. Another alternative widely used to examine inequality is the ratio of mean to median net household wealth. This shows that wealth inequality is highest in Austria and Germany. The robustness of the results of this pioneering survey is still under scrutiny.

The crisis and the large fiscal consolidation efforts in many Member States have raised concerns about the prospect of inequalities increasing. Whereas Member States have the principal role in this matter, not all have in place the necessary investments to meet people's needs. The strategies adopted by Member States to restore the sustainability of public finances must be implemented in a way that supports both growth and employment and social fairness as set out in the Europe 2020 strategy.

The Commission recommends Member States to reinforce active labour market policies and to shift the overall tax burden towards tax bases that are less detrimental to growth and job creation and to make tax systems fairer and more efficient. Furthermore, the Social Investment Package of February 2013 gives guidance to Member States on how to put more emphasis on social investment in human capital and social cohesion as part of social policy reforms.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/other/ecbsp2en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004465/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Βίαιος εξτρεμισμός στην ΕΕ

Η αύξηση των ακραίων τάσεων και φωνών σε αρκετά κράτη μέλη, φαινόμενο που ενισχύεται και από την μακρόχρονη οικονομική κρίση, επιβάλλει την επικαιροποίηση της ευρωπαϊκής προσέγγισης στον τομέα αυτό. Η Επιτροπή, μάλιστα, με πρόσφατη τοποθέτησή της (IP/13/59) είχε τονίσει την ανάγκη δημιουργίας ευρωπαϊκής «φαρέτρας» με βάση τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές στα κράτη μέλη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Συλλέγονται βέλτιστες πρακτικές από τα κράτη μέλη που αφορούν την αντιμετώπιση του βίαιου εξτρεμισμού; Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει τις σημαντικότερες από αυτές και σε ποια κράτη μέλη εφαρμόζονται;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Όπως αναφέρεται στην απάντηση στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-8264/11 ([1]), η Επιτροπή συνεχίζει να εργάζεται για τους τρόπους συνδρομής των κρατών μελών στην πρόληψη του βίαιου εξτρεμισμού, ανεξάρτητα από τα κίνητρα και τις μεθόδους, ως μίας από τις προτεραιότητες της εσωτερικής ασφάλειας, συνεκτιμώντας ότι η πρωταρχική ευθύνη παραμένει σε τοπικό και εθνικό επίπεδο. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, το Δίκτυο Ενημέρωσης σχετικά με τη Ριζοσπαστικοποίηση (RAN), που δρομολογήθηκε τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2011, συνδέει παράγοντες που εμπλέκονται στην πρόληψη της ριζοσπαστικοποίησης που οδηγεί στη τρομοκρατία και τον βίαιο εξτρεμισμό. Το Δίκτυο στοχεύει να συνδυάσει την πείρα, τη γνώση και τα συναχθέντα συμπεράσματα για την καλύτερη προετοιμασία των πρώτης γραμμής ατόμων και ομάδων στελεχών στην επικίνδυνη καθημερινή τους εργασία.

Το έργο τους θα ενταχθεί σε ένα ευρωπαϊκό πρόγραμμα για την αντιμετώπιση του βίαιου εξτρεμισμού, μεταξύ άλλων με τη συλλογή και διάχυση πρακτικών, μεθοδολογιών και προσεγγίσεων σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-008264&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004465/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Violent extremism in the EU

The growth in extremist tendencies and voices in several Member States, a phenomenon strengthened by the long economic crisis, means that Europe's approach in this area needs to be brought up to date. In fact the Commission, in a recent statement (IP/13/59) stressed the need to create a European toolbox based on best practices in Member States.

Will the Commission say:

Are efforts being made to identify best practices from Member States on countering violent extremism? Can it list the most important ones and say in which Member States they are being implemented?

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

As set out in the reply to Written Question E-8264/11 ([1]) the Commission continues to work on ways to assist Member States in addressing prevention of violent extremism regardless of motivation and methods, as one of the internal security priorities, bearing in mind that the primary responsibility remains at local and national level. More specifically the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), launched in September 2011, connects practitioners involved in preventing radicalisation leading to terrorism and violent extremism. The Network aims to pool experience, knowledge and lessons learned to better equip first-line practitioners in their daily work with at risk individuals and groups.

Their work will feed into a European Programme on how to counter violent extremism, including by a collection and dissemination of practices, methodologies and approaches from across the EU Member States.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-008264&language=EN.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004466/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εκτιμήσεις για τα επισφαλή δάνεια στην ΕΕ

Τα μη εξυπηρετούμενα δάνεια σε αρκετές τράπεζες πολλών κρατών μελών, λόγω και της οικονομικής κρίσης, θέτουν άλλο ένα πρόβλημα όσον αφορά την τραπεζική σταθερότητα.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Διαθέτει πρόσφατα στοιχεία αναφορικά με το ύψος των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων στην ΕΕ;

2. Σε ποιες χώρες παρατηρείται εντονότερο το φαινόμενο και τι ποσοστό αντιπροσωπεύουν αναφορικά με το συνολικό ύψος των δανείων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Ιουλίου 2013)

Τα στοιχεία σχετικά με τα μη εξυπηρετούμενα δάνεια συγκεντρώνονται σε τακτική βάση από την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (Αποθήκη στατιστικών στοιχείων). Τα πλέον πρόσφατα αριθμητικά στοιχεία αφορούν τον Ιούνιο του 2012 και είναι διαθέσιμα στους εξής δύο συνδέσμους:

Ετήσια στοιχεία:

http://sdw.ecb.int/browseTable.do?node=71390&CB_REP_SECTOR=67&FREQ=A&CB_ITEM=73614&flipped=Y&sfl2=4&sfl1=3&sfl4=6&sfl3=4&DATASET=0&periodSortOrder=ASC

Εξαμηνιαία στοιχεία:

http://sdw.ecb.int/browseTable.do?node=71390&CB_REP_SECTOR=67&FREQ=H&CB_ITEM=73614&flipped=Y&sfl2=4&sfl1=3&sfl4=6&sfl3=4&DATASET=0&periodSortOrder=ASC

Είναι σημαντικό να σημειωθεί ότι ο ορισμός των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων δεν έχει εναρμονιστεί σε όλες τις χώρες, συνεπώς η σύγκριση των στοιχείων σε διεθνές επίπεδο θα πρέπει να προσεγγίζεται με επιφύλαξη. Σύμφωνα με την ΕΚΤ, το ποσοστό των μη εξυπηρετούμενων δανείων (ΜΕΔ) στην ΕΕ φτάνει το 4% (επί του συνόλου των δανείων) από το πρώτο εξάμηνο του 2012. Το ποσοστό αυτό καλύπτει μεγάλες ανισότητες ως προς τα επίπεδα των ΜΕΔ και τις τάσεις σε όλες τις ευρωπαϊκές χώρες. Επιπλέον, τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία των ΜΕΔ θα πρέπει να αναλύονται σε σχέση με το ποσό των αποθεματικών που προβλέφθηκαν γι' αυτά (ο συντελεστής κάλυψης).

Η εικόνα όσον αφορά την εξέλιξη είναι ανάμεικτη. Τα ΜΕΔ αυξάνονται ταχέως στην περιφέρεια της ευρωζώνης.

Αντιθέτως, τα ΜΕΔ στα κράτη της Βαλτικής σημειώνουν αισθητή μείωση ενώ αρχικά ήταν σε πολύ υψηλά επίπεδα. Ορισμένες χώρες της Ανατολικής Ευρώπης παρουσιάζουν επίσης αυξήσεις των ΜΕΔ που σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις φθάνουν σε πολύ υψηλά επίπεδα. Στις βόρειες και κεντρικές περιοχές της Ευρώπης τα ΜΕΔ αυξάνονται, αν και με βραδύτερους ρυθμούς. Σε άλλες χώρες του πυρήνα σημειώνεται μάλιστα και μείωση των ΜΕΔ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004466/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Estimates of bad loans in the EU

Loans in a number of banks in many Member States are non-performing due to the economic crisis. This is one more problem affecting bank stability.

Will the Commission state:

1. Does it have any recent information concerning the amount of non-performing loans in the EU?

2. Which countries are most affected and what percentage do such loans represent compared to the total amount of loans?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 July 2013)

The data on non-performing loans are compiled on a regular basis by the European Central Bank (Statistical Data Warehouse). The most recent figures correspond to June 2012 and are available through these two links:

Annual data:

http://sdw.ecb.int/browseTable.do?node=71390&CB_REP_SECTOR=67&FREQ=A&CB_ITEM=73614&flipped=Y&sfl2=4&sfl1=3&sfl4=6&sfl3=4&DATASET=0&periodSortOrder=ASC

Semi-annual data:

http://sdw.ecb.int/browseTable.do?node=71390&CB_REP_SECTOR=67&FREQ=H&CB_ITEM=73614&flipped=Y&sfl2=4&sfl1=3&sfl4=6&sfl3=4&DATASET=0&periodSortOrder=ASC

It is important to note that the definition of non-performing loans is not harmonised across countries so that international comparison of data should be taken with caution. Non-performing loans (NPLs) in the EU stand at 4% (of total loans) as of 2012H1, according to the ECB. This figure hides a wide disparity in NPL levels and trends across European countries. Moreover, NPL figures should be analysed with respect to the amount of provisions set aside for them (the coverage ratio)

The picture in terms of evolution is mixed. NPLs are rapidly rising in the EA periphery.

In contrast, in the Baltic States NPLs are strongly decreasing from very high initial levels. Some Eastern European countries are also experiencing increases in NPLs, reaching in some cases significantly high levels. In the northern and central parts of Europe NPLs are rising, although at a slower pace. Other core countries are even experiencing a decline in NPLs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004467/13
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Religious conflict in Egypt

Is the Commission aware of the escalating situation in Egypt as regards religious persecution? This is on the increase and becoming more vicious, as demonstrated by recent clashes in which six Coptic Christians and one Muslim are estimated to have died ([1]).

Does the Commission propose to take any action to help re-establish the peaceful co-existence of different religious groups in the area?

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

The Commission is aware of the escalating situation in Egypt concerning religious minorities, as the recent clashes in which six Copts and one Muslim died. The HR/VP issued a statement on 7 April ([2]) while travelling to the region, urging for restraint and for the security forces to control the situation. The EU Delegation closely monitors the situation and its follow-up.

Freedom of religion or belief and the rights of minorities are high priorities under the EU's human rights policy. The EU is using the full range of its diplomatic and cooperation instruments to address freedom of religion or belief and to ensure minorities in Egypt are protected against such acts of violence.

In this respect, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights plays an active role in support of human rights in Egypt. He raised the issue during his visit to Egypt in mid-March 2013.

The basis for the EU engagement in Egypt is the renewed EU Neighbourhood Policy adopted in 2011 according to which the EU engagement — technically as well as financially — is strictly linked to the respect of fundamental rights and values according to the 'more-for-more' principle.

([1]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-22062622.
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136667.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004468/13
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D) and Linda McAvan (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Illegal bird hunting in Malta

Under the 1979 Wild Birds Directive, the hunting of wild birds is regulated in the EU. The Commission has previously launched infringement proceedings against Malta for failing to comply with the provision of the directive concerning hunting. Can the Commission provide an update regarding these infringement proceedings and confirm whether they are still ongoing?

Recent reports indicate that the Maltese authorities have relaxed the supervision of, and the enforcement requirements for, the spring hunt for turtle dove and quail.

Is the Commission aware of these recent developments, and of the level of illegal bird hunting in Malta in general? Can the Commission confirm what action it will take in response to this?

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

The Commission is aware of the situation in Malta and recent developments with respect to the spring hunting derogation. The Commission is in contact with the Maltese authorities regarding the effectiveness of the enforcement system. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Members to its answers to written questions E-347/2013 and E-4289/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004469/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Croatia's accession to the EU

The Commission outlined 10 areas for progress ahead of Croatia's proposed accession to the EU on 1 July 2013. Will the Commission provide details of these requirements and outline the progress made on each to date?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

In its October 2012 Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia ([1]), the Commission considered that particular attention should be paid by Croatia in the coming months to ten priority actions in the area of competition, judiciary and fundamental rights, and justice, freedom and security.

In its Spring 2013 Monitoring Report on Croatia's accession preparations ([2]), the Commission concluded that Croatia has completed the ten priority actions identified in the Commission's Comprehensive Monitoring Report of October 2012.

([1]) COM(2012) 601 final/10.10.2012.
([2]) COM(2013) 171 final/ 26.03.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004470/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Assistance package for Palestine

Can the Commission outline the details of the 2013 assistance package for Palestine, including the overall cost to the European Union, which budget the package is financed from, and how this package compares to any previous aid given in 2011 and in 2012?

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

The European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument has allocated EUR 300 million for support to Palestine and the Palestinian people in 2013. Of this amount, EUR 168 million has been allocated for recurrent expenditure of the Palestinian Authority under the PEGASE Mechanism (salaries, social allowances and contribution to arrears of referrals to East Jerusalem hospitals); EUR 80 million to UNRWA; EUR 8 million for actions in East Jerusalem and the remainder for institution-building and water infrastructure projects. The overall amount is the same as for the two previous years.

EUR 3.9 million has been allocated from thematic budget lines (EUR 2.4 million from Non State Actors & Local Authorities in Development, EUR 0.9 million from the Civil Society Facility and EUR 1.5 million from European Instrument for Human Rights) so far in 2013. In 2012 the figure was EUR 9.7 million and in 2011 it was EUR 11.25 million.

EUR 35 million have been so far allocated this year for humanitarian operations for Palestinians, compared with EUR 42 million allocated in 2012 and EUR 48.63 million in 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004471/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU free trade deal with Japan

I welcome the news that Japan and the EU have agreed to open talks on a trade deal next month, as the latest sign of a re-energised global trade negotiating agenda.

What trade concerns are considered a priority in these negotiations and what benefits could be brought to the EU as a result of such a deal, particularly to smaller regions throughout the EU, such as Northern Ireland?

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

The launch of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations has been in preparation for some years. The actual negotiations are based on the outcome of the scoping exercise which the EU and Japan completed in 2012. In the context of this exercise, both parties committed to an ambitious trade liberalisation agenda covering all issues including non-tariff barriers or access to public procurement. For the EU side, the priority areas will include, but will not be limited to, the elimination of non-tariff barriers by Japan, ensuring access for EU companies to Japanese railway procurement and elimination of tariffs of exports of EU agricultural products.

According to the available studies, it is estimated that an ambitious FTA between EU and Japan will bring considerable gains. Depending on the liberalisation scenario used, the FTA is expected to boost EU Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 0.6% to 0.8%.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004472/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Forced child labour in Uzbekistan's cotton industry

There is much concern across the EU at the reports of state-sponsored forced child labour in Uzbekistan's cotton industry. Human rights groups have estimated that every year as many as 100 000 children are forced into work.

The EU is the largest destination market for Uzbek cotton and the country benefits from preferential import duties for its cotton exports to the EU.

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure independent monitoring of the cotton harvest? Does the Commission intend to address the issue of forced labour in the Uzbek cotton industry and to reconsider the preferential import duties until the situation improves?

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

The European Commission has been following with considerable attention the situation of human rights in Uzbekistan. The issue of child labour in the cotton harvest was raised for example at the EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Committee on 19 July 2012, the Human Rights Dialogue on 6 November 2012 and the EU-Uzbekistan Economic, Trade and Investment Subcommittee on 15 March 2013.

The EU has sought to develop relevant cooperation responses with Uzbekistan, including the promotion of agriculture diversification and diminishing the country's reliance on cotton monoculture. Furthermore, the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) provides incentives for the export of many other products aside from cotton-based goods. The Commission favours cooperation, transparency and dialogue as most efficient tools to achieve the EU's objectives. GSP preferences can be temporarily withdrawn only if a country is responsible for serious and systematic violations of principles laid down in international conventions, including those of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on child labour standards.

Though a steep decline in the number of younger children (under 15) working in the 2012 harvest has been reported by embassies and international organisations, the Commission continues to urge the Uzbek government to cooperate with the ILO, including on monitoring aspects, and encourage further efforts towards full implementation of Uzbekistan's obligations under ILO conventions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004473/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Arming Syrian rebels

In a recent joint letter to the Commission, the UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, William Hague, and the French Foreign Minister, Laurent Fabius, urged the Commission to threaten the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad with the potential arming of rebels within the country.

Can the Commission outline its current policy on this issue and state what preparations it has made to engage with the Syrian rebels should the situation in Syria deteriorate further?

Question for written answer E-004792/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(29 April 2013)

Subject: EU support for Syrian rebels

With growing calls by the international community to arm the Syrian rebels fighting President Bashar al-Assad, could the Commission indicate what support, if any, is being given to the rebels?

With increasing concerns by Israel and others that Islamists could use any weapons to further their own cause, it is essential that any support is carefully considered before being given.

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 July 2013)

The EU is committed to spare no effort to bring about a successful convening of the peace conference on Syria on the basis agreed in the Geneva Communique of June 2012. The EU has been reviewing its sanctions regime against Syria in order to support and help the opposition and to enable greater support for the protection of civilians. The recent Council decisions have been taken in this context, including amending its sanctions regime in order to allow the delivery of non-lethal military equipment and related technical assistance to the National Coalition for the protection of civilians. Derogations under the restrictive measures have also been introduced to allow under certain conditions the resumption of imports of oil and petroleum products from Syria to the EU, exports of key equipment and technology for the oil and gas industry to Syria, as well as investments in the Syrian oil industry, the granting of any financial loan or credit to, the acquisition or extension of a participation in, or the creation of any joint venture with any Syrian person, the opening of a new bank account or a new representative office, or the establishment of a new branch or subsidiary

With regard to the measures on arms, the Council underlines the Council Declaration adopted on 27 May 2013 ([1]). In this Declaration Member States committed to proceed in their national policies with regard to the possible export of arms to Syria for the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces and intended for the protection of civilians on the basis of adequate safeguards and on a case-by-case basis, taking full account of the criteria set out in Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment.

Member States also committed not to proceed at this stage with the delivery of the equipment mentioned above. The Council will review its position before 1 August 2013 on the basis of a report by the High Representative/Vice-President, after having consulted the UN Secretary General, on the developments related to the US-Russia initiative and on the engagement of the Syrian parties.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137315.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004474/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Labour shortages in EU health and technology industries

Many recent reports have shown that, despite the economic crisis, there is still a shortage of professionals across the EU, particularly in the healthcare and technology industries.

Can the Commission detail current initiatives and future plans to address this issue in these two industries and explain what plans are in place to encourage more EU nationals to take up careers or upskill in order to fill vacancies in these industries?

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

The EU's health workforce shortage will worsen as the workforce ages and there are not enough new recruits to replace those retiring, so successfully managing health workforce is a high EU priority.

The Commission Staff Working Document on an Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce ([1]) proposes practical measures to help the Member States tackle the challenges facing the EU healthcare sector and boost employment in the medium to long term:

— forecasting workforce needs and improving workforce planning methodologies;

— anticipating future skill needs in the health professions (social partners have completed a feasibility study with EU financial support on establishing an EU sector skills council in the area of nursing and care);

— sharing good practice on effective recruitment and retention strategies for health professionals.

The Commission Staff Working Document 'Exploiting the employment potential of ICTs' ([2]) identifies ICT as a largely untapped area for employment creation. The Commission went on to launch a Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs ([3]), proposing actions to boost the number of ICT professionals through industry-led training and certification, mobility, education and awareness-raising of careers in ICT. Within this framwork stakeholders from across the EU are currently submitting pledges to commit themselves to concrete actions to help fill digital jobs vacancies.

([1]) Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2012) 93 final of 18 April 2012 is part of the Employment Package, which is available at: . http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/headlines/news/2012/04/20120418_en.htm

([2]) Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2012) 96 final of 18 April 2012 is also part of the Employment Package and is available on the same website.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004475/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Innovation in the EU

I welcome the recent publication of the Innovation Union Scoreboard for 2012 by the European Commission. The United Kingdom has achieved the laudable status of 'innovation follower' but Northern Ireland, which I represent, is the only place in the British Isles to be deemed a 'moderate innovator'.

How does the Commission intend to assist Northern Ireland with its innovation objectives in 2013 in order to bring it into line with the rest of the United Kingdom?

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

The United Kingdom is one of the EU innovation followers with an above average innovation performance ([1]). Regarding the regional level ([2]), there is considerable diversity in innovation performance both between and within Member States. Most of the European countries have regions with different levels of innovation performance. This is the case for Northern Ireland, a moderate innovator.

The concept of Smart Specialisation — a requirement for EU Structural Fund investments in R&I in 2014-2020 — works from the assumption that regions have different strengths and weaknesses. It involves a process of developing a vision, identifying competitive advantages, setting strategic priorities and making use of smart policies to maximise the knowledge-based development potential of any region. In 2012 Northern Ireland participated in the peer review of the Smart Specialisation Platform and in a next step the Commission will finance expert advice to assess Northern Ireland's smart specialisation strategy and its future innovation objectives.

The European Regional Development Fund ([3]) 2007-2013 Competiveness Programme for Northern Ireland presently provides EUR 272 m to bolster the competitiveness and innovative capacity of the economy ([4]). The Northern Ireland Competitiveness Programme also provides a further EUR 210m for enterprise development and entrepreneurship ([5]). Through the intermediary Invest Northern Ireland, the ERDF is supporting R&D and development/design programmes and venture capital provision for Northern Ireland companies. The ERDF is supporting the provision of proof of concept funding which seeks to encourage the commercialisation of technological development occurring within Northern Ireland universities.

([1]) According to the Innovation Union Scoreboard 2013.
([2]) Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2012.
([3]) ERDF.
([4]) 50% from ERDF and the remaining 50% from national public and private sources.
([5]) 50% from ERDF and the remaining 50% from national public and private sources.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004476/13
to the Council (President of the European Council)
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: PCE/PEC — Allocation of rural development top-ups during February's budget negotiations

One of the outcomes of the February budget negotiations between the EU's leaders was the allocation of additional rural development funds to sixteen Member States.

Given the scale of these top-up payments, I would be interested to know what criteria were used during the negotiations for making such allocations and the justification for payments being made to each of the Member States concerned.

Reply
(15 July 2013)

The February European Council concluded that the overall support for rural development will amount to EUR 84 936 million at 2011 prices.

It will be distributed between Member States based on objective criteria and past performance while taking into account the objectives of the rural development and having regard to the overall context of the common agricultural policy and the Union budget. Amounts will be adjusted to take into account flexibility between pillars.

As an exception to the distribution based on those criteria, the European Council also decided that additional allocations will be made for sixteen Member States. They will be granted to those Member States facing particular structural challenges in their agriculture sector or which have invested heavily in an effective delivery framework for rural development expenditure.

For the Member States receiving financial assistance in accordance with Articles 136 and 143 TFEU, the additional allocations will be subject to full EU co-financing. This rule shall be reassessed in 2016.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004477/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Reallocating reclaimed CAP expenditure

The Commission recently claimed back EUR 414 million of agricultural policy funds from 22 Member States. How and where does the Commission intend to reallocate these funds?

Many of these amounts reclaimed relate to repeat-offence actions by Member States in breach of Commission guidelines. What is the Commission doing to address these issues and effectively communicate with Member States in order to prevent further offences?

Moreover, with the ongoing reform of the CAP, how does the Commission propose that financial corrections of this nature be avoided in the future, especially given that many of its preferred proposals are likely to place an additional administrative burden on the shoulders of Member States?

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

1. The financial corrections (EUR 414 million) were adopted by Decision 2013/123/EU ([1]). Receipts originating from financial corrections are designated as revenue assigned to the financing of EAGF expenditure. In the 2013 budget EUR 1533 million assigned revenue was estimated to be available for EAGF expenditure of which EUR 500 million was allocated to market related expenditure and EUR 1033 million to direct aids.

2. In this decision, two financial corrections were made on repeat-offense actions or recurrence by Member States. The Commission has notified Member States how it deals with recurrent shortcomings in control systems ([2]) and if shortcomings persist, it can be justified to increase the flat-rate correction. In neither of the two recurrent weaknesses corrected were the conditions met for application of an increase in the flat-rate correction.

3. When drafting its CAP reform proposals the Commission consulted Member States' experts and farmers specifically on the controllability, simplification and administrative burden aspects of the key novel elements being considered for the new programming period. However the co-legislator has introduced certain elements during the co-decision procedure which risk complicating the application of the new provisions. While Member States themselves often apply additional layers of obligations and eligibility criteria leading to greater complexity.

The Commission will continue to ensure that the legislation adopted by the co-legislator is correctly applied in the Member States; it will use all the means at its disposal in order to shield the EU budget from irregular expenditure.

([1]) Commission Implementing Decision of 26 February 2013 on excluding from European Union financing certain expenditure incurred by the Member States under the Guarantee Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (notified under document C(2013) 981), OJ L 67, 9.3.2013, p. 20-52.

([2]) Doc AGRI/60637/2006 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004478/13
an die Kommission
Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE)
(22. April 2013)

Betrifft: Freihandelsabkommen zwischen China und Island

China hat vor kurzem ein Freihandelsabkommen mit China geschlossen. Dies ist das erste Freihandelsabkommen zwischen China und einem westlichen Staat. Darüber hinaus hat sich Island als Gastgeber eines Forums „Nördlicher Polarkreis" (Arctic Circle) ins Spiel gebracht. Im Gegensatz zum Arktischen Rat (Arctic Council), dem nur die sieben arktischen Anrainerstaaten angehören dürfen, steht dieses Forum einer Reihe von Teilnehmern offen, darunter Staaten wie Frankreich und China und nichtstaatliche Akteure wie Google. Der Arktis kommt eine immer größere geopolitische Bedeutung zu, und zahlreiche Akteure, einschließlich China, sind bestrebt, ihren Einfluss dort auszuweiten. Auf diese Region entfallen 25 Prozent des weltweit gefangenen Weißfischs, und durch eine Öffnung der nördlichen Seeroute könnte der bisherige Seeweg zwischen Europa und Ostasien um 40 Prozent verkürzt werden. Im vergangenen Jahr wurde die nördliche Seeroute von nahezu 50 Schiffen befahren.

Die Kommission wird daher um folgende Auskünfte gebeten:

Wie bewertet die Kommission das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen China und Island?

Welche Regelungen dieses Freihandelsabkommens sind für die EU von Belang?

Wird die Kommission ausführliche Informationen zu diesem Thema dem Parlament zukommen lassen?

Ist sich die Kommission dessen bewusst, dass China und Island bereits fortgeschrittene Verhandlungen über die Zusammenarbeit bei einer Studie zur Erschließung von Ölvorkommen in den nordöstlichen Küstengewässern geführt haben?

Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen China und Island ein Kapitel über Erdölbohrungen in der Arktis enthält?

Hat Island im Rahmen seiner Beitrittsverhandlungen mit der EU, welche die isländische Regierung Ende 2013 abschließen möchte, seine Verhandlungen mit China über das Freihandelsabkommen zur Sprache gebracht?

Befürwortet die Kommission eine Teilnahme der EU an dem Forum „Nördlicher Polarkreis", wie es Island angeregt hat?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(14. Juni 2013)

1. Island hat bereits zahlreiche Freihandelsabkommen geschlossen, und wie in anderen solchen Fällen nimmt die Kommission keinen besonderen Standpunkt dazu ein, zumal das vorliegende Abkommen eine Kündigungsklausel enthält. Die Kündigungsklausel ist im Hinblick auf einen künftigen Beitritt Islands zur EU von Bedeutung.

2. Das Freihandelsabkommen zwischen Island und China ist veröffentlicht und kann auf der angegebenen Website eingesehen werden ([1]).

4. Abgesehen von dem oben erwähnten offiziell übermittelten Text des Freihandelsabkommens verfügt die Kommission über keine weiteren Informationen.

5. Die Kommission hat keine Kenntnis von etwaigen Bestimmungen des Abkommens zur Erdölförderung in der Arktis.

6. Island hat die Kommissionsdienststellen über seinen Fahrplan für Freihandelsabkommen informiert, dabei jedoch keinen konkreten Zeitplan für den Abschluss eines Abkommens angegeben. Dies ist auch in den Fortschrittsberichten der Kommission zu Island für 2011 und 2012 vermerkt; Letzterer wurde im Oktober 2012 veröffentlicht und kann auf der angegebenen Website eingesehen werden ([2]).

7. Über ihre Teilnahme am Forum „Nördlicher Polarkreis" hat die Kommission noch keine Entscheidung getroffen.

([1]) http://www.mfa.is/foreign-policy/trade/free-trade-agreement-between-iceland-and-china/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/is_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004478/13
to the Commission
Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Free trade agreement between China and Iceland

China has recently signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with Iceland. This is the first FTA concluded between China and a Western nation. In addition, Iceland has taken the initiative to host an 'Arctic Circle' forum. In contrast to the Arctic Council, open only to the seven Arctic coastal states, this forum is open to a variety of participants, ranging from states such as France and China to non-state actors like Google. The Arctic region is becoming increasingly important in geopolitical terms, and a wide number of actors, including China, are looking at expanding their stakes in the region. Not only does the region account for 25% of the global catch of whitefish, but opening the Northern Sea Route could cut the Europe-East Asia route by 40%. Last year nearly 50 ships passed through the Northern Sea Route.

In this context, I ask the Commission to answer the following questions:

How does the Commission evaluate the China-Iceland Free Trade Agreement?

Which provisions of the China-Iceland Free Trade Agreement are of relevance to the EU?

Will the Commission share detailed information with Parliament on this matter?

Is the Commission aware that China and Iceland have engaged in advanced talks to cooperate on a study of oil exploration in northeast coastal waters?

Can the Commission confirm that the China-Iceland Free Trade Agreement includes paragraphs on oil drilling in the Arctic?

Has Iceland raised the issue of its negotiations with China on a free trade agreement with the EU in the context of its negotiations on accession to the EU, which the Icelandic Government aims to conclude by the end of 2013?

Does the Commission advocate that the EU should join the Arctic Circle, as initiated by Iceland?

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

1. Iceland has already concluded many Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and as with others, the Commission does not take a particular view especially since this FTA includes a termination clause. The termination clause is relevant in view of any future accession of Iceland to the EU.

2. The Iceland — China FTA is published and can be found at the following address ([1]).

4. The Commission has no further information beyond the officially communicated FTA referenced above.

5. The Commission is not aware of any provisions in the Agreement with regard to oil drilling in the Arctic.

6. Iceland has informed the Commission services of its FTAs agenda; however without specifying a timeline for the conclusion of an agreement. This is also mentioned in the progress reports of the Commission on Iceland for 2011 and 2012, the latest one published in October 2012 and can be found at the following address ([2]).

7. The Commission has not yet taken a decision as regards its participation in the Arctic Circle.

([1]) http://www.mfa.is/foreign-policy/trade/free-trade-agreement-between-iceland-and-china/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/is_rapport_2012_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004479/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: SME 'TOP 10' consultation

The results of the Commission's consultation entitled 'Which are the TOP 10 most burdensome EU legislative acts for SMEs?' have now been published.

