IV

(Informazioni)

INFORMAZIONI PROVENIENTI DALLE ISTITUZIONI, DAGLI ORGANI E DAGLI ORGANISMI DELL'UNIONE EUROPEA

PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

INTERROGAZIONI SCRITTE CON RISPOSTA

Interrogazioni scritte presentate dai deputati al Parlamento europeo e relative risposte date da un'Istituzione dell'Unione europea

(2014/C 265/01)

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(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013809/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Popolazione di religione islamica in Europa nei prossimi decenni

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-006126/2010 può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(19 febbraio 2014)

Secondo le proiezioni demografiche di Eurostat ([1]), la popolazione totale dell'UE-27 dovrebbe raggiungere i 519,1 milioni nel 2025 e i 524,1 milioni nel 2050, mentre le stime relative alla migrazione netta indicano, rispettivamente, un totale di 1.3 milioni e di 1.1 milioni in questi anni specifici. Tali proiezioni demografiche non fanno alcun riferimento a gruppi religiosi specifici.

Con finanziamenti pari a 825 milioni di euro per il periodo 2007-13, la Commissione europea ha sostenuto iniziative a livello nazionale e di UE al fine di facilitare l'integrazione degli immigrati da paesi terzi nelle società europee tramite il Fondo europeo per l'integrazione (FEI). Il Fondo europeo per l'integrazione supporta le autorità degli Stati membri dell'UE e la società civile al fine di potenziare la loro capacità di sviluppare, attuare, monitorare e valutare le strategie, le politiche e le misure di integrazione, oltre agli scambi di informazioni e di migliori pratiche e alla cooperazione su questioni di integrazione per garantire una proficua interazione tra persone di estrazione diversa, sia culturale che religiosa ([2]). Il nuovo Fondo Asilo e migrazione continuerà a lavorare nella stessa direzione, con un'attenzione maggiore a livello locale.

L'integrazione è un processo graduale e bidirezionale: i migranti e le minoranze devono accettare l'ordinamento giuridico del paese in cui risiedono, compresi i diritti fondamentali, e fare sforzi per integrarsi. Allo stesso tempo, la società nel suo insieme dovrà cercare di facilitare l'integrazione delle minoranze e dei migranti. I diversi modi di esprimere le proprie convinzioni religiose non possono essere automaticamente imputabili a una minore volontà di integrarsi, e non possono neppure essere considerati una delle cause di un'integrazione meno efficace ([3]).

([1]) EUROPOP2010 Marzo 2011; i dati sono disponibili sul sito http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database
Eurostat sta attualmente sviluppando delle nuove proiezioni demografiche (EUROPOP 2013).

([2]) Si vedano ad esempio «I moduli europei per l'integrazione dei migranti» http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=25494

([3]) Si vedano il progetto di ricerca CHALLENGE: «The Changing Landscape of European Liberty and Security», cofinanziato dal 6° programma quadro di ricerca, http://www.libertysecurity.org/index.html e J.Cesari, «Muslims in the West after 9/11», Routledge 2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013809/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Islamic population in Europe over the next few decades

With reference to my Written Question E-006126/2010, can the Commission provide an update on the situation?

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

According to Eurostat population projections ([1]), the total population of EU-27 is projected to reach 519.1 million in 2025 and 524.1 million in 2050, where the assumptions about total net migration were, respectively, 1.3 million and 1.1 million in those specific years. These population projections do not make any reference to specific religious groups.

With funds worth EUR 825 million for the period 2007-13, the European Commission has supported national and EU initiatives that facilitate the integration of non-EU immigrants into European societies through the European Integration Fund (EIF). The EIF supports EU Member State authorities and civil society in enhancing their capacity to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate integration strategies, policies and measures, as well as their exchanges of information and best practices and cooperation on integration issues to ensure meaningful interaction between people with different backgrounds, be they cultural or religious ([2]). The new Asylum and Migration Fund will continue to do work in the same direction with an increased focus on the local level.

Integration is a progressive two-way process: migrants and minorities must accept the legal system of the country in which they live, including fundamental rights, and make integration efforts. At the same time, society at large will have to find ways to facilitate integration of minorities and migrants. Different ways to express religious beliefs cannot automatically be ascribed to a lesser will to integrate nor be viewed as a cause for a less effective integration ([3]).

([1]) EUROPOP2010 March 2011; data are available in http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database
Eurostat is currently developing a new set of population projections (EUROPOP2013).

([2]) See for example 'The European modules on migrant integration' http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=25494

([3]) See research project CHALLENGE: 'The Changing Landscape of European Liberty and Security', co-funded by 6th Research Framework Programme, http://www.libertysecurity.org/index.html and J. Cesari, 'Muslims in the West after 9/11', Routledge 2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013810/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Vendita di terre nei paesi africani

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-003730/2010 può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(29 gennaio 2014)

Dalla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-3730 del 2010, la situazione si è evoluta in modo significativo.

Le informazioni relative alle acquisizioni fondiarie su ampia scala sono raccolte e pubblicate in modo più sistematico, in particolare dopo il lancio di Land Matrix ([1]).

Gli orientamenti internazionali e gli strumenti di soft law, vale a dire gli orientamenti volontari sulla governance responsabile delle proprietà fondiarie, delle foreste e della pesca, approvati nel 2012, rispondono all'esigenza di regolamentare gli investimenti fondiari su ampia scala e di proteggere i diritti delle popolazioni locali. I principi di investimento agricolo responsabile sono in fase di discussione. Numerose multinazionali hanno dichiarato «tolleranza zero» nei confronti dell'appropriazione di terreni all'interno della loro catena di approvvigionamento.

Un forum ad alto livello ha adottato il piano d'azione di Nairobi in materia di investimenti fondiari su ampia scala per promuovere la regolamentazione e la trasparenza delle acquisizioni fondiarie in Africa, mentre i governi valutano sempre più spesso le loro recenti operazioni in modo critico e adeguano il quadro giuridico e amministrativo per regolamentare gli investimenti fondiari su ampia scala.

L'UE aiuta i paesi a regolamentare gli investimenti fondiari su ampia scala. Nel 2013 è stato approvato un progetto da 33 milioni di euro per migliorare la governance fondiaria conformemente agli orientamenti volontari sulla governance responsabile delle proprietà fondiarie, delle foreste e della pesca e ai quadri d'azione e orientamenti sull'Africa tramite una serie di azioni in 10 paesi dell'Africa subsahariana. Il G8 ha inoltre avviato partenariati sulla trasparenza fondiaria, due dei quali diretti dalla Commissione europea, con 8 paesi subsahariani.

In conclusione, nel corso degli ultimi 3 anni, i processi avviati e la pressione da parte della comunità internazionale hanno portato a un maggiore controllo degli investimenti fondiari su ampia scala in Africa. Tuttavia, occorre proseguire l'impegno per garantire che, qualora si verifichino, tali investimenti esprimano appieno il loro potenziale economico, sociale e ambientale.

Per ulteriori dettagli si rimanda alle risposte alle interrogazioni parlamentari sullo stesso argomento: per il 2013, E-000266, E- 000610, E-011631 e E-013351 ([2]).

([1]) www.landmatrix.org
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013810/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Sale of land in African countries

With reference to my Written Question E-003730/2010, can the Commission provide an update on the situation?

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

Since the answer to E-3730 in 2010, the situation has evolved significantly.

Information on large scale land acquisitions is collected and published more systematically, in particular after the launch of the Land Matrix. ([1])

International guidelines and soft law, namely the Voluntary Guidelines on responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), endorsed in 2012, address the need to regulate Large Scale Land Based Investments (LSLBI) and protect the rights of local populations. Principles for responsible agriculture investment (rai) are under discussion. Several multinationals have declared zero tolerance for 'land grabs' in their supply chain.

A High Level Forum adopted the Nairobi Action Plan on LSLBI to promote regulation and transparency concerning land acquisitions in Africa, and Governments increasingly assess their recent deals critically and adjust the legal and administrative framework to regulate LSLBI.

The EU helps countries to regulate LSLBI. In 2013, a EUR 33 million project was approved to improve land governance in line with the VGGT and the African Frameworks and Guidelines through a set of actions in 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The G8 also launched partnerships on land transparency with 8 SSA countries, two of which are led by the European Commission.

In conclusion, over the last 3 years, the processes launched and pressure by the international community have led to more scrutiny of LSLBI in Africa. However, efforts must be continued to guarantee that where they occur, LSLBI fulfil their economic, social and environmental potential.

More details can be found in related answers to parliamentary questions: for 2013, E-000266, E-000610, E-011631 and E-013351 ([2]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013813/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Costo dell'energia in Europa e pericolo di fuga delle imprese

Durante il seminario che si è tenuto a Washington organizzato dal Consiglio per le relazioni tra Italia e Stati Uniti è emerso il pericolo che le nostre imprese abbandonino l'Europa per inseguire costi dell'energia più bassi. Con la rivoluzione dello shale gas, tra il 2005 e il 2012 i prezzi nominali del gas per l'industria sono diminuiti del 54 % negli Stati Uniti mentre nello stesso arco di tempo, sono saliti del 64 % in Europa.

come intende la Commissione incidere nel breve periodo sul costo dell'energia per rendere l'UE più competitiva e evitare il suo declino industriale?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(29 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è consapevole delle preoccupazioni relative alle tendenze dei prezzi e dei costi dell'energia in Europa, in particolare in relazione alle tendenze registrate negli USA. Nell'ambito del pacchetto «energia e clima 2030» che sarà adottato dalla Commissione nelle prossime settimane, sarà pubblicata una relazione analitica esaustiva su questi aspetti. La relazione contribuirà a dare un quadro chiaro delle tendenze, dei fattori e delle conseguenze dei prezzi dell'energia in Europa che sono elementi fondamentali del dibattito sulla creazione di un settore energetico sicuro e sostenibile, a prezzi abbordabili. La relazione esaminerà anche i mezzi di cui gli Stati membri dell'UE e i consumatori di energia dispongono per ridurre i costi energetici e contenere i prezzi dell'energia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013813/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Cost of energy in Europe and danger of businesses leaving

The danger that our businesses may leave Europe in search of lower energy costs emerged during a seminar held in Washington, organised by the Council for the United States and Italy. Thanks to the shale gas revolution, nominal gas prices for industry fell by 54% in the US between 2005 and 2012, whereas they increased by 64% during the same period in Europe.

How does the Commission plan to influence the cost of energy in the short term to make the EU more competitive and prevent its industrial decline?

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

The Commission is well aware of the concern regarding trends in energy prices and costs in Europe, particularly in relation to those of the USA. A thorough report and analysis on the subject will be published as part of the 2030 energy and climate package that will be adopted by the Commission in the coming weeks. The report will contribute to giving a clear understanding of the trends, drivers and consequences of energy costs in Europe that are crucial to the discussion of creating a secure, sustainable but affordable energy sector. The report will also look at the means available to the EU Member States and energy consumers in order to reduce their energy costs and contain energy prices.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013815/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Fondi preadesione e conseguenze della mancata adesione da parte di uno dei Paesi coinvolti

Per quanto riguarda i fondi erogati attraverso gli appositi strumenti messi a disposizione dall'UE per i Paesi in preadesione, può la Commissione indicare cosa avverrà nel caso in cui uno di questi Paesi decidesse di interrompere la procedura di adesione all'Unione europea?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2014)

Lo strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA) fornisce un sostegno finanziario ai paesi candidati e candidati potenziali. Ai sensi dell'articolo 49 del TUE, ogni Stato europeo che rispetti i principi e i valori fondamentali dell'Unione può domandare di diventare membro dell'Unione. Un paese candidato è libero in qualsiasi momento di ritirare la domanda di adesione all'UE.

A norma del regolamento IPA II, i beneficiari sono ammissibili all'assistenza preadesione se figurano nell'allegato I. Se un paese candidato decidesse di ritirare la sua domanda di adesione, non vi sarebbero più i presupposti per fornire l'assistenza di preadesione e i colegislatori dovrebbero modificare di conseguenza l'allegato I del regolamento IPA.

Se un paese sospende i negoziati di adesione senza che a ciò faccia seguito una corrispondente modifica dello status di beneficiario nel quadro del regolamento IPA, la Commissione sospende l'attuazione dell'assistenza per garantire il collegamento tra l'assistenza preadesione e il processo di adesione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013815/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Pre-accession funds and the consequences in the event that a pre-accession country failed to accede

With regard to the funds provided by means of the specific instruments which the EU places at the disposal of pre-accession countries, can the Commission state what would happen in the event that one of these countries decided to discontinue the EU accession procedure?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) provides for financial support to candidate countries and potential candidates. Under Article 49 of the TEU any European State which respects the basic principles and values of the Union may apply for membership. At any moment, an applicant country is free to withdraw the application for EU membership.

Under the IPA II regulation, a beneficiary is eligible for pre-accession assistance if listed in Annex I. If an applicant country decided to withdraw its application, there would be no further basis for pre-accession assistance and Annex I to the IPA Regulation would require a corresponding amendment by the co-legislators.

Where a country puts the accession negotiations on hold, without this leading to a corresponding change of the status of beneficiary under the IPA Regulation, the Commission puts the implementation of the assistance on hold with the aim of ensuring the link between pre-accession assistance and the accession process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013816/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Rischio di pena di morte per i due marò italiani

In merito al caso internazionale dei due marò italiani detenuti in India e in attesa di processo, alcune fonti lasciano intendere che per essi potrebbe essere richiesta la pena capitale e le dichiarazioni ufficiali del governo indiano non escludono totalmente tale ipotesi.

Può la Commissione:

1. riferire in merito al caso;

2. agire per assicurare ai due militari italiani un giusto processo che rispetti i loro diritti quali cittadini europei anche alla luce degli accordi conclusi dall'UE con l'India quali il «Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013» e il «Cooperation Agreement del 1994» che espressamente richiamino al rispetto dei diritti umani?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013817/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rischio di pena di morte per i due maró italiani

In merito al caso internazionale dei due marò italiani detenuti in India e in attesa di processo, alcune fonti lasciano intendere che per essi potrebbe essere richiesta la pena capitale e le dichiarazioni ufficiali del governo indiano non escludono totalmente tale ipotesi.

Può l'Alto Rappresentante:

1. riferire in merito;

2. agire per assicurare ai due militari italiani un giusto processo che rispetti i loro diritti quali cittadini europei anche alla luce degli accordi conclusi dall'UE con l'India, quali il «Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013» e il «Cooperation Agreement del 1994» che richiamino espressamente al rispetto dei diritti umani?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue con estrema attenzione, sin dall'inizio della vicenda, il caso dei due marò italiani, tenendosi in contatto sia con le autorità italiane che con quelle indiane. La questione riguarda anche la lotta mondiale contro la pirateria, oggetto di un fermo impegno dell'UE.

Secondo le ultime informazioni disponibili, benché dall'incidente siano trascorsi quasi due anni, non sono ancora stati depositati i capi d'imputazione contro i marò italiani, che restano in carcere a New Delhi. Preoccupa in particolare la presunta intenzione del governo indiano di trattare il caso nell'ambito della legislazione indiana antiterrorismo (la cosiddetta SUA — Suppression of Unlawful Acts), che comporta il ribaltamento dell'onere della prova e condanne a lungo termine (compresa la pena di morte).

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna hanno sollevato la questione con il governo indiano a vari livelli negli ultimi tempi e continueranno ad esercitare pressioni sul paese al riguardo.

In particolare, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha esortato l'India a trovare rapidamente una soluzione soddisfacente a questa vicenda che si protrae da tempo, nel pieno rispetto della convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare e del diritto internazionale.

Le decisioni dell'India sul caso saranno oggetto di un attento esame.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013816/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Two Italian marines face the death penalty

With regard to the international case of the two Italian marines being held in India pending their trial, sources have reported that prosecutors may seek the death penalty for them. Official statements by the Indian Government have not completely ruled out this possibility.

Can the Commission:

1. report on this case;

2. intervene to secure a fair trial for the two Italian soldiers which respects their rights as EU citizens, including in light of EU-India agreements such as the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 and the 1994 Cooperation Agreement which expressly refer to human rights?

Question for written answer E-013817/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Two Italian marines face the death penalty

With regard to the international case of the two Italian marines being held in India pending their trial, sources have reported that prosecutors may seek the death penalty for them. Official statements by the Indian Government have not completely ruled out this possibility.

Can the High Representative:

1. report on this matter;

2. intervene to secure a fair trial for the two Italian soldiers which respects their rights as EU citizens, including in light of EU-India agreements such as the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 and the 1994 Cooperation Agreement which expressly refer to human rights?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

The HR/VP has been following the case of the two Italian marines very closely, since its beginning, in contact with both the Italian and Indian authorities. This issue has also a bearing on the global fight against piracy, to which the EU is strongly committed.

According to the latest available information, the Italian marines are still being held in New Delhi, with no charge sheet having been issued despite almost two years have passed since the incident. It is of particular concern the purported intention of the Indian Government to deal with the case under the Indian anti-terrorism legislation (the so-called SUA — Suppression of Unlawful Acts) which implies the reversal of the burden of proof and long-term convictions (including the death penalty).

The HR/VP and the European External Action Service have raised this issue with the Indian government, at various levels, in the recent past, and will continue to do so with increasing emphasis.

In particular, the HR/VP has encouraged India to find, as a matter of urgency a satisfactory outcome to this long-standing case as soon as possible, based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and international law.

Any decision by India on this case will be carefully assessed.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013818/13
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 december 2013)

Betreft: Natura 2000-gebied, kalkarm grijs duin, gemeente Westland en omstreken

Het dorp Monster in de gemeente Westland bevindt zich deels in een in 2007 aangewezen Natura 2000-kustgebied dat dient ter bescherming van o.a. het habitattype grijs duin. Voor het specifieke habitattype kalkarm grijs duin werd in Monster een gebied van 3,5 hectare aangewezen waarin zich ook een camping bevindt.

De camping — de enige camping in het dorp — dreigt nu te moeten verdwijnen voor de afgraving van het terrein, terwijl er in de tussentijd verschillende ontwikkelingen hebben plaatsgevonden. Zo is er een gebied van 7,5 hectare gelegen naast de camping aan het Natura 2000-gebied toegevoegd. Verder wordt de kuststrook in de betroffen regio verbreed, hetgeen resulteert in 75 hectare extra natuur. Daarnaast wordt het bestaande duingebied versterkt en opgehoogd. De lokale politiek en de bevolking hechten zeer aan het behoud van de camping, die van groot belang is voor het toerisme in het dorp.

Is het mogelijk de 3,5 hectare van de camping uit te zonderen van het Natura 2000-gebied aangezien er inmiddels 7,5 hectare extra aan het gebied zijn toegevoegd (4 hectare meer dan het oorspronkelijke plan)?

Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het behalen van de doelstellingen van de Natura-richtlijnen (het tegengaan en stoppen van biodiversiteitsverlies) leidend is en niet de precieze locatie of grootte van het gebied?

Indien op de nieuwe 7,5 hectare de doelstelling even goed gehaald kan worden als op de oorspronkelijke 3,5 hectare, is het in dat geval mogelijk de grenzen van het gebied te herzien?

Is het gezien de uitbreiding van het oorspronkelijke gebied van 3,5 hectare met 7,5 hectare en de extra natuurrealisatie van 75 hectare mogelijk de camping te ontzien, mede gezien de bepaling in artikel 6, lid 4, van de habitatrichtlijn die stelt dat bij de overwegingen voor de goedkeuring van een project of plan rekening gehouden kan worden met dwingende redenen van groot openbaar belang, inclusief redenen van sociale of economische aard?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(14 februari 2014)

Grijs duin is een prioritair habitattype dat voor de Gemeenschap van belang is. Nederland heeft zich met betrekking tot de Natura 2000-site „Solleveld en Kapittelduinen" onder meer tot doel gesteld de ecologische kwaliteit te verbeteren en het gebied met grijs duin op de site in stand te houden. Deze doelstelling geldt voor alle gebieden met grijs duin op de site, ongeacht de precieze locatie ervan binnen de site. De grenzen van Natura 2000-sites worden op basis van ecologische criteria getrokken. Deze grenzen kunnen alleen worden gewijzigd als de oorspronkelijke criteria als gevolg van natuurlijke ontwikkelingen zijn veranderd of als de afbakening op een wetenschappelijke fout was gebaseerd.

Het is aan Nederland om te beslissen hoe de doelstellingen inzake milieubehoud het best binnen de grenzen van de site worden verwezenlijkt. Het is ook aan Nederland om de maatregelen inzake milieubehoud concreet gestalte te geven. Het is ook aan de Nederlandse autoriteiten om te beslissen in welke mate de activiteiten van een bestaande camping kunnen worden voortgezet of moeten worden aangepast aan de doelstellingen inzake milieubehoud.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013818/13
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Natura 2000 area, decalcified grey dune, municipality of Westland and environs

The village of Monster in the [Dutch] municipality of Westland lies partially within a Natura 2000 coastal area designated in 2007 in order to protect, amongst other things, the grey dune habitat type. In order to protect the specific habitat type of a decalcified grey dune, a 3.5 hectare site in Monster was designated. The site includes a campsite.

The campsite, which is the only one in the village, is now facing an existential threat of having the site dug up, while there have been various other developments in the meantime. For example, a 7.5 hectare area adjacent to the campsite has been added to the Natura 2000 area. In addition, the coastal strip in the area concerned was widened, resulting in an additional 75 hectares of natural environment. Furthermore, the existing dune area was invigorated and enhanced. The local politicians and public attach great importance to the retention of the campsite, which is of major significance for tourism in the village.

Is it possible to except the 3.5 hectares of the campsite from the Natura 2000 area, given that 7.5 additional hectares have been added to the Natura 2000 area since its establishment (4 hectares more than was originally planned)?

Does the Commission share the view that it is the achievement of the goals of the Natura directives (tackling and halting the loss of biodiversity) that is key, rather than the precise location or size of the area?

If these goals can be achieved just as well on the new 7.5 hectares as on the original 3.5 hectares, is it then possible to revise the boundaries of the Natura 2000 area?

Given the expansion of the original 3.5-hectare area by 7.5 hectares and the additional 75 hectares of natural habitat, is it possible to spare the campsite, especially in light of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, which states that, when considering approval of a project or plan, account may be taken of imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

Grey dunes are a priority habitat type of Community interest. The conservation objective set by the Netherlands for the Natura 2000 site 'Solleveld and Kapittelduinen' is, inter alia, to improve the ecological quality and maintain the area of the grey dunes present on the site. This objective applies to all areas of the habitat type 'grey dunes' present on the site, independently of their precise locations within the site. The boundaries of a Natura 2000 site are drawn on the basis of ecological criteria. These boundaries can only be modified if the original criteria have changed due to natural developments or if the delimitation was based on a scientific error.

It is up to the Netherlands to decide how the conservation objectives are best achieved within the boundaries of the site and to put the corresponding conservation measures into action. It also falls to the Dutch authorities to determine to what extent the activities of an existing campsite can continue or may have to be adapted in the light of the site's conservation objectives.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013819/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: European Commission central library books

How many books have been borrowed over the last 12 months from the Commission's two central libraries?

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

In 2013, around 30 000 materials were consulted in the library and some 39 000 printed books were borrowed. Access to digital material is rapidly increasing — for both on-screen reading and downloading. Between 2008 and 2013, downloads increased by 60% to a total of over 120 000. 80% of all subscriptions are to e-journals.

Most of the requests for reader services (loan, access to specialised periodicals, newspapers and online resources, on-demand bibliographical searches, etc.) are completed electronically or by phone and do not require a physical visit to the Central Library. Some 7 000 readers visited the Central Library in 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013820/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Running costs of the Commission's central libraries

What were the office running costs of the Commission's central libraries over the last 12 months?

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

The Central Library of the Commission is a single department with locations in Brussels and Luxembourg.

In 2013, the running costs of the Library were EUR 2 275 000 for IT and infrastructure -including the spaces needed to store the physical collections (over 560 000 volumes in Brussels and 110 000 in Luxembourg) — and EUR 9 635 000 for salaries (total estimate).

These salaries covered 52 Officials, 1 Temporary agent and 12 Contractual agents, who performed various functions as librarians, financial agents, IT staff, clerical officers and storekeepers. In 2013 the staff managed around 2 700 subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals, around 5 000 orders for books, 468 standing orders for subscriptions to annual publications, and about 130 000 orders for individual articles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013821/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Visitors to the Commission's central libraries

How many visitors have both of the Commission's central libraries had over the last 12 months?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-013819/2013 ([1]) for a reply concerning the number of visitors to the European Commission Central Library.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013822/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Commission central library staff numbers and salaries

How many members of staff have worked in both of the Commission's central libraries over the last 12 months? What were their salaries?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-013820/2013 ([1]) for a reply concerning the number of staff members of the European Commission Central Library and their salaries.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013823/13
to the Commission
Daniel Hannan (ECR)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Conference attendance by European Commission central library staff

Have Commission central library staff attended any conferences over the last 12 months? If so, where were these conferences held and how much was spent on transport?

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

Some staff members of the Commission Central Library attended conferences in 2013. These conferences were held in Bath (UK), Berlin (DE), Ghent (BE), Lisbon (PT), Luxembourg (LU) and Strasbourg (FR).

The total associated transport costs were EUR 916.13.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013824/13
à la Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(5 décembre 2013)

Objet: Cigarette électronique

La cigarette électronique s'impose peu à peu dans notre quotidien. La Commission veut une nouvelle fois décider d'une législation basée sur le principe de précaution, compris de manière très restrictive, et fait le jeu des intérêts industriels notamment.

Les bases scientifiques évoquées par la Commission sont souvent remises en cause pour leur manque de transparence.

1. Sur quelles recherches et études s'appuie la Commission dans le cadre de cette proposition de directive et comment s'assure-t-elle de l'indépendance des entités qu'elle consulte?

2. Selon quels critères définit-elle un équilibre entre liberté individuelle, impératifs de santé publique et principe de précaution?