The Commission has stated that it will use the results of the consultation in the work being done under the EU regulatory fitness initiative (REFIT).

The consultation has identified specific pieces of legislation that are especially burdensome.

Businesses across Europe want to know when the European institutions will take action to remove such burdens.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. What specific actions or measures does it recommend be taken to address the issues raised?

2. What timetable does it propose for proposals to revise individual areas of legislation in order to reduce the burdens on SMEs?

3. What timetable does it propose for the implementation of such actions and measures?

If the Commission cannot provide specific timetables at this time, can it please state when these will be available?

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

The Commission is currently preparing its follow-up to the results of the TOP10 consultation on the most burdensome EU legislative acts for SMEs in the context of its work on the EU Regulatory fitness initiative (REFIT).

The Commission's response to the TOP10 consultation will be presented to the European Council in June. This response will include information on the specific actions the Commission will take and on the timing of these actions in order to reduce regulatory burden on SMEs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004480/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Commission, European Consumer Centres and 'Leaseurope' — developments with regard to Written Question E-007987/2012

In its answer to Written Question E-007987/2012, the Commission states that, together with European Customer Centres, it has started cooperation with the European association of car rental companies 'Leaseurope' in view of improving the code of best practice adopted by the members of this association by feeding it with the most common consumer complaints.

The Commission has concluded that fuelling policy is one of the top ten priorities chosen for cooperation in 2013.

I have recently received the following enquiry on this issue from a constituent: given that we are well into 2013, what have the Commission, the European Consumer Centres and 'Leaseurope' done to tackle the issue of EU rental companies charging for a full tank of fuel and asking for the car to be returned with an empty tank?

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

As indicated in its response to Question E-007987/2012 ([1]), the Commission has worked in particular with the European Consumer Centres (ECCs) on improving the situation of consumers when they rent cars in another EU country. Every year, they help solve about 1 000 complaints related to car renting.

The Commission shares the view that it is unacceptable that as a result of the full/empty policy implemented by certain companies, consumers may end up paying for fuel they have not consumed ([2]). These practices could be contrary to the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive ([3]) and the Unfair Contract Terms Directive ([4]).

The ECC of Spain recently obtained from national authorities an assessment of such a policy. They have informed the Commission that awareness activities will be carried out so that companies change their practices. In parallel, the Commission will feed this assessment into its discussions with the European association of car rental companies 'Leaseeurope' on improving the code of best practice adopted by its members.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) See its responses to parliamentary questions E-5999/2008 by Ms Stihler (S&D), E-5462/2009 by Mr Kamall, E-5234/2009 by Ms Hall and H-0412/2009 by Mr Gallagher.
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC and 2002/65 and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 (Unfair Commercial Practices Directive), OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.
([4]) Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts, OJ L 95, 21.4.1993.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004481/13
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(22 april 2013)

Betreft: Amerikaanse wet op naleving belastingvoorschriften buitenlandse rekeningen (Fatca) en weigering van Amerikaanse burgers als klanten door Swedbank

Onlangs is ons ter ore gekomen dat paragraaf 1.4 van de specifieke voorwaarden die gelden voor de overeenkomst inzake een beleggingsrekening bij Swedbank ([1]), het volgende bepaalt:

„De bank biedt de beleggingsrekening niet aan Amerikaanse personen aan noch verkoopt de bank dit product aan hen, en de klant bevestigt hierbij tegenover de bank dat hij geen Amerikaanse persoon is. De bank heeft het recht de overeenkomst onmiddellijk te beëindigen indien de klant een Amerikaanse persoon is of tijdens de looptijd van de overeenkomst wordt. De klant verplicht zich ertoe de bank onmiddellijk op de hoogte te stellen van alle omstandigheden die ertoe kunnen leiden dat de klant als Amerikaanse persoon wordt aangemerkt. De bank kan ook gebruikmaken van openbare informatie om te beoordelen of een klant als Amerikaanse persoon moet worden aangemerkt. Een rechtspersoon kan een Amerikaanse persoon zijn wanneer deze in de VS is gevestigd, overeenkomstig de Amerikaanse wet handelt, een postadres in de VS heeft, enigerlei zakelijke activiteiten in de VS heeft, enz. Een vertegenwoordiging of filiaal van een buitenlandse rechtspersoon kan onder dezelfde voorwaarden als Amerikaanse persoon worden aangemerkt. Een natuurlijke persoon kan een Amerikaanse persoon zijn wanneer deze voor belastingdoeleinden als Amerikaanse ingezetene wordt beschouwd, voor studie of werk enige tijd in de VS verblijft, enz. Een persoon kan ook onder andere, van de Amerikaanse wetgeving afgeleide voorwaarden als Amerikaanse persoon worden beschouwd."

Is de Commissie van mening dat deze door Swedbank gehanteerde specifieke voorwaarden verband houden met de onlangs goedgekeurde Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (Fatca — Amerikaanse wet op naleving belastingvoorschriften buitenlandse rekeningen), het feit dat er momenteel aan desbetreffende intergouvernementele akkoorden wordt gewerkt, en de rechtsonzekerheid voor buitenlandse financiële instellingen omtrent de extraterritoriale toepassing van de Fatca?

Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat het extraterritoriale effect van de Fatca voor banken op het grondgebied van de EU aanleiding zou kunnen zijn om Amerikaanse klanten te weigeren?

Is de Commissie van mening dat deze praktijk in strijd is met het algemene beginsel van gelijke behandeling en non-discriminatie of met een of meer bepalingen in de EU-Verdragen?

Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat de definitie van „Amerikaanse persoon" van toepassing kan zijn op EU-burgers, hetgeen inhoudt dat in de EU woonachtige EU-burgers rechtstreeks de gevolgen van een Amerikaanse wet zouden kunnen ondervinden?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(7 juni 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van dit probleem, waarmee ook EU-burgers die een bankrekening wensen te openen in een lidstaat waar zij niet verblijven, mee kunnen worden geconfronteerd.

Uit hoofde van het beginsel van contractvrijheid hebben banken het recht om zelf te beslissen met wie zij een contract wensen te sluiten. Zij kunnen steeds klanten weigeren indien zij hiervoor goede commerciële redenen hebben.

De Commissie is echter van mening dat financiële instellingen personen geen toegang tot financiële diensten mogen ontzeggen enkel vanwege de zorgvuldigheids- en rapportageverplichtingen die dat schept. De Commissie heeft onlangs een voorstel ([2]) goedgekeurd dat de lidstaten ertoe verplicht ervoor te zorgen dat consumenten die legaal in de Unie verblijven, bij het aanvragen van of toegang verkrijgen tot een betaalrekening niet worden gediscrimineerd op grond van nationaliteit of woonplaats. Daartoe worden de lidstaten uit hoofde van de richtlijn verplicht om ervoor te zorgen dat ten minste één betalingsdienstaanbieder op hun grondgebied een betaalrekening met basisfuncties aanbiedt aan consumenten die legaal in de Unie verblijven, ongeacht de woonplaats in de EU of nationaliteit van deze consument. Het voorstel kan de problemen oplossen die in de EU wonende burgers van de VS, maar evenzeer burgers van de EU kunnen ondervinden bij het openen van een bankrekening.

([1]) https://www.swedbank.ee/static/pdf/private/investor/deposits/cond_investdep_eng_2012_08_20.pdf
([2]) COM(2013) 266 — voorlopige versie van 8.5.2013.

Bovendien is het uit hoofde van een clausule in bijlage II bij de FATCA-modelovereenkomsten verboden voor een financiële instelling die in aanmerking wil komen voor het statuut van „deemed-compliant", om ten aanzien van VS-burgers discriminerende beleidsbeginselen of praktijken toe te passen ([3]).

([3]) Deze discriminatieclausule is in bijlage II bij zowel model 1 als bij model 2 opgenomen onder nummer 10, onderafdeling A („Financial Institution with a Local Client Base") van hoofdstuk III („Small or Limited Scope Financial Institutions that Qualify as Deemed-Compliant FFIs"). In deze clausule wordt bepaald dat de financiële instelling geen beleidsbeginselen of praktijken mag toepassen die discrimineren bij het openen of aanhouden van financiële rekeningen door Amerikaanse burgers of ingezetenen van [FATCA-partnerland]. Zie http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/treaties/Pages/FATCA.aspx.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004481/13
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and the refusal by Swedbank to accept US citizens as clients

We have recently been informed that, according to paragraph 1(4) of the terms and conditions of Swedbank's investment deposit agreement ([1]),

'The Bank does not offer or sell investment deposit to US persons and the Client hereby confirms to the Bank that it is not a US person. The Bank has the right to terminate the agreement immediately if the Client is a US person or becomes a US person during the term of the agreement. The Client undertakes to inform the Bank immediately of any circumstances which could cause the Client to be qualified as a US person. The Bank can also use public information when assessing the qualification of a client as a US person. A legal person can be a US person, among other things, when it is established in the US, acts in accordance with US law, has a US postal address or has some business activities in the US. A representative office or a branch of a foreign legal person can be qualified as a US person on same conditions. A natural person can be a US person, among other things, when it is considered a US resident for tax purposes or if the person stays in the US for some time for educational or work purposes. A person can be considered a US person also under other conditions deriving from US laws.'

Does the Commission consider these terms and conditions set forth by Swedbank to be related to the recently adopted US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), the ongoing development of intergovernmental agreements with regard to it and the legal uncertainty for foreign financial institutions with regard to the extraterritorial application of the FATCA?

Is the Commission aware that the extraterritorial effect of the FATCA could prompt banks on EU territory to refuse US clients?

Does the Commission consider this practice to be in violation of the general principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination, or of any provision of the EU Treaties?

Is the Commission aware that the definition of 'US person' may apply to EU citizens, meaning that EU citizens living in the EU could be directly affected by a US law?

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

The Commission is aware of this problem which can also be encountered by EU nationals wishing to open bank accounts in Member States where they are not resident.

Banks have the right, under the contractual freedom principle, to decide with whom they want to contract. They can in any event refuse clients for sound commercial reasons.

However the Commission believes that financial institutions should not deny persons access to financial services merely because they would then face due diligence and reporting obligations. The Commission has recently adopted a proposal ([2]) that would oblige the Member States to ensure that consumers legally resident in the EU are not discriminated against by reason of their nationality or place of residence when applying for or accessing a payment account. To this end, the directive obliges Member States to ensure that at least one payment service provider in their territory offers a payment account with basic features to consumers legally resident in the Union, irrespective of the consumer's EU place of residence or nationality. This proposal may help to address the difficulties that not just US citizens who are resident within the EU but also EU nationals may currently encounter in opening bank accounts.

([1]) https://www.swedbank.ee/static/pdf/private/investor/deposits/cond_investdep_eng_2012_08_20.pdf
([2]) COM(2013)266 — provisional version of 8.5.2013.

Moreover, the FATCA Model agreements include, in Annex II, a clause that would forbid a financial institution wishing to benefit from the 'deemed-compliant' status from having 'discriminatory policies or practices' in respect of US citizens ([3]).

([3]) That non-discrimination clause is included in Annex II of both Model 1 and Model 2, at number 10, subsection A ('Financial Institution with a Local Client Base') of section III ('Small or Limited Scope Financial Institutions that Qualify as Deemed-Compliant FFIs'). It provides that the Financial Institution must not have policies or practices that discriminate against opening or maintaining Financial Accounts for individuals who are Specified U.S. Persons and residents of [the FATCA Partner country]. See http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/treaties/Pages/FATCA.aspx

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004482/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 avril 2013)

Objet: Bien-être animal et accord OMC

Dans le cadre de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC), l'Union européenne s'est engagée dans un large mouvement d'ouverture de ses marchés. Même si le secteur agricole est un secteur où les négociations avancent peu, la politique agricole commune (PAC) est élaborée, autant que faire se peut, en conformité avec ces principes.

Si l'Union européenne peut protéger son marché des importations de produits alimentaires qui ne respectent pas les critères de sûreté qu'elle s'est assignés, grâce à l'accord sur les mesures sanitaires et phytosanitaires, elle ne peut en revanche rien faire pour contrer la concurrence des productions qui ne respectent pas les mêmes normes en matière de bien-être animal.

L'élevage européen est ainsi soumis à une concurrence déloyale de la part des pays tiers, et l'OMC interdit à l'Union de le protéger.

1. La Commission dispose-t-elle de données pour évaluer l'impact de ces distorsions de concurrence sur la compétitivité des exploitations européennes?

2. La Commission tient-elle compte de cet état de fait lorsqu'elle fait des propositions législatives concernant le bien-être animal?

3. La Commission compte-t-elle engager, en interne ou dans le cadre de l'OMC, des actions pour faire cesser cette concurrence déloyale, qui détériore gravement la santé économique de certaines filières? Si oui, peut-elle détailler ces actions?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(1er juillet 2013)

Conséquence des accords conclus avec l'OMC et d'une série d'accords bilatéraux, les exportations de produits agroalimentaires de l'Union européenne sont en augmentation constante. Des réformes cohérentes et orientées sur le marché ont contribué à renforcer la compétitivité de la politique agricole commune. L'Union respecte pleinement les engagements auxquels elle a souscrit envers l'OMC dans le cadre de l'accord sur l'agriculture.

La législation de l'Union fait l'objet de vastes consultations auxquelles sont associées les parties prenantes et d'autres institutions lorsque la compétitivité de l'UE est l'un des éléments pris en considération.

Les produits agroalimentaires qui entrent sur le marché de l'Union doivent être conformes aux exigences de la législation de cette dernière en matière de sûreté des produits alimentaires et de santé des animaux et des plantes.

En ce qui concerne le bien-être des animaux dans les abattoirs exportant de la viande vers l'UE, celle-ci a pu obtenir la garantie suivante: la certification des abattoirs en question exige que les animaux soient traités conformément aux spécifications du règlement (CE) n° 1099/2009 sur la protection des animaux au moment de leur mise à mort ([1]) et que des prescriptions au moins équivalentes à celles de la législation de l'Union soient respectées.

En outre, à la demande du Parlement européen, une étude a été consacrée au coût pour les agriculteurs de la mise en conformité avec la législation de l'Union relative à l'environnement, au bien-être animal et à la sûreté alimentaire; cette étude sera prête en décembre 2013.

L'Union continuera à coopérer dans le domaine du bien-être animal avec ses partenaires commerciaux dans les enceintes internationales appropriées. En outre, cette coopération est systématiquement prise en compte dans la négociation d'accords commerciaux bilatéraux avec des pays tiers.

([1]) JO L 303 du 18.11.2009, pp. 1-30.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004482/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Animal welfare and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreement

As a member of the World Trade Organisation, the European Union is part of a broad movement to open up markets. Even though the agricultural sector is one in which very little progress has been made in negotiations, the common agricultural policy (CAP) is drawn up, as far as possible, according to these principles.

While the European Union can protect its market from imported foodstuffs that do not meet the safety criteria that it has laid down thanks to the agreement on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, it cannot do anything to oppose competition from products that do not comply with the same animal welfare standards.

European livestock farming is thus subject to unfair competition from third countries, and the WTO prevents the EU from protecting it.

1. Does the Commission have any figures which can be used to assess the impact of these distortions of competition on the competiveness of European farms?

2. Does the Commission take account of this situation when it makes legislative proposals on animal welfare?

3. Does the Commission plan to take action, internally or within the WTO, to put an end to this unfair competition, which is seriously damaging the economic well-being of certain sectors? If so, can it say what this action is?

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

Following the WTO agreements and a series of bilateral agreements, EU exports of agro-food products have constantly increased. Consistent market-oriented reforms of the CAP have helped enhancing the competitiveness. The EU fully respects its WTO commitments under the Agreement on Agriculture.

Legislation in the EU is subject to broad consultations with stakeholders and other institutions where EU's competitiveness is one of the elements taken into consideration.

Agro-food products which enter the EU market have to comply with requirements set by EU legislation which concern the safety of food products and animal and plant health.

The EU has been able to obtain guarantees that as regards animal welfare in slaughterhouses exporting meat to the EU the certification requires that the animals have been handled in compliances with Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing ([1]) and have met requirements at least equivalent to those laid down in EC law.

Furthermore, on the basis of a request from the European Parliament, a study assessing farmers' costs of compliance with EU legislation in the fields of environment, animal welfare and food safety will conclude in December 2013.

The EU will continue the cooperation on animal welfare with EU's trading partners in the appropriate international fora. Furthermore, cooperation on animal welfare is systematically included in negotiations related to bilateral trade agreements with third countries.

([1]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1-30.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004483/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 avril 2013)

Objet: TVA forfaitaire agricole

La directive 2006/112/CE permet aux États membres de mettre en œuvre un régime forfaitaire pour les exploitations agricoles pour lesquelles l'assujettissement au taux normal de TVA se heurterait à des difficultés.

L'article 299 de la directive dispose que «Les pourcentages forfaitaires de compensation ne peuvent avoir pour effet de procurer à l'ensemble des agriculteurs forfaitaires des remboursements supérieurs aux charges de TVA en amont».

Or, comme le démontre l'étude de l'OCDE intitulée «Taxation and Social Security in Agriculture 2005», le système de TVA en Allemagne, qui applique le régime forfaitaire non seulement aux petites mais également aux grandes exploitations, confère aux entreprises un avantage compétitif certain. D'abord jugé «faible», cet avantage s'est accru jusqu'à représenter, grâce à des techniques fiscales avancées, telles que la subdivision légale des exploitations et le passage successif d'un régime à l'autre, 3,8 centimes d'euros par kilo dans le secteur porcin.

1. La Commission juge-t-elle cette pratique conforme au droit européen? N'y voit-elle pas une distorsion de concurrence?

2. Dans le cas où la Commission considérerait que la législation allemande est contraire à la directive TVA ou à son esprit, quelles mesures entend-elle mettre en œuvre pour faire cesser cette situation?

3. Étant donné l'immédiateté de la menace que représente cette pratique, quels moyens d'urgence peut-elle employer pour rétablir une relative équité fiscale pour les entreprises agricoles?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2013)

Dans le cadre d'une enquête, les services de la Commission ont informé les autorités allemandes qu'ils ont reçu une plainte concernant l'application dans cet État membre du régime commun forfaitaire établi aux articles 295 et suivants de la directive 2006/112/CE.

Les services de la Commission examinent actuellement la question, sur la base des réponses des autorités allemandes.

Si une quelconque incompatibilité avec le droit de l'Union est constatée, la Commission prendra, en tant que gardienne des traités, les mesures nécessaires pour assurer la mise en œuvre correcte du droit de l'Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004483/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Flat-rate VAT scheme for agriculture

Directive 2006/112/EC allows Member States to implement a flat-rate scheme for agricultural holdings which would face difficulties if they were liable for the normal VAT rate.

Article 299 of the directive states that 'The flat-rate compensation percentages may not have the effect of obtaining for flat-rate farmers refunds greater than the input VAT charged'.

The OECD study 'Taxation and Social Security in Agriculture 2005' reveals that the German VAT system gives undertakings a competitive advantage, since the flat-rate scheme is applied to large agricultural holdings as well as small ones. Although this advantage was initially regarded as 'weak', advanced tax techniques such as the legal sub-division of holdings and successive switches from one scheme to another mean that it now amounts to 3.8 cents per kilo in the pig-farming sector.

1. Does the Commission believe that this practice complies with EC law? Does it not believe that it represents a distortion of competition?

2. If the Commission believes that the German legislation infringes the VAT Directive or the spirit of the latter, what measures does it intend to take to put a stop to the situation?

3. Given the immediacy of the threat posed by this practice, what urgent steps could it take to restore a measure of tax justice for agricultural undertakings?

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

In the framework of an investigation the Commission services informed the German authorities that they have received a complaint regarding the application in that Member State of the common flat-rate scheme laid down in Articles 295 et seq of the Directive 2006/112/EC.

On the basis of the replies from the German authorities, the Commission's services are currently examining the matter.

Should any incompatibility with EC law be established, the Commission will, as a guardian of the Treaties, take the necessary actions to ensure that EC law is correctly implemented.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004484/13
à la Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 avril 2013)

Objet: Dumping social filière agroalimentaire

Depuis plusieurs années, les entreprises allemandes ont un recours massif aux travailleurs détachés, notamment dans l'agroalimentaire et en particulier dans la filière abattage. Cette possibilité, ménagée par le droit communautaire, permet à ces entreprises d'exercer une concurrence insoutenable pour leurs rivaux des pays voisins, avec un coût salarial plus de trois fois inférieur.

1. La Commission juge-t-elle que ces pratiques sont toujours conformes au droit communautaire? Prévoit-elle de prendre des mesures pour faire cesser les éventuelles pratiques illégales?

2. Dans le cas où ces pratiques devaient être considérées comme légales, la Commission ne considère-t-elle pas que la législation européenne est inadaptée et crée des distorsions de concurrence anormales? Si tel est son jugement, prévoit-elle de modifier le droit européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(17 juin 2013)

1. Pour être en mesure de juger si les allégations de pratiques de dumping social dans le secteur agroalimentaire en Allemagne tendent, ou non, à révéler une infraction à la législation de l'Union, il semble nécessaire de clarifier et d'étayer davantage les circonstances de fait. C'est pourquoi la Commission entend examiner plus en détail ces circonstances et aborder la question d'une éventuelle non-conformité avec les autorités allemandes par les voies appropriées.

La Commission rappelle que la surveillance et le contrôle de l'application des conditions de travail et d'emploi et de la rémunération d'un salarié relèvent de la compétence des États membres, y compris en ce qui concerne les travailleurs détachés.

2. En mars 2012, la Commission a adopté une proposition ([1]) de directive d'exécution visant à améliorer l'application et le respect de la directive 96/71/CE ([2]) par les États membres, en vue de prévenir le contournement des règles, de prévoir des sanctions en cas de non-respect de ces règles et de mieux protéger les travailleurs sur le territoire de l'Union européenne. Le texte est actuellement examiné par le Conseil et le Parlement. La Commission invite les colégislateurs à profiter de cette occasion pour renforcer dans le droit de l'UE les garanties juridiques contre les pratiques abusives en matière de détachement de travailleurs.

([1]) COM(2012) 131 final du 21 mars 2012.
([2]) Directive 96/71/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 16 décembre 1996 concernant le détachement de travailleurs effectué dans le cadre d'une prestation de services, JO L 18 du 21.1.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004484/13
to the Commission
Agnès Le Brun (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Social dumping in the agri-food sector

For several years now German companies have relied heavily on posted workers, in particular in the agri-food and animal slaughter industries. Such arrangements are permitted under EC law, but they allow these companies to compete at a level which is unsustainable for their rivals in neighbouring countries, given that they spend three times less on wages.

1. Does the Commission believe that these practices still comply with EC law? Does it intend to take any steps to put a stop to any practices which are illegal?

2. If these practices are deemed legal, does the Commission not believe that the European legislation is ill-adapted and creates undue distortions of competition? If so, does it intend to amend this legislation?

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

1. In order to be able to assess whether or not the allegations of social dumping practices in the agri-food sector in Germany point to a breach of Union law, further clarification and substantiation of the factual circumstances appear necessary. Therefore the Commission intends to investigate such circumstances in greater depth and raise the matter of an eventual non-compliance with the German authorities through the appropriate channels.

The Commission recalls that the monitoring and enforcement of the working and employment conditions and the actual remuneration of an employee fall within the competence of the Member States, including as regards posted workers.

2. 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 with the aim of preventing and providing sanctions for the circumvention of the rules applicable and improving the protection of posted workers in the EU. The proposal is being examined by the Council and Parliament. The Commission calls upon the co-legislators to seize this opportunity to strengthen the legal safeguards in EC law against abusive practices in the context of the posting of workers.

([1]) 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.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-004486/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(22 Aibreán 2013)

Ábhar: Infhaighteacht Ionchlannán Cochla Déthaobhach

Tá éisteacht an dá chluas ag teastáil chun gnáthfhuaimeanna steiréó a chloisteáil. Is féidir le hionchlannáin dhéthaobhacha (lena gcuirtear ionchlannán sa dá chluas) cumas éisteachta iad siúd a bhfuil ionchlannán cochla faighte acu nó a bhfuil an deis acu ionchlannán cochla a fháil a fheabhsú go suntasach.

Aithnítear gur dea-chleachtais idirnáisiúnta atá i gceist le hionchlannáin dhéthaobhacha. Níl ach cúpla tír san Eoraip nach gcuireann ionchlannáin chomhuaineacha agus sheicheamhacha ar fáil, agus Éire ina measc. Anuas air sin, ní thugtar ach ionchlannán cluas amháin do leanaí in Éirinn, agus measann eagraíocht a bhíonn i mbun feachtais ar son 350 páiste in Éirinn atá ag fanacht ar ionchlannáin a fháil nach bhfuil sé sin leath maith a dhóthain. Is gá go gcuirfí isteach an dara hionchlannán do na páistí sin laistigh de thrí go cúig bliana ón gcéad cheann a chur isteach, toisc go bhfaigheann an néaróg bás i ndiaidh na tréimhse sin agus nach mbíonn maitheas ar bith mar sin leis an ionchlannán.

Chuige sin, an bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt maidir lena bhfuil á dhéanamh chun a spreagadh go gcuirfear ionchlannán cochla ar fáil sna Ballstáit éagsúla dóibh siúd atá ag fanacht air sin agus nach bhfuil mórán ama fágtha acu leis an ionchlannán a fháil?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Borg thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(24 Meitheamh 2013)

In Airteagal 168(7) den Chonradh ar Fheidhmiú an Aontais Eorpaigh ([1]) tá an prionsabal leagtha síos gurb iad na Ballstáit féin atá freagrach as a mbeartas seirbhísí sláinte a shainiú agus as seirbhís sláinte agus cúram leighis a eagrú agus a sholáthar. Dá réir sin is faoi gach Ballstát ar leith atá sé an 'ciseán sochar' a chinneadh, i.e. na cóireálacha agus na seirbhísí leighis a chuirfidh sé ar fáil dá phobal. Dá bhrí sin, is faoi gach Ballstát ar leith atá sé a chinneadh an gcuirfear ionchlannáin chochla ar fáil — maille leis an modh ionchlannaithe a úsáidfear.

Faoin seachtú creatchlár le haghaidh taighde agus forbartha teicneolaíochta (2007-2013), tá tacaíocht tugtha ag an AE do thaighde ar chóireálacha i gcoinne míchumais chéadfaigh trí mhír speisialta sa chlár oibre i gcomhair Sláinte 2012. As measc na seacht tionscadal ([2]) ar tacaíodh leo, baineann cúig cinn leis an éisteacht agus dheonaigh an AE EUR 21.3 milliún dóibh.

([1]) IO L 83, 30.3.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/medical-research/severe-chronic-diseases/projectsfp7_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004486/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Availability of bilateral cochlear implants

To experience everyday sounds in stereo, we need to be able to hear with both ears. For cochlear implant candidates and recipients, bilateral implantation (cochlear implants in both ears) greatly improves hearing.

Bilateral implants are recognised as international best practice. Ireland is one of the few countries in Europe which does not provide simultaneous and sequential implantation. Furthermore, Irish children are limited to one ear implant and an organisation that campaigns for 350 children in Ireland who are waiting for implants believe that leaves much to be desired. These children have a window of three and five years between the first and second implant. After this time the nerve dies and the implant is useless.

Could the Commission provide information as regards what is being done to encourage cochlear implants being made available in the various Member States to those waiting for them and who cannot afford to wait much longer for them?

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

Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([1]) establishes the principle that Member States are responsible for the definition of their health services policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. This means that each Member State has responsibility for deciding on the 'basket of benefits': the healthcare treatments and services which it provides to its population. Therefore, the decision as to whether or not to offer cochlear implants — and the method of their implantation — is for each Member State to decide.

Under its Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), the EU has supported research on combating sensory impairment with a special topic in the Health 2012 work programme. Of the seven projects supported ([2]), five concern hearing and receive an EU contribution of EUR 21.3 million.

([1]) OJ L 83, 30.3.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/medical-research/severe-chronic-diseases/projectsfp7_en.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004487/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Regolamentazione sigarette elettroniche

L'attuale direttiva sui prodotti del tabacco (2001/37/CE) risale al 2001. Da allora, si sono registrati significativi sviluppi scientifici, internazionali e di mercato. Ad esempio, si sono resi disponibili nuovi elementi di prova relativi agli aromi utilizzati nei prodotti del tabacco e all'efficacia dei messaggi di informazione relativi alla salute. Nel frattempo, sul mercato sono comparsi prodotti di nuova generazione, quali le sigarette elettroniche, prive di brevetti specifici, di provenienza dubbia e totalmente svincolate dal rispetto delle normative che regolano invece le sigarette classiche. Tale fenomeno, contrario agli sforzi di disincentivare la moda dell'uso delle sigarette, appare preoccupante per il consumatore europeo, non essendovi alcuna evidenza scientifica che consenta di escludere effetti dannosi, a breve o lungo termine, causati dal consumo di sigaretta elettronica, sia per quanto riguarda il fumatore che per il soggetto, bambino o adulto, esposto in modo passivo. La sola cosa che pare accertata è l'effetto immediato del broncospasmo, che si produce dopo 10 minuti dall'utilizzo della sigaretta elettronica, con un aumento della resistenza che i bronchi oppongono al passaggio dell'aria.

L'UE e tutti i suoi Stati membri hanno ratificato la convenzione quadro dell'OMS per la lotta al tabagismo (FCTC). Di conseguenza, alcune delle attuali disposizioni della direttiva dell'UE sono diventate obsolete. Appare quindi evidente come vi sia la necessità di armonizzare la regolamentazione della produzione e commercializzazione delle sigarette elettroniche. La nuova direttiva in fase di discussione, pur cercando di aggiornare e implementare la legislazione attuale tenendo conto dei nuovi sviluppi scientifici e di mercato dei prodotti del tabacco, non analizza tutti i cambiamenti del settore in relazione all'avvento della sigaretta elettronica.

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

1. reputa la Commissione che sia auspicabile un'armonizzazione della legislazione dei diversi Stati membri dell'Unione riguardo alla produzione e commercializzazione delle sigarette elettroniche, che sia a diretta tutela del consumatore?

2. reputa che sia necessario prevedere un sistema di brevetti comunitari e di tracciabilità per le sigarette elettroniche?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(31 maggio 2013)

In base alle informazioni in possesso della Commissione, le normative nazionali in materia di sigarette elettroniche presentano attualmente divergenze molto marcate ([1]). La Commissione ha di conseguenza proposto un approccio armonizzato a tali prodotti.

Secondo la proposta della Commissione, le sigarette elettroniche contenenti nicotina al di là di determinate soglie sarebbero assoggettate al quadro normativo per i medicinali ([2]). Ne consegue che la loro immissione in commercio sarebbe subordinata ad un'autorizzazione preventiva, così come prescritto dalla legislazione farmaceutica. Le soglie in questione sono state stabilite facendo riferimento al tenore in nicotina delle terapie sostitutive della nicotina che hanno già ottenuto autorizzazioni all'immissione in commercio negli Stati membri.