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

À propos des études sur lesquelles s'appuie la proposition de réglementation des cigarettes électroniques, la Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question à sa réponse à la question écrite E-13950/2013 de Mme Papadopoulou.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013824/13
to the Commission
Philippe de Villiers (EFD)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Electronic cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes are gradually becoming part of everyday life. Yet once again the Commission wants to adopt legislation which derives from a very narrow understanding of the precautionary principle, and which would primarily serve industrial interests.

The scientific evidence cited by the Commission has been criticised on many occasions for its lack of transparency.

1. Which research and studies has the Commission used as a basis for its proposal for a directive, and how has it ensured the independence of the bodies which were consulted?

2. Which criteria did it apply in its search for a balance between individual freedoms, public health requirements and the precautionary principle?

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

On the studies and justification for the proposed regulation of electronic cigarettes, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-13950/2013 by Mrs Papadopoulou.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013825/13
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Criminal records applications in Member States

I have been contacted by one of my constituents, a member of whose family was killed in a road accident in Val d'Isère, France in 2001. Six years later the driver was convicted in France of manslaughter through dangerous driving but the family later found out that the resulting criminal record applies only in France. The driver now lives in the UK. I have been informed that the law has since been changed, meaning that if an offence is committed in another Member State, the authorities of the country in which the offence took place may, at their own discretion, notify the country where the offender was born and lives that a conviction has been made.

Does the Commission have any plans to make this notification procedure compulsory?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 February 2014)

Council Framework Decision 2008/675/JHA ([1]) establishes the mechanism that previous convictions delivered by a Member State are taken into account during criminal proceedings in another Member State.

In the context of new criminal proceedings, Member States must ensure that previous convictions handed down in another Member State are duly taken into consideration under the same conditions as the previous national convictions.

Information regarding previous convictions can be obtained under applicable instruments on mutual assistance in criminal matters between Member States or via ECRIS. ECRIS is a decentralised information technology system interconnecting the national criminal registers of Member States regulated by Council Framework Decision 2009/315/JHA ([2]) and Council Decision 2009/316/JHA ([3]).

Criminal records are stored in national databases and exchanged electronically between the central authorities of European Union Member States upon request. The Member State of nationality of the person is the central repository of all convictions handed down to that person. The Member State's authorities must store and update all the information received and retransmit when requested.

As a result, each Member State is in a position to provide exhaustive, up-to-date information on its nationals' criminal records, regardless of where those convictions were handed down.

A Member State convicting a non-national is obliged to immediately send information, including updates, on this conviction to the Member State(s) of the offender's nationality.

([1]) OJ L 220 of 15.8.2008 on taking account of convictions in the Member States of the European Union in the course of new criminal proceedings.
([2]) OJ L 93 of 7.4.2009.
([3]) OJ L 93 of 7.4.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013826/13
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Capital gains tax in France

It has come to my attention that British residents who own property in France are facing problems in that their capital gains tax is being miscalculated as a result of them not being permanent residents in France.

In light of this, could the Commission explain what action is being taken to ensure that the national authorities in France investigate any disputes of this nature?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

The Commission services are aware of this problem and have opened infringement proceedings against France for violation of EC law at the beginning of July 2013, in particular Regulation (EU) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems. The French authorities, by imposing social levies ('prélèvements sociaux') on income from real estate located in France on persons who are not tax resident in France and who are not subject to the French social security legislation, infringe the principle of unity of the law laid down in Article 11 (3) (e) of Regulation (EC) 883/2004.

In its judgment of 17 July 2013, the French Conseil d'État communicated its intention to refer a request for a preliminary ruling to the Court of Justice of the European Union (Case C-623/13) concerning the application of Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 ([1]) on social levies. The Commission services are awaiting the judgment of the Court of Justice before deciding further action is needed.

([1]) The predecessor of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013827/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 décembre 2013)

Objet: Harmonisation européenne de la législation sur les colorants pour les encres de tatouages

La France s'apprête à interdire 59 colorants utilisés dans les encres pour tatouages. Un arrêté déposé le 6 mars 2013 par l'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament (ANSM) met en garde contre une probable nocivité de ces encres dont les pigments contiennent des métaux toxiques et des types d'hydrocarbure, qui accroissent les risques d'infection, d'allergie, et peut-être de cancers.

Dans une réponse à une question écrite de 2010 (E-004078/2010), la Commission disait vouloir intégrer dans la directive sur les dispositifs médicaux la question de ces colorants même lorsque que ceux-ci ne sont pas utilisés à des fins médicales. La consultation ouverte en 2008 en vue de la réforme de ce texte abordait, en effet, la question des produits injectables sans but médical. Pourtant, le texte proposé par la Commission en 2012 et voté par le Parlement le 22 octobre dernier ne prend pas en considération ce sujet.

1. Cette question doit-elle être seulement régie par les législations nationales? N'y a-t-il pas un intérêt à ce qu'elle soit traitée au niveau européen? La Commission envisage-t-elle d'aborder ce sujet dans une autre proposition législative?

2. La Commission ne craint-elle pas des mouvements intra-européens de clients si les législations nationales divergent?

3. Certains laboratoires, certifiés au niveau européen, ont approuvé une liste de produits non nocifs. Néanmoins, ces certificats ne sont pas reconnus dans tous les pays membres. La Commission envisage-t-elle de créer un certificat européen accréditant les laboratoires à établir des listes de produits exempts de risques?

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(6 février 2014)

En règle générale, tous les produits de tatouage mis sur le marché de l'Union européenne et disponibles à la vente doivent être sûrs et conformes aux dispositions de la directive 2001/95/CE relative à la sécurité générale des produits ([1]). Plusieurs États membres ont adopté des réglementations sur ces produits, réglementations qui ont été notifiées à la Commission et aux autres États membres conformément à la procédure d'information établie par la directive 98/34/CE ([2]). Certains États membres ont aussi demandé l'adoption d'une législation spécifique de l'Union sur les produits de tatouage. Dans sa réponse à la question E-011055/2013, la Commission indiquait qu'elle réfléchissait à la faisabilité d'une telle demande.

Par ailleurs, comme elle l'a précisé dans sa réponse à la question E-004078/2010, elle a présenté en septembre 2012 une proposition de règlement visant à modifier la législation relative aux dispositifs médicaux ([3]), laquelle contient une liste exhaustive de produits implantables ou autres produits invasifs qui doivent être considérés comme des dispositifs médicaux, qu'ils soient ou non destinés à être utilisés à des fins médicales. Les encres de tatouage n'ont pas été incluses dans cette liste, dès lors qu'elles sont utilisées, dans leur grande majorité, à des fins exclusivement esthétiques et qu'elles ne remplissent pas les critères d'un dispositif médical, qui impliquent généralement une utilisation médicale.

La Commission est consciente que certains laboratoires fournissent pour des encres de tatouage des certificats d'essai fondés sur la résolution du Conseil de l'Europe ResAP(2008)1 ([4]) relatives aux exigences et les critères d'innocuité des tatouages et des maquillages permanents. Il n'existe pas actuellement de système de certification ou d'autorisation des produits de tatouage à l'échelle de l'Union. L'établissement d'un tel système ne pourrait être envisagé que dans le contexte d'une évaluation du besoin et de la faisabilité de règles de l'Union en la matière.

([1]) JO L 11 du 15.1.2002, p. 4.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1998L0034:20070101:FR:PDF
([3]) COM(2012) 542 final.
([4]) Résolution ResAP(2008)1 sur les exigences et les critères d'innocuité des tatouages et des maquillages permanents (remplaçant la résolution ResAP(2003)2 sur les tatouages et les maquillages permanents).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013827/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: EU-wide harmonisation of legislation on tattoo ink pigments

France will soon introduce a ban on 59 pigments used in tattoo inks. A decree adopted on 6 March 2013 by the French National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety (ANSM) warns that these inks are likely to be harmful because their pigments contain toxic metals and certain hydrocarbons which increase the risk of infections, allergies and perhaps even cancer.

In its response to a written question tabled in 2010 (E-004078/2010), the Commission said that it intended to extend the scope of the directive on medical devices to cover these pigments even though they have no medical purpose. The consultation on the revision of this text which was launched in 2008 covered the issue of injectable products without any medical purpose, but the text tabled by the Commission in 2012 and voted through Parliament on 22 October makes no reference to them.

1. Will this issue be regulated solely at national level? Would it not be a good idea to introduce EU-wide harmonisation in this area? Is the Commission planning to cover the issue in a different legislative proposal?

2. Is the Commission not concerned about the possibility that citizens who want tattoos will travel between Member States if different legislative regimes are in force?

3. A list of safe products has been issued by a number of laboratories certified at European level, but these certifications are not recognised by all Member States. Is the Commission planning to introduce an EU-wide certificate authorising laboratories to draw up lists of risk-free products?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

As a general rule, all tattooing products placed on the EU market and made available for purchase by consumers must be safe and comply with the provisions of the General Product Safety Directive 2001/95/EC ([1]). Several Member States have adopted regulations regarding tattooing products that were notified to the Commission and other Member States in accordance with the information procedure set up by Directive 98/34/EC ([2]). Several Member States also have called for the establishment of specific EU legislation on tattoo products. As mentioned in its answer to the Question E-011055/2013 the Commission is currently assessing the feasibility of this request.

As indicated in its answer to Question E-004078/2010, the Commission presented in September 2012 a proposal for a new Regulation to revise the medical device legislation ([3]), which contains an exhaustive list of implantable or other invasive products which shall be considered medical devices, regardless of whether or not they are intended to be used for a medical purpose. Tattoo inks were not included in this list as the vast majority of tattoo inks are intended for aesthetic purposes only and hence do not fit into the concept of a medical device which generally requires a medical purpose.

The Commission is aware that some laboratories provide test certificates regarding tattoo inks based on the Council of Europe Resolution ResAP (2008)1 ([4]) on requirements and criteria for the safety of tattoos and permanent make-up. There is currently no EU-wide certification or authorisation system for tattooing products. The establishment of such a system could only be considered in the context of an assessment of the need and feasibility of EU wide rules in the field of tattoos.

([1]) OJ L 11, 15.1.2002, p. 4.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1998L0034:20070101:EN:PDF
([3]) COM(2012) 542 final.
([4]) Resolution ResAP(2008)1 on requirements and criteria for the safety of tattoos and permanent make-up (superseding Resolution ResAS(2003)2 on tattoos and permanent make-up).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013828/13
adresată Comisiei
Eduard-Raul Hellvig (ALDE)
(5 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Lista aditivilor alimentari permiși pentru preparatele din carne

Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind aditivii alimentari stabilește în anexa II o listă a aditivilor alimentari autorizați la nivel european. Această listă a fost elaborată prin intermediul Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1129/2011 al Comisiei de modificare a anexei II din Regulamentul 1333/2008, intrat în vigoare la 1 iunie 2013.

Printre altele, lista se referă și la aditivii utilizați în compoziția preparatelor din carne. Intrarea în vigoare a acestei liste afectează în mod direct modul în care sunt preparați „micii", un preparat tradițional românesc. Aceștia sunt preparați pe baza unei paste din carne, iar rețeta tradițională implică utilizarea a doi aditivi care nu se regăsesc în prezent în lista de la anexa II, și anume bicarbonatul de sodiu (E500) și carminul (E120).

Acest lucru mi-a fost adus la cunoștință și a fost semnalat atât autorităților române, cât și Comisiei Europene. Din informațiile pe care le dețin, Comisia intenționează să propună un nou regulament care să revizuiască anexa II în sensul adăugării aditivilor menționați în lista aditivilor permiși la nivel european. Cu toate acestea, au existat întârzieri semnificative față de calendarul anunțat inițial, iar propunerea nu a fost încă adoptată în mod formal.

Doresc să subliniez atașamentul românilor față de acest produs și, deci, importanța pentru România a modificării cât mai rapide a listei aditivilor permiși, astfel încât acest preparat să poată fi în continuare pregătit după rețeta tradițională.

1. Poate Comisia să confirme angajamentul de a modifica lista aditivilor permiși?

2. Care sunt motivele care au justificat decizia amânării propunerii de regulament al Comisiei pentru modificarea anexei II?

3. În ce măsură a stabilit Comisia un nou calendar, iar dacă este deja fixat, care este acesta?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-014100/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE)
(13 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Aditivi alimentari care trebuie incluși în anexa IV la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008

Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1129/2011, care include Anexa II la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008, în cadrul căreia sunt enumerați aditivii alimentari a căror utilizare în alimente este autorizată, a intrat în vigoare la 1 iunie 2013. Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1129/2011 nu include însă anumiți aditivi alimentari utilizați la prepararea pastei de carne pentru specialitatea românească denumită „mici".

Părțile interesate din România și autoritățile românești au întreprins demersurile necesare în vederea includerii în anexa II la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008 a aditivilor necesari preparării acestei paste carne.

Adoptarea oficială a propunerii de regulament care modifică lista aditivilor care pot fi utilizați în produsele de carne ar fi trebuit să aibă loc la 21 octombrie 2013, în cadrul unei reuniuni a Comitetului permanent pentru lanțul alimentar și sănătatea animală (SCFCAH). Cu toate acestea, în septembrie 2013, Comisia a informat statele membre că a decis să prelungească consultarea internă inter-servicii, ceea ce implică modificarea datei adoptării.

Având în vedere cele de mai sus, Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. motivele care stau la baza deciziei de prelungire a consultării interne inter-servicii;

2. noua dată de adoptare oficială a propunerii de regulament.

Răspuns comun dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(7 februarie 2014)

Lista Uniunii privind aditivii alimentari a fost stabilită pe baza aditivilor alimentari autorizați pentru utilizare în produsele alimentare în conformitate cu Directiva 94/35/CE privind îndulcitorii, Directiva 94/36/CE privind coloranții și Directiva 95/2/CE privind aditivii alimentari, alții decât coloranții și îndulcitorii. În prezent, aditivii alimentari sunt incluși în listă pe baza categoriilor de produse alimentare în care pot fi adăugați, ceea ce permite o identificare mai ușoară a aditivilor autorizați.

Din cauza diferențelor de interpretare din trecut, aditivii alimentari au fost utilizați în anumite produse tradiționale care nu sunt în conformitate cu dispozițiile vechilor directive, nici cu noua anexă II la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008.

Comisia a primit din partea statelor membre, precum și din partea părților interesate, mai multe cereri pentru a include unele dintre aceste utilizări în lista Uniunii privind aditivii alimentari autorizați, inclusiv utilizarea bicarbonatului de sodiu (E 500) și a carminului (E 120) în produsele tradiționale preparate din carne („mici"). A fost necesar ca aceste cereri să fie analizate cu atenție, pentru a asigura respectarea condițiilor de utilizare care sunt stabilite în legislația referitoare la aditivii alimentari.

Comisia va finaliza în curând un proiect de măsură care propune autorizarea utilizării acestor aditivi alimentari în produsul în cauză, precum și alte autorizări în alte produse tradiționale care sunt importante pentru anumite state membre ale Uniunii Europene.

Data prevăzută pentru votarea proiectului de măsură în cadrul reuniunii Comitetului permanent pentru lanțul alimentar și sănătatea animală (Secțiunea siguranța toxicologică a lanțului alimentar) este 20 februarie 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013828/13
to the Commission
Eduard-Raul Hellvig (ALDE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: List of food additives permitted in meat products

Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on food additives provides a list in Annex II of the food additives approved in the EU. This list has been drawn up based on Commission Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008, which entered into force on 1 June 2013.

Substances referred to in the list also include additives used in the making of meat products. The entry into force of this list has a direct impact on the method of preparing 'mici' (grilled minced meat rolls), which is a traditional Romanian dish. They are prepared using a meat paste, but the traditional recipe involves using two additives which do not currently appear on the list in Annex II: sodium bicarbonate (E500) and carmine (E120).

I was made aware of this fact, which was also reported to both the Romanian authorities and the Commission. Based on the information which I have, the Commission intends to table a new regulation which will revise Annex II with a view to including the additives mentioned in the list of additives permitted in the EU. However, there have been considerable delays in relation to the timetable initially announced and the proposal has still not been formally adopted.

I would like to stress how fond Romanians are of this product. This is why it is important to Romania to amend the list of permitted additives as soon as possible, so that this dish can continue to be prepared according to the traditional recipe.

1. Can the Commission confirm its commitment to amending the list of permitted additives?

2. What are the reasons justifying the decision to postpone the Commission's proposal for a regulation amending Annex II?

3. What progress has the Commission made in setting a new timetable and, if it is already set, what is it?

Question for written answer E-014100/13
to the Commission
Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE)
(13 December 2013)

Subject: Food additives to be included in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008

Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011, which comprises Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 listing the food additives approved for use in foods, entered into force on 1 June 2013. However, Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011 does not include some of the food additives traditionally used to prepare the meat paste for the Romanian food speciality called 'mici'.

The interested parties in Romania and the Romanian authorities have completed the necessary steps in order to include in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 the additives needed for preparing the meat paste.

The formal adoption of the proposal for a regulation, which would modify the list of additives that can be used in meat products, was scheduled to take place on 21 October 2013, at a meeting of of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH). However, in September 2013, the Commission informed Member States that there would be a change in the schedule as it had decided to prolong the internal inter-service consultation.

In view of the above, can the Commission specify:

1. the reasons behind its decision to prolong the internal inter-service consultation?

2. the new schedule for the formal adoption of the proposal for a regulation?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission

(7 February 2014)

The Union list of food additives was established based on food additives permitted for use in foods in accordance with Directive 94/35/EC on sweeteners, Directive 94/36/EC on colours and Directive 95/2/EC on food additives other than colours and sweeteners. The additives are now listed on the basis of the categories of food to which they may be added, which allows an easier identification of the additives that are authorised.

Due to historical differences in interpretations, food additives have been used in certain traditional products that are not in conformity with the provisions of the old directives nor with the new Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008.

The Commission received from Member States as well as stakeholders, several requests to include some of these uses in the Union list of authorised food additives, including the use of sodium carbonate (E 500) and Carmine (E 120) in the traditional meat preparation 'Mici'. These requests needed to be carefully considered in order to assure compliance with the conditions od use that are laid down in the food additives legislation.

The Commisison is now finalising a draft measure to authorise the use of these food additives in the product concerned, together with some additional authorisations in other traditional products that are important for certain Member States in the European Union.

The draft measure is expected to be voted in the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (Section Toxicological Safety of the Food Chain) on 20 February 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013829/13
aan de Commissie
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(5 december 2013)

Betreft: Landbouwsubsidie van de EU voor Facebookspel „Farmville"

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het Nederlandse artikel getiteld: „EU geeft 500 000 euro subsidie voor boerderij in Farmville" ([1])? Zo nee, waarom niet?

2. Is de Commissie bekend met het feit dat er landbouwsubsidie is verleend (500 000 euro) aan een „Facebookspel" genaamd „Farmville"? Zo nee, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie de mening dat er iets moet gebeuren om in de toekomst het verlenen van deze (landbouw)subsidie aan „games" te voorkomen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat landbouwsubsidie hier absoluut niet voor is bedoeld en er in de toekomst zeer zorgvuldig om moet worden gegaan met het uitdelen van subsidie, oftewel geld van de belastingbetaler? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. Is de Commissie bereid zich transparant op te stellen, door openbaar te maken aan welke „games" zij nog meer subsidie heeft verleend? Zo nee, waarom niet?

6. Welke stappen gaat de Commissie ondernemen om dit geld — geld van de belastingbetaler — terug te krijgen?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013910/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: EU geeft 500 000 euro subsidie voor niet-bestaande boerderijen

Volgens mediaberichtgeving ([2]) hebben acht Roemenen drie jaar lang ongeveer 500 000 euro EU-landbouwsubsidie gekregen voor boerderijen die alleen op papier bestonden. De Roemenen vroegen in 2010 subsidie aan bij de Europese Unie voor het houden van koeien. Op papier ging het daarbij om 1 860 koeien waarmee de acht personen 100 tot 150 euro per koe kregen. Na drie jaar is gebleken dat de boerderijen en de koeien niet bestaan. De verdachten moeten het geld terugbetalen, maar drie van hen hebben bezwaar aangetekend. Zij stellen dat nergens duidelijk is vermeld dat er alleen subsidie voor fysieke koeien kan worden aangevraagd.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de berichtgeving dat er drie jaar lang subsidies zijn uitgekeerd voor niet-bestaande boerderijen en maar liefst 1 860 koeien?

2. Vindt de Commissie net als de PVV dat het verkwisten van subsidiegeld een zware belediging is voor de belastingbetalers van met name de netto-betalende lidstaten, die dat geld immers hebben opgebracht? Zo nee, hoe omschrijft de Commissie dat dan wel?

3. Is de Commissie nu ook eindelijk tot de conclusie gekomen dat de zeggenschap over het landbouwbeleid inclusief de bijbehorende financiële middelen terug moet naar de lidstaten? Zo nee, waarom niet? Wat moet er nog meer misgaan voordat de Commissie tot deze conclusie komt?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe het kan dat deze fraude zo lang onopgemerkt gebleven is?

5. Hoe oordeelt de Commissie over de immorele houding van de drie frauderende bezwaarmakers die zichzelf kennelijk in het gelijk vinden staan terwijl zij op oneigenlijke gronden geld hebben verkregen?

6. Is de Commissie bereid het geld direct in mindering te brengen op de landbouwbijdrage aan Roemenië? Zo nee, waarom niet?

([1]) http://nutech.nl/games/3646107/eu-geeft-500000-euro-subsidie-boerderij-in-farmville.html
([2]) http://nutech.nl/games/3646107/eu-geeft-500000-euro-subsidie-nep-boerderij.html

Antwoord van de heer Cioloș namens de Commissie
(5 februari 2014)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de aantijgingen waarnaar wordt verwezen door de geachte Parlementsleden en blijft actief de zaak volgen door contacten met de betrokken nationale autoriteiten.

In de eerste plaats moet erop worden gewezen dat de verwijzing naar „Farmville" uit de Roemeense media slechts ter illustratie was en er niet daadwerkelijk werd beweerd dat de subsidie werd uitbetaald aan het Facebook-spel „Farmville". De Nederlandse website die is vermeld door de geachte Parlementsleden met het artikel in kwestie, is bijgewerkt om dit punt te corrigeren.

De verantwoordelijkheid voor het beheer van EU-regelingen wordt gedeeld tussen de Commissie en de lidstaten en het is aan de laatstgenoemde om als eerste te reageren indien er aantijgingen zijn van wanbeheer of fraude met EU-middelen. Er wordt op gewezen dat het onderhavige geval werd ontdekt door de nationale autoriteiten en het wordt momenteel onderzocht door hun dienst voor fraudeonderzoek. Informatie van de nationale autoriteiten is daarom noodzakelijk voordat de Commissie formeel commentaar kan geven op de aantijgingen en alvorens na te gaan of maatregelen moeten worden genomen.

Voorts zal de Commissie, indien zij van oordeel is dat de Roemeense autoriteiten over het algemeen niet afdoende hebben voldaan aan hun verplichtingen op het gebied van management, met name met betrekking tot de controles, correcties in het kader van de goedkeuring van de rekeningen opleggen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013829/13
to the Commission
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: EU agricultural subsidies for the Facebook game 'Farmville'

1. Is the Commission familiar with the Dutch article entitled 'EU geeft 500 000 euro subsidie voor boerderij in Farmville' [EU grants EUR 500 000 subsidy for farm in Farmville] ([1])? If not, why not?

2. Is the Commission aware of the fact that an agricultural subsidy (of EUR 500 000) was granted to a Facebook game called 'Farmville'? If not, why not?

3. Is the Commission of the opinion that something needs to be done in order to prevent the awarding of such (agricultural) subsidies to games in future? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission share the view that agricultural subsidies are absolutely not intended for this purpose and that the awarding of subsidies — taxpayers' money — needs to be handled extremely carefully in future? If not, why not?

5. Is the Commission prepared to provide transparency by making public what other games have been granted subsidies? If not, why not?

6. What steps is the Commission going to take to get back this money, which is, after all, taxpayers' money?

Question for written answer E-013910/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: EU grants EUR 500 000 subsidy to non-existent farms

According to media reports ([2]), over a three-year period, eight Romanians received around EUR 500 000 in EU agricultural subsidies for farms that only existed on paper. The Romanians applied for a European Union subsidy for keeping cattle in 2010. On paper, the application related to 1 860 cows, in respect of which the eight applicants received EUR 100-150 per cow. After three years, it turned out that neither the farms nor the cows exist. The accused are required to pay the money back, but three of them have lodged an appeal. They argue that it was not clearly stated anywhere that subsidies can only be applied for in respect of real-life cattle.

1. Is the Commission aware of the reports that subsidies were paid out for three years for non-existent farms and no less than 1 860 cows?

2. Does the Commission agree with the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) that the wasting of subsidy money represents a serious insult to taxpayers, specifically those of the net contributor Member States who, after all, generated that money? If not, how would the Commission describe it?

3. Has the Commission now finally come to the conclusion that control over agricultural policy, including the appurtenant funding, must be returned to the Member States? If not, why not? What else has to go wrong before the Commission reaches this conclusion?

4. Can the Commission explain how it can be that this fraud went unnoticed for so long?

5. What view does the Commission take of the immoral position of the three fraudulent appellants, who apparently see themselves as in the right, despite having received money on spurious grounds?

6. Is the Commission prepared to deduct the money directly from Romania's agricultural contribution? If not, why not?

([1]) http://nutech.nl/games/3646107/eu-geeft-500000-euro-subsidie-boerderij-in-farmville.html
([2]) http://nutech.nl/games/3646107/eu-geeft-500000-euro-subsidie-nep-boerderij.html

Joint answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the allegations referred to by both Honourable Members and is actively pursuing the matter via contacts with the national authorities concerned.

In the first place it must be emphasised that the reference to 'Farmville' originating in the Romania media was for illustrative reasons only and it was not actually alleged that the subsidy was paid to the Facebook game 'Farmville'. The Dutch website quoted by both Honourable Members with the article in question has been updated to correct this point.