Per quanto concerne le sigarette elettroniche al di sotto di tali soglie, la proposta della Commissione contempla avvertenze relative ai rischi per la salute, con le formulazioni opportune a seconda dei casi. Tali sigarette dovrebbero inoltre rispettare, come già avviene, le prescrizioni della direttiva sulla sicurezza generale dei prodotti.

Secondo la proposta della Commissione la maggior parte delle sigarette elettroniche ricadranno nel campo di applicazione della normativa farmaceutica. La commercializzazione delle stesse dovrà quindi uniformarsi alle norme applicabili ai medicinali. A parere della Commissione, tale soluzione renderebbe superfluo un sistema di tracciabilità specifico per le sigarette elettroniche.

([1]) SWD(2012)452 def.
([2]) COM(2012)788 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004487/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Rules for electronic cigarettes

The current Directive on tobacco products (2001/37/EC) dates back to 2001. Since then there have been significant scientific, international and market developments. For example, new evidence is available concerning the aromas used in tobacco products and the effectiveness of health information messages. Meanwhile, next generation products, such as electronic cigarettes, have appeared on the market; they have no specific patents, are of dubious origin and are not bound in any way by the legislation which governs traditional cigarettes. This phenomenon, which goes against all efforts to discourage the trend of smoking cigarettes, seems to be a cause for concern for European consumers, since there is no scientific evidence to rule out the short- or long-term adverse effects of using electronic cigarettes, both for smokers themselves and for any person, child or adult, exposed to passive smoking. The only thing that seems to have been confirmed is the immediate effect of bronchospasms, which occur 10 minutes after an electronic cigarette has been used, causing the bronchioles to constrict and making it more difficult for air to pass through.

The EU and all its Member States have ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Accordingly, some of the current provisions of the EU Directive have become obsolete. It therefore seems obvious that the rules on the production and sale of electronic cigarettes need to be harmonised. The new directive is currently being discussed and, although it is intended to update and implement current legislation while taking into account new developments in science and in the tobacco products market, it does not analyse all the changes in the sector with regard to the arrival of electronic cigarettes.

1. Does the Commission believe that legislation in the various EU Member States concerning the production and sale of electronic cigarettes should be harmonised, in order to protect consumers directly?

2. Does it believe that an EU patent and traceability system is needed for electronic cigarettes?

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

According to the information available to the Commission, national legislation on electronic cigarettes is currently characterised by significant divergences ([1]). The Commission therefore proposes a harmonised approach for these products.

According to the Commission proposal, electronic cigarettes would fall under the legal framework for medicinal products if they contain levels of nicotine above certain thresholds ([2]). Thus, their bringing on the market would require prior authorisation under pharmaceutical legislation. The threshold has been identified by considering the nicotine content of nicotine replacement therapies that have already received a marketing authorisation by Member States.

For electronic cigarettes below the thresholds, the Commission proposal foresees that they carry tailor made health warnings. They would also have to comply with the General Product Safety Directive as it is the case at the moment.

The Commission proposal foresees that the majority of electronic cigarettes would fall under the pharmaceutical legislation. Their placing on the market would thus have to comply with the rules applying to medicinal products. The Commission is of the opinion that, with this solution, a specific traceability system for electronic cigarettes would not be required.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final.
([2]) COM(2012) 788 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004488/13
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: London job creation — single market

Barriers to trade within the single market have not been eliminated, despite the EU celebrating the 20th anniversary of the single market programme last year.

Has the Commission conducted any research into the impact on job creation in London that the development of the single market, as it stands, has had?

If so, can it give details of this research?

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

While being aware of several private sector studies in relation to this topic on which it cannot comment, the Commission has not conducted research into the impact on job creation that the development of the Single Market as it stands has had in relation to any particular city in the EU.

Trade with the rest of the Single Market (i.e. the 26 other EU Member States) represented respectively 53.9% of total UK exports of goods and 39.5% of total UK exports of services in 2010. 51.4% of the total UK imports of goods and 51.1% of total UK imports of services came from the Single Market in 2010 (source: Eurostat).

Given the importance of the Greater London area for the UK economy, the Commission has no reason to believe that the impact of the trade in goods and services with the rest of the Single Market on jobs in the Greater London area is less important than it is in the rest of the UK.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004489/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(22 avril 2013)

Objet: Protéger les consommateurs en garantissant l'application des règles européennes: la situation des opérateurs étrangers de l'énergie en Hongrie

Dans sa déclaration en session plénière du Parlement européen, le 17 avril, Viviane Reding a évoqué les évolutions constitutionnelles récentes en Hongrie et souligné les conséquences qu'elles pourraient avoir en termes de compatibilité avec les règles européennes.

Viviane Reding a également rappelé la possibilité pour la Commission européenne de lancer de nouvelles procédures en infraction à l'encontre de la Hongrie, sans toutefois mentionner le secteur de l'énergie.

Or, les opérateurs étrangers du secteur de l'énergie rencontrent des difficultés sur le marché hongrois et subissent des pertes du fait des mesures prises par le gouvernement hongrois pour bloquer les tarifs de l'énergie et diminuer les taux de rémunération pour la distribution. Ces mesures dissuadent les entreprises étrangères d'investir dans le pays, craignant de nouvelles mesures défavorables aux opérateurs étrangers.

Ce ne sont pas seulement les consommateurs hongrois qui pourraient pâtir de ces problèmes, mais également tous les Européens, car ils ne peuvent tirer tous les bénéfices d'un marché de l'énergie pleinement intégré.

Dans sa communication sur un bon fonctionnement du marché intérieur de l'énergie, la Commission insiste sur la bonne application des règles et la mise en œuvre des règles de concurrence pour que toutes les entreprises du marché bénéficient d'une réelle égalité de traitement. À ce titre, que pense la Commission des problèmes spécifiques rencontrés par les opérateurs de l'énergie en Hongrie?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(28 juin 2013)

La Commission a suivi attentivement l'évolution du marché de l'énergie en Hongrie, et notamment les modifications législatives annoncées récemment. Ces modifications font actuellement l'objet d'une évaluation concernant leurs conséquences pour les opérateurs sur le marché de l'énergie en Hongrie et pour le fonctionnement du marché hongrois de l'énergie en général.

Lors de son analyse du cadre réglementaire, la Commission examine si les règles sont conformes à la législation de l'Union relative au marché intérieur de l'énergie. Pour avoir une idée globale de la situation, et notamment clarifier les différents éléments des mesures réglementaires, la Commission prendra contact, le cas échéant, avec les autorités hongroises. Le résultat de cette analyse permettra à la Commission de déterminer la conduite à adopter.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004489/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Protecting consumers by ensuring that EU rules are applied: the situation of foreign energy operators in Hungary

In a statement made at Parliament's plenary session of 17 April 2013, Viviane Reding referred to the recent constitutional developments in Hungary and drew attention to their possible consequences in terms of compatibility with EU rules.

Commissioner Reding also stated that the Commission may launch further infringement procedures against Hungary; however, she made no mention of the energy sector.

Foreign energy operators are facing difficulties in the Hungarian market and are incurring losses after the Hungarian Government adopted measures to block the implementation of energy tariffs and reduce remuneration for distribution. These steps are discouraging foreign enterprises from investing in Hungary, as they give rise to fears that more new measures will be introduced that put them at a disadvantage.

It is not only Hungarian consumers who could suffer as a result of this, but all Europeans, since they would be unable to take full advantage of a fully integrated energy market.

In its communication on the proper functioning of the internal energy market, the Commission insists that existing rules, including competition rules, should be properly applied in order to ensure that all companies in the market can benefit from truly equal treatment. In this connection, what is the Commission's view on the specific problems faced by energy operators in Hungary?

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

The Commission has carefully followed developments in the Hungarian energy market including the recently announced regulatory changes. These changes are now being assessed with regards to their impact on the energy market actors in Hungary and on the functioning of the Hungarian energy market in general.

When analysing the regulatory framework the Commission assesses whether the rules comply with EU internal energy market legislation. In order to have an overall picture of the situation — including clarifying the details of the regulatory measures — the Commission will engage with the Hungarian authorities as appropriate. The result of this analysis will help the Commission determining the appropriate course of action.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004490/13
à la Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(22 avril 2013)

Objet: Politique en matière de gestion des déchets biodégradables

La Commission européenne a publié le 7 mars 2013 un Livre vert sur une stratégie européenne en matière de déchets plastiques dans l'environnement. À la lecture de ce dernier, on se rend compte que les objets de la vie quotidienne, tels que les sacs plastiques fabriqués avec des matières biodégradables, ne seraient en fait pas si bénéfiques pour l'environnement que ce que l'on pourrait croire.

On apprend par exemple à la page 20 que les sacs plastiques biodégradables, s'ils sont jetés en mer, ne se décomposent que très lentement, voire pas du tout lorsqu'ils se retrouvent dans l'estomac d'un animal. La difficulté du recyclage de ces déchets dits biodégradables est également évoquée, et il semblerait qu'aucune solution satisfaisante n'ait été trouvée pour le moment. En revanche, il apparaît que sur les 25 millions de tonnes de déchets produits par an dans l'Union européenne, seuls 21,3 % ont pu être recyclés. Par conséquent, se pose la question de la pertinence du développement des matières biodégradables dans l'Union européenne, en particulier pour la fabrication de sacs plastiques.

1. Ne serait-il pas préférable, compte tenu des analyses auxquelles s'est livrée la Commission, d'encourager le développement de la filière de recyclage des déchets «classiques», plutôt que d'inciter à produire des sacs dits biodégradables qui, finalement, posent également beaucoup de problèmes environnementaux?

2. Quelles solutions la Commission envisage-t-elle de proposer pour résoudre les problèmes environnementaux supplémentaires qu'induit la production de sacs biodégradables?

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

1. La Commission tient à préciser qu'il n'est dit nulle part dans le Livre vert sur une stratégie européenne en matière de déchets plastiques dans l'environnement que les sacs biodégradables ne sont «pas si bénéfiques pour l'environnement», pas plus qu'il n'est indiqué que les sacs en plastique biodégradables sont plus problématiques que les sacs en plastique composés de plastique traditionnel. Le livre vert établit plutôt, sur la base des informations scientifiques disponibles, que les sacs en plastique biodégradables doivent faire l'objet d'un examen attentif avant d'être considérés comme une solution au problème de la présence de plastique dans les déchets marins.

2. La consultation publique sur le livre vert s'est achevée le 7 juin 2013. La Commission examine actuellement les réponses qu'elle a reçues et se prononcera plus tard sur d'éventuelles options stratégiques. La Commission a l'intention de présenter cette année une proposition concrète, basée sur une analyse approfondie des différentes approches possibles, afin de traiter la question des sacs en plastique à usage unique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004490/13
to the Commission
Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Biodegradable waste management policy

On 7 March 2013 the Commission published a Green Paper on a European strategy on plastic waste in the environment, according to which everyday items such as plastic bags made from biodegradable materials are not as environmentally friendly as might be thought.

For example, it is stated on page 20 that biodegradable plastic bags, if they are disposed of in the sea, only decompose very slowly or even not at all if they end up in an animal's stomach. Reference is also made to the problem of recycling this 'biodegradable' waste, and it seems that no satisfactory solution has yet been found. On the other hand, it has apparently only been possible to recycle 21.3% of the 25 million tonnes of waste produced every year by the EU. It is therefore worth asking whether there is any point in developing biodegradable materials in the EU, particularly for the manufacture of plastic bags.

1. In view of the analyses carried out by the Commission, would it not be preferable to encourage the development of 'traditional' waste recycling, rather than encouraging the production of 'biodegradable' bags which are ultimately much more problematic in environmental terms?

2. What solutions will the Commission propose to resolve the additional environmental problems associated with the production of biodegradable bags?

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

1. The Commission would like to clarify that the Green Paper on a European strategy on plastic waste in the environment does not state that biodegradable bags are 'not as environmentally friendly' and nowhere does it consider biodegradable plastic bags *more* problematic than plastic bags made of conventional plastic. Rather it reasoned on the basis of available scientific information that biodegradable plastic bags need careful consideration before being promoted as a solution for the problem of plastic in marine litter.

2. The public consultation on the Green Paper ended on 7 June 2013. The Commission is now in the process of evaluating the replies received and will only later decide on potential policy options. The Commission intends to come forward with a specific proposal to tackle the issue of single-use plastic bags this year, based on a thorough analysis of the various possible approaches.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004491/13
à la Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(22 avril 2013)

Objet: Plafonds d'effort de pêche — Pêche à la coquille en Baie de Seine

La pêche à la coquille en Manche est encadrée par le règlement du Conseil (CE) n° 1954/2003. Ce règlement indique la répartition de l'effort entre États membres faisant partie de cette pêcherie, notamment les zones CIEM VI et VII.

Les plafonds d'effort de pêche à respecter sont fixés par la Commission européenne (annexe I du règlement (CE) n° 1954/2003), laquelle reçoit également des États membres une description des mesures mises en œuvre pour la gestion de l'effort exercé. La Commission reçoit notamment la liste des navires possédant des permis de pêche spéciaux pour la coquille de la part des États membres (article 10).

En plus des règles communautaires qui sont la taille minimale, le régime d'encadrement de l'effort de pêche à travers les permis de pêche spéciaux et le plafond d'effort annuel, les pêcheurs de Basse-Normandie ont mis en place un ensemble de règles nationales pour la gestion durable de la coquille Saint-Jacques. Ces mesures comprennent notamment la fermeture annuelle du 15 mai au 30 septembre, le maillage des anneaux des dragues, la fixation d'une quantité maximale de pêche par sortie, un accès plus restreint aux zones côtières et des restrictions du temps de pêche.

Depuis 2011 déjà, les pêcheurs français de la Baie de Seine sont préoccupés par l'augmentation de l'effort de pêche de leurs homologues d'autres États membres, particulièrement les navires britanniques. En zone CIEM VII, la production a doublé en quatre ans. L'augmentation de l'effort britannique semble avoir dépassé les seuils d'effort de pêche initialement alloués par l'Union européenne.

1. La Commission a-t-elle pris la mesure du conflit entre professionnels dans le cadre de la pêche de cette espèce?

2. La Commission peut-elle nous faire parvenir un tableau comparatif des seuils d'effort autorisés par le règlement (CE) n° 1954/2003 et les chiffres de l'effort de pêche à la coquille effectivement réalisés en zone CIEM VI et VII par chaque État membre?

3. La Commission peut-elle proposer ses services en tant que médiateur dans ce conflit entre professionnels français et britanniques et permettre la mise en place d'un accord entre professionnels reconnu par les États concernés tel qu'il existe dans la Baie de Granville?

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

La Commission est consciente du problème et des efforts déployés par l'industrie pour mettre en place des mesures de gestion coopérative.

Les limites de l'effort fixées pour les eaux occidentales à l'annexe I du règlement (CE) n° 1415/2004 peuvent être adaptées chaque année au moyen d'échanges entre les États membres. Conformément aux dispositions des articles 33 et 109 du règlement relatif au contrôle [règlement (CE) n° 1224/2009], les États membres sont tenus de fournir des chiffres d'utilisation exacts pour le 15 de chaque mois. La Commission transmet directement à l'Honorable Parlementaire et au secrétariat du Parlement un tableau présentant les données officielles dont la Commission dispose pour 2012.

La Commission contrôle actuellement les systèmes de notification de plusieurs États membres afin de s'assurer de leur efficacité et de vérifier que les limites de l'effort de pêche définies sont respectées. Si des cas de non-respect des règles de l'Union applicables sont constatés, les mesures appropriées seront prises.

La Commission est disposée à aider au règlement des différends survenant entre les secteurs de la pêche, y compris dans ce cas concernant une pêcherie largement côtière. Si l'état du stock ou son exploitation devenaient préoccupants, la Commission étudierait les options disponibles afin de prendre des mesures de conservation supplémentaires. À la suite du récent accord donné par les colégislateurs sur la réforme de la politique commune de la pêche, l'une des solutions possibles serait la mise en place de mesures de gestion conjointe par les États membres concernés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004491/13
to the Commission
Alain Cadec (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Fishing effort ceilings — fishing for scallops in the Seine estuary

Fishing for scallops in the English Channel is covered by Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003. This regulation sets out how the fishing effort is to be divided between Member States fishing this fishery, particularly in ICES areas VI and VII.

The fishing effort ceilings which must be complied with are set by the Commission (Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003), which also receives from the Member States a description of the steps they have taken to manage the effort deployed. In particular, the Commission receives from the Member States a list of vessels with special fishing permits for scallops (Article 10).

In addition to EU rules such as the minimum size requirement, the regime to contain fishing effort through special fishing permits and the annual effort ceiling, the fishermen of Lower Normandy have implemented a set of national rules for the sustainable management of scallops. These measures include an annual close season from 15 May to 30 September, a mesh size for nets, a maximum quantity of fish per trip, more controlled access to coastal zones and time restrictions on fishing.

Since 2011, French fishermen in the Seine estuary have been concerned about the increased fishing effort by their fellow fishermen in other Member States, particularly by British vessels. Production has doubled in four years in ICES area VII. The increased British effort appears to have exceeded the fishing effort limits originally allowed by the EU.

1. Is the Commission fully aware of the dispute between fishermen in respect of fishing for this species?

2. Can the Commission provide a table comparing the effort limits authorised by Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 and the figures for the scallop fishing effort actually deployed in ICES areas VI and VII by each Member State?

3. Can the Commission act as a mediator in this dispute between French and British fishermen, allowing an agreement to be reached between fishermen that is recognised by the Member States concerned, as is the case in the Bay of Granville?

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

The Commission is aware of the issue and of attempts by the industry to develop cooperative management measures.

The initial Western Waters effort limits set out in Annex I of Regulation (EC) No 1415/2004, can be adapted yearly by exchange between Member States. Pursuant to the provisions of Articles 33 and 109 of the Control Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009), Member States are required to provide accurate uptake figures by the 15th of each month. The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat a table that presents the official data available to the Commission for 2012.

The Commission is currently auditing the reporting processes of several Member States to ensure effective of reporting systems and to check that defined effort limits are complied with. Action will be taken as appropriate if any non-compliance with applicable EU regulations should be found.

The Commission is willing to help resolve any differences between fishing sectors, including this largely inshore fishery. Should there be cause for concern about the state of the stock or its exploitation, the Commission will consider options for any additional conservation measures. Following the recent agreement on the reformed rules of the common fisheries policy by the co-legislators one possible option is the development of joint management measures by the Member States involved.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004492/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Riduzione del gap informatico tra Nord e Sud Europa

Nell'ultima edizione del Global Information Technology Report, a cura del World Economic Forum, viene evidenziato il forte divario in ambito di implementazione delle tecnologie informatiche tra i Paesi del Nord e quelli del Sud Europa.

Da un lato, la Finlandia, dove l'accesso alla banda larga è riconosciuto per legge come un diritto di ogni cittadino, risulta il Paese più virtuoso in quanto a facilità di accesso ad internet per privati e imprese, seguito a breve distanza da Svezia, Olanda e Norvegia; dall'altro Italia e Grecia presentano un indice di penetrazione di internet assai deludente, inferiore persino a quello di Paesi globalmente meno sviluppati come Taiwan o la Giordania.

Si pensi che in Italia e nella stessa Lombardia, dove gli ostacoli di tipo ambientale o orografico sono decisamente inferiori a quelli esistenti nei Paesi Scandinavi, molte località non sono tuttora raggiunte dalla banda larga, il che implica considerevoli disagi per cittadini ed imprese e frena lo sviluppo delle aree interessate da tale problema.

Poiché tale situazione comporta notevolissimi danni all'economia europea, e considerato che i Paesi più avanzati in questo settore hanno raggiunto l'attuale primato anche grazie ad oculate scelte politiche, e ricordando altresì come la presenza di una rete informatica veloce, economica, affidabile e capillare costituisca un presupposto imprescindibile per una reale implementazione del mercato unico europeo e della stessa idea di Unione europea, chiediamo alla Commissione quali iniziative intenda intraprendere per agevolare una migliore diffusione dell'accesso a internet per imprese e cittadini in tutto il territorio dell'Unione e per ridurre il gap informatico tra gli Stati membri.

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2013)

La Commissione concorda pienamente sul fatto che la banda larga è fondamentale per l'economia europea ed essenziale per l'Italia e per tutti i cittadini europei. Essa ha confermato la sua posizione in merito nell'agenda digitale europea ([1]) e ha fissato traguardi ambiziosi per la copertura a banda larga e la sua diffusione. La Commissione al momento sta lavorando con gli Stati membri per garantire un'efficace realizzazione di questi obiettivi e rendere la banda larga accessibile a tutti.

Il miglioramento delle connessioni a banda larga richiede investimenti sia da parte del settore pubblico sia di quello privato. Il ruolo della Commissione in relazione agli investimenti privati è assicurare che ci sia un quadro normativo atto ad incoraggiare tali investimenti. La Commissione persegue tale obiettivo e sta lavorando a una raccomandazione sui metodi di definizione dei costi e sulla non discriminazione. Inoltre, nel marzo di quest'anno, la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativo a misure volte a ridurre il costo dell'installazione di reti di comunicazioni elettroniche ad alta velocità ([2]), che dovrebbe ridurre il costo della diffusione di internet ad alta velocità fino al 30 %. In risposta alle conclusioni del Consiglio europeo di marzo, la Commissione sta lavorando a una proposta di misure volte a creare un mercato unico delle tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione.

In aree in cui il settore privato non veda alcun interesse commerciale nell'investimento, come potrebbe verificarsi nel caso delle zone remote e scarsamente popolate dell'Italia, la Commissione può finanziare gli investimenti in banda larga tramite i Fondi strutturali e per gli investimenti europei. Di recente la Commissione ha adottato nuovi orientamenti in materia di aiuti di Stato ([3]) al fine di garantire che tale regolamentazione sia al passo con i più recenti sviluppi tecnologici in fatto di connessione a banda larga.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/digital-agenda-europe.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0147:FIN:IT:PDF].
([3]) Orientamenti dell'Unione europea per l'applicazione delle norme in materia di aiuti di Stato in relazione allo sviluppo rapido di reti a banda larga.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004492/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Reducing the digital divide between northern and southern Europe

The latest edition of the World Economic Forum's Global Information Technology Report highlights the wide gap in information technology implementation between the countries of northern and southern Europe.

On the one hand, Finland, where the right of every citizen to broadband access is enshrined in law, is the best country in terms of Internet access for individuals and companies, followed closely by Sweden, the Netherlands and Norway; on the other hand, Italy and Greece have extremely disappointing Internet penetration rates, even lower than those of globally less developed countries such as Taiwan or Jordan.

In Italy and specifically in Lombardy, where there are far fewer environmental and orographic obstacles than in Scandinavian countries, many areas still do not have broadband, which is a major disadvantage for citizens and companies and which slows down the development of the areas affected by this problem.

Given that this situation causes great harm to the European economy and that the more advanced countries in this sector have gained their current advantage partly because of shrewd policy choices, and considering, furthermore, that the existence of a fast, economical, reliable and widespread IT network is a prerequisite for the actual implementation of the single European market and of the very concept of European Union, what action does the Commission intend to take to facilitate improved Internet access for companies and citizens across the whole European Union and to reduce the digital divide among the Member States?

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

The Commission fully agrees that broadband underpins the European economy and that it is essential for Italy and all Europeans. The Commission has reinforced this position in the Digital Agenda for Europe ([1]) by setting ambitious targets for broadband coverage and take up. It is now working with the Member States to ensure effective implementation of these targets and make broadband accessible for all.

Improving broadband connections requires investment by both the private and public sectors. The Commission's role in regard to private investment is to ensure that there is a regulatory framework encouraging such investment. The Commission pursues this objective and is currently working on a recommendation on costing methodologies and non-discrimination. In addition, in March this year, the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks ([2]), which is expected to cut the cost of rolling out high speed Internet by up to 30%. In response to the March European Council Conclusions, the Commission is working on a proposal of measures to establish a single market for Information and Communication Technologies.

In areas where the private sector can see no business case to invest, which may well apply to the remote and sparsely populated parts of Italy, the Commission may support broadband investment through the European Structural and Investments Funds. The Commission also recently adopted revised guidelines on state aid regulations ([3]) to ensure these are up to date with the latest technological developments in broadband connectivity.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/digital-agenda-europe.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0147:FIN:EN:PDF].
([3]) Guidelines for the application of state aid rules in relation to the rapid deployment of broadband networks.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004493/13
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Polizze auto assicurative più costose per ragioni di età

Secondo la sentenza relativa alla causa C 236/09, in applicazione anche dell'articolo 21 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali che vieta discriminazioni fondate sul sesso, non è consentito stipulare polizze di assicurazione relative alla circolazione stradale con tariffe differenti in base al sesso dell'assicurato.

Poiché il citato articolo 21 vieta altresì discriminazioni fondate sull'età, intende la Commissione attivarsi perché le assicurazioni non applichino, sempre riguardo alle polizze per la circolazione stradale, condizioni tariffarie differenti in base all'età?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2013)

La sentenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea nella causa C-236/09 («Test-Achats») riguarda la direttiva 2004/113/CE del Consiglio che attua il principio della parità di trattamento tra uomini e donne per quanto riguarda l'accesso a beni e servizi e la loro fornitura ([1]).

Attualmente nessuna legislazione dell'UE vieta la discriminazione per motivi di età per l'accesso a beni e servizi. L'articolo 21 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea si applica soltanto agli Stati membri esclusivamente nell'attuazione del diritto dell'Unione, articolo 51, paragrafo 1, della Carta.

Nel 2008 la Commissione ha presentato una proposta di direttiva ([2]) che introduce il divieto di discriminazione anche per motivi di età, nell'accesso a beni e servizi, tra cui prodotti finanziari quali le polizze assicurative. La proposta legislativa è ancora in fase di negoziato al Consiglio, che deve raggiungere l'unanimità per adottarla.

Il progetto di direttiva prevede una disposizione specifica sui servizi finanziari in base alla quale disparità proporzionate di trattamento in ragione dell'età non costituiscono discriminazione se, per il servizio prodotto in questione, l'età è un elemento determinante per valutare i rischi e se la valutazione si basa su principi attuariali e dati statistici.

([1]) GU L 373 del 21.10.2004, pag. 37.
([2]) Proposta di direttiva del Consiglio recante applicazione del principio di parità di trattamento fra le persone indipendentemente dalla religione o dalle convinzioni personali, dalla disabilità, dall'età o dall'orientamento sessuale, COM(2008)426 definitivo del 2 luglio 2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004493/13
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Increased cost of vehicle insurance policies on the grounds of age

According to the judgment in Case C-236/09, pursuant to Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which prohibits discrimination based on sex, the cost of vehicle insurance policies must not differ based on the policyholder's gender.

Since the aforementioned Article 21 also prohibits discrimination based on age, will the Commission take action to ensure that the premium conditions for vehicle insurance policies do not differ on the grounds of age?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2013)

The judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C-236/09 ('Test-Achats') concerned Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services ([1]).

There is currently no EU legislation prohibiting discrimination on grounds of age in the access to goods and services. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union is only applicable at Member States level as regards the implementation of EC law (in line with Article 51(1) of the Charter).

In 2008, the Commission issued a proposal for a directive ([2]) that would introduce a ban on discrimination on the grounds of age (among other grounds) in access to goods and services, including financial products such as vehicle insurance. This legislative proposal is still being negotiated in Council where unanimity is required for its adoption.

The draft Directive includes a specific provision on financial services, according to which proportionate differences in treatment on the grounds of age would not constitute discrimination provided that age is a determining factor in the assessment of risk for the service in question and that this assessment is based on actuarial principles and statistical data.

([1]) OJ L 373, 21.10.2004, p. 37.
([2]) Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, COM(2008) 426 final, 2.7.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004494/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Aumento delle violenze religiose contro i cristiani in Uzbekistan

È notizia recente che le persecuzioni contro i cristiani sono in netto aumento nel mondo arabo e che, in Uzbekistan in particolare, ad attuarle sono le stesse forze di polizia chiamate a reprimerle. Quattro famiglie cristiane, ad esempio, sono state arrestate perché colpevoli di possedere libri e cd sulla fede cristiana. La polizia ha trattenuto per ore i membri di queste famiglie, li ha sottoposti a trattamenti degradanti e infine ha distrutto il materiale sequestrato. Sono numerosi anche gli attacchi ai missionari e ai giovani convertitisi, attacchi che si traducono in multe di migliaia di euro, violenze fisiche e morali.

Considerando che, come sottolinea Amnesty International nel suo ultimo rapporto, il 23 dicembre 2008 l'Uzbekistan ha aderito al secondo protocollo opzionale della convenzione internazionale sui diritti civili e politici, ma non ha ancora ratificato il protocollo opzionale della convenzione contro la tortura;

considerando altresì le risoluzioni adottate dal Parlamento europeo contro le persecuzioni religiose verso i cristiani, in particolare le risoluzioni P6_TA(2007)0542 e P7_TA(2011)0021 e la risoluzione P6_TA(2007)0543 nella parte in cui «esorta le autorità dell'Uzbekistan a rispettare pienamente i loro impegni internazionali a favore delle libertà fondamentali»;

si chiede all'Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione:

1. se sia a conoscenza degli sviluppi della situazione;

2. quali azioni ha già intrapreso o intende intraprendere per favorire il rispetto della libertà di culto in Uzbekistan.

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

Essendo la libertà di religione e di credo un diritto umano universale, la sua tutela rientra tra le priorità della politica dell'UE in materia di diritti dell'uomo.

L'AR/VP ha condannato la violenza e gli atti di terrorismo in tutto il mondo, in particolare contro i cristiani e i loro luoghi di culto, i pellegrini musulmani e altre comunità religiose.

Sebbene l'Uzbekistan non sia rimasto completamente immune a rinnovate manifestazioni di intolleranza nei confronti di gruppi cristiani, questo fenomeno fortunatamente non ha raggiunto le dimensioni che si riscontrano in molti altri paesi. Siamo tuttavia preoccupati per i recenti e incresciosi eventi che coinvolgono i cristiani, spesso dovuti alla rigida applicazione della legislazione uzbeca che vieta ogni forma di «attività di proselitismo». Abbiamo quindi incoraggiato l'Uzbekistan a riformare questa legge.

L'UE utilizza l'intera gamma degli strumenti diplomatici e di cooperazione di cui dispone per affrontare il problema della libertà di religione e di credo su base bilaterale, in particolare nell'ambito del dialogo annuale sui diritti umani. Inoltre, l'UE ha ripetutamente invitato l'Uzbekistan a ratificare il protocollo facoltativo della convenzione contro la tortura. A livello locale, le delegazioni dell'UE stanno monitorando la situazione per quanto riguarda la libertà di religione e di credo e si impegnano per affrontare i problemi ad essa connessi laddove necessario.

Nelle sedi internazionali, l'UE si impegna a livello multilaterale per ottenere consenso sulle misure di libertà di religione e di credo e sulla lotta all'intolleranza religiosa e alla violenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004494/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Rise in religious violence against Christians in Uzbekistan

According to recent news reports, there has been a sharp increase in persecutions of Christians in the Arab world, and in Uzbekistan in particular, the police, who should be preventing such persecutions, are the perpetrators. For example, four Christian families were arrested for possessing books and CDs about the Christian faith. The police detained the members of those families for hours and subjected them to degrading treatment before finally destroying the seized material. There have also been numerous attacks on missionaries and young converts, consisting of fines of thousands of euros, as well as physical violence and moral coercion.

As Amnesty International highlights in its latest report, on 23 December 2008 Uzbekistan signed the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but has not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

Furthermore, the European Parliament has adopted resolutions against religious persecution of Christians, in particular Resolutions P6_TA(2007)0542 and P7_TA(2011)0021 and Resolution P6_TA(2007)0543, in which it 'urges the Uzbek authorities to implement fully their international commitments to fundamental freedoms'.

1. Is the High Representative of the Union aware of these developments?

2. What measures has she already taken or does she intend to take in order to promote respect for freedom of worship in Uzbekistan?

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

As a universal human right, freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) is a high priority under EU's human rights policy.

The HR/VP has condemned violence and acts of terrorism worldwide, in particular against Christians and their places of worship, Muslim pilgrims and other religious communities.

Although Uzbekistan has not remained totally immune to renewed manifestations of intolerance vis-à-vis Christian groups, this phenomenon has fortunately not reached the magnitude seen in some other countries. We are nonetheless concerned with some recent and regrettable occurrences involving Christians, often due to the strict enforcement of the Uzbek legislation prohibiting any form of 'proselytizing activity'. We have thus encouraged Uzbekistan to reform this piece of legislation.

The EU uses the full range of its diplomatic and cooperation instruments to address FoRB on a bilateral basis, in particular in the framework of the annual Human Rights Dialogue. Moreover, the EU has repeatedly called on Uzbekistan to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. At local level, EU Delegations are monitoring the state of FoRB and engage on such issues whenever necessary.

In international fora, the EU has recourse to multilateral engagement to gather consensus on FoRB standards and against religious intolerance and violence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004495/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi erogati ai paesi in fase di preadesione attraverso lo strumento IPA

L'Unione europea ha costituito specifici strumenti finanziari per promuovere un progressivo avvicinamento di paesi in fase di preadesione: Turchia, Croazia, ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia-Erzegovina, Montenegro e Islanda.

Nel 2007 i precedenti strumenti finanziari messi a disposizione di tali paesi sono stati sostituiti dall'IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance).

Può la Commissione indicare l'ammontare dei fondi erogati attraverso l'IPA per ognuno di questi Stati e per ogni singolo anno, dal 2007 ad oggi?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004496/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi erogati ai paesi in fase di preadesione dal 2000 al 2006

L'Unione europea ha costituito specifici strumenti finanziari per promuovere un progressivo avvicinamento di paesi in fase di preadesione: Turchia, Croazia, ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia-Erzegovina, Montenegro.

Prima del 2007 gli strumenti di preadesione attivati dall'UE erano: PHARE, PHARE-CBC, SAPARD, ISPA, il regolamento finanziario per la Turchia e CARDS.

Può la Commissione indicare l'ammontare dei fondi erogati attraverso questi strumenti per ogni singolo Stato e per ogni singolo anno fra il 2000 e il 2006?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(27 giugno 2013)

La relazione annuale 2011 sull'assistenza finanziaria preadesione (IPA, PHARE [1], CARDS [2], strumento di preadesione per la Turchia e strumento di transizione) e il relativo documento di lavoro [SWD(2012)385 final] [3] contengono informazioni sull'assistenza ai paesi dell'allargamento. Entrambi i documenti sono stati trasmessi al Consiglio e al Parlamento subito dopo l'adozione da parte della Commissione.

I dati più recenti sugli esborsi relativi ai fondi pre-IPA (strumenti di preadesione 2000-2006) sono riportati a pagina 171 e 172 del documento di lavoro.

Gli esborsi relativi ai fondi IPA dal 2007 al 2011 sono pubblicati anche nella relazione annuale 2011 sull'assistenza finanziaria preadesione e i dati più recenti figurano a pagina 24 e 25.

Il documento di lavoro contiene informazioni più dettagliate sui singoli paesi in fase di preadesione e sull'attuazione della cooperazione finanziaria [4].

La relazione annuale 2012 sull'assistenza finanziaria preadesione (IPA, PHARE, CARDS, strumento di preadesione per la Turchia e strumento di transizione) è in fase di elaborazione e dovrebbe essere adottata nel terzo trimestre 2013.

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[1] PHARE = Programma comunitario di assistenza ai paesi dell'Europa centrale e orientale.
[2] CARDS = Assistenza comunitaria alla ricostruzione, allo sviluppo e alla stabilizzazione.
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/2011_ipa_annual_report_with_annex_new_en.pdf
[4] Cfr. pagg. 23-24 per la Croazia, 49-50 per la Turchia, 56 per l'Islanda, 69-70 per l'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia, 88-89 per il Montenegro, 104-105 per l'Albania, 121-122 per la Serbia, 135-135 per la Bosnia-Erzegovina, 145-146 per il Kosovo e 165 per il programma multibeneficiari.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004495/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Funds disbursed to pre-accession countries through the IPA

The European Union has established specific financial instruments to encourage pre-accession countries — Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Iceland — gradually to move closer to the EU.

In 2007 the previous financial instruments available to these countries were replaced by the IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance).

Can the Commission state the amount of the funds disbursed through the IPA for each of these States and for each year, from 2007 until now?

Question for written answer E-004496/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Funds disbursed to pre-accession countries between 2000 and 2006

The European Union has established specific financial instruments to encourage pre-accession countries — Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro — gradually to move closer to the EU.

Prior to 2007 the pre-accession instruments established by the EU were: Phare, Phare CBC, Sapard, ISPA, the financial instrument for Turkey and CARDS.

Can the Commission state the amount of the funds disbursed through these instruments for each individual State and for each year between 2000 and 2006?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2013)

Information on assistance to Enlargement countries is presented in the Annual Report on Financial Assistance for Enlargement 2011 (IPA, Phare ([1]), CARDS ([2]), Turkey pre-accession Instrument and Transition Facility) and its accompanying Staff Working Document [SWD(2012)385 final] ([3]). Both have been transmitted to Council and Parliament upon adoption by the Commission.

The latest figures concerning the disbursements relative to pre-IPA (Instruments for Pre-Accession 2000-2006) Funds are presented on pages 171 and 172 of the SWD.

The disbursements concerning IPA funds from 2007 to 2011 are also published in the Annual Report on Financial Assistance for Enlargement 2011, and the latest figures can be found on pages 24 and 25.

More detailed information for each pre-accession country and related to the implementation of financial cooperation is presented in the accompanying SWD per country ([4]) .

The 2012 Annual Report on Financial Assistance for Enlargement (IPA, Phare, CARDS, Turkey pre-accession Instrument and Transition Facility) is under preparation and its adoption is foreseen in the course of the 3rd quarter of 2013.

([1]) Phare = Programme of Community Aid to the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe.
([2]) CARDS = Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/2011_ipa_annual_report_with_annex_new_en.pdf
([4]) See pages 23-24 for Croatia, 49-50 for Turkey, 56 for Iceland, 69-70 for The former Republic of Macedonia, 88-89 for Montenegro, 104-105 for Albania, 121-122 for Serbia, 135-135 for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 145-146 for Kosovo and 165 for the Multi Beneficiary Programme.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004497/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Prestiti erogati dalla BEI ai Paesi in fase di preadesione

La Commissione può indicare l'ammontare dei prestiti erogati dalla Banca Europea per gli Investimenti (BEI) in favore di ogni singolo Paese attualmente in fase di preadesione, per il periodo 2007-2013, dettagliando gli importi per anno?

La Commissione può altresì indicare per quali importi l'Unione europea si è fatta garante presso la BEI nonché le conseguenze in termini economici per l'UE di un eventuale loro mancato rientro?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(17 luglio 2013)

Alla fine del 2012 i finanziamenti concessi dalla BEI alla regione interessata dal processo di preadesione, coperti da garanzie dell'UE, ammontavano a EUR 8,636 miliardi. La concessione della garanzia dell'Unione si fonda sulla Decisione n. 1080/2011/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, che accorda alla Banca europea per gli investimenti una garanzia dell'Unione in caso di perdite dovute a prestiti e garanzie sui prestiti a favore di progetti realizzati al di fuori dell'Unione e che abroga la decisione n. 633/2009/CE. Va altresì ricordato che il fondo di garanzia per le azioni esterne, istituito con regolamento (CE, Euratom) n. 480/2009 del Consiglio, del 25 maggio 2009, che istituisce un fondo di garanzia per le azioni esterne ([1]), rappresenta una riserva di liquidità per il bilancio dell'Unione, in quanto esso compensa le perdite subite per inadempienze su finanziamenti erogati dalla BEI e fornisce fondi per altre azioni esterne dell'Unione.

([1]) GU L 145 del 10.6.2009, pag. 10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004497/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EIB loans granted to pre-accession countries

Can the Commission reveal the total amount of the loans granted by the European Investment Bank (EIB) to each individual country currently in the pre-accession phase, during the 2007-2013 period, and specify the amounts granted in each of those years?

Furthermore, can the Commission specify the amounts for which the European Union is acting as a guarantor to the EIB, as well as the economic consequences for the EU of any failure to repay the loans?

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

At the end of 2012, EIB financing in the Pre-Accession region covered by the EU guarantee reached EUR 8.636 billion. The coverage of the EU guarantee is specified in Decision No 1080/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 granting an EU guarantee to the EIB against losses under loans and loan guarantees for projects outside the Union and repealing Decision No 633/2009/EC. Moreover, it should be recalled that the Guarantee Fund for external actions, established by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009 of 25 May 2009 establishing a Guarantee Fund for external actions ([1]), provides a liquidity cushion for the Union budget against losses incurred on EIB financing operations and other Union external action.

([1]) OJ L 145, 10.6.2009, p. 10.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004498/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per l'industria boschiva nel Comune di Lariano

Nel Comune di Lariano, in provincia di Roma, esiste da circa cinquant'anni una società leader nel settore dell'industria boschiva, e precisamente nella lavorazione di travi, morali, doghettati e tavolame in castagno. Tale società è impegnata principalmente nella produzione di prodotti di altissima qualità come tettoie e gazebi, oltre a lavorare il lamellare di abete e palombelle, anche grazie alla sua eccellente manodopera altamente specializzata e a una continua ricerca delle più moderne tecnologie.

Oggi tale società è impegnata in una strutturazione e riorganizzazione aziendale che prevede l'espansione della propria produzione e distribuzione attraverso l'ampliamento del proprio sito industriale. L'idea, infatti, è quella di migliorare la propria lavorazione in relazione anche alle mutate richieste di mercato. Tutto questo favorirà la creazione di nuovi posti di lavoro e la creazione di un nuovo indotto in tutta l'area del Comune di Lariano.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se esistono possibili finanziamenti per il progetto suesposto;

2. quali azioni o programmi sono previsti per il sostegno alle PMI nel settore dell'industria boschiva nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020;

3. un quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(4 luglio 2013)

Il progetto menzionato dall'onorevole deputata potrebbe essere finanziato a valere sulla priorità I «Ricerca, innovazione e rafforzamento della base produttiva» del programma del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) per il Lazio, che supporta gli interventi a favore delle PMI.
Tuttavia, in linea con il principio di gestione condivisa applicato all'amministrazione della politica di coesione, la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti rientrano nelle responsabilità delle autorità nazionali. Per ulteriori informazione la Commissione suggerisce all'onorevole deputata di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione del programma per il Lazio:

Autorità di gestione del programma operativo regionale per il Lazio 2007-2013
Via R. R. Garibaldi, 7 — 00145 Roma
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

Per il periodo 2014-2020, conformemente ai regolamenti proposti del Fondo strutturale e di investimento europeo (ESIF), che devono essere ancora adottato, le regioni più sviluppate dell'UE quali il Lazio dedicheranno almeno il 60 % dei finanziamenti del FESR a favore della ricerca e dell'innovazione e a sostegno della competitività delle piccole e medie imprese operanti in tutti i settori economici tranne quelli esclusi dall'allegato I del trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE (vale a dire i prodotti agricoli che potrebbero essere oggetto di un'organizzazione comune dei mercati nel quadro delle politica agricola comune).

Gli obiettivi specifici regionali saranno definiti nei programmi 2014-2020 che dovranno essere sottoposti alla Commissione dopo l'adozione dei regolamenti ESIF, parallelamente al perfezionamento dell'accordo di partenariato italiano.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004498/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the timber industry in the municipality of Lariano

For around 50 years, the municipality of Lariano, in the province of Rome, has been home to one of the foremost timber companies, particularly when it comes to manufacturing chestnut wood beams, joists, planks and boards. The company mainly manufactures very high-quality products such as canopies and gazebos, and produces laminated spruce and corbels, thanks to its exceptional and highly skilled workforce and its constant researching of the latest technologies.

The company is currently undergoing restructuring and reorganisation, which involves expansion of its production and distribution by enlarging its industrial site. The idea is to enhance its production in line with the changed demands of the market. All this will foster the creation of new jobs and the creation of new economic activity throughout the municipality of Lariano.

1. Is there any potential funding for the above project?

2. What action or programmes are planned to support small and medium-sized enterprises in the timber industry in the new programming period 2014-2020?

3. Can the Commission provide an overview of the situation?

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

The project referred to by the Honourable Member could potentially be financed under priority I 'Research, innovation and strengthening of production' of the Lazio European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme, which supports interventions in favour of SMEs.

However, in line with the shared management principle used for the administration of the cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. For more information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the Lazio programme:

Managing authority regional operational programme Lazio for 2007-2013
Via R. R. Garibaldi, 7 00145 Roma
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

Regarding 2014-2020, according to proposed European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) regulations which have yet to be adopted, the EU's more developed regions such as Lazio will dedicate at least 60% of ERDF funds in favour of research and innovation and to support the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises operating in all economic sectors except those excluded by Annex I of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU (i.e. agricultural products which could be subject to a common market organisation in the framework of the common agricultural policy).

Specific regional objectives will be defined in the 2014-2020 programmes which are to be submitted to the Commission after the adoption of the ESIF regulations, in parallel with the finalisation of the Italian partnership agreement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004499/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per il settore della pelletteria in Toscana

In provincia di Siena esiste da quarant'anni una società leader nel settore della moda e precisamente nella produzione di prodotti di pelletteria. Tale società è impegnata principalmente nella produzione di prodotti di lusso e di alta moda. Infatti, grazie alla sua eccellente manodopera altamente specializzata e ad una continua ricerca delle più moderne tecnologie, da circa vent'anni fornisce il proprio know-how al Gruppo LVMH, leader mondiale di brand di lusso delle più prestigiose griffe francesi.

Ad oggi tale società, oltre a garantire l'occupazione a 35 famiglie, riesce anche a generare un indotto per altre cinque aziende locali. Recentemente, in un quadro di ristrutturazione e riorganizzazione aziendale, la società ha previsto l'espansione della propria produzione attraverso l'ampliamento del proprio sito industriale, assorbendo così al suo interno alcune aziende che già avevano collaborato in passato. L'idea, infatti, è quella di progettare insieme al Gruppo LVMH una nuova linea di produzione che comprenda l'intero ciclo produttivo che va dalla progettazione fino al prodotto finito. Tutto questo favorirà la creazione di nuovi posti di lavoro altamente specializzati, favorendo anche la creazione di un nuovo indotto in tutta l'area senese.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1. far sapere se esistono possibili finanziamenti per il progetto suesposto;

2. indicare quali azioni o programmi sono previsti per il sostegno alle PMI nella nuova programmazione 2014-2020;

3. fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2013)

Per il periodo di programmazione 2014-2020 la Commissione ha presentato una proposta riguardante un nuovo programma per la competitività delle imprese e le PMI (il programma COSME). La Commissione intende utilizzare tale programma per fornire un sostegno finanziario e non finanziario, tra l'altro, a PMI dell'UE che fabbricano beni di consumo con una marcata componente di design nei settori della pelletteria e delle calzature, come pure ad altre industrie della moda. Il programma COSME comprende misure volte a migliorare l'accesso delle PMI a finanziamenti, servizi per le imprese e innovazione.

Basandosi sul successo del programma quadro per la competitività e l'innovazione (CIP), i finanziamenti del COSME saranno forniti sotto forma di garanzie e capitale proprio, disponibili tramite le istituzioni finanziarie che partecipano al programma. Un sostegno alle PMI, finalizzato a promuovere la leadership industriale dell'Unione europea, è proposto anche nel quadro del programma per la ricerca e l'innovazione Orizzonte 2020.

Sia per Orizzonte 2020 che per COSME sono in corso discussioni a livello interistituzionale per far sì che l'attuazione dei programmi abbia inizio a partire dal 1º gennaio 2014.

Altre possibilità di finanziamento sono offerte del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, per quanto riguarda la Regione Toscana. Per il periodo 2007-2013 il programma operativo per la Regione Toscana ha destinato il 28 % circa del suo bilancio complessivo a iniziative volte a promuovere la crescita delle PMI, in particolare sviluppando il loro potenziale innovativo al fine di facilitare l'accesso a nuovi mercati nel contesto della globalizzazione economica.

La rete Enterprise Europe può fornire consulenze sulle fonti di finanziamento, a livello europeo e/o locale, che possono essere adatte a sostenere una nuova linea di produzione o l'espansione di una linea già esistente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004499/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the leather goods sector in Tuscany

For 40 years a leading company in the fashion industry and, more specifically, in leather goods manufacturing, has been operating in the province of Siena. That company is mainly engaged in the production of luxury and high fashion goods. In fact, thanks to its excellent and highly specialised workforce and to its constant search for the most up-to-date technologies, for some 20 years it has been providing its know-how to the LVMH Group, the world leader in luxury brands bearing the most prestigious French labels.

To date that company, in addition to providing jobs for 35 families, has been able to generate work for five other local businesses. As part of a recent restructuring and reorganisation exercise, the company sought to expand its production by extending its industrial site and hence absorbing some firms with which it had already worked in the past. The idea, in fact, is to design, together with the LVMH Group, a new production line that encompasses the whole production cycle, from design right through to the finished product. All this will facilitate the creation of new and highly specialised jobs, and will help stimulate new economic activity throughout the Siena area.

Can the Commission therefore:

1. Say whether possible funding exists for the above project?

2. Explain what actions or programmes are envisaged to support SMEs in the new 2014–2020 programming period?

3. Provide an overview of the situation?

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

For the programming period 2014-2020, the Commission presented a proposal for a new Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (the COSME programme). The Commission is planning to use the COSME programme to provide financial and non-financial support, *inter alia*, to EU design-based consumer goods manufacturing SMEs of the leather and footwear sectors as well as other fashion industries. The COSME programme includes measures to improve SMEs' access to finance, business services and innovation.

Building upon the success of the Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme (CIP), COSME financing will be provided in the form of guarantees and equity which are available through financial institutions participating in the programme. Aimed at promoting European Union industrial leadership, support to SMEs is also proposed within the framework programme for research and innovation, Horizon 2020.

For both Horizon 2020 and COSME, interinstitutional discussions are ongoing with the aim of ensuring programme implementation starting from 1 January 2014.

Another possibility of funding exists from the European Regional Development Fund, targeted at the Tuscany Region. For the period 2007-2013, the Operational Programme for the Tuscany Region allocated some 28% of its total budget to initiatives aimed at fostering the growth of SMEs, notably by developing their innovation potential with a view to facilitating access to new markets in the economic globalisation context.

The Enterprise Europe Network can provide advice on sources of European and/or local funding which may be appropriate in supporting a new production line or the expansion of an existing one.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-004500/13
do Komisji
Marek Siwiec (S&D)
(22 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przepisy UE dotyczące swobody przemieszczania się

W dniu 25 marca 2013 r. premier Wielkiej Brytanii David Cameron oświadczył w przemówieniu dotyczącym imigracji, że zamierza zmienić status imigrantów w Wielkiej Brytanii, którzy korzystają z przepisów UE dotyczących swobody przemieszczania się, oraz że ograniczy ich dostęp do dodatków mieszkaniowych i krajowego systemu opieki zdrowotnej. W szczególności zapowiedział, że:

— osoby przybywające z państwa członkowskiego UE, które nie zdołają znaleźć pracy, utracą prawo do zasiłku dla osób poszukujących pracy po sześciu miesiącach;

— w odniesieniu do mieszkań socjalnych pierwszeństwo będą mieli obywatele Wielkiej Brytanii, a imigrantom mieszkania takie będą przysługiwały dopiero po 2 latach pobytu;

— zostaną podjęte działania ograniczające dostęp do służby zdrowia, co mogłoby oznaczać, że osobom spoza UE udzielano by opieki medycznej dopiero po udowodnieniu, że posiadają ubezpieczenie.

Art. 45 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej gwarantuje swobodę przepływu pracowników wewnątrz Unii i zniesienie wszelkiej dyskryminacji ze względu na przynależność państwową w zakresie zatrudnienia, wynagrodzenia i innych warunków pracy.

Czy w związku z tym Komisja uważa, że zapowiedzi te naruszają podstawową zasadę traktatową UE dotyczącą prawa obywateli UE do swobodnego przemieszczania się? Czy według Komisji przytoczone powyżej oświadczenia są sprzeczne z dyrektywą 2004/38/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 29 kwietnia 2004 r. w sprawie prawa obywateli Unii i członków ich rodzin do swobodnego przemieszczania się i pobytu na terytorium państw członkowskich, zmieniającą rozporządzenie (EWG) nr 1612/68 i uchylającą dyrektywy 64/221/EWG, 68/360/EWG, 72/194/EWG, 73/148/EWG, 75/34/EWG, 75/35/EWG, 90/364/EWG, 90/365/EWG i 93/96/EWG, a także z rozporządzeniem Komisji (WE) nr 635/2006 z dnia 25 kwietnia 2006 r. uchylającym rozporządzenie (EWG) nr 1251/70 dotyczące prawa pracowników do pozostania na terytorium państwa członkowskiego po ustaniu zatrudnienia w tym państwie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(23 maja 2013 r.)

Prawo do swobodnego przemieszczania się jest jednym z najbardziej cenionych praw przez obywateli UE. Komisja jest w pełni zaangażowana w ochronę tego prawa oraz zagwarantowanie, by obywatele UE mogli skutecznie z niego korzystać na terytorium całej Unii.

W tym kontekście zgodność z prawem UE wszelkich środków przedstawionych przez brytyjski rząd w celu realizacji tych planów może być – i będzie – dokładnie badana, z chwilą zgłoszenia projektu owych środków.

Mając na uwadze wzmocnienie ochrony praw pracowników w UE poprzez zapewnienie lepszego informowania i wsparcia w zakresie egzekwowania praw UE, Komisja przyjęła w dniu 26 kwietnia 2013 r. wniosek dotyczący dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie środków ułatwiających korzystanie z praw przyznanych pracownikom w kontekście swobodnego przepływu pracowników (COM(2013)236).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004500/13
to the Commission
Marek Siwiec (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU rules on freedom of movement

On 25 March 2013, the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, declared in a speech on immigration that he intends to change the status of immigrants to the UK benefiting from the EU's rules on freedom of movement and that he will restrict their access to housing benefits and to the National Health Service (NHS). In particular, he announced that:

— people arriving from an EU Member State who are not able to find a job will lose their right to the jobseekers' allowance after six months;

— regarding eligibility for council housing, local people will be given priority, and immigrants will not be eligible until they have been in the country for 2 years;

— measures will be taken in order to restrict access to health services which could mean non-EU nationals having to prove they hold insurance before obtaining care.

Given that Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantees the free movement of workers within the territory of the Member States and outlaws all forms of discrimination on the basis of nationality with regard to employment, reimbursement and other working conditions:

Does the Commission think that these announcements violate the EU's fundamental treaty rule concerning the right of EU citizens to move freely? Has the Commission considered whether the above statements are in conflict with Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC, as well as Commission Regulation (EC) No 635/2006 of 25 April 2006 repealing Regulation (EEC) No 1251/70 on the right of workers to remain in the territory of a Member State after having been employed in that State?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2013)

The fundamental right of free movement is one of the rights most cherished by EU citizens and the Commission is fully committed to safeguarding this right and ensuring that EU citizens can effectively enjoy it across the EU.

In this context, the compatibility with EC law of any measure presented by the UK Government to implement the plans can be — and will be — closely monitored once draft measures are tabled.

To improve the rights of EU workers by ensuring better information and support as regards enforcement of EU rights, the Commission adopted a 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 on 26 April 2013 (COM(2013)236).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004501/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(22. April 2013)

Betrifft: Neue Saatgutverordnung gefährdet Vielfalt der Flora

Umweltschutzorganisationen kritisieren die aktuellen Pläne für eine neue EU-Saatgutverordnung, aufgrund der viele der seltenen und alten Sorten von Obst, Gemüse und Getreide, die in Österreich heimisch sind, für immer aussterben würden.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Es wird kritisiert, dass aus den über 12 EU-Richtlinien nur eine EU-Verordnung werden soll und dass es bei der Umsetzung keine nationalen Spielräume mehr geben würde. Wie steht die Kommission zu dieser Kritik?

2. Der endgültige Vorschlag der Kommission wird derzeit für Mitte 2013 erwartet. Wie ist der aktuelle Stand der Pläne?

3. Die geplante EU-Saatgutverordnung fördert laut Berichten die Konzentration von Saatgut „in Händen weniger multinationaler Agrarkonzerne". Wie beurteilt die Kommission diese ernstzunehmende Kritik, und wie kann sie dies verhindern?

4. Die Landwirte und Verbraucher fühlen sich durch die geplanten Rechtsvorschriften in ihrer Existenz bedroht. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Ängste, dass Agrarkonzerne künftig bestimmen würden, was angebaut wird und natürlich auch was auf den Tellern der Menschen landet?

5. Derzeit beherrschen nach Angaben von Global 2000 die zehn größten Agrarkonzerne bereits 75 % des Saatgutmarktes. Wie sieht die Kommission diese Entwicklung in Richtung einer Beschneidung der Vielfalt an Saatgut?

6. Wäre eine EU-Saatgutverordnung, die eine Sortenvielfalt zulässt und seltene und alte Sorten nicht in die Illegalität treibt, nicht viel besser für die Umwelt?

7. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Forderungen der Umweltverbände und Umweltschützer, dass der Austausch von Saat- und Pflanzgut legal bleiben muss und es keine verbindliche Sortenzulassung und keine Zertifizierung für samenfestes Saat- und Pflanzgut geben darf.

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2013)

1. Ein Ziel des Vorschlags ([1]) besteht darin, die unterschiedliche Umsetzung der derzeitigen Richtlinien in den Mitgliedstaaten abzustellen. In dem Vorschlag werden allgemeine Anforderungen für gelistete Arten und weniger strenge Anforderungen für nicht gelistete Arten festgelegt, und die Mitgliedstaaten werden die Möglichkeit haben, auf nationaler Ebene strengere Anforderungen festzulegen.

2. Der Vorschlag wurde am 6. Mai 2013 angenommen und wird nun vom Unionsgesetzgeber erörtert.

3.-5. Der Kommission liegen keine Daten vor, die darauf schließen lassen würden, dass der EU-Markt von multinationalen Saatgutunternehmen beherrscht wird. So ergeben die vorliegenden Daten, dass der Saatgutmarkt in der EU zum größten Teil aus Mikrounternehmen sowie KMU besteht. Mit der Verordnung soll gewährleistet werden, dass sich der Markt auch weiterhin aus einer Vielfalt an Akteuren zusammensetzt und dass die Käufer aus einem breit gefächerten Angebot (neue, getestete Sorten, althergebrachte Sorten, für Nischenmärkte bestimmtes Material) wählen können.

([1]) KOM(2013)262 endg. Siehe: http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_propagation_material/review_eu_rules/index_en.htm

6. Mit dem Vorschlag wird die Vielfalt dadurch gefördert, dass althergebrachte Sorten unter Einhaltung geringer Anforderungen registriert werden können, Mikrounternehmen von den Registrierungsgebühren befreit werden und die Möglichkeit eingeräumt wird, auch für nicht gewerbliche Akteure, Nischenmarktmaterial ohne Registrierung auf dem Markt bereitzustellen. Der Austausch von Saatgut zwischen nicht gewerblich tätigen Akteuren unterliegt nicht den Bestimmungen der vorgeschlagenen Verordnung, und Landwirte und Gärtner können jedes beliebige Material verwenden. Die Vorschriften der vorgeschlagenen Verordnung finden also lediglich Anwendung auf Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial, das auf dem Markt bereitgestellt sowie zur Bereitstellung auf dem Markt erzeugt wird.

7. Die Registrierung von Sorten dient dazu, einen transparenten Markt zu schaffen und die Verbraucher zu schützen. Um den Verwaltungs- und Kostenaufwand zu senken, werden von Mikrounternehmen gemäß der vorgeschlagenen Verordnung keine Registrierungsgebühren verlangt. Für aus althergebrachten Sorten gewonnenes Vermehrungsmaterial ist keine Zertifizierung vorgeschrieben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004501/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: New seed regulation threatens diversity in flora

Environmental; protection organisations are critical of current plans for a new EU seed regulation that would mean extinction for many of the rare and old varieties of fruit, vegetables and cereals native to Austria.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. The criticism is raised that more than 12 EU directives are to become a single EU regulation and that there will be no national discretion in relation to implementation. What is the position of the Commission with regard to this criticism?

2. The final proposal from the Commission is currently expected in mid-2013. What is the current status of the plans?

3. According to reports, the planned EU Seed Regulation will promote the concentration of seed 'in the hands of a small number of multinational agricultural concerns'. How does the Commission judge this serious criticism and how can it prevent this?

4. Farmers and consumers are feeling that their existence is under threat as a result of the planned legal provisions. How does the Commission assess the fears that in future agricultural concerns could decide what is cultivated and, of course, what ends up on people's plates?

5. At present, according to Global 2000, the ten largest agricultural concerns already control 75 per cent of the seed market. How does the Commission regard this development in terms of reducing the diversity of seed?

6. Would it not be much better for the environment to have an EU seed regulation that permits diversity rather than declaring rare and older seed varieties illegal?

7. How does the Commission view the demands of the environmental NGOs and protection groups that the interchange of seed and plant material must remain legal and that there should be no binding approval of varieties and no certification for heirloom seed and plant material?

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

1. One objective of the proposal ([1]) is to overcome the varying implementation of the current directives in Member States. The proposal defines common principles for listed species and light principles for non-listed species, while giving the possibility to have stricter national rules.