The responsibility for management of EU schemes is shared between the Commission and the Member States and it is for the latter to respond first if there are allegations of mismanagement or fraud of EU funds. It is noted that the present case was detected by the national authorities and is currently being pursued by their Fraud Investigation Service. Information is therefore necessary from the national authorities before the Commission can make any formal comment about the allegations and before deciding if action is necessary.

Additionally, if the Commission finds that the Romanian authorities have more generally not properly fulfilled their management obligations, notably with regard to controls, then it will impose 'clearance of Accounts' corrections.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013830/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Competencia tratados bilaterales

Según admite la Comisión, existen en la EU más de mil tratados entre Estados miembros y terceros países que restringen la competencia en el sector aeroportuario y del transporte aéreo. En su respuesta de 8 de diciembre de 2010, la Comisión decía: «la Comisión está manteniendo actualmente activas negociaciones con Brasil, Israel, Líbano, Ucrania y Australia con el objetivo de alcanzar un acuerdo de transporte aéreo en nombre de la Unión Europea y de sus Estados miembros. La Comisión también ha entablado negociaciones con Nueva Zelanda y ha recibido el mandato de entablarlas con Túnez y Argelia. En todos los casos, la Comisión defiende un acceso libre al mercado sin limitaciones en cuanto a los destinos que puedan explotar las compañías aéreas de cada parte».

Recientemente, la Comisión ha firmado un memorando de entendimiento de cooperación en materia de competencia con terceros países como, por ejemplo, la India, mostrando que existe margen de maniobra para que la política de competencia tenga también una dimensión exterior.

¿Piensa la Comisión incluir en los memorandos de entendimiento de cooperación provisiones que traten el problema de los tratados bilaterales?

¿Cuál es el estado de las negociaciones citadas en su respuesta a las preguntas E-008848/2010, E-008851/2010, E-008850/2010 y E-008849/2010? ¿Ha abierto la Comisión nuevas negociaciones con terceros países para defender un «acceso libre al mercado sin limitaciones en cuanto a los destinos que puedan explotar las compañías aéreas de cada parte»?

¿Piensa la Comisión tratar desde el punto de vista legislativo la dimensión exterior de la política de competencia, en concreto en lo que incumbe al sector del transporte aéreo de pasajeros?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión coopera con las autoridades responsables de la competencia de terceros países, con el fin de garantizar la aplicación efectiva de sus respectivas leyes de competencia y promover la convergencia de las políticas de competencia. En algunos casos, los acuerdos de cooperación se han codificado en acuerdos bilaterales específicos, por ejemplo, con Canadá, los Estados Unidos, Japón y Corea. En otros casos, la Comisión concluye memorandos de acuerdo, de carácter no vinculante, con las autoridades responsables de la competencia de los principales socios comerciales, como la India.

Ninguno de ellos se refiere a aspectos sectoriales específicos, sino que crean un marco general para la cooperación administrativa y un diálogo continuo para mejorar la comprensión y la sensibilización respecto de las futuras estrategias de la política de competencia y de su aplicación.

Con el fin de seguir progresando en la apertura de los respectivos mercados de la aviación, se firmaron acuerdos de transporte aéreo con Georgia y Jordania en diciembre de 2010, con Moldavia en junio de 2012 y con Israel en junio de 2013. En marzo de 2011 concluyeron las negociaciones con Brasil, pero este país ha solicitado volver a negociar algunas disposiciones. Cabe esperar que pueda firmarse un acuerdo antes de que finalice este año. Las negociaciones con Ucrania concluyeron en octubre de 2013 y se espera que el acuerdo se firme en marzo de 2014. En 2013 se iniciaron negociaciones con Azerbaiyán y Túnez. Por distintas razones, no se ha registrado ningún progreso en las negociaciones con Australia y Nueva Zelanda desde 2010.

La Comisión incluye sistemáticamente en las negociaciones de acuerdos sobre transporte aéreo con terceros países un artículo relativo al marco de competencia del transporte aéreo entre las Partes. Su objetivo es la salvaguardia de la libre competencia y generalmente hoy es aceptado por los países socios como una parte normal de los acuerdos globales de transporte aéreo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013830/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Bilateral treaties on competition

The Commission acknowledges that over a thousand treaties exist in the EU, between Member States and third countries, that restrict competition in the airport and air transport sectors. In its answer dated 8 December 2010, the Commission said: 'the Commission is currently in active negotiations with Brazil, Israel, Lebanon, Ukraine and Australia with the objective of reaching an air transport agreement on behalf of the Union and its Member States. The Commission has also opened negotiations with New Zealand, and has received a mandate to open negotiations with Tunisia and Algeria. In all cases, the Commission defends an open access to the market with no limitations as to the points that can be served by the carriers of the respective parties'.

The Commission recently signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation with third countries, such as India, concerning competition, indicating that there is room for manoeuvre to allow competition policy to include an external dimension.

Does the Commission intend to include provisions in memorandums of understanding on cooperation to deal with the problem of bilateral treaties?

What is the current state of the negotiations referred to in its answer to questions E---008848/2010, E-008851/2010, E-008850/2010 and E-008849/2010? Has the Commission opened new negotiations with third countries to defend 'open access to the market with no limitations as to the points that can be served by the carriers of the respective parties'?

Does the Commission intend to deal with the external dimension of competition policy from a legislative point of view, particularly with regard to the passenger air transport sector?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

The Commission cooperates with competition authorities of third countries to ensure effective application of the respective competition laws and to promote convergence of competition policies. In some cases, cooperation arrangements are codified in dedicated bilateral agreements, e.g. with Canada, the US, Japan and Korea. In other cases the Commission concludes non-binding Memoranda of Understanding with competition authorities of the major trading partners, such as India.

Neither of these deal with specific sectorial issues, but create a general framework for administrative cooperation and a continued dialogue to increase understanding and awareness of forthcoming competition policy approaches and enforcement.

Air transport agreements, aiming at further opening the respective aviation markets, were signed with Georgia and Jordan in December 2010, with Moldova in June 2012 and with Israel in June 2013. Negotiations were finalised with Brazil in March 2011 but Brazil has requested certain provisions renegotiated. It is expected that an agreement can be signed later this year. Negotiations with Ukraine were finalised in October 2013 and it is expected that the agreement will be signed in March 2014. Negotiations with Azerbaijan and Tunisia were opened in 2013. For various reasons, no progress has been made in the negotiations with Australia and New Zealand since 2010.

The Commission systematically includes in the negotiations on air transport agreements with third countries an article relating to the competitive framework for air transport between the parties. It is aimed at safeguarding fair competition and is generally accepted by partner countries as now a normal part of comprehensive air transport agreements.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013831/13
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Prohibición de las parrillas de barbacoa a base de metales pesados

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-006349/2013 del pasado mes de julio, la Comisión informaba de que estaba estudiando la posibilidad de tomar medidas para hacer frente al problema denunciado por este diputado en relación con las barbacoas recubiertas por un baño metálico de níquel, cobre, estaño y zinc. Estos dispositivos, comercializados en la EU, presentaban un grave riesgo para la salud humana por el desprendimiento de metales pesados en el proceso de asado.

Por otro lado, tal y como la Comisión indica en la citada respuesta y según el Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004, si circulan por el mercado parrillas que no cumplen la normativa comunitaria, los Estados miembros están facultados para prohibir y retirar dichos utensilios. Sin embargo, dado que el problema afecta a muchos países de la UE (solo Finlandia e Italia han tomado medidas respecto a la migración de metales en contacto con alimentos), y dado que la mayoría de las parrillas defectuosas proceden de países terceros, parece que se impone una actuación urgente desde las instituciones comunitarias.

¿Puede informar la Comisión del estado de su evaluación sobre la necesidad de nuevas medidas a adoptar, a la que hacía referencia en su respuesta parlamentaria? ¿Ha tomado la Comisión una decisión sobre nuevos instrumentos legislativos en este caso? Dado que la seguridad alimentaria de los ciudadanos europeos está implicada, ¿se han dispuesto plazos o un posible calendario para su aprobación?

Teniendo en cuenta que el acero inoxidable es una alternativa segura y viable para este tipo de utensilios, ¿ha valorado la Comisión la posibilidad de realizar una modificación por comitología al Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004 que, sobre la base de lo previsto en su artículo 11 (autorización comunitaria) o de la prohibición directa de los «metales pesados en parrillas de asar» en el Anexo I, punto 8, pudiera ayudar a resolver el problema aquí expuesto? ¿Piensa la Comisión desarrollar legislativamente el punto sobre metales y aleaciones del mismo Anexo tal y como ya se ha hecho con la normativa UE relativa a otros materiales (cerámicas, celulosa, plásticos)?

¿No considera la Comisión que los Estados miembros en los que se están comercializando actualmente las parrillas concernidas están incurriendo en infracción de lo dispuesto en el artículo 8, apartado 2, del citado Reglamento?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de febrero de 2014)

El artículo 8, apartado 2, del Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004 ([1]) dispone que no se autorizará ninguna sustancia a nivel de la Unión a menos que su seguridad haya quedado demostrada adecuada y suficientemente en las condiciones de uso previstas.

Como ya se indicó en la respuesta a la pregunta E-006349/13, la Comisión está evaluando si se necesita una mayor armonización y más iniciativas a nivel de la Unión. Los metales pesados han sido incluidos en el plan de trabajo sobre materiales no armonizados ([2]) mencionado también en la respuesta a la pregunta E-006349/13. Los resultados se esperan para 2015.

([1]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1935/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 27 de octubre de 2004, sobre los materiales y objetos destinados a entrar en contacto con alimentos y por el que se derogan las Directivas 80/590/CEE y 89/109/CEE, DO L 338 de 13.11.2004, p. 4.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/planned_ia/docs/2014_sanco_005_fcm_specific_provisions_for_materials_other_than_plastics_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013831/13
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Ban on barbecue grills made of heavy metals

In its answer to Question E-006349/2013 of last July, the Commission reported that it was considering the possibility of taking measures to address the problem reported by this MEP regarding barbecue grills coated with nickel, copper, tin and zinc. These implements, marketed in the EU, present a serious risk to human health due to heavy metals flaking off them during the cooking process.

Moreover, as the Commission stated in the answer mentioned above, Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 states that Member States are entitled to prohibit and remove any grills from the market that do not comply with Community legislation. However, since the problem affects many EU countries (only Finland and Italy have taken action on the migration of metals in contact with food), and given that most of the defective grills are from third countries, urgent action by Community institutions would appear to be necessary.

Can the Commission report on the status of its assessment of the need to adopt new measures, referred to in its parliamentary answer? Has the Commission decided on new legislative instruments in this case? Given that the food safety of European citizens is involved, have deadlines or a possible timetable for approval of such instruments been prepared?

Given that stainless steel is a safe and viable alternative for utensils of this kind, has the Commission assessed the possibility of modifying Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 by comitology, based on the provisions in its Article 11 (Community authorisation), or of directly prohibiting 'heavy metals in barbecue grills' in its Annex I(8), as a way of resolving the problem set out in this question? Does the Commission intend to develop legislation with regard to the metals and alloys section in the abovementioned annex, as has already been done with EU legislation on other materials (ceramics, cellulose, plastics)?

Does the Commission not believe that any Member States in which the grills concerned are currently marketed are breaching the provisions of Article 8(2) of the regulation mentioned above?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

Article 8(2) of Regulation (EC) 1935/2004 ([1]) sets out that substances should not be authorised at Union level without an adequate and sufficient demonstration of their safety under intended conditions of use.

As already mentioned in the reply to Question E-006349/13 the Commission is currently evaluating if further harmonisation and initiatives at Union level are necessary. Heavy metals have been included in the roadmap for non-harmonised materials ([2]) also referred to in the reply to Question E-006349/13. Results are expected for 2015.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food and repealing Directives 80/590/EEC and 89/109/EEC, OJ L 338, 13.11.2004, p. 4.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/planned_ia/docs/2014_sanco_005_fcm_specific_provisions_for_materials_other_than_plastics_en.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-013832/13
komissiolle
Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE)
(5. joulukuuta 2013)

Aihe: Euroopan vakausmekanismin perustaminen Luxemburgiin

Veroparatiiseissa makaa miljardeja euroja eri puolilla maailmaa. Luxemburg on yksi näistä maista. Se ei ole suostunut kansainvälisten vaatimusten mukaiseen avoimuuteen pankkiasioissa.

Euroopan vakausmekanismin kotipaikka ja päätoimipaikka ovat Luxemburgissa. Kyse on suurista summista veronmaksajien rahaa. Vakausmekanismin yhteenlaskettu pääoma takauksineen on 700 miljardia euroa.

EU on julistanut taistelevansa veroparatiiseja ja veronkiertoa vastaan. EU:n pitää myös omalla esimerkillään näyttää, että näin on.

Onko komission mielestä ongelma, että Euroopan vakausmekanismin kotipaikka ja päätoimipaikka ovat Luxemburgissa, joka on veroparatiisi?