2. The proposal was adopted on 6 May 2013 and now is being discussed by the legislator.

3-5. The Commission has no data to suggest that multinational seed companies dominate the EU market. Available data show that the EU seed market is composed of mostly micro-enterprises and small and medium operators. The aim of the regulation is to maintain this diversity of operators and to offer a broad choice (new, tested varieties; traditional varieties; niche market material) to the buyer.

6. The proposal promotes diversity by offering low-burden options for registering traditional varieties, by exempting micro-enterprises from variety registration fees and by giving the possibility, also to non-professionals, to market niche market material without registration. Exchange in kind between two persons other than professional operators is outside the proposed Regulation's scope and farmers and gardeners are free to use any material they like. The proposed Regulation only concerns marketing and production with a view to marketing.

7. Registration of varieties serves the transparency of the market and consumers' protection. To reduce administrative and financial burdens micro-enterprises are exempted by the proposal from registration fees. Material from traditional varieties will not be certified.

([1]) COM(2013) 262 final; see http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_propagation_material/review_eu_rules/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004502/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to Written Question E-002473/2013

In its answer to my Written Question E-002473/2013, the European Commission simply ignored the specific questions. Therefore, could the Commission respond to the specific questions below:

1. If an EU Member State decides to leave the EU, what tariffs would it would face from the European Union were it to exit the Union without an interim agreement?

2. Could the Commission confirm whether it is legally possible for a Member State to leave the European Union through Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon but remain a member of the European Economic Area as an independent signatory to the 1994 EEA agreement?

3. Could the Commission confirm whether Article 127 of the 1994 European Economic Area Agreement allows continued free trade and movement for 12 months between a withdrawing state and the EEA, after a Member State signals its withdrawal?

4. If a Member of the European Parliament wishes to submit a complaint about the European Commission refusing to answer a parliamentary question, is there a Member of the Commission who is responsible for ensuring that the complaint is heard?

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

1 to 3. No Member State has decided to withdraw from the European Union.

Article 50 TEU provides that, in case a Member State would decide, in accordance with its own constitutional requirements, to withdraw from the Union, an agreement shall be negotiated and concluded between the Union and that State setting out the arrangements for its withdrawal; this agreement shall take into account the framework for the future relationship of that State with the Union.

The Commission is not prepared to speculate on the legal consequences, including the consequences for international agreements to which the Union and the Member States are Parties, of the hypothetical situation of absence of such an agreement, while the treaty provides that such an agreement 'shall be concluded'.

4. Answers to written questions given by one member of the Commission are given on behalf of the whole Commission, in accordance with the principle of collective responsibility.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004503/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(22 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Nasilające się prześladowania chrześcijan w Nigerii

W ciągu ostatnich kilku miesięcy nasilające się prześladowania chrześcijan kosztowały życie kilkuset osób w Nigerii.

Tylko w okresie od stycznia do marca media donoszą o szeregu incydentów. Ponad 250 osób zginęło, zaś wiele odniosło poważne obrażenia w brutalnych atakach w Musari, Nijiri, Saminaka, Ratas, Mangor i Matog, w regionach Bokkos oraz Plateau, czy w ataku na wioskę w chrześcijańskiej części stanu Kaduna. W marcu w wyniku eksplozji samochodu pułapki na dworcu autobusowym w chrześcijańskiej dzielnicy Sabon Gari w stanie Kano zginęło kolejne co najmniej 60 osób. W Mubi chrześcijanie nie wychodzą z domów po 8 wieczorem, boją się uczestniczyć w Mszach św., czy wychodzić na targ. W marcu w diecezji Maiduguri, w stanie Borno, zniszczonych zostało 50 z 52 kościołów katolickich. Według szacunków organizacji Open Doors około 100 000 chrześcijan jest zmuszone ratować się ucieczką na południe kraju.

Czy sytuacja ta jest znana Wysokiej Przedstawiciel i jeśli tak, jakie natychmiastowe kroki zostały podjęte w celu ochrony praw chrześcijan w Nigerii?

Jakie działania podejmie Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby pomóc zagwarantować bezpieczeństwo chrześcijanom w Nigerii?

Czy można oczekiwać jednolitego stanowiska państw członkowskich UE wobec tej narastającej tragedii humanitarnej?

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

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest świadoma eskalacji przemocy w północnej i środkowej części Nigerii i wielokrotnie ją potępiała. Przemoc taka jest bardzo dużym problemem dla ludności przebywającej na terytorium kraju i poza jego granicami, gdyż wymierzona jest przeciwko niewinnym cywilom, zarówno chrześcijanom jak i muzułmanom.

Ważne jest, by nie postrzegać ataków terrorystycznych sekty Boko Haram tak, jakby była ona jedynie ruchem religijnym, ani nie reagować tak na te ataki. Boko Haram jest zbitką szeregu grup terrorystycznych kierujących się różnymi pobudkami, która dąży do destabilizacji Republiki Nigerii, wykorzystując w tym celu wszystkie możliwe środki, a w szczególności pogłębianie różnic, w tym religijnych (które w ostatnich latach nie stanowiły w Nigerii problemu). Reakcja wyłącznie na elementy religijne sprzyjałaby celom terrorystów.

UE będzie nadal współpracować zarówno z rządem, jak i społeczeństwem Nigerii, aby pomóc położyć kres obecnej przemocy na drodze ciągłego dialogu politycznego na temat odpowiedniego podejścia do problemów, a także ukierunkowanych działań w zakresie pomocy.

Rada wyraziła jednolite stanowisko UE, w którym potępia przemoc i wzywa do wszechstronnego rozwiązania problemów związanych z bezpieczeństwem i ich przyczyn. W ramach dialogu na szczeblu ministerialnym UE-Nigeria, który miał miejsce w dniu 16 maja 2013 r. w Brukseli, UE podkreśliła potrzebę podjęcia aktualnych wyzwań w dziedzinie bezpieczeństwa przy zastosowaniu kompleksowego podejścia do bezpieczeństwa i rozwoju; ponownie zadeklarowała ona pomoc za pośrednictwem programu współpracy w Nigerii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004503/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Growing persecution of Christians in Nigeria

In the last few months, growing persecution of Christians has claimed several hundred lives in Nigeria.

In the period from January to March alone, a whole series of incidents were reported in the media. More than 250 people have been killed and many others injured in brutal attacks in Musari, Nijiri, Saminaka, Mangor and Matog, in the Bokkos and Plateau regions and in an attack on a village in a Christian part of Kaduna State. In March, a car-bomb exploded at a bus station in the Christian neighbourhood of Sabon Gari in Kano State, killing over 60 people. In Mubi, Christians do not leave their houses after 20:00; they are scared to attend mass or go to the market. 50 of the 52 Catholic churches in the diocese of Maiduguri, Borno State, were destroyed in March. The Open Doors organisation estimates that some 100 000 Christians have been forced to save themselves by escaping to southern Nigeria.

Is the High Representative aware of this situation? If so, what immediate steps have been taken to protect the rights of Christians in Nigeria?

What action will the High Representative take to help ensure the safety of Christians in Nigeria?

Is it anticipated that the EU Member States will adopt a unified position on this growing humanitarian tragedy?

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

The HR/VP is aware and has repeatedly condemned the escalating violence in the Northern states and the Middle Belt of Nigeria. This violence is of great concern for those inside and outside the country since it targets innocent civilians, both Christians and Muslims.

It is important not to perceive or to respond to the terrorist acts of Boko Haram as if it were only a religious-based movement. Boko Haram is an amalgam of variously motivated terrorist groups seeking to destabilise the State of Nigeria by all means and especially by seeking to widen all differences, including religious (which in recent years have not been a problem in Nigeria). Responding on only religious grounds would play into the hands of terrorists.

The EU will continue to work with the Government and people of Nigeria to help bring an end to the current cycle of violence through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate approaches to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions.

A unified EU position, condemning the violence and calling for a comprehensive solution to the security problems and their underlying causes, has been expressed by the Council. At the EU-Nigeria Ministerial dialogue on 16 May 2013 in Brussels, the EU stressed the need to address the current security challenges with a comprehensive security/ development approach; and it repeated its determination to help through its cooperation programme in Nigeria.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004504/13
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(22 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zwalczanie nielegalnego alkoholu w Unii Europejskiej

Ze względu na specyfikę zagadnienia trudno jest precyzyjnie określić wielkość spożycia nielegalnego alkoholu w Unii Europejskiej. Z pewnością ma ono jednak znaczące skutki ekonomiczne i społeczne, co jest szczególnie ważne w obliczu kryzysu gospodarczego, z którym Unia będzie musiała się jeszcze zmagać w najbliższych latach. Stąd warto precyzyjnie oszacować skalę zjawiska.

1. Czy Komisja posiada analizy dotyczące skali alkoholowej szarej strefy w Unii Europejskiej lub w poszczególnych krajach UE?

2. Czy Komisja posiada analizy dotyczące strat ekonomicznych związanych z nielegalnym handlem alkoholem dla budżetów poszczególnych państw, legalnych producentów oraz rolnictwa?

3. Czy Komisja prowadzi działania na rzecz monitorowania i przeciwdziałania alkoholowej szarej strefie? Jeśli tak, to jakie działania i jakie nakłady finansowe są na to przeznaczane?

4. Jeśli nie, to czy Komisja w obliczu niedawnej sytuacji związanej z zatruciami alkoholem nieznanego pochodzenia w Czechach ma w planach podjęcie działań zmierzających do określenia zagrożenia związanego z istnieniem alkoholowej szarej strefy, zarówno w wymiarze ekonomicznym, jaki i zdrowotnym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(21 czerwca 2013 r.)

Komisja wie o problemie szarej strefy alkoholu w pewnej liczbie państw członkowskich, nie posiada jednak analizy skutków gospodarczych w UE. WHO, przy wsparciu Komisji, wydaje okresowe szacunki nierejestrowanego spożycia alkoholu. Wynosi ono ok. 13 % łącznej ilości alkoholu spożytego w UE, przy znacznym zróżnicowaniu poziomów pomiędzy poszczególnymi krajami europejskimi ([1]).

Nowy wniosek legislacyjny dotyczący decyzji Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie poważnych transgranicznych zagrożeń zdrowia tworzy ramy przepisów służących do powiadamiania, oceny i koordynacji na poziomie unii reakcji na potencjalne zagrożenia dla zdrowia związane z spożyciem alkoholu nieznanego pochodzenia ([2]).

Ponadto jeśli chodzi o kwestię skażonego alkoholu, który wydaje się u przyczyną zatruć metanolem w Republice Czeskiej, prace są w toku.

Na podstawie informacji, jakimi dysponuje Komisja, wydaje się, że część zanieczyszczonego alkoholu w Republice Czeskiej była (początkowo) wytworzona w innym państwie członkowskim jako środek zapobiegający zamarzaniu. W częściowo skażonym alkoholu zastosowano metodę skażania.

W celu ograniczenia możliwości nadużyć i ułatwienia kontroli podmiotom i państwom członkowskim, Komisja niedawno zmieniła rozporządzenie w sprawie procedur całkowitego skażenia alkoholu etylowego ([3]). Kilka metod skażania poddano przeglądowi i usunięto, po czym wprowadzono wspólną „euro"-metodę skażania ze skutkiem od dnia 1 lipca 2013 r.

Zgodnie z zapowiedzią zawartą w planie działania, prowadzone są również prace w dziedzinie częściowo skażonego alkoholu mające na celu wzmocnienie zwalczania oszustw podatkowych i unikania opodatkowania([4]).

([1]) Raport za 2012 r. pt. „Alkohol w Unii Europejskiej": (http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf)
([2]) COM(2011) 0866 wersja ostateczna – 2011/0421 (COD).
([3]) Rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji (UE) nr 162/2013 z dnia 21 lutego 2013 r. zmieniające załącznik do rozporządzenia (WE) nr 3199/93 w sprawie wzajemnego uznawania procedur całkowitego skażenia alkoholu etylowego do celów zwolnienia z podatku akcyzowego (Dz.U. L 49 z 22.2.2013). 4 COM(2012) 722 final; 6 grudnia 2012 r.
([4]) COM(2012) 722 final; 6 grudnia 2012 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004504/13
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: The fight against illegal alcohol in the European Union

It is difficult to determine the exact scale of illegal alcohol consumption in the European Union because of the specific nature of this problem, but there can be no doubt that it has major economic and social implications. This is particularly significant in view of the economic crisis which will continue to affect the EU over the coming years, and so it would be useful to obtain an accurate estimate of the extent of the problem.

1. Is the Commission in possession of any analyses of the scale of the grey market in alcohol in the European Union or in the individual Member States?

2. Is the Commission in possession of any analyses of the economic losses caused by the illegal trade in alcohol to the budgets of the individual Member States, to legal manufacturers and to agriculture?

3. Is the Commission taking any steps to monitor and combat the grey market in alcohol? If so, which steps is it taking, and what funding has been allocated for this purpose?

4. If not, and in view of the recent cases of poisoning in the Czech Republic caused by alcohol of unknown origin, does the Commission have any plans for measures aimed at determining the economic and health risks associated with the grey market in alcohol?

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

The Commission has been informed about problems of the grey market in alcohol in a number of Member States, but is not in possession of any analyses of the economic impact in the EU. The WHO, with the support of the Commission, periodically estimates unrecorded alcohol consumption which is about 13% of all alcohol consumed in the EU with marked differences between the European countries ([1]).

The new legislative proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross-border threats to health sets a framework of provisions to notify, assess and coordinate at EU level the response to potential health risks linked to the consumption of alcohol of unknown origin ([2]).

Moreover, in the area of denatured alcohol, which seems to be at the source of the methanol poisonings in the Czech Republic, work is ongoing.

On the basis of the information available to the Commission, it seems that some of the contaminated spirit in the Czech Republic was (originally) manufactured in another Member State as an anti-freeze product. A denaturing method used in partially denatured alcohol was applied.

To reduce opportunities for fraud and ease control for operators and Member States, the Commission recently amended its Regulation on procedures for the complete denaturing of alcohol ([3]). Several denaturing methods were revised and removed and a common 'Euro' denaturing method was introduced with effect from 1 July 2013.

Work is also underway in the field of partially denatured alcohol as announced in the Action plan to strengthen the fight against fraud and tax evasion ([4]).

([1]) 2012 report Alcohol in the European Union (http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf).
([2]) COM(2011) 0866 final — 2011/0421 (COD).
([3]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 162/2013 of 21 February 2013 amending the annex to Regulation (EC) No 3199/93 on the mutual recognition of procedures for the complete denaturing of alcohol for the purposes of exemption from excise duty (OJ L 49, 22.2.2013).
([4]) COM(2012) 722 final, 6 December 2012.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004505/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(22 kwietnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Sprawa Magnickiego

Po raz kolejny zwracam się do Komisji z prośbą o interwencję w sprawie Siergeja Magnickiego – rosyjskiego prawnika, który po wykryciu oszustw podatkowych sam został uwięziony, a następnie zmarł w więzieniu na skutek tortur. Ostatnie zatrważające informacje mówią o pośmiertnym procesie wszczętym przez władze rosyjskie przeciwko Magnickiemu. Sytuacja ta jest niedopuszczalna i niezgodna z międzynarodowymi uregulowaniami w dziedzinie praw człowieka. Dodatkowo władze rosyjskie zdecydowały o wystosowaniu listu gończego za Williamem Browderem, prezesem Hermitage Capital – firmy, dla której pracował Siergej Magnicki. Wczoraj Twerski Sąd Rejonowy w Moskwie przystąpił do rozpatrywania wniosku policji o zaoczny areszt wobec Browdera. Nie można oprzeć się przekonaniu, że sprawa ta jest motywowana politycznie.

W związku z powyższym pragnę zapytać Komisję, jaka jest jej pozycja w kwestii pośmiertnego procesu przeciwko Siergejowi Magnickiemu oraz czy misja UE w Moskwie monitoruje tę kwestię.

Czy Komisja złożyła oficjalny sprzeciw wobec pośmiertnego procesu?

Czy Komisja będzie monitorować sprawę oskarżeń wobec Williama Browdera?

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

UE od dawna nalega na przeprowadzenie odpowiedniego dochodzenia celem zapewnienia, by wszelkie osoby odpowiedzialne za śmierć S. Magnickiego oraz aferę korupcyjną, którą odkrył, zostały postawione przed sądem. UE ponownie podniosła tę kwestię podczas szczytu UE-Rosja 21 grudnia oraz przy okazji wizyty Komisji złożonej rosyjskiemu rządowi w dniach 21-22 marca 2013 r. Stanowisko UE jest jednoznaczne: tylko przeprowadzenie wiarygodnego i skrupulatnego dochodzenia pomoże w Rosji zbudować zaufanie do państwa prawa.

Jak podkreśliła Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca w oświadczeniu wydanym 20 marca 2013 r., decyzja Rosji o przedwczesnym zamknięciu przedmiotowej sprawy oraz równoczesne wszczęcie pośmiertnego procesu przeciwko S. Magnickiemu stanowią dodatkowe źródło obaw co do funkcjonowania należytych procedur prawnych w Federacji Rosyjskiej.

W dniu 17 maja, podczas ostatniej rundy konsultacji między UE a Rosją dotyczących praw człowieka, UE ponownie wyraziła swoje zaniepokojenie pośmiertnym procesem S. Magnickiego oraz zwróciła się do władz rosyjskich o wyjaśnienia dotyczące podstawy prawnej tego procesu. Delegatura UE w Moskwie będzie w dalszym ciągu uważnie śledzić tę kwestię.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004505/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: The Magnitsky case

I should like to call on the Commission once more to intervene in the case of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer who, having uncovered evidence of tax fraud, was himself imprisoned. He later died in prison after being tortured. Alarming information has recently come to light showing that the Russian authorities are bringing a posthumous trial against Magnitsky. This state of affairs is unacceptable and in breach of international human rights regulations. Furthermore, the Russian authorities have decided to issue an arrest warrant for William Browder, CEO of Hermitage Capital Management — the company for which Sergei Magnitsky worked. Yesterday, the Tver District Court in Moscow began examining the Police's request for the arrest *in absentia* of Mr Browder. It would be hard not to conclude that this case is politically motivated.

What is the Commission's view on the posthumous trial of Sergei Magnitsky? Is the EU delegation in Moscow monitoring this matter?

Has the Commission lodged a formal objection to the posthumous trial?

Will the Commission monitor the case of William Browder?

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

The EU has for a long time been insisting on the need for a proper investigation that ensures that any person responsible for the death of Mr Magnitsky and for the corruption scandal he uncovered is brought to justice. The EU raised the case again at the EU-Russia Summit on 21 December and during the Commission visit to the Russian Government on 21-22 March 2013. The EU's position is clear: only a credible and thorough judicial investigation will help creating confidence in the rule of law in Russia.

As noted in the statement issued by the High Representative/Vice-President on 20 March 2013, the Russian decision to close this case prematurely, while at the same time opening a posthumous trial against Mr Magnitsky himself, is an additional source of concern as to the state of the due process of law in the Russian Federation.

The EU has reiterated its concerns at the posthumous prosecution of Mr Magnitsky during the latest round of the EU-Russia human rights consultations on 17 May 2013 and sought clarifications from the Russian authorities on the legal basis of this trial. The EU Delegation in Moscow is closely following the issue and will continue to do so.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004506/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(22 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Plata serviciilor medicale în străinătate

În ultimul timp, presa scrisă și audio-vizuală europeană a semnalat o serie de probleme cu care se confruntă cetățenii europeni care locuiesc în Spania sau Grecia sau turiștii aflați în vacanță în aceste țări, legate de refuzul unor spitale publice sau private de a recunoaște cartea europeană de asigurare medicală (CEAM).

Pe de altă parte, mai multe case de asigurări medicale atrag atenția asupra faptului că cetățenilor europeni care călătoresc în străinătate sau locuiesc în alt stat membru li se cere să plătească facturile de la spital sau medicamentele în numerar, la tarife superioare celor plătite de locuitorii din țările UE unde călătoresc sau se află persoanele respective.

În ce măsură este Comisia la curent cu problemele semnalate și ce propune pentru evitarea situațiilor de acest gen, în viitor?

Răspuns dat de dl. Andor în numele Comisiei
(17 iunie 2013)

Comisia este conștientă de plângerile referitoare la faptul că anumite spitale din Spania refuză CEASS și, prin urmare, la data de 30 mai, a lansat o procedură privind încălcarea dreptului comunitar. Referitor la problema cetățenilor UE care plătesc tarife mai ridicate, se pare că acest lucru rezultă din faptul că CEASS este refuzată și cetățenii respectivi sunt nevoiți să achite costurile pentru îngrijiri medicale private.

Cardul european de asigurări sociale de sănătate (CEASS) certifică faptul că titularul este asigurat în sistemul public de sănătate al unui stat membru și că are dreptul de a beneficia de îngrijiri de sănătate care se dovedesc a fi necesare din motive medicale în timpul unei șederi temporare într-un alt stat membru. Acest drept este conferit de articolul 19 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 883/2004, care prevede faptul că titularul poate beneficia de servicii medicale în statul membru gazdă, în aceleași condiții și la același preț ca și cetățenii țării respective. Cardul nu acoperă serviciile medicale furnizate în sistemul privat și nu este destinat persoanelor care au reședința în țara-gazdă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004506/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Payment for medical services abroad

There have been recent reports in the print and audiovisual media in Europe about a number of problems faced by European citizens living in Spain or Greece or by tourists on holiday in these countries, relating to some public or private hospitals refusing to recognise the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

On the other hand, several medical insurance funds are highlighting that European citizens travelling abroad or living in another Member State are being asked to pay for hospital bills or medicines in cash at higher rates than those paid by the inhabitants of the EU countries where these people are travelling or living.

To what extent is the Commission aware of the problems highlighted, and what is it proposing to do to prevent such situations from arising in the future?

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

The Commission is aware of complaints concerning the refusal of the EHIC by certain hospitals in Spain and therefore it launched an infringement procedure on 30 May. As regards the question of EU citizens paying higher rates, this appears to result from the fact that the EHIC is being refused and the citizens in question are being asked to pay the cost of private healthcare.

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) certifies that the holder is insured under the public healthcare system of one Member State and entitled to receive healthcare which becomes necessary on medical grounds during a temporary stay in another Member State. This right is given by Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and it entitles the holder to receive treatment within the host Member State's public healthcare system on the same terms and at the same cost as nationals of the state concerned. It does not cover healthcare that is provided privately, nor should it be used by persons who are in fact residing in the host state.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004507/13
komissiolle
Riikka Manner (ALDE)
(22. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Jatkokysymys luontodirektiivistä

Jätin luontodirektiiviä koskevan kirjallisen kysymyksen komissiolle tammikuussa (E-000550/2013). Sain 15.3. komission jäsenen Potočnikin allekirjoittaman vastauksen, jossa ennen muuta viitattiin aiempiin kysymyksiin ja vastauksiin luontodirektiivin ja erityisesti Suomen kohtaaman susiongelman tasapainosta.

Susien laajeneva elinpiiri sekä muuttuneet käyttäytymistottumukset ihmisen läheisyyteen nostattavat yhä enemmän inhimillistä huolta Suomessa. Viranomaisohjeistus nojaa EU-lainsäädäntöön, ja kansalaisten tunne siitä, ettei lainsäädäntö suojele ihmistä, on vahva. Haluan siksi tarkentaa edellistä kysymystäni ja samalla pyydän myös komissiolta aiempaa syvempiä ja täsmällisempiä vastauksia.

Millä aikataululla komissio aikoo julkistaa toimenpiteitä, joilla ihmisten ja suurpetojen rinnakkaiselo saatetaan nykyistä turvallisemmaksi ihmisten – erityisesti lasten – sekä maaseutualueiden elinkeinotoiminnan näkökulmista? Toistan myös aiemman kysymyksen siitä, onko komissiossa arvioitu tai suunniteltu arvioitavan luontodirektiivistä ihmisille koituvia negatiivisia vaikutuksia? Kuinka usein luontodirektiivin taustalla olevat kanta-arviot päivitetään suojelutarpeen jatkuvan ajantasaisuuden varmistamiseksi? Onko komissio tietoinen, että Suomessa susien aiheuttamat vaaratilanteet ja ongelmat ovat maantieteellisesti levinneet voimakkaasti viime vuosina?

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004539/13
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(23. huhtikuuta 2013)

Aihe: Suurpetojen kantojen säätely

Kansalaiset Suomessa ovat kokeneet suurpetojen määrän muodostavan uhan varsinkin lasten ja kotieläinten turvallisuudelle, joten petoihin liittyvä keskustelu on ollut siellä varsin kiivasta. Sen jälkeen kun Suomi liittyi Euroopan unioniin vuonna 1995, on esimerkiksi susien määrä Suomessa eräiden arvioiden mukaan kolminkertaistunut. Sudet ovatkin tappaneet pihapiireissä olleita koiria ja vaikeuttanut lasten koulumatkoja ja liikkumista ulkona. Maaseudulla lapset kulkevat kouluun hyvin yleisesti joko kävellen, polkupyörällä tai hiihtäen – Suomessa autokuljetusta ei järjestetä alle kolmen tai alle viiden kilometrin koulumatkalle, oppilaan iästä riippuen. Tällöin yksin liikkuva lapsi saattaa kohdata suden. Asutuksen liepeillä liikkuvista susista aiheutuva uhka ja huoli on todellinen ja aiheellinen. Tämän lisäksi suurpetojen aiheuttamat vahingot Pohjois-Suomen porotaloudelle ovat huomattavia.

Suurpedoilla on Suomessa myös puolustajansa. Heidän argumenttinsa pohjaavat oletettuihin EU:n määräyksiin petojen suojelemiseksi. Heidän mukaansa petokannan supistaminen ei ole mahdollista nimenomaan EU-lainsäädännön vuoksi. Komission taannoiseen kysymykseeni antama vastaus (E-006576/2012) osoittaa kuitenkin tällaiset väitteet perusteettomiksi. Haluan tämän johdosta selvennykseksi kysyä, onko komissiossa jokin taho tai määräys, joka estää petojen määrän vähentämisen Suomessa sellaiselle tasolle, että niistä ei olisi uhkaa tai vaaraa ihmisille tai kotieläimille? Onko komissio suunnittelemassa tarkempaa ohjeistusta, joka selkeyttäisi tilanteen ja voisi osaltaan rauhoittaa tulehtunutta tilannetta?

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta antama yhteinen vastaus
(11. kesäkuuta 2013)

Komissio haluaa muistuttaa arvoisaa parlamentin jäsentä kirjallisiin kysymyksiin E-6576/2012 ([1]) ja E-0550/2013 ([2]) antamistaan vastauksista, joissa se jo viittasi antamiinsa suurpetokantojen hallintaa koskeviin ohjeisiin. Alan asiantuntijat arvioivat yleisesti, että sudet aiheuttavat ihmisten turvallisuudelle vain pienen riskin tai vain lähes olemattoman riskin, jos perustason varotoimia noudatetaan.

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

Komissio käynnisti vuonna 2012 suurpetoja koskevan aloitteen, jonka tarkoituksena on suojella mm. susia ja mahdollistaa niiden rinnakkaiselo ihmisten kanssa. Tähän aloitteeseen osallistuvat asianomaiset sidosryhmät, ja siinä pyritään yksilöimään yhteisiä ratkaisuja ja kehittämään suurelle yleisölle kohdistettavia ohjeita, toimintasuunnitelmia ja pilottitoimia.

Luontodirektiivissä ([3]) jäsenvaltioita edellytetään antamaan kertomus direktiivin täytäntöönpanosta kuuden vuoden välein. Näissä kertomuksissa annetaan mm. päivitetyt tiedot direktiivillä suojattujen suurpetojen suojelun tilanteesta.

Komissio on tietoinen siitä, että suurpedot ovat palaamassa tietyille alueille useiden vuosien poissaolon jälkeen, ja tämän aiheuttamista ongelmista. Kuten edellisiin kysymyksiin annetuissa vastauksissa ja edellä mainituissa ohjeissa todetaan, komissio katsoo, että tiukasti suojeltuja suurpetokantoja voidaan direktiiviä noudattaen hallinnoida asianmukaisella tavalla. Perustelluissa tapauksissa voidaan säännöksistä kuitenkin myöntää poikkeuksia.

([3]) Direktiivi 1992/43/ETY, EYVL L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004507/13
to the Commission
Riikka Manner (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question concerning the Habitats Directive

In January, I tabled a written question to the Commission concerning the Habitats Directive (E-000550/2013). On 15 March, I received a reply signed by Commissioner Potočnik, which mainly referred to previous questions and answers concerning the balance between the Habitats Directive and the wolf problem encountered particularly by Finland.

The increasingly large area of wolf habitat and changes in the animals' customary behaviour in the vicinity of humans are causing more and more concern to people in Finland. The guidance provided by the authorities is based on EU legislation, and there is a strong feeling amongst the public that this legislation does not protect human beings. I should therefore like to make my question more specific than before and at the same time to ask the Commission for more thorough and precise answers.

Within what time-frame will the Commission publish measures to make the coexistence of people and large predators safer from the point of view of people — particularly children — and economic activity in rural areas? I should also like to reiterate my previous question as to whether the Commission has assessed, or intends to assess, adverse effects of the Habitats Directive on people. How often are estimates of population figures which are of relevance to the Habitats Directive updated in order to ensure that assessments of the need for protection keep abreast of the current situation? Is the Commission aware that the geographical area in Finland where wolves are presenting a danger and causing problems has grown substantially in recent years?

Question for written answer E-004539/13
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Regulation of populations of large predators

In Finland, members of the public have had the feeling that the number of large predators presents a threat particularly to the safety of children and domestic animals, as a result of which the debate concerning wild animals has been quite heated there. For example, since Finland joined the European Union in 1995, the number of wolves in Finland has tripled according to some estimates. Wolves have also killed dogs within the grounds of people's own homes and made it more difficult for children to travel to school and to spend time out of doors. In the countryside, it is very common for children to travel to school on foot, by bicycle or on skis — in Finland, school buses are not provided for journeys shorter than three or five kilometres, depending on the age of the pupils. This means that an unaccompanied child may encounter a wolf. There is genuine and objective danger and good reason for the concern occasioned by the presence of wolves around settlements. Moreover, large predators cause significant damage to reindeer farming in Northern Finland.

Large predators also have their defenders in Finland. Their arguments are based on the EU legislation which is thought to exist to protect wild animals. According to them, it is not possible to reduce wild animal populations precisely because of EC law. However, the Commission's answer to my recent question (E-006576/2012) shows that such claims are unjustified. By way of clarification I should therefore like to ask whether there is any department or rule at the Commission which would make it impossible to reduce the number of wild animals in Finland to a level where they do not present a threat or danger to people and domestic animals. Is the Commission planning to provide more precise guidance which will clarify the situation and which could to some extent calm the public agitation on this subject?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its replies to Written Questions E-6576/2012 ([1]) and E-0550/2013 ([2]) which already refer to Commission guidance on population level management of large carnivores in the EU. The general assessment of experts is that the risks to human safety from wolves are minimal and close to zero if basic precautions are observed.