Olli Rehnin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(7. helmikuuta 2014)

Euroopan vakausmekanismi (EVM) on kansainvälinen rahoituslaitos. Sen verokohtelusta määrätään EVM:n perustamissopimuksessa, jonka sopimuspuolia ovat kaikki euroalueen jäsenvaltiot.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013832/13
to the Commission
Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Basing of the European Stability Mechanism in Luxembourg

Billions of euros are deposited in tax havens in various parts of the world. Luxembourg is one of them. It has not agreed to banking transparency in accordance with international requirements.

The base and main place of operation of the European Stability Mechanism are in Luxembourg. Large sums of taxpayers' money are involved. The total capital of the Mechanism together with guarantees amounts to EUR 700 bn.

The EU has proclaimed its intention of combating tax havens and tax evasion. The EU should set an example which demonstrates this intention to be genuine.

Does the Commission consider it to be a problem that the base and main place of operation of the European Stability Mechanism are in Luxembourg, which is a tax haven?

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

The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) is an international financial institution. Its tax treatment has been determined by the contracting parties, the euro area Member States, in the Treaty establishing the ESM.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-013833/13
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(5 décembre 2013)

Objet: Importation de gaz de schiste dans l'accord commercial entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis

L'Union européenne est en train de négocier avec les États-Unis un accord de libre-échange. Ces négociations prévoient actuellement l'ouverture du marché américain du gaz de schiste afin de supprimer les obstacles à l'importation de ce gaz outre-Atlantique.

En dépit des divisions entre États membres sur l'extraction du gaz de schiste, la Commission européenne, alors que son mandat de négociation lui est donné par les gouvernements européens, consacre une partie très importante des négociations avec les États-Unis à la liberté d'accéder au gaz naturel liquéfié.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer si le mandat de négociation que lui a conféré le Conseil européen pour cet accord de libre-échange l'autorise effectivement à ouvrir le marché américain du gaz de schiste?

L'abolition des restrictions à l'importation du gaz de schiste n'entrerait-elle pas en contradiction avec les choix de certains États membres, la France notamment, de mettre en place un moratoire sur l'exploitation et la prospection du gaz de schiste?

Alors que le Parlement européen a adopté une directive encadrant au maximum les incidences environnementales de l'exploitation du gaz de schiste (directive sur l'évaluation des incidences environnementales), n'est-il pas incohérent d'accepter l'importation d'un gaz américain dont l'encadrement environnemental est beaucoup plus léger?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(14 janvier 2014)

Le mandat de négociation du Conseil pour la conclusion d'un accord de partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement oblige la Commission à négocier, entre autres, des accords dans le domaine des matières premières et de l'énergie, comme cela a été le cas dans le passé pour les négociations avec divers autres partenaires.

Les autorités des États-Unis ont pris la décision souveraine de permettre la prospection et la production de gaz naturel provenant de formations schisteuses (gaz de schiste). La position de l'UE est que le gaz, dès lors qu'il a été produit et qu'il peut être utilisé pour la consommation domestique, devrait pouvoir être exporté vers l'UE, sans restrictions et sur une base non discriminatoire, conformément au futur accord de partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement. Il convient de rappeler que l'obtention d'un accès libre et non discriminatoire au gaz naturel extrait aux États-Unis n'est que l'un des éléments pertinents dans le contexte des négociations sur l'énergie et les matières premières.

Enfin, les accords dans le domaine de l'énergie négociés actuellement dans le contexte du partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement n'ont absolument aucun impact sur la prospection et l'extraction de gaz de schiste sur le territoire de l'Union européenne ou de ses États membres. La décision de permettre la prospection et la production de gaz de schiste demeure une décision souveraine prise par les autorités compétentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013833/13
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Import of shale gas in the trade agreement between the EU and the USA

The European Union is currently negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA) with the USA. At present these negotiations are due to include the opening up of the American shale gas market, to eliminate obstacles to the import of shale gas from the USA.

In spite of the divisions between Member States on the extraction of shale gas, the Commission, although it receives its negotiating mandate from European governments, is devoting a very large part of the negotiations with the USA to the freedom to access liquefied natural gas.

Can the Commission state whether the negotiating mandate conferred on it by the European Council for this FTA in fact authorises it to open up the US shale gas market?

Would not the lifting of restrictions on the import of shale gas contradict the decisions of certain Member States, notably France, to impose a moratorium on extracting and prospecting for shale gas?

Given that the European Parliament has adopted a directive (the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive) that imposes the most stringent conditions on the environmental impact of shale gas extraction, is it not inconsistent to accept the import of gas from America, where environmental regulation is much lighter?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 January 2014)

The Council's negotiation directives negotiations on Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) requests the Commission to negotiate, *inter alia*, disciplines in the area of raw materials and energy as was the case in the past for negotiations with many other partners.

The authorities in the United States have taken the sovereign decision to allow for the exploration and production of natural gas from shale formations (shale gas). The EU position is that once the gas has been produced and can be used for domestic consumption it should be made available with no restrictions and on a non-discriminatory basis for exports to the EU, in line with the future TTIP. It should also be recalled that obtaining free and non-discriminatory access to natural gas extracted in the US is just one of the elements relevant in the context of the negotiations on energy and raw materials.

Finally, the energy related disciplines currently being negotiated in the context of the TTIP do not have any impact whatsoever on the shale gas exploration and extraction in the European Union or its Member States. The decision to allow for the exploration and production of shale gas remains a sovereign decision by the relevant authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013835/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Posible fraude en relación con la inversión del BEI en el proyecto «Valencia Centros Escolares»

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación españoles han publicado que una coalición de partidos políticos de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) ha reclamado ante la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude (OLAF) que se realice una investigación sobre el proyecto del Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) «Valencia Centros Escolares», que contó con varias fases y está destinado a la construcción, rehabilitación y extensión de instalaciones educativas.

El Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana distribuyó estos fondos a través del programa «Crea Escola» y muchos de los proyectos incluidos en él no han sido realizados a pesar de que su plazo de ejecución ha finalizado. Recientemente ha aparecido en los medios de comunicación españoles que el Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana no va a cumplir con el programa «Crea Escola» por dificultades económicas derivadas de la crisis.

1. ¿Conoce la Comisión qué cantidad aportó el BEI a la Comunidad Valenciana en las distintas fases del proyecto «Valencia Centros Escolares»?

2. ¿Puede la Comisión darnos información sobre cuál es el desglose, por años y fases del proyecto «Valencia Centros Escolares», de esa inversión recibida por la Comunidad Valenciana?

3. ¿Es conocedora la Comisión de si existía la posibilidad de destinar el dinero proveniente de dicha inversión europea a otras finalidades distintas a las descritas en el mismo proyecto del BEI?

4. ¿Ha realizado o va a realizar la Comisión una investigación sobre el cumplimiento del objetivo de esas inversiones en la Comunidad Valenciana, y sobre si el destino de las mismas ha sido el que recogía la finalidad descrita en el proyecto «Valencia Centros Escolares»?

5. ¿Qué opinión le merecen a la Comisión las declaraciones del Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana en las que asegura que no va a cumplir con un programa que ha sido financiado con fondos provenientes de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de febrero de 2014)

Con arreglo a la información proporcionada por el Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI), se ha financiado el 50 % del programa «Crea Escola» mediante dos préstamos al proyecto, Valencia Centros Escolares (VCE) II-1 y II-2, por un importe total de 800 millones EUR para las dos primeras fases del programa ([1]). Los préstamos del BEI se desembolsaron en varios tramos entre 2007 y 2011. Un tercer préstamo «VCE 3», que cubre la tercera fase del programa, fue aprobado por el Consejo de Administración del BEI en 2010, pero no llegó a firmarse, es decir, no se ha efectuado desembolso alguno.

El BEI supervisa estrechamente la ejecución del programa Crea Escola y no tiene indicios de que los importes desembolsados al amparo de VCE II-1 y II-2 no hayan sido asignados a ese programa. De acuerdo con sus procedimientos generales, el BEI supervisa los proyectos a partir de la firma del contrato de préstamo hasta el reembolso del mismo, pasando por la ejecución del proyecto y la fase de funcionamiento, al efecto de garantizar que sus préstamos sirven para los fines previstos.

En octubre de 2013, la OLAF informó al BEI de que había desestimado un asunto relacionado con el programa Crea Escola al no haberse formulado ninguna alegación de fraude. No obstante, el Mecanismo de Reclamaciones independiente del BEI está llevando a cabo una investigación sobre la ejecución del proyecto.

La Comisión se abstiene de comentar las declaraciones realizadas por el Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana.

Además, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a sus respuestas a las preguntas parlamentarias E-546/13, E-4092/13 y E-10481/13.

([1]) http://www.eib.org/projects/loans/2004/20040726.htm y http://www.eib.org/projects/pipeline/2006/20060215.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013835/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Possible fraud related to EIB investment in the Valencia Centros Escolares (Valencia Education Centres) project

Recently, the Spanish media have reported that a coalition of political parties in the Community of Valencia (Spain) has called on the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) to investigate Valencia Centros Escolares, a European Investment Bank (EIB) project in several stages aimed at the construction, refurbishment and expansion of educational facilities.

The Government of the Community of Valencia distributed these funds through the Crea Escola programme, but many of the projects in the programme have not been carried out despite their implementation period having ended. The Spanish media have recently reported that the Government of the Community of Valencia will not fulfil its commitments to the Crea Escola programme due to economic difficulties arising from the crisis.

1. Does the Commission know how much money the EIB provided to the Community of Valencia in the different stages of the Valencia Centros Escolares project?

2. Can the Commission provide us with a breakdown, by year and stage of the Valencia Centros Escolares project, of investment received by the Community of Valencia?

3. Does the Commission know whether it was possible for money from this European investment to be allocated for purposes other than those set out in the EIB project itself?

4. Has the Commission investigated, or does it intend to investigate, whether the goal of these investments in the Community of Valencia has been met, and whether the investment has been used for the purpose set out in the Valencia Centros Escolares project?

5. What is Commission's opinion of statements made by the Government of the Community of Valencia saying that it will not fulfil its commitment to a programme that was funded by the Union?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2014)

According to information provided by the European Investment Bank (EIB), it has financed 50% of the 'Crea Escola' programme through two loans, Valencia Centros Escolares (VCE) II-1 and II-2, for a total amount of EUR 800 million covering the first two phases of the programme ([1]). The EIB loans have been disbursed in several tranches between 2007 and 2011. A third loan 'VCE 3', covering the programme's third phase was approved by the EIB Board of Directors in 2010, but has never been signed, i.e. no disbursements have been made.

The EIB is closely following the implementation of the Crea Escola programme and has no evidence indicating that the amounts disbursed under VCE II-1 and VCE II-2 have not been allocated to the Crea Escola programme. According to its general procedures, the EIB monitors projects from the signature of the loan contract through the project implementation and operation phase until the loan is paid back, in order to ensure that its loans are used for the purpose for which they are intended.

In October 2013, OLAF informed the EIB that it had dismissed a case in relation to the Crea Escola programme as no allegation of fraud was formulated. However, an ongoing inquiry regarding the implementation of the project is being carried out by the EIB's independent Complaints Mechanism.

The Commission refrains from commenting on the statements made by the Government of the Community of Valencia.

The Commission would furthermore like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to the parliamentary questions E-546/13, E-4092/13 and E-10481/13.

([1]) http://www.eib.org/projects/loans/2004/20040726.htm) and http://www.eib.org/projects/pipeline/2006/20060215.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013836/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Plan hidrológico de la Demarcación Hidrográfica del Júcar

Según publican medios de comunicación españoles, la Mesa pel Xúquer, plataforma que agrupa ayuntamientos, organizaciones diversas, usuarios y partidos políticos de la zona de la Ribera (Comunidad Valenciana), se dirigirá a la Comisión de Peticiones del Parlamento Europeo para denunciar el nuevo plan hidrológico de la cuenca del río Júcar.

Según declaraciones de la plataforma, este plan hidrológico «legaliza la sobreexplotación del acuífero», no cumple con el caudal ecológico que debería reservarse y no aborda la recuperación de los acuíferos. De ser cierto, lo afirmado podría contradecir los objetivos comunitarios al respecto tal y como están recogidos en la Directiva 2000/60/CE por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas, cuyo artículo 4 prevé que «los Estados miembros habrán de proteger, mejorar y regenerar todas las masas de agua».

A la luz de esta información, se formulan a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de que se haya realizado el estudio de impacto ambiental relativo al plan hidrológico de la Demarcación Hidrográfica del Júcar?

2. ¿Ha comprobado la Comisión que dicho plan hidrológico no vulnera la Directiva 2000/60/CE?

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

El incumplimiento por parte de España de la obligación de adoptar y notificar a la Comisión los planes hidrológicos de cuenca en virtud de la Directiva marco del agua (DMA) ([1]) correspondientes a la mayoría de las demarcaciones hidrográficas españolas, incluida la del Júcar, se está abordando en el marco de la ejecución de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea, de 4 de octubre de 2012 (asunto C-403/11, Comisión contra España). La Comisión espera que el plan hidrológico de la cuenca del río Júcar sea adoptado y notificado en breve, momento en el cual procederá a evaluar su contenido y su compatibilidad con la DMA.