The Commission has launched in 2012 a Large Carnivores Initiative aimed at reconciling the conservation of these species with human co-existence. This initiative involves relevant stakeholders and aims to identify shared solutions and develop further guidance, action plans and pilot actions that will be made available to the public.

The Habitats Directive ([3]) requires each Member State to provide a report on the implementation of the directive every 6 years. These reports include updated information on the conservation status of large carnivore species protected under the directive.

The Commission is aware that large carnivores are re-colonising certain areas after absences of many years and of the challenges that this presents. As explained in answers to previous questions and in its guidance document, the Commission considers that strictly protected large carnivore populations may be appropriately managed under the directive thorough application of derogations, where this is justified.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Ibidem.
([3]) Directive 1992/43/EEC, OJ L 206 , 22.7.1992.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-004508/13
till kommissionen
Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE)
(22 april 2013)

Angående: Olaglig export av svenskfångad Östersjölax till Frankrike

Ett företag i Karlskrona, Sverige, har under drygt två års tid (2011–2012) sålt över 105 ton Östersjölax till Frankrike. Detta skrev det svenska Livsmedelsverket den 16 april 2013 i ett pressmeddelande. Karlskrona kommun har polisanmält företaget efter att kommunens miljökontor spårat exporten till Frankrike. Lax från Östersjön har så höga halter av miljögifter att den inte får säljas i andra EU-länder än Sverige, Finland och Lettland.

Att detta har fortgått utan åtgärd är uppseendeväckande, särskilt eftersom den svenska regeringen blev informerad om laxexporten redan för två år sedan av Sveriges Sportfiske- och Fiskevårdsförbund.

2012 beviljades den svenska regeringen ett permanent undantag från gränsvärdet för dioxin i fisk. Inför regeringens beslut om huruvida de skulle ansöka om ett undantag eller ej skrev Livsmedelsverket en rapport i vilken slutsatsen var att det ur ett folkhälsoperspektiv vore bättre att låta EU:s gränsvärde gälla även i Sverige, eftersom kostråden om att begränsa intaget av fet Östersjöfisk inte når fram till befolkningen i tillräckligt hög grad. Denna rapport skickade Sveriges regering dock inte till kommissionen när regeringen ansökte om det permanenta undantaget från gränsvärdena.

1. Det har framkommit att 105 ton Östersjölax har exporterats olagligt från Sverige till Frankrike. Vad avser kommissionen att göra med anledning av detta?

2. Mot bakgrund av den olagligt exporterade laxen, tänker kommissionen ompröva beslutet att ge Sverige ett permanent undantag från gränsvärdena?

3. Vad anser kommissionen om att Sveriges regering inte informerade kommissionen om Livsmedelsverkets rapport om kostråd för Östersjölax när Sverige ansökte om undantag från gränsvärdena?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(17 maj 2013)

1. Efter konstaterandet att ett svenskt företag olagligt har sålt Östersjölax främst till Frankrike har den svenska behöriga myndigheten vidtagit omedelbara åtgärder när det gäller de berörda företagen. De svenska myndigheterna underrättade systemet för snabb varning för livsmedel och foder (RASFF) om den olagliga handeln den 1 mars 2013 (RASFF-anmälan 2013.0279) och angav uppgifter om distributionen. Efter de åtgärder som de svenska myndigheterna vidtagit behövs inga ytterligare åtgärder från kommissionens sida.

2. Kommissionen anser att de svenska myndigheterna har vidtagit lämpliga åtgärder efter det att den olagliga handeln med Östersjölax konstaterats. Kommissionen har också underrättats om det kontrollsystem som inrättats för att förhindra sådan olaglig handel i framtiden. Kommissionen har därför inte för avsikt att se över det undantag som Sverige beviljats vad gäller gränsvärden för dioxiner och PCB i fisk från Östersjöområdet.

3. Kommissionen kände till Livsmedelsverkets rapport om kostråd för Östersjölax när Sverige beviljades undantaget genom kommissionens förordning (EU) nr 1259/2011 ([1]). De behöriga svenska myndigheterna har åtagit sig att genomföra nödvändiga initiativ och åtgärder för att förbättra kostrådens effektivitet i syfte att minska utsatta befolkningsgruppers exponering för dioxiner via konsumtion av fisk från Östersjöområdet. De måste lämna bevisning om dessa åtgärders effektivitet till kommissionen.

([1]) EUT L 320, 3.12.2011, s. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004508/13
to the Commission
Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Illegal exports of Baltic salmon caught by Swedish fishermen to France

Within a period of just over two years (2011-2012), an undertaking in Karlskrona, Sweden, sold more than 105 tons of Baltic salmon to France (press release of 16 April 2013 from the Swedish National Food Agency). The commune of Karlskrona reported the undertaking to the police after the commune's environmental department had discovered the exports to France. Salmon from the Baltic contains such high levels of pollutants that its sale is prohibited in all EU Member States except Sweden, Finland and Latvia.

It is surprising that this was able to continue without any intervention by the authorities, particularly as the Swedish Angling and Fish Conservation Association had informed the Swedish Government about the salmon exports a full two years ago.

In 2012 the Swedish Government was granted a permanent derogation from the limit value for dioxin in fish. Before the government decided whether or not to apply for the derogation, the National Food Agency had written a report which concluded that from the point of view of public health it would be better to retain the EU limit value in Sweden as well, since the dietary recommendation to limit consumption of oily fish from the Baltic was not getting through to the public sufficiently. However, the Swedish Government did not forward this report to the Commission when applying for the permanent derogation from the limit values.

1. It has emerged that 105 tons of Baltic salmon has been illegally exported from Sweden to France. What action will the Commission take in response to this?

2. In view of the illegal salmon exports, will the Commission review the decision to grant Sweden a permanent derogation from the limit values?

3. What view does the Commission take of the fact that the Swedish Government did not inform it about the National Food Agency's report containing dietary advice on Baltic salmon when Sweden applied for a derogation from the limit values?

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

1. Following the finding of the illegal trade by a company in Sweden of Baltic salmon mainly to France, the Swedish competent authority has taken immediate action as regards the involved companies. The Swedish authorities informed the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of this illegal trade on 1 March 2013 (RASFF notification 2013.0279) with distribution details. Following the actions undertaken by the Swedish authorities, no further actions are needed from the Commission.

2. The Commission is of the opinion that the Swedish authorities have taken appropriate action following the finding of the illegal trade of Baltic Salmon. The Commission has furthermore been informed of the control system put in place in order to prevent such illegal trade in the future. Therefore the Commission has no intention to review the derogation granted to Sweden as regards the maximum levels for dioxins and PCBs in fish from the Baltic region.

3. The Commission was aware of the National Food Agency's report on the dietary advice on Baltic Salmon when the derogation was granted to Sweden by Commission Regulation (EU) 1259/2011 ([1]). The Swedish Competent Authorities have committed to undertake the necessary initiatives and measures to improve the effectiveness of the dietary recommendations to reduce human dioxin exposure of the vulnerable groups of the population from the consumption of fish from the Baltic region. They have to provide evidence to the Commission of the effectiveness of these measures.

([1]) OJ L 320, 3.12.2011, p. 18.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004509/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(22. April 2013)

Betrifft: Kältemittel Tetrafluorpropen (R1234yf) — Bedenken der Automobilindustrie

Berichten der Süddeutschen Zeitung zufolge weigert sich der Stuttgarter Daimler Konzern, ein neues Kühlmittel für Klimaanlagen einzusetzen, das bei Crashtests in Flammen aufging. Er verweist auf einfach zu reproduzierende Versuche, welche die Selbstentzündung des Gas-Sauerstoffgemischs im heißen Motorraum zeigen. Laut Brüssel verstoße der Konzern damit gegen EU-Recht; eine Ausnahmeregelung sei abgelehnt worden. Die Autohersteller wehren sich vehement gegen das für Klimaanlagen neuer Autos seit Januar 2011 EU-weit vorgeschriebene Kältemittel R1234yf, weil Crashtests belegen, dass das leicht entflammbare Kältemittel bei der Verbrennung hochgiftigen Fluorwasserstoff freisetzt, so dass der Kontakt für Unfallopfer, aber auch für deren Helfer lebensbedrohliche Folgen haben kann. Dennoch sollen Autohersteller durch die EU gezwungen werden, das brandgefährliche Kältemittel zu verwenden.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Steht dieses Vorgehen nicht mehr im Interesse multinationaler Konzerne, und warum begibt man sich freiwillig in eine Abhängigkeit zu einem Monopol/Oligopol?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Forderung der Autohersteller, dieses Gesetz anzupassen?

3. Beabsichtigt die Kommission, die Zulassung für neue Automodelle wie die neue A-Klasse und die neue S-Klasse von Daimler zu sanktionieren?

4. Stimmt es, dass seitens der US-Chemieunternehmen Honeywell und Dupont Druck auf die Kommission ausgeübt wird, das umstrittene Kühlmittel R1234yf verbindlich europaweit zu verwenden?

5. Daimler hat bei der zuständigen Generaldirektion der Kommission ein halbes Jahr Aufschub erbeten, um nach ungefährlicheren Alternativen zu suchen. Warum lässt die Kommission den europäischen Autoherstellern nicht mehr Zeit, um nach ungefährlicheren Alternativen zu suchen?

6. Die Bundesanstalt für Materialprüfung in Berlin verweist auf ein Gutachten für das Umweltbundesamt, das bereits 2010 auf die Selbstentzündlichkeit des Stoffes ab 400 °C und den Austritt gefährlicher Flusssäure hinweist. Warum wurde das Kältemittel R1234yf dennoch verbindend zugelassen?

7. Wird die Kommission angesichts der vorgelegten Fakten nach anderen, weniger gefährlichen Kühlmittelalternativen suchen, etwa CO_2 oder Propan, so wie es in Australien verwendet wird?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(3. Juni 2013)

In der Richtlinie 2006/40/EG über mobile Klimaanlagen ist festgelegt, dass mobile Klimaanlagen von neu genehmigten Fahrzeugtypen mit einem Kältemittel mit geringem Treibhauspotenzial (global warming potential, GWP) befüllt sein müssen. Es wird zur Einhaltung dieser Vorschrift jedoch kein bestimmtes Kältemittel oder System vorgeschrieben. Weder werden deshalb Autohersteller dazu gezwungen, ein bestimmtes Produkt zu verwenden, noch wurde die Verwendung eines solchen vorgeschrieben. Die Kommission hat nicht die Absicht, an dieser Vorgehensweise etwas zu ändern.

Im Jahr 2009 hat sich die Automobilindustrie einvernehmlich dafür entschieden, den Bestimmungen der Richtlinie durch den Einsatz des Kältemittels HFO 1234yf nachzukommen. Diese Entscheidung wurde nach der Analyse des Einsatzes alternativer Kältemittel und nach einer Risikobewertung, in der die Verwendung des Kältemittels in mobilen Klimaanlagen als sicher bezeichnet wird, getroffen. Diese Prüfverfahren wurden kürzlich nochmals von zehn Herstellern durchgeführt, was zu gleichen Ergebnissen führte ([1]).

([1]) http://www.sae.org/servlets/pressRoom?OBJECT_TYPE=PressReleases&PAGE=showRelease&RELEASE_ID=1984

Die Kommission wurde von einem Unternehmen über Sicherheitsbedenken hinsichtlich der Verwendung von HFO-1234yf in seinen Fahrzeugen in Kenntnis gesetzt. Jedoch liegen der Kommission keine Informationen darüber vor, dass andere Hersteller diese Bedenken teilen oder die Verwendung des Kältemittels entschieden ablehnen. Der Kommission liegen derzeit keine Anhaltspunkte dafür vor, dass es keine technischen Lösungen gäbe, die das Risiko der Entflammbarkeit im Zusammenhang mit der Verwendung dieses Gases in mobilen Klimaanlagen verringern könnten. Jedoch untersuchen die zuständigen nationalen Behörden diese Bedenken zurzeit noch.

Die Kommission wird nicht gezielt gegen einzelne Wirtschaftsakteure tätig. Im Falle der Nichteinhaltung der EU-Rechtsvorschriften muss der für die Fahrzeugtypgenehmigung zuständige Mitgliedstaat geeignete Abhilfemaßnahmen unmittelbar beim Hersteller durchführen. Die Kommission kann in ihrer Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen Mitgliedstaaten einleiten, die das EU-Recht nicht ordnungsgemäß anwenden.

Ausführlichere Informationen zu den Bereichen Risikobewertung und Wettbewerb findet der Herr Abgeordnete in den Antworten P-3477/13 und P-9817/12 ([2]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004509/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Tetrafluorpropene refrigerant (R1234yf) — concerns in the automobile industry

According to reports in the Süddeutsche Zeitung newspaper, the Stuttgart-based Daimler Group has decided against using a new refrigerant for air-conditioning systems that combusted during crash tests. It refers to easily reproduced trials that indicate the self-ignition of the gas/oxygen mix in the hot engine compartment. According to Brussels, the Group is therefore in contravention of EC law; a derogation has been refused. Car manufacturers are vehemently opposed to the use of refrigerant R1234yf in the air-conditioning systems of new cars, despite this being required on an EU-wide basis since January 2011. This is because crash tests show that the highly flammable refrigerant releases highly toxic hydrogen fluoride during combustion, which can have life-threatening consequences for accident victims and rescue services upon contact. Despite this fact, car manufacturers are to be forced by the EU to use this highly flammable refrigerant.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is this procedure not more in the interests of multinational concerns and why are we voluntarily making ourselves dependent on a monopoly/oligopoly?

2. How does the Commission assess the call from car manufacturers for this act to be modified?

3. Does the Commission intend sanctioning the approval for new car models, such as the new A class and the new S class from Daimler?

4. Is it true that US chemical concerns Honeywell and Dupont are putting pressure on the Commission to allow the controversial R1234yf refrigerant on a binding basis throughout Europe?

5. Daimler has asked the competent Directorate General of the Commission for a six-month extension so that safer alternatives can be found. Why is the Commission unwilling to allow European car manufacturers more time to find safer alternatives?

6. The German Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing in Berlin has drawn attention to an assessment for the German Federal Environmental Agency dating from 2010, which already indicated that the material could self-ignite at temperatures in excess of 400°C and that hazardous liquid acids could result. Why has the R1234yf refrigerant been approved on a binding basis nonetheless?

7. In view of the facts presented, does the Commission intend to seek safer alternative refrigerants, such as CO_2 or propane, which are used in Australia?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

Directive 2006/40/EC on mobile air-conditioning ([1]) stipulates that MAC of newly approved types of vehicles have to be filled with a refrigerant with a low GWP. It does not prescribe any specific refrigerant/system to fulfil this obligation. Hence, car manufacturers are not forced to use any particular product and no product has been made binding. The Commission has no intention to propose to change this approach.

In 2009 car manufacturers decided, consensually, to use HFO-1234yf to implement the directive. This followed the analysis of alternatives and a risk assessment concluding that the refrigerant was safe for use in MAC systems. These procedures were recently repeated by 10 manufacturers, with equivalent results ([2]).

The Commission has been informed by a company that it had safety concerns on the use of HFO-1234yf in their vehicles. It has no information that other manufacturers share these concerns or vehemently oppose the use of the refrigerant. For the Commission there is so far no evidence that there are no technical solutions to mitigate the flammability risks associated with the use of that gas in MAC systems. However, the competent national authorities are still evaluating these concerns.

([1]) MAC.
([2]) http://www.sae.org/servlets/pressRoom?OBJECT_TYPE=PressReleases&PAGE=showRelease&RELEASE_ID=1984.

The Commission does not take action against specific economic operators. In cases of non-compliance with EU legislation, the Member State responsible for the vehicle type-approval must apply appropriate corrective measures directly with the manufacturer. The Commission, in its role as guardian of the Treaty, may launch infringement proceedings against Member States that are not correctly applying EU legislation.

The Honourable Member may find more information on risk assessment and competition aspects in the replies to P-3477/13 and P-9817/12 ([3]).

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004510/13
adresată Consiliului
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(22 aprilie 2013)

Subiect: Strategia pentru sănătatea copiilor

Datele publicate recent de UNICEF ([1]) indică un procent alarmant de copii supraponderali în țările UE. Judecând după criteriul indicelui masei corporale, 20% din toți copiii de 11, 13 și 15 ani dintr-o serie de state membre sunt supraponderali. Organizația Mondială a Sănătății vorbește acum de o „epidemie de obezitate".

Președinția irlandeză și-a luat angajamentul de a aborda problema obezității infantile. În cadrul unei reuniuni cu miniștrii sănătății desfășurate în perioada 4-5 martie 2013, ea a făcut un apel pentru lansarea unui plan de acțiune în domeniul obezității infantile; s-a convenit ca de această solicitare să se ocupe Grupul la nivel înalt pentru nutriție și activitate fizică.

Acest lucru este binevenit. Cu toate acestea, nu crede oare Consiliul că obezitatea infantilă ar trebui abordată ca parte a unei strategii mai cuprinzătoare în domeniul sănătății copiilor, care să trateze toate problemele legate de sănătatea copiilor?

O să sprijine Consiliul apelul meu pentru o strategie în domeniul sănătății copiilor — bazată pe măsuri concrete și susținută prin fonduri corespunzătoare — care să fie adoptată de Comisie?

Răspuns
(9 iulie 2013)

Chestiunea sănătății copiilor face parte dintr-o strategie UE mai largă în domeniul sănătății, cu privire la care Consiliul a adoptat concluzii în decembrie 2007 ([2]). Consiliul nu a discutat necesitatea unei strategii specifice a UE în domeniul sănătății copiilor ca atare.

În acest sens, obezitatea infantilă trebuie abordată ca parte a unei abordări transsectoriale cuprinzătoare a problemei obezității în Europa. În concluziile sale cu privire la punerea în aplicare a unei strategii UE privind problemele de sănătate legate de nutriție, supraponderalitate şi obezitate ([3]), Consiliul a salutat cartea albă a Comisiei pe această temă ([4]) şi a solicitat statelor membre să colaboreze pentru dezvoltarea unor acțiuni comune cu părțile interesate relevante şi cu Comisia, pentru a produce o schimbare reală în comportamentul legat de sănătate.

Chestiunea luptei împotriva obezității, inclusiv a obezității infantile, este urmărită, *inter alia*, în cadrul Platformei UE privind alimentația, activitatea fizică şi sănătatea, menționată în concluziile Consiliului privind întărirea promovării sănătății şi prevenirii bolilor prin intermediul unei nutriții echilibrate şi a unei activități fizice suficiente ([5]).

Consiliul a recunoscut de asemenea problema obezității şi necesitatea promovării unui stil de viață sănătos prin Rezoluția Consiliului şi a reprezentanților guvernelor statelor membre, reuniți în cadrul Consiliului din 20 noiembrie 2008, privind sănătatea şi bunăstarea tinerilor ([6]). Mai recent, Concluziile Consiliului şi ale reprezentanților guvernelor statelor membre, reuniți în cadrul Consiliului, din 27 noiembrie 2012 privind promovarea activităților fizice care întăresc sănătatea (HEPA) ([7]) au menționat de asemenea această chestiune.

([1]) http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/
([2]) A se vedea Cartea albă „Împreună pentru sănătate: O abordare strategică pentru UE 2008-2013" (14689/07) şi Concluziile Consiliului privind strategia UE în domeniul sănătății (16137/08).
([3]) 15612/07.
([4]) 9838/07.
([5]) 9363/07.
([6]) JO C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 1.
([7]) JO C 393, 19.12.2012, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004510/13
to the Council
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Child health strategy

Data recently published by Unicef ([1]) reveals an alarmingly high percentage of overweight children in EU countries. In terms of body mass index, over 20% of all 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds in a number of Member States are overweight. The World Health Organisation now refers to an 'obesity epidemic'.

The Irish Presidency has made a commitment to tackle childhood obesity. In a meeting with health ministers on 4 and 5 March 2013, it called for an Action Plan on Childhood Obesity; it was agreed that the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity would respond to this request.

This action is to be welcomed. However, would the Council agree that childhood obesity should be tackled as part of a broader child health strategy in order that all challenges linked to child health may be addressed?

Will the Council support my call for a child health strategy — based on concrete measures and backed by proper funding — to be adopted by the Commission?

Reply
(9 July 2013)

The issue of child health is a part of a broader EU Health Strategy on which the Council adopted Conclusions in December 2007 ([2]). The Council has not discussed the need for specific EU child health strategy as such.

In this sense, child obesity is to be tackled as part of the comprehensive cross-sectoral approach to the obesity problem in Europe. In its Conclusions on Putting an EU strategy on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related Health Issues into operation ([3]), the Council welcomed the Commission White Paper on this subject ([4]) and called upon Member States to work together to develop joint actions with relevant stakeholders and with the Commission in order to achieve the positive change in health behaviour.

The issue of fight against obesity, including child obesity, is pursued, *inter alia*, in the framework of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, mentioned in the Council Conclusions on the strengthening of health promotion and disease prevention by means of balanced nutrition and sufficient physical activity ([5]).

The Council also recognised the obesity problem and the need for promotion of a healthy lifestyle through the Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 20 November 2008 on the health and well-being of young people ([6]). More recently, the Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 27 November 2012 on promoting health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) ([7]), also mentioned this issue.

([1]) http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/.
([2]) see the White Paper 'Together for Health: A Strategic Approach for the EU 2008-2013' (14689/07) and Council Conclusions on EU Health Strategy (16137/08).
([3]) 15612/07.
([4]) 9838/07.
([5]) 9363/07.
([6]) OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 1.
([7]) OJ C 393, 19.12.2012, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004511/13
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Requirements for EU couples in instances where a spouse moves abroad

The spouse of a self-employed EU citizen whose fiscal residence is in his home Member State has moved to another EU Member State, to seek employment.

Prior to her establishment abroad, she was entitled to avail of her self-employed spouse's health insurance scheme.

Once she moved abroad, she lost her entitlement to her spouse's health insurance scheme and was required to take out health insurance in her host Member State.

Furthermore, the self-employed party was informed that following his spouse's departure from his own home Member State, entitlements to avail of a family income tax assessment as a couple were lost.

These stipulations will entail a loss of available income of approximately EUR 8 000 for 2013 alone.

Could the Commission indicate whether either of these two stipulations contravenes EU legislation?

If not, does the Commission view these stipulations as a barrier to the right to free movement of persons, as enshrined in the Treaties?

Could the Commission further clarify, given that the self-employed citizen's spouse also holds EU citizenship — albeit from a third Member State — whether these situations would arise were she to hold citizenship of the same Member State as her spouse?

If not, does the Commission view this as an instance of discrimination on the grounds of nationality?

Could the Commission indicate what action is foreseen to address the two abovementioned issues, or point towards practical solutions which any citizen faced with a similar situation could pursue?

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

Free movement of persons is a fundamental freedom of EU citizens. However, EC law does not guarantee taxation or social security neutrality on taking up residence in another Member State. It is for the citizen to weigh the pros and cons when deciding whether to move to another country.

EC law ([1]) does not harmonise the national social security systems, including health insurance. It determines which legislation is applicable to EU mobile citizens, but the benefits and the conditions for entitlement to them are laid down by national law. The Honourable Member does not state which national legislation is concerned or describe the personal situation of your constituent who moved within the EU to seek employment. Presumably, she had non-active status and thus, would be subject to the legislation of her country of residence. Non-active EU citizens should enjoy equal treatment and be treated in the same way as regards the access to benefits as the nationals of the country of residence. Family members of EU citizens may enjoy independent or derivative rights to social security, depending on their situation and the system of the Member State in which they reside.

([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.

The fact that a Member State does not grant to non-residents some tax benefits is not, as a rule, discriminatory since they are not in comparable situation to residents ([2]). However, if your constituent has, under the terms of a treaty for the avoidance of double taxation, maintained her tax residence in the country of her husband, a difference in treatment might be discriminatory. This would depend on the law on tax assessment as a couple in that country and on whether most of the income of the couple is earned there. Your constituent may contact the national Solvit Centre ([3]) to examine if EC law was breached in her case.

([2]) Judgment of the Court of 14 February 1995 in Case C-279/93, Finanzamt Köln-Altstadt and Roland Schumacker, ECR 1995, p. I-249.
([3]) See http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/site/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004512/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(22 aprile 2013)

Oggetto: Commercio di vino falso in Italia e nel Regno Unito per un valore di 10 milioni di euro

Tra il 16 e il 17 aprile un'operazione che ha visto coinvolti i Servizi Antisofisticazioni Vinicole provinciali della Regione Piemonte, l'Agenzia delle dogane, le dogane inglesi e il NAS dei Carabinieri, sotto il coordinamento della Procura della Repubblica di Vigevano (PV), ha portato all'arresto di tredici persone per associazione a delinquere finalizzata alla frode, all'adulterazione di vino DOP e IGT, alla ricettazione di prodotti enologici e all'evasione fiscale sia in Italia che nel Regno Unito.

Il Servizio Antisofisticazioni Vinicole delle province piemontesi, congiuntamente con l'Agenzia delle dogane milanese, ha permesso la ricostruzione delle attività illecite messe in atto da operatori senza scrupoli che immettevano sui mercati italiano e inglese vini contraffatti di bassissima qualità venduti come prodotti a Denominazione di Origine Protetta (DOP) o a Indicazione Geografica Tipica (IGT).

Le ditte oggetto delle indagini acquistavano vino da tavola di bassissima qualità che successivamente veniva imbottigliato come prodotto DOP o IGT per essere successivamente spedito e commercializzato nel Regno Unito.

Negli otto mesi in cui si sono svolte le indagini condotte dalle forze dell'ordine risulterebbero commercializzati addirittura 3,5 milioni di bottiglie di vino per un giro d'affari di 10 milioni di euro, con un danno ingente sia sotto il profilo dell'immagine sia dal punto di vista della concorrenza con vini realmente DOP e IGT.

È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti? Quali azioni intende intraprendere per tutelare i consumatori e i produttori di vini di qualità dai danni arrecati da queste frodi e da questi commerci illeciti?

Quali misure ha intenzione di porre in atto per bloccare la circolazione di questi vini falsi nel mercato interno e in particolare nel Regno Unito?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2013)

La Commissione non è stata informata del caso presentato nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputato. Di fatto, conformemente alla normativa dell'Unione europea, gli Stati membri sono responsabili dei controlli, anche antifrode, nel quadro stabilito.

In questo contesto, le norme europee garantiscono la tracciabilità dei prodotti vitivinicoli nell'Unione europea. Inoltre permettono di controllare, durante la produzione e la commercializzazione, la conformità dei vini al diritto dell'Unione e alle prescrizioni del disciplinare di produzione e, pertanto, le autorità nazionali sono pienamente competenti in caso di frode ([1]).

La Commissione non prevede altre iniziative legislative in materia, ma può essere coinvolta nel controllo del mercato, ove necessario, in collaborazione con gli Stati membri, a norma dell'articolo 192 del regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 del Consiglio ([2]).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 436/2009, in particolare gli articoli 24, 26 e 27, regolamento (CE) n. 555/2008 e regolamento (CE) n. 607/2009.
([2]) GU L 299 del 16.11.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004512/13
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Sale of counterfeit wine worth EUR 10 million in Italy and the United Kingdom

Between 16 and 17 April 2013 an operation involving the Piedmont Region's Provincial Wine Adulteration Prevention Service, the Italian customs authority, the UK customs authority and the adulteration prevention branch of the Carabinieri (NAS), coordinated by the Vigevano (Pavia) Public Prosecutor's office, led to the arrests of 13 people charged with criminal conspiracy aimed at fraud, the adulteration of protected designation of origin (PDO) and *indicazione geografica tipica* (IGT) wine, the handling of wine products and tax evasion in Italy and in the United Kingdom.

The Piedmont Region's Wine Adulteration Prevention Service, together with the Milan customs authority, helped to reconstruct the illegal activities carried out by unscrupulous operators who sold very poor quality counterfeit wine as PDO and IGT products in Italy and in the UK.

The companies targeted by the investigation bought very poor quality table wine that was subsequently bottled as a PDO or IGT product before being shipped for sale in the United Kingdom.

During the eight months in which the law enforcement agencies conducted their investigations, it is thought that as many as 3.5 million bottles of wine were sold, generating EUR 10 million in revenue and causing great harm both from an image point of view and from the point of view of competition with genuine PDO and IGT wine.

Is the Commission aware of the facts set out above? What action does it intend to take to protect consumers and producers of quality wine from the harm caused by these fraudulent activities and illegal sales?

What measures does it intend to take to prevent this counterfeit wine from circulating in the internal market and in particular in the United Kingdom?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Commission had not been informed of the case set out in the question of the Honourable Member. In fact, in accordance with EU rules, Member States are responsible for controls, including against fraud within the defined framework.

In this context, the rules provided for by the EU legislation guarantee the traceability of wine products within the EU. These rules also permit, during the production and marketing, to control the conformity of wine with EC law including requirements laid down in product specifications and therefore national authorities are fully competent in case of fraud ([1]).

The Commission does not consider additional legislative initiatives on the matter, but may be involved in the market monitoring when necessary, in cooperation with Member States according to Article 192 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([2]).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 436/2009, in particular Articles 24, 26 and 27, Regulation (EC) No 555/2008 and (EC) 607/2009.
([2]) OJ L 299, 16.11.2007.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-004513/13
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(22 април 2013 г.)

Относно: Мерките в предложението за преразглеждане на Директивата за тютюневите изделия

Директива 2001/37/ЕО на Европейския парламент и на Съвета за сближаване на законовите, подзаконовите и административните разпоредби на държавите членки относно производството, представянето и продажбата на тютюневи изделия бе приета на 5 юни 2001 г.

От приемането ѝ изминаха над десет години. С оглед пазарното и научното развитие, както и това в международен план, се появи необходимост посочената директива да бъде актуализирана и допълнена.

На 19 декември Европейската комисия (ЕК) прие предложението за преразглеждане на Директивата за тютюневите изделия и в момента то се разглежда в Европейския парламент и съответните му комисии.

Според ЕК новите правила ще доведат до намаляване вредата от тютюнопушенето и ограничаване на потреблението на тютюневи изделия.

В този смисъл:

Разполага ли ЕК с анализ за това как предложените мерки ще повлияят на производството и заетостта в сектора на тютюна, особено що се отнася до малките и средните земеделски производители?

Как предложените мерки ще се отразят на конкурентоспособността на ЕС на световния пазар на тютюна и предвиждат ли се мерки за ограничаване на вноса на тютюневи изделия, включително от трети страни, които не отговарят на разпоредбите на настоящата директива?

Какви мерки ще предприеме ЕК в защита на европейските тютюнопроизводители срещу вноса от трети страни на тютюн и тютюневи изделия с неизвестно качество и състав?

Отговор, даден от г-н Borg от името на Комисията
(31 май 2013 г.)

На 19 декември 2012 г. Комисията прие предложение за преразгледаната версия на директивата за тютюневите изделия. Приемането му беше предшествано от задълбочен анализ на икономическите, социалните и здравните последици от политическите мерки, в това число въздействието на мерките върху търговията на дребно. В раздел 6 от доклада за оценка на въздействието и в приложение 5 към него е направен преглед на икономическото въздействие върху тютюневата промишленост, нейните доставчици нагоре по веригата — включително тютюнопроизводителите, доставчиците на съставки и хартиената промишленост, както и върху дистрибуторите надолу по веригата (на едро и дребно).

Нито една от приетите мерки не би трябвало да води до допълнителни разходи за привеждане в съответствие за селскостопанските производители или да окаже несъразмерно отражение върху производителите на специфични видове тютюн, включително „Бърлей“ и ориенталски тютюни.

Селскостопанските производители може да бъдат засегнати непряко от очакваното намаление от 2 % на потреблението на тютюн през следващите пет години. Това би могло да доведе до общо намаление на приходите на тютюнопроизводителите в целия ЕС в размер на приблизително 13 милиона евро годишно. През последните години, обаче, намаляването на потреблението на тютюневи изделия в ЕС и земеделската продукция не са пряко свързани.

Всички мерки, залегнали в предложението на Комисията, се прилагат по еднакъв начин за всички тютюневи изделия, които са пуснати законно на пазара, независимо от това дали са произведени или внесени в ЕС. Въпросът за незаконната търговия също е разгледан чрез въвеждането на система за следене и обратно проследяване и на видими защитни елементи. Освен това правилата, залегнали в предложението на Комисията, не се прилагат за изделия, които са предназначени за износ.

Според Комисията предложението е балансирано, без да оказва несъразмерно отражение върху земеделските производители и конкурентоспособността на ЕС.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004513/13
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Measures featuring in the proposal for revising the Tobacco Products Directive

Directive 2001/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products was adopted on 5 June 2001.

More than 10 years have passed since it was adopted. In line with market, scientific and international developments, the need has arisen for this directive to be updated and supplemented.

On 19 December the Commission adopted the proposal for revising the Tobacco Products Directive, and it is currently being examined by Parliament and its relevant committees.

The Commission believes that the new rules will help reduce the harm caused by smoking and restrict the consumption of tobacco products.

In this context:

Does the Commission have any analysis showing what impact the proposed measures will have on production and employment in the tobacco sector, especially with regard to small and medium-sized agricultural producers?

How will the proposed measures affect the EU's competitiveness in the global tobacco market, and are there measures planned on restricting the import of tobacco products, including from third countries, which fail to comply with the provisions of this directive?

What measures will the Commission adopt to protect European tobacco producers against tobacco and tobacco products being imported from third countries of unknown quality and content?

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

The Commission adopted a proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive on 19 December 2012. The adoption was preceded by a thorough analysis of the economic, social and health impacts of policy measures, including the effects of measures on the retail sector. The Impact Assessment Report provides an overview of the economic impacts on the tobacco industry, their upstream suppliers including growers, ingredients suppliers and paper industry, and downstream distributors (wholesale, retail), in its Section 6 and Annex 5.

None of the adopted measures should lead to additional compliance costs for agricultural producers or disproportionally affect growers of specific tobacco types, including Burley and Oriental.

Agricultural producers could be affected, indirectly, by the expected 2% reduction in tobacco consumption over five years. This could result in a total revenue loss for tobacco growers in the whole of the EU of approximately 13 million euro per year. In recent years, however, the reduction in smoking consumption in the EU and farming output are not directly correlated.

All measures put forward in the Commission proposal apply equally to all tobacco products placed legally on the market irrespective of whether they are manufactured in or imported into the EU. The issue of illicit trade is also addressed the by introduction of a tracking and tracing system and visible security features. In addition, the rules put forward in the Commission proposal do not apply to products which are to be exported.

In the view of the Commission the proposal is balanced without disproportionate impact on agricultural producers and the EU's competitiveness.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004514/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κοινοτικοί πόροι για την αντιμετώπιση της λαθρομετανάστευσης

Η Ελλάδα έχει απροσδιόριστο αριθμό λαθρομεταναστών οι οποίοι μπαίνουν παρανόμως και παραμένουν στην χώρα, λόγω του άδικου Κανονισμού «ΔΟΥΒΛΙΝΟ 2».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι τα ποσά που έχουν δοθεί στην Ελλάδα από το 2008 και ως σήμερα για την αντιμετώπιση της χαώδους κατάστασης που δημιούργησαν οι λαθρομετανάστες στη χώρα; Ποιο το ποσό που δόθηκε την ίδια περίοδο ειδικώς από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Προσφύγων προς την Ελλάδα και ποια τα ποσά που δόθηκαν στις υπόλοιπες χώρες της ΕΕ;

2. Ποιες κοινοτικές πρωτοβουλίες έχουν μείνει ανεκμετάλλευτες εκ μέρους των ελληνικών αρχών και ανενεργές εξαιτίας καθυστερήσεων των υπηρεσιών των Οργάνων της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Ιουλίου 2013)

Σχετικά με τα κονδύλια που διατίθενται σε κάθε κράτος μέλος στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου για τους Πρόσφυγες (ΕΤΠ), η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος στο διαδραστικό εργαλείο του δικτυακού τόπου της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Εσωτερικών Υποθέσεων σχετικά με τα τέσσερα Ταμεία του γενικού προγράμματος «Αλληλεγγύη και διαχείριση των μεταναστευτικών ροών» (κονδύλια «SOLID»):

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/mapping-funds/index_en.htm

Πέραν των εθνικών ετήσιων κονδυλίων στο πλαίσιο των Ταμείων του προγράμματος «SOLID», από το 2008 η Ελλάδα έχει λάβει περαιτέρω 24,7 εκατ. ευρώ ως έκτακτη στήριξη στα πλαίσια του ΕΤΠ, κυρίως για την ενίσχυση της ικανότητας υποδοχής της προκειμένου να διαχειριστεί την ιδιαίτερη πίεση που έχει να αντιμετωπίσει η χώρα. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, μεταξύ του 2008 και 2011, στην Ελλάδα είχε χορηγηθεί συμπληρωματική χρηματοδότηση ύψους 10,96 εκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο των συγκεκριμένων δράσεων του Ταμείου Εξωτερικών Συνόρων με στόχο την αντιμετώπιση των αδυναμιών στα εξωτερικά της σύνορα.

Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει συνεχώς τις προσπάθειες της Ελλάδας για μεταρρύθμιση των πολιτικών της σχετικά με το άσυλο, τη μετανάστευση και τα σύνορα και για αντιμετώπιση των τρεχουσών προκλήσεων στον τομέα αυτό. Εκτός από την οικονομική συμμετοχή της δυνάμει των Ταμείων του προγράμματος «SOLID», η Επιτροπή διατηρεί επίσης στενή συνεργασία με τις αρμόδιες ελληνικές αρχές σε μόνιμη βάση, τόσο στο στάδιο του προγραμματισμού όσο και κατά την εφαρμογή των σχετικών έργων, με την παροχή εμπειρογνωμοσύνης και συμβουλών, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των τακτικών επισκέψεων στην Ελλάδα.

Η Επιτροπή δεν γνωρίζει καμία πρωτοβουλία σε επίπεδο ΕΕ που έχει παραμεληθεί ή παρέμεινε αναξιοποίητη λόγω καθυστερήσεων από τις υπηρεσίες των θεσμικών οργάνων της ΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή στηρίζει επίσης την Ελλάδα μέσω της δημιουργίας ειδικής ομάδας εργασίας για την Ελλάδα, προκειμένου να μεγιστοποιηθεί η απορρόφηση της χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004514/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Community resources for tackling illegal immigration

Greece has an indeterminate number of illegal immigrants who enter illegally and remain in the country because of the unjust 'DUBLIN 2' Regulation.

Will the Commission say:

1. How much has been disbursed to Greece since 2008 to address the chaotic situation created by illegal immigrants in the country? What amount has been allocated over the same period in particular by the European Refugee Fund to Greece and what amounts have been allocated to other EU Member States?

2. Which Community initiatives have been neglected by the Greek authorities or have remained unused because of delays by the services of the EU institutions?

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

On the allocations provided to each Member State under the European Refugee Fund (ERF), the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the interactive tool on the Directorate General Home Affairs website concerning the four Funds of the General Programme Solidarity and Migration of Migration Flows ('the SOLID Funds'):

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/mapping-funds/index_en.htm

In addition to the national annual allocations under the SOLID Funds, since 2008 Greece has received a further EUR 24.7 million as emergency support under the ERF, mainly for reinforcing its reception capacities in order to manage the particular pressure the country has been confronted with. In this context, between 2008 and 2011, Greece was awarded additional funding of EUR 10.96 million under the Specific Actions of the External Borders Fund to address weaknesses at its external borders.

The Commission has been continuously supporting the efforts of Greece to reform its policies on asylum, migration and borders and address the current challenges in this field. Apart from the financial contribution under the SOLID Funds, the Commission is also maintaining close cooperation with the competent Greek authorities on a regular basis, both at the planning stage and during the implementation of relevant projects, with the provision of expertise and advice, including regular visits to Greece.

The Commission is not aware of any initiative at EU level which has been neglected or remained unused because of delays by the services of the EU institutions. The Commission is supporting Greece, also via the establishment of the Task Force for Greece, to maximise the absorpion of EU financial assistance.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004515/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Cohesion funds package and rural areas (Scotland)

What measures have been proposed by the Commission in the cohesion funding package, in recognition of the particular difficulties — sparse population density, extended distance from markets, long-term unemployment and restricted transport and energy network connections -encountered in rural areas of EU regions, such as in Scotland?

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

Territorial challenges are recognised and addressed in the Commission's legislative proposals for cohesion policy in the 2014-2020 period.

Programmes shall specify how they address demographic challenges of regions and the specific needs of geographical areas which suffer severe permanent natural or demographic handicaps as defined by Article 174 of the Treaty. Where appropriate, Partnership Agreements shall set out an integrated approach to territorial development to address these challenges and needs.

Further details and strategic guiding principles on addressing demographic change and key territorial challenges are provided in the Common Strategic Framework which is part of the legislative provisions.

The Commission has also proposed that low population density (below 12.5 inhabitants/km^2 at NUTS level 3) is a factor which will be taken into consideration for defining the allocation of funding by Member States to the more developed regions.

Concerning the UK more specifically, supporting the employability of the long term-unemployed via the European Structural and Investment Funds is one of the specific objectives addressed by the Commission in its UK position paper.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004516/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Regional state aid guidelines for the period 2014-2020 — SME intervention levels — Scotland

In relation to the proposed Commission reform of the regional state aid guidelines for the period 2014-2020:

Does the Commission acknowledge that reducing the maximum intervention level for small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) will have a significant impact on many rural Scottish regions, given that investment in the form of regional state aid is extremely valuable in addressing the unique issues encountered in these areas, such as sparse population density, extended distance from markets, and limited transport and energy network connections?

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

The maximum aid intensities currently applicable for regional investment aid in favour of SMEs in Scotland are 30% for medium-sized enterprises and 40% for small enterprises located in the Highlands and Islands region, and respectively 20% and 30% or 25% and 35% in the other assisted areas designated under Article 107(3)(c) TFEU.

In the Regional aid guidelines applicable in the period 2014-2020, aid intensities will be reduced by five percentage points, compared to these levels, the maximum aid intensities applicable in areas designated under Article 107(3)(c). The maximum aid intensities applicable for SMEs would therefore be respectively 25% and 35% in sparsely populated areas and 20% and 30% in other assisted areas designated under Article 107(3)(c).

Reducing the aid intensities is consistent with the Commission's approach in favour of better targeted aid as well as with the logic that, as the economic development of regions in Europe progresses, the level of aid necessary to compensate for regional handicaps should also be reduced.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004517/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU budget — 2012 outstanding commitments (*reste à liquider* (RAL)) — Commission estimates

In relation to the RAL figure of EUR 207 billion from the end of 2012, could the Commission detail what level of outstanding commitments had been predicted and estimated:

1. when the financial framework for the period 2007-2013 was adopted?

2. when the 2012 draft budget was proposed?

3. when draft amending budget 6/2012 was proposed?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2013)

1. At the beginning of 2007 taking into account the level of actual RAL at the end of 2006, the forecast for the RAL at the end of the financial framework in 2013 was EUR 181 billion.

2. The actual RAL at the beginning of 2012 was EUR 207.4 billion, and at the end of 2012 it had increased to EUR 217.8 billion, i.e. an increase of EUR 10.4 billion. This can be explained as follows:

— The level of commitments in 2012 was EUR 151.3 billion

— The total payments made (including all amending budgets) amounted to EUR 138.7 billion

— Decommitments amounted to EUR 2.2 billion.

— Therefore: 207.4 + (151.3-138.7-2.2) = 217.8.

On this basis, when the Draft Budget (DB) 2012 was proposed, the Commission's assumption was that the RAL would grow by EUR 14.7 billion (DB Commitments — DB Payments). This would have increased the RAL from EUR 207.4 billion at end 2011 to EUR 222.1 billion. In fact, in the voted budget for 2012, the gap between commitments and payments was much greater, and the RAL could have grown by as much as EUR 18.1 billion.

3. By the time the DAB 6/2012 was proposed in October 2012, other amending budgets had adapted the situation, so the difference between the commitments and payments in the budget, and therefore the likely additional RAL at the year end, was EUR 18.8 billion. In DAB 6/2012, the Commission proposed some EUR 9 billion in additional payments, and so the forecast was for a RAL which would grow in 2012, not by EUR 18.8 billion, but by EUR 9.8 billion. In the end, the AB 6/2012 was approved for some EUR 6.1 billion, but thanks to a further EUR 2.2 billion in decommitments, the growth of the RAL was limited to some EUR 10.4 billion as explained in point 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004518/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU budget — postponement of EUR 2.6 billion and suspended payments

With reference to the payments totalling EUR 2.6 billion that have been deferred to 2013 following the negotiations concerning draft amending budget 6/2012 and the 2013 budget, and to which the Joint Declarations signed in December 2012 refer:

Can the Commission detail to which Member States, funding programmes and projects this EUR 2.6 billion in payment appropriations is due?

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

The EUR 2.6 billion of payments postponed to 2013 following the negotiations on the draft amending budget No 6/2012 and the 2013 Budget are the sum of EUR 1.4 billion of payment claims for 2007-2013 programmes subject to interruption/suspension and EUR 1.2 billion of payments for the closure of 2000-2006 programmes and projects ([1]).

The detailed breakdown by Member State and Fund of the postponed payment amounts both for 2007-2013 interruptions/suspensions and 2000-2006 closure is shown in the annex sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

([1]) Another EUR 0.3billion for 2000-2006 closures were paid via the year-end transfer in December 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004519/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU budget — outstanding commitments (RAL) at the end of 2012 — funding programmes

Can the Commission provide a detailed breakdown per Member State of the EUR 207 billion of outstanding commitments (RAL) at the end of 2012, identifying the funding programme to which the commitments are assigned?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

The Honourable Member is advised that a reply was given in the context of E-2557/2013 ([1]).

A breakdown of the RAL by Member State (in Annex) is basically only possible for shared management Funds related to structural actions, i.e. the Cohesion Policy Funds ERDF, ESF and CF (Heading 1b of the 2007-2013 Multiannual Financial Framework MFF) and the structural-type Funds within Heading 2 of the MFF (EAFRD and EFF and their 2000-2006 predecessors EAGGF-Guidance and FIFG). As compared to the overall end 2012 RAL by Heading as of end 2012, the breakdown by MS therefore does not include:

a) for Heading 1b: the RAL for technical assistance, contribution to cross-border cooperation programmes managed outside H1b and residual pre-2000 RAL,

b) for Heading 2: the RAL for technical assistance and residual pre-2000 RAL and all RAL outside structural-type funds, i.e. for LIFE+, animal and plant health, agriculture direct payments and market measures, fisheries markets etc.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004520/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: EU budget — draft amending budget (DAB) 2/2013 — justification

In relation to DAB 2/2013, can the Commission provide a detailed justification for the additional EUR 11.2 billion payment request, and can it clarify its reason for publishing the DAB at this early stage of the financial year?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2013)

The Commission has provided detailed explanations of its request in the explanatory memorandum of the proposed DAB 2/2013 (COM(2013) 183.

The timing took account of the time it could take the budgetary authority to take a decision, and when the appropriations on certain budget lines would run out. It also took account of the cash-flow situation. The DAB should be approved in due time to ensure that the additional resources can be called from the Member States, sufficiently early in the year to ensure that the payments can be made.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004521/13
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(22 April 2013)

Subject: Regional state aid guidelines for the period 2014-2020 — large enterprise intervention support — Scotland

In relation to the proposed Commission reform of the regional state aid guidelines for the period 2014-2020:

Does the Commission acknowledge that removing the facility to provide support for large enterprises in certain categories of regions will have a significant impact on many rural Scottish regions, given that investment in the form of regional state aid is extremely valuable in addressing the unique issues encountered in these areas, such as sparse population density, extended distance from markets, and limited transport and energy network connections?

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

The Commission has decided to adopt a stricter approach on regional aid for investments made by large enterprises in geographical areas designated under Article 107(3)(c) of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union.

Evidence shows that the decisions by large enterprises to invest in areas designated under Article 107(3)(c) are often attributable to factors such as the pre-existence of production facilities, the availability of production factors (workforce, land, capital, etc.) or the general economic context (taxes, business environment), rather than to state aid. An important concern is that large enterprises would often make such investments even without financial support.

Therefore, Member States will be allowed to grant aid to large enterprises for investments in areas designated under Article 107(3)(c) that bring new economic activity, for initial investments for the diversification of existing establishments into new products or new process innovations, as it is more likely that such investments are carried out as a result of the aid. However, in areas designated under Article 107(3)(a), i.e. regions with a GDP per capita below 75% of EU average, Member States will continue to be allowed to grant regional aid for other types of investments by large enterprises.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004522/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: General Data Protection Regulation — impact on trade

In relation to the legislative proposal on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data, and the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation (COM(2012) 11 final)), has the Commission fully and properly considered the impact on trade?

If so, what has been done?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2013)

In accordance with the European Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines ([1]), the legislative proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([2]) was accompanied by a thorough impact assessment ([3]) which assessed three broad categories of impacts, namely economic, social and environmental impacts.

Within economic impacts, impacts on trade were analysed in Section 6 of the abovementioned impact assessment, as well as in Annexes 5 and 10. Annex 10 in particular is entirely devoted to analysing the trade impacts of the preferred policy option, looking *inter alia* at how this policy option will affect the global competitive position of EU firms, its possible impact on productivity, its impact on innovation, cost and price competitiveness, its effects on trade barriers, and possible impacts on cross-border investment flows.

According to this analysis, the trade impacts will be positive. The approach of the preferred policy option to increase harmonisation at EU level through a regulation will have a positive impact on enterprises and enhance the attractiveness of Europe as location to do business, at the same time as strengthening the EU in its global promotion of high data protection standards. The cost of the current fragmentation in national rules will be removed and the resources made available through the total overall estimated savings of EUR 2.3 billion will potentially be used by businesses to enhance their investment strategies, both within the EU and beyond.

([1]) SEC(2009)92 — European Commission Impact Assessment Guidelines of 15 January 2009, available at http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/docs/iag_2009_en.pdf

([2]) COM(2012)11 — Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation).

([3]) SEC(2012)72 final — available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/document/review2012/sec_2012_72_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004523/13
an die Kommission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(23. April 2013)

Betrifft: Zeitumstellung in der EU ab 2015

Der österreichischen Presse war zu entnehmen, dass die aktuell gültige Vereinbarung über die Zeitumstellung in der EU im Jahr 2015 auslaufen würde („Der Kampf gegen die Zeitumstellung", Kurier vom 22.3.13). Trifft diese neue Information zu?

Oder handelt es sich vielmehr um eine Fehlinterpretation der alle 5 Jahre fälligen Evaluierung der bestehenden Sommerzeit-Richtline 2000/84/EG, die 2015 das nächste Mal ansteht?

Wenn ja, welche Evaluierung plant die Kommission für 2015? Beabsichtigt die Kommission, umfassendere und belastbarere Studienergebnisse zu den gesundheitlichen Beeinträchtigungen bei Menschen und Tieren sowie zu den tatsächlichen Energieeinsparungen durch die Zeitumstellung als in der Vergangenheit einzubeziehen?

Welche konkreten Folgen hätte eine negative Evaluation dieser Richtlinie? Sieht die Kommission die Notwendigkeit einer Beibehaltung der Zeitumstellung zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt weiterhin gegeben?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2013)

Die Richtlinie 2000/84/EG ([1]) ist unbefristet gültig und sieht auch keine fünfjährliche Überprüfung vor.

Im Jahr 2007 legte die Kommission gemäß Artikel 5 der Richtlinie 2000/84/EG auf der Grundlage der Angaben der Mitgliedstaaten über die Funktionsweise und die Auswirkungen der Bestimmungen der Richtlinie über die Sommerzeit einen Bericht ([2]) vor. Dieser führte zu dem Schluss, dass die Sommerzeit abgesehen von verstärkten abendlichen Freizeitaktivitäten und kleinen Energieeinsparungen nur wenig Auswirkungen hat.

Die derzeitigen Regelungen scheinen in keinem Mitgliedstaat Anlass zu Bedenken zu geben, und seit der Veröffentlichung des Berichts hat kein Mitgliedstaat die Kommission gebeten, eine Änderung der geltenden Regelungen in Erwägung zu ziehen.

Die Kommission ist daher der Ansicht, dass die Sommerzeitregelungen der Richtlinie 2000/84/EG weiterhin ihren Zweck erfüllen. Im Interesse eines funktionierenden Binnenmarktes — der den Hauptzweck der Richtlinie darstellt — ist es vor allem wichtig, einen harmonisierten Zeitplan für die Umstellung von und zur Sommerzeit beizubehalten.

([1]) Richtlinie 2000/84/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 19. Januar 2001 zur Regelung der Sommerzeit, ABl. L 31 vom 2.2.2001.
([2]) Mitteilung der Kommission an den Rat, das Europäische Parlament und den Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss gemäß Artikel 5 der Richtlinie 2000/84/EG zur Regelung der Sommerzeit, KOM(2007)739 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004523/13
to the Commission
Herbert Reul (PPE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Time shift in the EU from 2015 onwards

According to information in the Austrian press, the current agreement on time shifts in the EU will expire in 2015 ('*Der Kampf gegen die Zeitumstellung*' [The fight against the time shift], *Kurier*, 22 March 2013). Is this information correct?

Or is it instead a misinterpretation of the evaluation of the existing Summer-time Directive 2000/84/EC, which takes place every five years and is next due to be carried out in 2015?

If so, what evaluation is the Commission planning for 2015? Does the Commission intend to include more comprehensive and robust results of studies on the damage to the health of people and animals and on actual energy savings as a result of the time shift than it has done in the past?

What would the consequences be, in specific terms, of a negative evaluation of this directive? Does the Commission still consider it necessary to retain the time shift at the present time?

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

Directive 2000/84/EC ([1]) does not contain any expiry date, nor does it foresee an evaluation every five years.

In 2007, as required by art. 5 of Directive 2000/84/EC the Commission presented a report based on information provided by Member States on the functioning and impact of the summertime provisions of this directive ([2]). The report concluded that besides encouraging evening leisure activities and generating small energy savings summer time has little impact.

The current arrangements do not appear to be a cause of concern to any Member State and since the publication of the report no Member State has asked the Commission to consider modification of the current arrangements.

The Commission therefore believes that the summer time arrangements as established by Directive 2000/84/EC remain suitable. It is important in particular to maintain the harmonisation of the timetable for changing to and from summer time to ensure a proper functioning of the internal market, which constitutes the essential objective of this directive.

([1]) Directive 2000/84/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 January 2001 on summer-time arrangements, OJ L 31, 2.2.2001.
([2]) Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee under Article 5 of Directive 2000/84/EC on summer-time arrangements, COM(2007)739 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004524/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23. April 2013)

Betrifft: Vogelschutz und Biodiversitätsziele 2020

Vielfach wurde bereits darauf hingewiesen, dass die Zahl der Vögel, vor allem jener, die in und an landwirtschaftlichen Nutzflächen leben, signifikant zurückgeht. Gründe dafür sind die modernen Methoden der Landwirtschaft, der Einsatz von Chemikalien und Pestiziden sowie die Zerstörung des Lebensraumes.

1. Gibt es — abgesehen von den Maßnahmen, die durch mehr „Greening" in der GAP in Europa erreicht werden können — von der Europäischen Union geförderte Programme zum Erhalt der europäischen Vogelarten und -populationen?

2. Wildvogelarten sind nach Aussagen der Organisation BirdLife ein wichtiger Indikator für die Biodiversität. Wie bewertet die Kommission den signifikanten Rückgang der Populationen wie auch der Artenvielfalt im Hinblick auf die Erreichung der Biodiversitätsziele 2020?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2013)

1. Entscheidend für die Erhaltung der in der EU lebenden Vögel ist die vollständige Umsetzung der Vogelschutzrichtlinie ([1]). Diese sieht vor, dass wild lebende Vogelarten durch von den Mitgliedstaaten eingerichtete besondere Schutzgebiete im Rahmen des Natura-2000-Netzes geschützt werden, welche die am besten geeigneten Lebensräume der in Anhang I der Richtlinie aufgeführten bedrohten Arten und/oder Zugvogelarten umfassen. Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung der Umsetzung dieser Richtlinie und zum Schutz des Natura-2000-Netzes kommen für Zuschüsse aus allen größeren EU-Fonds einschließlich des Fonds für die ländlichen Entwicklung, des Fonds für maritime Angelegenheiten und Fischerei, des Regional- und des Kohäsionsfonds sowie für Zuschüsse aus dem LIFE-Programm infrage. Es gibt viele Beispiele von Projekten, die auf die Erhaltung von Vögeln abzielen und aus unterschiedlichen EU-Fonds ([2]) finanziert werden. Die neue Veröffentlichung „LIFE Managing Habitats for Birds" (Bewirtschaftung der Lebensräume von Vögeln im Rahmen des LIFE-Programms, nur Englisch) gibt einen guten Überblick über Vogelschutzprojekte, die aus dem LIFE-Programm finanziert werden ([3]).

Im Jahr 2011 hat die Kommission ein Arbeitspapier zur Finanzierung von Natura 2000 ([4]) angenommen, in dem die Strategie zur Investition in Natura 2000 für die kommenden Jahre erläutert wurde.

Außerdem hat die EU die Erarbeitung von Artenschutzplänen für etwa 50 Vogelarten finanziell unterstützt ([5]). Zudem hat sie einen Zeitplan für die Bekämpfung des illegalen Tötens und Fangens von und des Handels mit Vögeln erstellt.

2. Die Verbesserung des Erhaltungszustands von gefährdeten Arten einschließlich Vögeln ist eines der Hauptziele der EU-Biodiversitätsstrategie bis 2020 ([6]). Ein Ziel dieser Strategie ist, dass bis 2020 die Zahl der Artenbewertungen nach der Vogelschutzrichtlinie, die einen verbesserten Erhaltungszustand zeigen, um 50 % steigt. Die breite Palette der im Rahmen dieser Strategie durchgeführten Aktionen und Maßnahmen dürfte zur Erreichung dieses Ziels beitragen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2009/147/EG.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/examples_Natura2000_projects_financing.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/birds2013.pdf
([4]) SEK(2011)1573 endg.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/action_plans/index_en.htm
([6]) KOM(2011)244 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004524/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Protection of birds and 2020 biodiversity targets

It has already been pointed out on many occasions that bird numbers, in particular those living in and on agricultural land, are showing a significant decline. The reasons for this decline are modern farming methods, the use of chemicals and pesticides and the destruction of their habitat.

1. Apart from the measures that can be achieved in Europe as a result of more greening in the common agricultural policy, are there any programmes for the conservation of European bird species and populations that are supported by the European Union?

2. According to the organisation BirdLife, wild bird species are an important indicator of biodiversity. How does the Commission view the significant decline in populations, as well as species diversity, in relation to achieving the 2020 biodiversity targets?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2013)

1. The key to the conservation of birds in the EU is the full implementation of the Birds Directive ([1]). It establishes protection of wild birds through Special Protection Areas set up by the Member States as part of the Natura 2000 network covering the most suitable habitats of threatened and/or migratory bird species listed in Annex I to the directive and for migratory bird species. Measures supporting the implementation of the directive and the protection of the Natura 2000 network are eligible for co-financing from all major EU funds, including rural development, maritime/fisheries, regional, cohesion funds and the LIFE programme. There are many examples of projects aimed at the conservation of birds co-financed from different EU funds ([2]). A recent publication 'LIFE managing habitats for birds' gives a good overview of bird conservation projects financed by the LIFE Programme ([3]).

In 2011 the Commission adopted a Staff Working Paper on financing Natura 2000 ([4]) in which the strategy of investing in Natura 2000 in the coming years was presented.

Additionally, the EU has funded the development of Species Action Plans for around 50 bird species ([5]). The EU has also developed a roadmap for combating illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds.

2. Improvement of the conservation status of endangered EU species, including birds, is one of the main objectives of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy ([6]). The strategy includes the specific target that by 2020, compared to the current situation, 50% more species assessments under the Birds Directive show an improved conservation status. A wide range of actions and measures undertaken as part of the strategy should help to achieve this objective.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/examples_Natura2000_projects_financing.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/documents/birds2013.pdf
([4]) SEC(2011) 1573 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/action_plans/index_en.htm
([6]) COM(2011) 244 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004525/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23. April 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfrage zur Anfrage E-002356/2012 — jugendliche Arbeitslose

Die Kommission teilt in ihrer Antwort auf die Frage, wie der Arbeitslosigkeit in Portugal Abhilfe geschaffen werden könne, mit, es werde geprüft, ob Strukturfondszuweisungen neu programmiert werden könnten, um verstärkt Maßnahmen zur Beschäftigung junger Menschen durchzuführen.

Wie ist der derzeitige Stand dieser Überprüfungen zur Anpassung der Strukturfondszuweisungen, insbesondere angesichts weiter steigender Arbeitslosenquoten, vor allem unter Jugendlichen?

Wurden — sollte die Überprüfung wurde zwischenzeitlich abgeschlossen sein — Strukturfondszuweisungen „neu programmiert", um die Förderung der Beschäftigung von Jugendlichen in Portugal zu verbessern?

Wenn ja, in welcher Höhe wurden Mittel für diese Zwecke bereitgestellt, und woher stammen sie?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(21. Juni 2013)

Die Kommission hat die allgemeine Neuprogrammierung des nationalen strategischen Rahmenplans Portugals im Dezember 2012 gebilligt.