([1]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013836/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Hydrological Plan for the Júcar River Basin

According to reports in the Spanish media, a platform called Mesa pel Xúquer, representing municipal councils, several organisations, users and political parties in the Ribera area of the Community of Valencia, will address a complaint to the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament regarding the new hydrological plan for the Júcar river basin.

According to statements by the platform, this hydrological plan 'legalises over-use of the aquifer', does not comply with the minimum ecological flow and does not cover the restoration of aquifers. If what the platform says is true, it could contravene the Community objectives in this regard, as set out in Directive 2000/60/EC setting a Community framework for action in the field of water policy, Article 4 of which provides that 'Member States shall protect, enhance and restore all bodies of … water'.

In view of the above, I would like to ask:

1. Can the Commission confirm that an environmental impact study has been made on the Hydrological Plan for the Júcar River Basin?

2. Has the Commission verified that this hydrological plan does not breach Directive 2000/60/EC?

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

The failure by Spain to adopt and report to the Commission the Water Framework Directive (WFD ([1])) River Basin Management Plans for most of the Spanish river basin districts, including for the Jucar River Basin, is being addressed in the framework of the implementation of the European Union Court of Justice judgment of 4 October 2012 (Case C-403/11 Commission v. Spain). The Commission expects the Jucar River Basin Management Plan to be adopted and reported soon and will then assess its contents and compatibility with the WFD.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013837/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ayudas para proyectos municipales en el período 2014-2020

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) han publicado que el alcalde de Burriana, municipio de la Comunidad Valenciana, solicitará ayudas de la Unión Europea para proyectos municipales tanto públicos como privados que puedan acogerse a subvenciones directas en el período 2014-2020.

Asimismo, el mencionado alcalde ha señalado que priorizará aquellos proyectos que tengan una repercusión medioambiental positiva o que comporten la reducción de emisiones de CO_2 a la atmósfera.

Por su parte, el director general de Proyectos y Fondos Europeos de la Conselleria de Hacienda y Administración Pública del Gobierno Valenciano (España) ha señalado que la Comunidad Valenciana recibirá 2 165 millones de euros de la Unión Europea provenientes de la política de cohesión.

Teniendo en cuenta esta información, se formulan a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Tiene información la Comisión sobre qué cantidad de recursos económicos de la Unión Europea recibirá la Comunidad Valenciana en el período 2014-2020?

2. De dichos recursos, ¿conoce la Comisión qué cantidad irá destinada a subvenciones directas de proyectos circunscritos al ámbito municipal?

3. ¿Tiene información la Comisión sobre qué condiciones deberán cumplir los proyectos que se beneficien de estas subvenciones directas de la Unión Europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión todavía no ha recibido ninguna información oficial de las autoridades españolas acerca de las asignaciones financieras por región y por programa. La lista de programas, con sus asignaciones indicativas respectivas, deberían figurar en el Acuerdo de Asociación que el Estado miembro debe remitir a la Comisión a más tardar el 22 de abril de 2014.

Tal como se establece en el artículo 7, apartado 4, del Reglamento (UE) n° 1301/2013 sobre el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) y sobre disposiciones específicas relativas al objetivo de inversión en crecimiento y empleo, *«al menos un 5 % de los recursos del FEDER asignados a nivel nacional en virtud del objetivo "inversión en crecimiento y empleo" se asignarán a medidas integradas para el desarrollo urbano sostenible»*. Además de este porcentaje, los municipios pueden recibir otras inversiones en los diferentes objetivos temáticos (transporte urbano sostenible, eficiencia energética, etc.).

La Comisión financiará, a través del FEDER, medidas de desarrollo urbano sostenible a través de estrategias que prevean acciones integradas a fin de hacer frente a los desafíos económicos, medioambientales, climáticos, demográficos y sociales que afectan a las zonas urbanas, teniendo al mismo tiempo en cuenta la necesidad de promover los vínculos entre el mundo urbano y el rural.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013837/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Aid for municipal projects for 2014 to 2020

Recently, the media in the Comunidad Valenciana (Spain) have reported that the Mayor of Burriana, a town in the Comunidad Valenciana, will request European Union aid for municipal projects, both public and private, that are eligible for direct subsidies in the 2014-2020 period.

In addition, the mayor has signalled that he will prioritise those projects that have a positive environmental impact or that involve the reduction of atmospheric emissions of CO_2.

The Director-General of European projects and funds in the Ministry of Finance and Public Administration in the Valencian Regional Government (Spain) has signalled that the Comunidad Valenciana will receive EUR 2 165 million from the European Union, from the cohesion policy.

In view of the above information, I would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. Does the Commission have information on the amount of financial resources that the Comunidad Valenciana will receive from the European Union in the 2014-2020 period?

2. Of these resources, does the Commission know what amount will be allocated to direct subsidies for projects restricted to the municipal sphere?

3. Does the Commission have information on the conditions that projects benefiting from these direct EU subsidies will have to meet?

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

The Commission has not yet received any official information from the Spanish authorities on the financial allocation per region and programme. The list of programmes with the respective indicative allocations should be reflected in the Partnership Agreement that the Member State should submit to the Commission at the latest on 22 April 2014.

As provided for by Article 7.4 of Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 on the European Development Fund (ERDF) and on specific provisions concerning the investment for growth and jobs goal, 'at least 5% of ERDF resources allocated at national level shall be allocated to integrated actions for sustainable urban development'. In addition to this share, municipalities can benefit from other investments in the different thematic objectives (sustainable urban transport, energy efficiency, etc.).

The Commission will finance, through ERDF, sustainable urban development actions through strategies that set out integrated actions to tackle the economic, environmental, climate, demographic and social challenges affecting urban areas, while taking into account the need to promote urban-rural linkages.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013838/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Presunta prohibición de la Unión Europea al Gobierno de España del pago de la «deuda histórica» a la Comunidad Valenciana (España)

En recientes declaraciones a medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España), el vicepresidente del Gobierno valenciano (España), José Ciscar, ha señalado que debido a que la Unión Europea controla «de manera severa» el déficit y la deuda de los países miembros, esta impediría que el Gobierno de España asumiera «en estos momentos el pago de las deudas históricas» con sus comunidades autónomas.

Esta «deuda histórica» supone, según la comisión de expertos encargada para la materia por el propio parlamento autonómico valenciano, que desde 2002 la Comunidad Valenciana (España) ha dejado de ingresar en transferencias del Estado 13 500 millones de euros (incluyendo «costes financieros») de los que le correspondería con un reparto proporcional a su población.

A la luz de esta información se formulan a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión sobre alguna petición del Gobierno de España para informarse de la posibilidad de abonar esta «deuda histórica» a la Comunidad Valenciana (España) o a cualquier otra Comunidad Autónoma española?

2. ¿Ha expresado la Comisión al Gobierno de España la prohibición de modificar el reparto de sus transferencias de ingresos a las Comunidades Autónomas?

3. ¿Existe una prohibición expresa por parte de la Comisión de abonar esta cantidad a la Comunidad Valenciana (España)?

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

1. La Comisión no dispone de información sobre los pagos, por el Gobierno español, de la denominada «deuda histórica» a la Comunidad de Valencia ni a ninguna otra región de España.

2. La Comisión no ha prohibido al Gobierno español la modificación de la distribución de las transferencias de ingresos a las regiones. La responsabilidad de las características del sistema de financiación de las Comunidades Autónomas recae en las autoridades españolas. La Comisión considera que las Comunidades Autónomas desempeñan un papel clave para que el proceso de reforma estructural y saneamiento presupuestario de España culmine con éxito.

3. La Comisión no ha formulado ninguna recomendación al Gobierno español con respecto al pago de los citados importes a la Comunidad de Valencia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013838/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The European Union's alleged prohibition of payment of 'historic debt' to the Community of Valencia (Spain) by the Spanish Government

In recent statements to the media in the Community of Valencia, the Vice-President of the Regional Government of Valencia, José Ciscar, said that the European Union's 'strict' control of deficit and debt in Member States would prevent the Spanish Government from assuming 'at this time, the payment of historic debts' to its Autonomous Communities.

According to a committee of experts set up to look at the subject by Valencia's own regional parliament, this 'historic debt' represents the fact that, since 2002, the Community of Valencia has failed to receive from the State transfers due to it, according to a proportional distribution by population, amounting to EUR 13.5 billion (including 'financial costs').

In view of the above, I would like to ask:

1. Is the Commission aware of any request received from the Spanish Government to be informed of the possibility of paying this 'historic debt' to the Community of Valencia or to any other Autonomous Community of Spain?

2. Has the Commission prohibited the Spanish Government from modifying the distribution of its revenue transfers to its Autonomous Communities?

3. Has the Commission expressly prohibited payment of the amount mentioned to the Community of Valencia?

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

1. The Commission does not have information on payments by the Spanish Government of the so-called 'historic debt' to the Community of Valencia or to any other region in Spain.

2. The Commission has not prohibited the Spanish Government from modifying the distribution of its revenue transfers to its regions. The responsibility for the design of the autonomous communities' financing system lies with the Spanish authorities. The Commission considers that the Autonomous Communities are key actors for the success of the structural reform and fiscal consolidation process in Spain.

3. The Commission has not given any recommendations to the Spanish Government regarding the payment to the Community of Valencia of the abovementioned amounts.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013839/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Fondos regionales en el período 2014-2020 en la Comunidad Valenciana (España)

Recientemente, los medios de comunicación de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) han recogido unas declaraciones del Presidente del Gobierno valenciano (España), en las que comunica que la Comunidad Valenciana (España) recibirá un total de 2 156,85 millones de euros procedentes de fondos europeos en el periodo 2014-2020, y que se mantienen en una cantidad similar con respecto a los 2 165 millones recibidos en el periodo 2007-2013, pese a dejar de ser considerada la Comunidad Valenciana como región objetivo 1 por la Unión Europea.

Asimismo, el presidente de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) ha asegurado que el porcentaje de gestión del Gobierno valenciano (España) de esos fondos aumentará al 45 % y el de participación aumentará al 50 %. También ha declarado que, de los 922,7 millones de euros que gestionará el Gobierno valenciano (España), 668 millones corresponderán al Fondo de Desarrollo Regional (Feder), 254,6 corresponderán al Fondo Social Europeo (FSE) y los restantes 106,45 se dedicarán a políticas de cooperación con otras regiones de la Unión Europea.

A la luz de estas informaciones, se formulan a la Comisión las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Puede facilitarnos la Comisión la cifra exacta de fondos europeos que recibirá la Comunidad Valenciana (España) en el período 2014-2020?

2. ¿Puede facilitarnos la Comisión la cifra exacta de fondos europeos que recibió la Comunidad Valenciana (España) en el período 2007-2013?

3. ¿Puede la Comisión detallarnos los motivos que llevan a que la Comunidad Valenciana (España) sea destinataria en el período 2014-2020 de casi la misma cantidad de fondos que en el período 2007-2013, a pesar de dejar de ser considerada región «Objetivo 1»?

4. ¿Puede la Comisión indicarnos qué porcentajes de gestión y de participación, así como su cantidad, asumirá el Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana en relación con los fondos recibidos por parte de la UE?

5. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de cuál va a ser el desglose de los fondos recibidos en el período 2014-2020 por la Comunidad Valenciana (España) desde la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión no ha recibido todavía ninguna notificación oficial de las autoridades españolas sobre la dotación financiera por región y por programa. La lista de programas con las respectivas asignaciones indicativas debe establecerse en el Acuerdo de asociación que deberá presentarse a la Comisión el 22 de abril de 2014 a más tardar. Por tanto, actualmente la Comisión no está en condiciones de responder a las tres últimas preguntas planteadas por Su Señoría.

Para el periodo 2007-2013, la cuantía de la financiación de la UE asignada al Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) asciende a 1 600 millones de euros y la asignada al Fondo Social Europeo (FSE), a 544 millones de euros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013839/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Regional funds in the period 2014-2020 in the Community of Valencia (Spain)

Recently, the media in the Community of Valencia have reported statements made by the President of the Regional Government of Valencia announcing that the Community of Valencia will receive a total of EUR 2 156.85 million from European funds in the period 2014-2020, which remains similar to the EUR 2 165 million received in the period 2007-2013, despite the Union no longer considering Valencia an Objective 1 region.

The President of the Community of Valencia also stated that the proportion of these funds managed by the Regional Government of Valencia will increase to 45% and the proportion under its shared management will increase to 50%. He also said that of the EUR 922.7 million to be managed by the Regional Government of Valencia, EUR 668 million will be from the Regional Development Fund (ERDF), EUR 254.6 million from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the remaining EUR 106.45 million will be allocated to political cooperation with other regions of the Union.

In view of the above, I would like to ask:

1. Can the Commission inform us of the exact amount of European funds to be received by the Community of Valencia in the period 2014-2020?

2. Can the Commission inform us of the exact amount of European funds that were received by the Community of Valencia in the period 2007-2013?

3. Can the Commission give the reasons for the Community of Valencia being allocated almost the same amount of funds for the period 2014-2020 as for 2007-2013, despite no longer being considered an 'Objective 1' region?