Insgesamt wurden für *Impulso Jovem* 344,1 Mio. EUR (200,9 Mio. EUR aus dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung und 143,2 Mio. EUR auf dem Europäischen Sozialfonds) an EU-Mitteln umgewidmet. Weitere 10 Mio. EUR aus einem Transfer vom Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung wurden dem operationellen Programm RUMOS-Madeira zugewiesen mit dem Ziel, die Unterstützung für Beschäftigte und Arbeitslose zu verstärken, insbesondere durch die Förderung der Beschäftigungsfähigkeit junger Menschen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004525/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question to Question E-002356/2012 — unemployed young people

In its answer to the question concerning what can be done about unemployment in Portugal, the Commission stated that consideration was being given to the possibility of reprogramming Portugal's Structural Funds allocation with a view to enhancing the measures to promote youth employment.

What is the current status of this examination of the possibility of adjusting the Structural Funds allocation, in particular in view of the further rise in unemployment rates, among young people in particular?

Assuming the examination has now been completed, has the Structural Funds allocation been 'reprogrammed' in order to improve the promotion of youth employment in Portugal?

If so, how much in the way of financing is being made available for this and where is it coming from?

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

The Commission approved the overall reprogramming of the Portuguese National Strategic Framework in December 2012.

Total EU funding reallocated to *Impulso Jovem* was EUR 344.1 million (EUR 200.9 million from the European Regional Development Fund and EUR 143.2 million from the European Social Fund). An extra EUR 10 million resulting from a transfer from the European Regional Development Fund was allocated to the RUMOS-Madeira operational programme in order to step up support for employment and the unemployed, in particular by promoting the employability of young people.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004526/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23. April 2013)

Betrifft: Nachfrage zur Arbeitslosigkeit in Portugal

Die Lage der Menschen in Portugal verschlechtert sich zusehends. Im Februar 2013 lag die Zahl der Arbeitslosen bei ca. 939 000; die durchschnittliche Arbeitslosenquote lag im Januar 2013 bei 15,8 %. Die Arbeitslosenquote im Dezember 2011 betrug 13,6 %.

In ihrer Antwort auf die Anfrage E-002356/2012 schrieb die Kommission: „Die […] in Kürze durchzuführenden Reformen sollten die Funktionsfähigkeit des Arbeitsmarktes mittelfristig verbessern und die Beschäftigungsquote im ganzen Land steigern".

1. Kann die Kommission angesichts der drastisch gestiegenen Zahl von Arbeitslosen in Portugal innerhalb eines Jahres wie auch der Meldungen, für die Wirtschaft 2013 werde eher eine Verschlechterung erwartet, mitteilen, wie sie die Entwicklung des Arbeitsmarktes in Portugal bewertet?

2. Ist in einer „mittelfristigen" Verbesserung der Lage eine vorübergehende Verschlechterung mit einberechnet worden?

3. Wurden die ebenfalls in der Antwort genannten „Neuprogrammierungen" des ESF und des EFRE im Jahr 2012 durchgeführt?

3.1 Wenn ja, welche Auswirkungen haben die daraus resultierenden Unterstützungsmechanismen für KMU bis dato auf den Arbeitsmarkt in Portugal gehabt?

4. In welchem Zeitrahmen erwartet die Kommission eine Verbesserung des Arbeitsmarktes? (Es wird um eine Definition des Begriffes „mittelfristig" in diesem Kontext gebeten.)

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(17. Juni 2013)

1./2. Die Kommission teilt die Auffassung, dass die Arbeitsmarktlage und die sozialen Bedingungen in Portugal derzeit düster sind und dass den Prognosen zufolge die Arbeitslosigkeit bis 2014 steigt. Portugal hat energische Maßnahmen zur Anpassung des Arbeitsmarkts ergriffen; dessen Erholung hängt allerdings hauptsächlich von einer positiven Entwicklung der Ausfuhren und des Finanzmarkts des Landes ab. Die Wirtschaftsaussichten dürften sich 2014 verbessern, wodurch auch die Beschäftigungsaussichten günstiger ausfallen sollten ([1]).

3./4. Die Kommission stimmte der umfassenden Neuprogrammierung des von dem Mitgliedstaat vorgelegten nationalen strategischen Rahmenplans zwecks Umschichtung von Mitteln der Strukturfonds, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Förderung der Jugendbeschäftigung, die Möglichkeiten unternehmerischer Initiative und den Zugang von KMU zu Finanzierungen, im Dezember 2012 zu; dieser neue Plan wird nun umgesetzt. Die Wirkung dieses Plans kann erst beurteilt werden, wenn ausreichend Zeit verstrichen ist.

([1]) Europäische Kommission, European Economic Forecast (Frühjahr 2013), abzurufen unter: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_spring/pt_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004526/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Supplementary question in relation to unemployment in Portugal

The position of people in Portugal is deteriorating rapidly. In February 2013, unemployment figures stood at approx. 939 000; average unemployment in January 2013 lay at 15.8%. The unemployment rate in December 2011 was 13.6%.

The Commission in its reply to Question E-002356/2012 wrote: 'The reforms which have been, or are soon to be, implemented … are expected to improve the way the labour market functions in the medium term and increase the rate of employment across the country.'

1. In view of the drastic increase in unemployment in Portugal within one year and the reports forecasting a likely further deterioration for the economy in 2013, can the Commission indicate its assessment of the development of the labour market in Portugal?

2. Has the forecast for a 'medium-term' improvement in the situation also taken account of a temporary deterioration?

3. Has the 'new reprogramming' of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in 2012, also mentioned in the answer, actually taken place?

3.1. If so, what has been the impact of the resulting support mechanisms for SMEs on the Portuguese labour market to date?

4. In what time frame is the Commission expecting an improvement in the labour market? (A definition of the term 'medium term' is requested in this context.)

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

1 and 2. The Commission agrees that current labour market and social conditions in Portugal are grim and that unemployment is forecast to increase until 2014. While Portugal has taken bold measures to adjust its labour market, any recovery of the employment market will depend mainly on positive developments in Portugal's exports and on its financial market. The economic outlook is expected to improve in 2014, which should bring more promising employment prospects ([1]).

3 and 4. The overall reprogramming of the National Strategic Framework submitted by the Member State with a view to reallocating Structural Fund resources, in particular to increase youth employment, entrepreneurship opportunities and SMEs' access to finance was approved by the Commission in December 2012 and is now being implemented. Its impact can only be gauged after sufficient time has passed.

([1]) European Commission, European Economic Forecast (Spring 2013), at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_spring/pt_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004527/13

an die Kommission

Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)

(23. April 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Mittel für die Eisenbahnachse Fehmarnbelt

Die EU beteiligt sich im Rahmen des Vorrangigen Vorhabens 20 „Eisenbahnachse Fehmarnbelt" der Transeuropäischen Verkehrsnetze (TEN-V) an der Finanzierung der festen Fehmarnbelt-Querung.

Im Februar 2011 erteilte der dänische Verkehrsminister seinen Vorhabensträger, Femern A/S, die Anweisung, die ausschreibungsreifen Pläne und die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfungen mit Vorrang für eine Tunnellösung zu erstellen. Er begründete seine Anweisung mit erheblich gestiegenen Baukosten und mehreren technischen Problemen für die zuvor favorisierte Brückenlösung. Seine Anweisung stellt eine wesentliche und kostensteigernde Änderung des Projektkonzepts dar.

Seit 2011 hat die EU dieses Projekt mit 93,581 Mio. EUR aus dem TEN-V gefördert.

Das dänische Projektierungsgesetz vom 15.4.2009 zur festen Fehmarnbeltquerung wurde u. a. anhand einer von COWI-Danskforskning 2004 erstellten volkswirtschaftlichen Studie begründet. Laut letzterer beträgt der Netto-Nutzen einer Tunnellösung etwa Null. Es liegt deswegen die Vermutung nahe, dass die EU-Förderung des Vorhabens seit Februar 2011 nicht mehr die Voraussetzungen des Artikel 30 der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) Nr. 966/2012 erfüllt.

1. Hat die Kommission geprüft, ob das Projektkonzept nach seiner wesentlichen Änderung im Februar 2011 durch die dänische Regierung weiterhin die in der EU-Haushaltsordnung verankerten Grundsätze der Wirtschaftlichkeit und Wirksamkeit (Artikel 30) erfüllt?

2. Wenn ja, wann und wie erfolgte diese Prüfung und welches Ergebnis erbrachte sie?

3. Falls nein, welche Schritte wird die Kommission unternehmen, damit die erforderliche Prüfung baldmöglichst durchgeführt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission

(19. Juni 2013)

Im Februar 2011 erklärte der dänische Verkehrsminister, die „bevorzugte" Lösung für die feste Fehmarnbelt-Querung sei ein Absenktunnel. Diese Lösung basierte auf einem Empfehlungsbericht der Planungs- und Betreibergesellschaft Femern S/A, in dem die Ergebnisse aller verfügbaren Studien und Untersuchungen anhand von Parametern wie Wirtschaft, Umwelt, Sicherheit, Navigation usw. bewertet wurden. Die Studien sind allerdings noch nicht abgeschlossen und mit der endgültigen Entscheidung des dänischen Parlaments (Verabschiedung des Baugesetzes) wird für Ende 2014 gerechnet.

Der finanzielle Beitrag der EU dient derzeit zur Finanzierung der Studien, vor allem im Hinblick auf die vorstehend genannten Parameter, auf die sich die Entscheidung des dänischen Parlaments stützen wird.

Da der Kofinanzierungssatz der TEN-V heute relativ niedrig ist, sind weiterhin die Mitgliedstaaten die mit Abstand wichtigsten Geldgeber für das Projekt. Die Mitgliedstaaten sind für Fragen wie die am besten geeignete technische Lösung, die Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse sowie die Einhaltung der einschlägigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften (UVP, SUP, Lebensräume, Wasser- und Meeresschutzrichtlinien usw.) zuständig. Über die weitere EU-Förderung der Arbeiten an der festen Querung wird möglicherweise im Rahmen künftiger Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen entschieden.

Im Rahmen des Bewertungsverfahrens durch die TEN-V-Exekutivagentur und die Kommission wird jedes Projekt u. a. auf seine Relevanz hin geprüft, d. h. hinsichtlich seines Beitrags zu den TEN-V-Prioritäten (wie sie in den TEN-V-Leitlinien dargelegt sind) und der Ziele der Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen sowie des sozioökonomischen Nutzens auf EU-Ebene.

Die Agentur und die Kommission überprüfen dann die ordnungsgemäße und fristgerechte Durchführung des Projekts auf der Grundlage der Bestimmungen des entsprechenden Finanzierungsbeschlusses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004527/13
to the Commission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: EU funding for the Fehmarn Belt railway axis

Within the framework of priority project 20, the 'Fehmarn Belt railway axis' of the Trans European Transport Networks (TEN-V), the EU is involved in funding the Fehmarn Belt Bridge fixed link.

In February 2011, the Danish Transport Minister instructed his project promoters, Femern A/S, to prepare the plans for the tendering stage and to draw up the environmental impact assessments with the focus on a tunnel solution. He explained his instructions by referring to the significantly increased construction costs and several technical problems with the previously favoured bridge solution. His instructions constitute a significant change to the project concept that will lead to higher costs.

Since 2011, the EU has funded this project from the TEN-V budget to the tune of EUR 93.581 million.

The Danish Project Planning Act of 15 April 2009 concerning the Fehmarn Belt Bridge fixed link was based on an economic study produced by COWI-Danskforskning in 2004. According to this study, the net benefit of a tunnel solution is roughly zero. There is therefore reason to suppose that the EU funding for the project since February 2011 no longer meets the requirements of Article 30 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

1. Has the Commission checked whether the project concept still meets the principles of efficiency and effectiveness (Article 30) anchored in the EU Financial Regulation, following a significant change in February 2011 by the Danish Government?

2. If so, when and how was this check carried out and what was the result?

3. If not, what steps will the Commission take to ensure that the necessary checks take place as soon as possible?

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

In February 2011, the Danish Transport Minister announced that the 'preferred' solution for the fixed link was an immersed tunnel. This solution was based on a recommendation report prepared by the implementing body, Femern S/A, which evaluated the results of all the available studies and investigations based on parameters such as economic, environmental, safety, navigation etc. However, studies are still ongoing and the final decision (the passing of the construction Act) by the Danish Parliament is expected by the end of 2014.

For the moment, the EU financial contribution is used for the studies, notably to address the abovementioned parameters, which shall support the decision of the Danish Parliament.

Since the co-funding rate of the TEN-T is today rather low, Member States remain the first and foremost important financiers of the project. Member States are responsible for issues such as the most appropriate technical solution, the cost-benefit analysis (CBA), as well as the compliance with the relevant EU legislation (EIA, SEA, Habitats, Water and Marine Directives etc). Further EU support for the works concerning the fixed link may be decided under the future calls for proposals.

During the evaluation process by the TEN-T Executive Agency and the Commission, each project is examined among others for its relevance, i.e. for its contribution to the TEN-T priorities (as laid out in the TEN-T Guidelines) and the objectives described in the call for proposals, as well as to the macro socioeconomic benefits at EU level.

The Agency and the Commission are then checking the proper and timely implementation of the project, based on the provisions of the corresponding funding decision.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004528/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(23. April 2013)

Betrifft: Atommüllfässer im Atlantik

Wie viele Atommüllfässer lagern im Atlantik, die von europäischen Firmen dort bis heute verklappt wurden, und wie will man die rostenden Fässer, die teilweise schon aufplatzen, aus dem Meer holen, deren Herstellungsland feststellen und wo an Land lagern?

Welche Art von radioaktiven Abfällen ist in den Fässern enthalten, und wie hoch ist die Aktivität (Becquerel) der gesamten eingeleiteten Abfälle?

Wie schätzt die Kommission die Auswirkungen der ausgetretenen Radioaktivität auf das maritime Ökosystem und damit auch die Verbraucher ein?

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

1. Das Einbringen radioaktiver Abfälle in das Meer ist bereits seit den 1970er-Jahren aufgrund internationaler Übereinkünfte ([1]) verboten. Die Überwachung der Einhaltung dieser Übereinkommen fällt nicht in die Zuständigkeit der Kommission.

Innerhalb der EU sind die Mitgliedstaaten dafür zuständig, die Radioaktivitätswerte in ihren Hoheitsgewässern (sowie im Boden und in der Luft) kontinuierlich zu überwachen und die Einhaltung der grundlegenden Sicherheitsnormen sicherzustellen ([2]).

2. Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen über europäische Vorhaben zur Rückholung radioaktiver Abfälle vom Meeresgrund vor.

3. Die Kommission ist nicht über das Herkunftsland und die Lage der Fässer informiert.

4. Die IAEO ([3]) hat wichtige Arbeiten zur Zusammenstellung von Daten über die Art der Abfälle und die Höhe der Radioaktivität ([4]) durchgeführt.

5. Die Kommission hat die Strahlengefährdung der EU durch die Radioaktivität in nordeuropäischen Meeren in einer Studie ([5]) untersucht ([6]). Abgesehen von Freisetzungen von Radioaktivität, die auf Kernbrennstoff-Wiederaufarbeitungsanlagen zurückgehen, wurde im Rahmen der Programme der Mitgliedstaaten zur langfristigen Überwachung in den letzten 30 Jahren keine signifikante Zunahme der Radioaktivität in Meeresgewässern festgestellt ([7]).

([1]) Siehe insbesondere das Londoner Übereinkommen über die Verhütung der Meeresverschmutzung durch das Einbringen von Abfällen und anderen Stoffen, das 1972 verabschiedet wurde und 1975 in Kraft trat. Auch das Basler Übereinkommen über die Kontrolle der grenzüberschreitenden Verbringung von gefährlichen Abfällen und ihrer Entsorgung (1989) und das internationale Übereinkommen zur Verhütung der Meeresverschmutzung durch Schiffe (1973) sehen Verbote der Entsorgung verschiedener Gefahr- und Schadstoffe im Meer vor.

([2]) Artikel 35 Euratom-Vertrag.

([3]) Internationale Atomenergie-Organisation.

([4]) IAEA TECDOC 1105, „Inventory of radioactive waste disposals at sea", August 1999.

([5]) MARINA II, 2003. Aktualisierung des MARINA-Projekts über die Strahlengefährdung der Europäischen Gemeinschaften durch die Radioaktivität in nordeuropäischen Meeren: http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/radprot. Europäische Kommission, Radiation Protection 132, 2003.

([6]) Die Kommission beteiligt sich auch an der Arbeit des für radioaktive Stoffe zuständigen OSPAR-Ausschusses und verfolgt einschlägige Arbeiten im Rahmen anderer regionaler Meeresschutzübereinkommen sowie die Arbeiten der IAEO.

([7]) Sollte die Kommission Informationen darüber erhalten, dass die Radioaktivität wesentlich zugenommen hat, würde sie Nachprüfungen gemäß Artikel 35 des Euratom-Vertrages vornehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004528/13
to the Commission
Sabine Wils (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Radioactive waste containers in the Atlantic

How many radioactive waste containers have been dumped in the Atlantic by European companies in a practice still continuing today? How is it planned to retrieve the rusting containers, some of which are already ruptured, from the sea? How is their country of origin to be determined and where are these containers to be stored on dry land?

What type of radioactive waste is held in these containers and how high is the radioactivity level (in Becquerels) of all the waste introduced?

How does the Commission assess the impact of leaking radioactivity on the maritime ecosystem and therefore on consumers?

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

1. Dumping of radioactive waste in the sea was forbidden by international instruments, adopted already in the 1970s ([1]). Supervision of the implementation of these Conventions is not the Commission's responsibility.

It has to be noted that within the EU, Member States are responsible for carrying out continuous monitoring of the level of radioactivity in their territorial waters (as well as in the air and soil) and accordingly to ensure compliance with the basic safety standards ([2]).

2. The Commission has no information on any European project aiming to retrieve radioactive waste from the seabed.

3. The information on the country of origin and location of the containers is not known to the Commission.

4. The IAEA ([3]) has carried out significant work in maintaining information on type of waste and activity ([4]).

5. The Commission has carried out a study on the radiological exposure of the EU from radioactivity in North European marine waters ([5]) ([6]). Apart from releases originating from nuclear fuel reprocessing facilities, long-term monitoring programmes carried out by the Member States have detected no significant increases in marine radioactivity over the last 30 years ([7]).

([1]) See, in particular, the London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, which was adopted in 1972 and which came into force in 1975. Prohibitions on ocean disposal of various hazardous wastes and polluting substances have also been introduced by the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (1989) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships (1973).

([2]) Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty.

([3]) International Atomic Energy Agency.

([4]) IAEA TECDOC 1105, Inventory of radioactive waste disposals at sea, August 1999.

([5]) MARINA II, 2003. Update of the MARINA Project on the radiological exposure of the European Community from radioactivity in North European marine waters; http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/radprot. European Commission, Radiation Protection 132, 2003.

([6]) The Commission also participates in the work of the OSPAR Radioactive Substances Committee and monitors related work under other regional marine conventions and the IAEA.

([7]) In the event that the Commission is informed that levels of radioactivity have significantly increased, it would carry out verifications under Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004529/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: Στάση ΕΕ στις έντονες αντιδράσεις της Μουσουλμανικής Αδελφότητας της Αιγύπτου στην πρόσφατη Διακήρυξη του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών

Οι πρόσφατες έντονες αντιδράσεις της Μουσουλμανικής Αδελφότητας της Αιγύπτου στη διακήρυξη του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών που, όπως ισχυρίζονται, θα επέτρεπε στις γυναίκες να ταξιδεύουν, να εργάζονται και να χρησιμοποιούν μέσα αντισύλληψης χωρίς την έγκριση των συζύγων τους και να διαχειρίζονται την περιουσία της οικογένειας ([1]) προκάλεσαν έντονη ανησυχία για τη δημοκρατική εξέλιξη, κάτι το οποίο ενισχύεται από παρεμφερείς αντιδράσεις κι άλλων μουσουλμανικών και μη κοινωνιών, κυρίως όσον αφορά στα δικαιώματα σεξουαλικής ελευθερίας και αναπαραγωγής. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το ψήφισμα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου της 14ης Μαρτίου 2013 σχετικά με την κατάσταση στην Αίγυπτο, στο οποίο μεταξύ άλλων καλούνται οι αρχές της Αιγύπτου *«να εξασφαλίσουν τον πλήρη σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και των θεμελιωδών ελευθεριών, περιλαμβανομένων των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών»* ([2]) καθώς και τα συμπεράσματα της Έκθεσης Προόδου 2012 για την Αίγυπτο στο πλαίσιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής Γειτονίας, όπου τονίζεται ότι η μετάβαση στη δημοκρατία *«δεν είναι χωρίς σοβαρά εμπόδια, όπως … η έλλειψη προόδου στα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα»* ([3]), ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει τις τελευταίες αυτές εξελίξεις;

2. Υπάρχουν παρόμοιες αντιδράσεις σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών από την αιγυπτιακή πλευρά στο πλαίσιο της εταιρικής σχέσης ΕΕ-Αιγύπτου;

3. Πώς σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να αντιμετωπίσει τη στάση αυτή της αιγυπτιακής ηγεσίας στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής γειτονίας αλλά και σε διεθνές επίπεδο;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004530/13
προς την Επιτροπή (Αντιπρόεδρος/Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος)
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(23 Απριλίου 2013)

Θέμα: VP/HR — Στάση ΕΕ στις έντονες αντιδράσεις της Μουσουλμανικής Αδελφότητας της Αιγύπτου στην πρόσφατη Διακήρυξη του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών

Οι πρόσφατες έντονες αντιδράσεις της Μουσουλμανικής Αδελφότητας της Αιγύπτου στη διακήρυξη του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών που, όπως ισχυρίζονται, θα επέτρεπε στις γυναίκες να ταξιδεύουν, να εργάζονται και να χρησιμοποιούν μέσα αντισύλληψης χωρίς την έγκριση των συζύγων τους και να διαχειρίζονται την περιουσία της οικογένειας ([4]) προκάλεσαν έντονη ανησυχία για τη δημοκρατική εξέλιξη, κάτι το οποίο ενισχύεται από παρεμφερείς αντιδράσεις κι άλλων μουσουλμανικών και μη κοινωνιών, κυρίως όσον αφορά στα δικαιώματα σεξουαλικής ελευθερίας και αναπαραγωγής. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το ψήφισμα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου της 14ης Μαρτίου 2013 σχετικά με την κατάσταση στην Αίγυπτο, στο οποίο μεταξύ άλλων καλούνται οι αρχές της Αιγύπτου *«να εξασφαλίσουν τον πλήρη σεβασμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και των θεμελιωδών ελευθεριών, περιλαμβανομένων των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών»* ([5]) καθώς και τα συμπεράσματα της Έκθεσης Προόδου 2012 για την Αίγυπτο στο πλαίσιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής Γειτονίας, όπου τονίζεται ότι η μετάβαση στη δημοκρατία *«δεν είναι χωρίς σοβαρά εμπόδια, όπως … η έλλειψη προόδου στα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα»* ([6]), ερωτάται η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος:

1. Πώς κρίνει η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος τις τελευταίες αυτές εξελίξεις;

2. Υπάρχουν παρόμοιες αντιδράσεις σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών από την αιγυπτιακή πλευρά στο πλαίσιο της εταιρικής σχέσης ΕΕ-Αιγύπτου;

3. Πώς σκοπεύει η Ύπατη Εκπρόσωπος να αντιμετωπίσει τη στάση αυτή της αιγυπτιακής ηγεσίας στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής γειτονίας αλλά και σε διεθνές επίπεδο;

([1]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/15/us-women-un-rights-idUSBRE92E03D20130315
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0095+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-245_en.htm
([4]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/15/us-women-un-rights-idUSBRE92E03D20130315
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0095+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL
([6]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-245_en.htm

Κοινή απάντηση της Ύπατης εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου κ. Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Ιουνίου 2013)

Η Διακήρυξη των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών εγκρίθηκε συναινετικά στις 15 Μαρτίου 2013. Υπήρξε έντονη εσωτερική συζήτηση σχετικά με τη θέση της Αιγύπτου όσον αφορά τη Διακήρυξη.

Ο σεβασμός και η προώθηση των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών, αποτελεί μέρος των αξιών της ΕΕ. Ειδικότερα, η ΕΕ είναι πλήρως αφοσιωμένη στη στήριξη του ρόλου των γυναικών κατά τη διάρκεια της πολιτικής μετάβασης που συντελείται στις αραβικές χώρες, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της Αιγύπτου. Έχουν κινητοποιηθεί σημαντικές προσπάθειες και χρηματοδοτικοί πόροι προς τον σκοπό αυτόν.

Η αντιπροσωπεία της ΕΕ διοργάνωσε πρόσφατα ένα σεμινάριο γυναικών υπό την προεδρία της ΥΕ/ΑΠ με θέμα «Αιγύπτιες Γυναίκες — Πορεία προς το μέλλον», κατά τη διάρκεια του οποίου υπεγράφη σύμβαση ύψους 4 εκατ. ευρώ για τη στήριξη της δράσης των γυναικών των Ηνωμένων Εθνών που έχει ως στόχο την παροχή δελτίων ταυτότητας στις Αιγύπτιες.

Η ΥΕ/ΑΠ εξέφρασε την ανησυχία της ΕΕ όσον αφορά τα δικαιώματα των γυναικών κατά τη διάρκεια της επίσκεψης της τον Απρίλιο του 2013. Η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς την κατάσταση και να συμμετέχει στην πλήρη υποστήριξη των δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών στην Αίγυπτο σύμφωνα με την αναθεωρημένη Ευρωπαϊκή Πολιτική Γειτονίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004529/13
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: EU position regarding Muslim Brotherhood backlash in Egypt against recent UN declaration on women's rights

The vehemence of recent reactions by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to the UN declaration on women's rights, allegedly calling for women to be allowed to travel, work, use contraceptives without their husband's permission and administer family finances, for example, ([1]) has prompted major concerns regarding progress towards democracy, particularly in view of similar objections from other quarters, both Muslim and non-Muslim, particularly regarding the right to sexual and reproductive freedom. In view of the European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2013 on the situation in Egypt, calling on the Egyptian authorities 'to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including women's rights' ([2]) and the conclusions of the 2012 Progress Report for Egypt in the framework of European neighbourhood policy, pointing out that that democratic transition 'has not been without serious setbacks, such as … lack of progress on human rights':

1. What view does the Commission take of these developments?

2. Is the question of women's rights provoking similar reactions from Egyptian interlocutors in the context of EU-Egypt partnership arrangements?

3. What action does the Commission intend to take in response to the stance adopted by the Egyptian leadership in the context of neighbourhood policy and at international level?

Question for written answer E-004530/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU position regarding Muslim Brotherhood backlash in Egypt against recent UN declaration on women's rights

The vehemence of recent reactions by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to the UN declaration on women's rights, which calls for women to be allowed to travel, work, use contraceptives without their husband's permission and administer family finances, for example ([3]), has prompted major concerns regarding has prompted major concerns regarding progress towards democracy, particularly in view of similar objections from other quarters, both Muslim and non-Muslim, principally concerning the right to sexual and reproductive freedom. In view of the European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2013 on the situation in Egypt, calling on the Egyptian authorities 'to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including women's rights' ([4]) and the conclusions of the 2012 Progress Report for Egypt in the framework of European neighbourhood policy, pointing out that that democratic transition 'has not been without serious setbacks, such as … lack of progress on human rights' ([5]):

1. What view does the High Representative take of these developments?

2. Is the question of women's rights provoking similar reactions from Egyptian interlocutors in the context of EU-Egypt partnership arrangements?

3. What action does the High Representative intend to take in response to the stance adopted by the Egyptian leadership in the context of neighbourhood policy and at international level?

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

The UN declaration on women's rights was adopted by consensus on 15 March 2013. There was a vivid internal discussion on the position of Egypt to the declaration.

([1]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/15/us-women-un-rights-idUSBRE92E03D20130315.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0095+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL
([3]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/15/us-women-un-rights-idUSBRE92E03D20130315
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0095+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL
([5]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-245_en.htm

The respect for and promotion of human rights, including the rights for women, is part of the values of the EU. In particular, the EU is fully dedicated to supporting the role of women in the political transitions going on in the Arab countries, including in Egypt. Significant efforts and financial resources have been mobilised in this regard.

The EU Delegation recently organised a women's seminar chaired by the HR/VP on 'Egyptian Women — the Way Forward' during which a EUR 4 million contract in support of United Nations Women's action to provide Egyptian women with Identity (ID) cards was signed.

The HR/VP raised the EU's concern on women rights during her visit in April 2013. The EU will continue to monitor the situation closely and stay involved in fully supporting the rights of women in Egypt in line with the revised European Neighbourhood Policy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004531/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: EU aid to Darfur

Could the Commission provide details of how much EU aid has been provided to Darfur since the beginning of the conflict in 2003? What are the Commission's priorities for the EUR 27.5 million of additional aid recently announced for Darfur? How much of this fund will be set aside for basic services?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2013)

The EU is one of the largest humanitarian donors in Sudan, and in Darfur in particular, with EUR 591.5 million provided for humanitarian assistance to Darfur since 2003. The Commission is financially supporting a number of specialised UN agencies and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for the emergency provision of food, healthcare, clean water and sanitation, hygiene, shelter and protection. Commission (DG ECHO) experts based in Sudan are closely monitoring the situation and liaising with relief organisations.

Year	Total Fund/Euro	% of the total fund of Sudan and South Sudan
2012	35 575 000	87% of fund allocated Sudan (North)
2011	77 211 159	52%
2010	77 910 730	58%
2009	96 400 000	73%
2008	71 835 253	71%
2007	71 835 253	67%
2006	72 322 215	75%
2005	14 766 319	33%
2004	71 614 392	79%
2003	2 000 000	9%
Total	591 470 321	

The pledge of EUR 27.5 million announced by the Commission at the International Donor Conference for Darfur on 7 and 8 April 2013 in Doha constitutes the first development initiative of the European Union in Darfur. This pledge, part of which will start implementation on the ground before the end of 2013, will contribute to lift the vulnerable people of Darfur out of extreme poverty by supporting greater access to, and quality of, basic services in health and education, and by facilitating the improvement of agriculture and livestock productivity, as well as the management of natural resources.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004532/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(23 April 2013)

Subject: Renewable energy consumption in the EU

It has become evident that the EU will need to dramatically increase its use of renewable energy resources in order to meet its 2020 targets. Could the Commission detail the percentage of current energy output produced from renewable resources for every Member State?

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

In the Renewable Energy Progress Report adopted on 27 March 2013 ([1]) the Commission has presented its most recent analysis of developments in the renewable energy sector including the share of renewable energy in energy consumption per Member State. According to this report the total share of renewable energy in the EU reached 12,7% in 2010 and 13% in 2011.

Further Member State data on 2011 are available from Eurostat:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/energy/data/main_tables

([1]) COM(2013) 175. Cf. Also SEC(2013) 102. http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/reports/reports_en.htm

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