4. Can the Commission indicate the percentages and amounts of EU funds to be managed and partly managed by the Regional Government of Valencia?

5. Does the Commission have a breakdown of the funds received by the Community of Valencia from the EU in the period 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

The Commission has not yet received any official information from the Spanish authorities on the financial allocation per region and programme. The list of programmes with the respective indicative allocations should be set out in the partnership agreement that should be submitted to the Commission by 22 April 2014. The Commission is therefore not in a position at this stage to respond to the last three questions asked by the Honourable Member.

For the 2007-2013 period, the allocated EU funding is EUR 1.6 billion for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and EUR 544 million for the European Social Fund (ESF).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013840/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: La Comunidad Valenciana (España) en el ICR 2013

El último Índice de Competitividad Regional de Comisión Europea (EU Regional Competitivines Index, RCI 2013), tal y como viene reflejado en los medios de comunicación, sitúa a la Comunidad Valenciana (España) en el puesto 182 de 262 regiones estudiadas, lo que supone una pérdida de 14 posiciones en tres años. De los nueve pilares analizados por el estudio, la Comunidad Valenciana (España) sólo supera a la media de regiones en dos, sanidad y educación superior, y esto debido a la eliminación del análisis del ratio de camas hospitalarias por habitante y de la tasa de abandono de los estudios superiores.

Se tiene constancia estadística (Presupuestos de la Comunidad Valenciana, España) de que estos dos pilares para la competitividad (sanidad y educación) sufren recortes presupuestarios en la región valenciana (España) y, tal como arroja el estudio (ICR 2013), de que la inversión en I+D+I está muy por debajo de la media europea.

A la luz de esta información, se formulan las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión previsto un plan de incentivos a la inversión en competitividad en la región valenciana (España)?

2. ¿Va a instar la Comisión a los gobiernos estatales y regionales a que aumenten su inversión en los pilares básicos para la competitividad señalados en el informe que citamos?

3. ¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión la reducción por parte de la Comunidad Valenciana (España) y del Gobierno de España de las inversiones en educación y sanidad?

4. ¿Qué motivación encuentra la Comisión para eliminar del informe los ratios de camas hospitalarias por habitante y el ratio de abandono de los estudios superiores?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2014)

1. La Comunidad Valenciana se beneficiará de ayudas de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos durante el periodo 2014-2020 para mejorar la competitividad de su economía y, en particular, la competitividad de las PYME. Deben enviarse a la Comisión los programas correspondientes a dichos Fondos antes de julio de 2014.

2. El Informe sobre el índice de competitividad regional se basa en once pilares. Unas mayores inversiones en estos pilares servirían para mejorar la competitividad regional, si bien en el caso de España, tales inversiones deben tener lugar en un contexto de consolidación fiscal, dado que el país es objeto de un procedimiento de déficit excesivo y, por tanto, se encuentra bajo supervisión macroeconómica.

3. La Comisión no puede opinar sobre la reducción de las inversiones en educación y salud por parte de la Comunidad Valenciana y el Gobierno español, ya que se trata básicamente de competencias autonómicas y nacionales. No obstante, en condiciones económicas normales debieran fomentarse las inversiones en educación y salud para mejorar la competitividad de la economía.

4. El motivo de la supresión de ambos indicadores es puramente técnico. Se ha descartado del citado informe el indicador de la relación entre el número de camas de hospital y el índice de población por falta de coherencia con los demás indicadores utilizados. En lo referente a la tasa de abandono de la educación superior, este indicador también se ha retirado del análisis por faltar demasiados datos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013840/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The Community of Valencia (Spain) in the RCI 2013

As reported in the media, the latest EU Regional Competitiveness Index, RCI 2013, ranks the Comunidad Valenciana (Community of Valencia) 182nd out of the 262 regions studied, 14 positions down on 3 years before. Of the nine pillars analysed in the study, the Community of Valencia is above the average for all regions only in two, health and higher education, and this is due to removal from the study of the analysis of the ratio of hospital beds to population and of the higher education drop-out rate.

There is statistical evidence (the Community of Valencia Budgets) that these two pillars of competitiveness (health and education) are having their budgets cut in the Region of Valencia and that, as the RCI 2013 study shows, investment in R&D&I is well below the European average.

In view of the above, I would like to ask:

1. Has the Commission considered an incentive scheme for investment in competitiveness in the Region of Valencia?

2. Will the Commission urge regional and state governments to increase their investment in the basic pillars of competitiveness identified in the abovementioned report?

3. What is the Commission's opinion of reduced investment in education and health by the Community of Valencia and the Spanish Government?

4. What reason can the Commission find for the removal from the RCI report of the hospital beds to population ratio and of the higher education drop-out rate?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

1. European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) will be allocated to Valencia for the 2014-2020 period to enhance the competitiveness of its economy and in particular that of SMEs. ESIF programmes have to be submitted to the Commission before July 2014.

2. The regional competitiveness index (RCI) report is based on 11 pillars. More investment in those pillars will improve regional competitiveness, although in the case of Spain, it has to be made in a context of fiscal consolidation, given the fact that Spain is under an excessive deficit procedure, therefore under macroeconomic surveillance.

3. The Commission cannot express an opinion on the reduced investment in education and health by the community of Valencia and the Spanish Government, which are mainly regional and national competences. However, in order to improve the competitiveness of the economy, investment in education and health should be encouraged in normal economic conditions.

4. The reason for the removal of both indicators is purely technical. The hospital beds to population ratio has been discarded from the RCI report as not being consistent with the other indicators used. With regard to the higher education drop-out rate, it is also discarded from the analysis because of having too many missing values.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013841/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Bankenunion — Abwicklungsbehörde und Notfallfonds

Mit der Bankenunion soll es künftig in der EU gemeinsame Regeln zur Schließung oder Rettung maroder Banken geben. Die sogenannte zweite Säule der Bankenunion bildet dabei eine Bankenabwicklungsbehörde inklusive eines entsprechenden Fonds, in welchen die Banken einzahlen und der im Notfall einspringen soll.

1. Wer soll in der EU konkret die Entscheidung darüber treffen, ob eine Bank mit dem gemeinsamen Instrument saniert oder abgewickelt werden soll? Binnenmarktkommissar Michel Barnier hatte vorgeschlagen, dass die Kommission diese Entscheidung treffen solle. Ist dies so geplant?

2. Wenn nicht, soll den Mitgliedstaaten oder der EZB die Entscheidung überlassen werden? Wie würden/könnten die diesbezüglichen Abstimmungsregeln aussehen?

3. Würde über Abwicklung und Kostenübernahme im selben Gremium oder in unterschiedlicher Zusammensetzung entschieden?

4. Wie kann man die gegenseitige Abhängigkeit von Bankbilanzen und Staatsfinanzen langfristig im Rahmen der Bankenunion verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(19. Februar 2014)

Der Vorschlag der Kommission sieht vor, dass der Abwicklungsausschuss der Kommission empfiehlt, die Abwicklung einer Bank zu beschließen und über den Rahmen für die Anwendung der Abwicklungsinstrumente und die Verwendung des Fonds (Abwicklungsregelung) zu entscheiden. Die Kommission kann auch aus eigener Initiative handeln. Das Europäische Parlament hat hauptsächlich Verfahrensanpassungen vorgeschlagen; die allgemeine Auffassung des Rates lautet hingegen, dass der Rat das Recht haben soll, die Abwicklungsregelung des Ausschusses aus bestimmten Gründen zu ändern oder abzulehnen. Das Thema ist Gegenstand laufender Trilog-Verhandlungen.

Gleiches gilt für die Vorgehensweise bei der Verteilung der Zuständigkeiten sowie für die Abstimmungsmodalitäten im Ausschuss. Die Kommission ist von der zentralen Bedeutung eines zügigen und wirksamen Entscheidungsprozesses überzeugt und hält ihren Vorschlag für den geeigneten Ansatz. Sie ist aber natürlich bereit, den Vorschlag im Zuge des Rechtsetzungsprozesses gemeinsam mit den Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat zu verbessern.

Die Trilog-Partner sind zwar unterschiedlicher Meinung darüber, wer in die Entscheidung über eine Abwicklung einbezogen werden soll, sie stimmen jedoch überein, dass Entscheidungen über Abwicklungen einerseits und über die Finanzierung der Maßnahmen andererseits von ein und demselben Gremium getroffen werden sollen.

Es ist ein wesentliches Ziel der Bankenunion, die bestehende Verbindung zwischen Staaten und Banken zu lösen. So soll etwa die einheitliche Aufsichtsinstanz für die teilnehmenden Mitgliedstaaten (die EZB) und das einheitliche Regelwerk, das sie anwenden wird (CRD IV/CRR), dazu beitragen, eine nachsichtige Regulierung zu verhindern. Ein einheitlicher Abwicklungsmechanismus in Kombination mit einem von der Kommission vorgeschlagenen, vom Bankensektor finanzierten einheitlichen Fonds würde es ermöglichen, Banken abzuwickeln anstatt sie mit Steuermitteln zu retten. In Zukunft werden bei einem Bankenausfall nicht mehr die Steuerzahler sondern die Aktionäre und Gläubiger der Banken sowie der Bankensektor selbst zur Kasse gebeten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013841/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Banking union — resolution authority and emergency fund

With the banking union, there are in future to be common rules in the EU for the closure or rescue of ailing banks. The 'second pillar' of the banking union is therefore a bank resolution authority, including a corresponding fund, intended to provide assistance in the event of an emergency, into which the banks will pay.

1. Who, specifically, in the EU is to take the decision as to whether a bank is to be restructured or wound up using the common instrument? The Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Mr Barnier, has proposed that the Commission take this decision. Is that what is planned?

2. If not, is the decision to be left to the Member States or the European Central Bank? What would/could the rules for voting be in this regard?

3. Would decisions on winding up and bearing of costs be taken by the same panel or by different configurations?

4. How can the mutual dependency of banks' balance sheets and state finances be prevented in the long term within the banking union?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The Commission proposed that the Board shall recommend to the Commission to place an entity under resolution and decide on a framework for the application of resolution tools and the use of the fund (resolution scheme). The Commission may also act on its own initiative. While the EP mainly proposed modifications to the procedure, the Council's General Approach is to give the Council the right to modify or object the Board's resolution scheme for certain reasons. The issue is subject to ongoing trilogue negotiations.

The same is true for the structure and composition of the allocation of competences and the rules on voting within the Board. The Commission is convinced that it is crucial to have a swift and effective decision-making process and considers its proposal to be the right response. It is of course open to discuss and to support improvements of the proposal in the legislative process with the co-legislators.

Although the positions of the trilogue parties differ as to who is involved in decisions on resolution, all agree that decisions on resolution on the one hand and resolution financing on the other hand should be taken by the same panel/configuration.

It is a major objective of the Banking Union to break the link between banks and sovereigns. For example the single supervisor for the participating Member States (the ECB) and the common rulebook it will apply (CRD IV/CRR) will help prevent regulatory forbearance. The Single Resolution Mechanism, if accompanied by an industry-financed single fund as proposed by the Commission, would allow resolving banks rather than bailing them out. It will be the shareholders and creditors of the bank as well as the banking industry which will pay the bill of future bank failures, not the taxpayer.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013842/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Gefälschte Waren aus Bulgarien

Medienberichten zufolge werden 28 % aller gefälschten Waren (Plagiate), die in der EU sichergestellt werden, an der bulgarischen Außengrenze beschlagnahmt. Bulgarien ist zudem führend in der Herstellung solcher „Waren" beteiligt, wie internationale Rankings nachweisen.

Der Mitgliedstaat Bulgarien wird in diesen Vergleichen zusammen mit Größen wie China, Hongkong und der Türkei genannt. Der Kommissar für Unternehmen und Industrie, Antonio Tajani, erklärte in einem Interview, dass die Herstellung und der Vertrieb von Plagiaten eine Form von Korruption sei.

Da Bulgarien weder zum Zeitpunkt seines Beitritts noch zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt die Kopenhagener-Kriterien erfüllt hat, stellen sich folgende Fragen:

1. Wie steht die Kommission zum oben dargestellten Sachverhalt?

2. Kann unter diesen Voraussetzungen überhaupt noch von einer Schengen-Reife Bulgariens die Rede sein?

3. Würde ein Schengen-Beitritt den Handel mit gefälschten Waren nicht noch zusätzlich erleichtern?

4. Wie hoch sind die Schäden, die Unternehmen in der EU durch gefälschte Waren aus Bulgarien oder über Bulgarien ins Unionsgebiet importierte gefälschte Waren erlitten haben?

5. Welche Gefahren gehen für Verbraucher in der EU durch gefälschte Waren aus oder über Bulgarien importierte Plagiate aus?

6. Wie gedenkt die Kommission, dem Handel mit gefälschten Waren aus oder über Bulgarien entgegenzuwirken?

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

Die Berichte über die EU-Durchsetzung der Rechte geistigen Eigentums durch die Zollbehörden in der EU zeigen, dass 28 % der von den Zollbehörden beschlagnahmten Waren 2011 von den bulgarischen Zollbehörden beschlagnahmt wurden. Dabei handelte es sich in den meisten Fällen um große Sendung Verpackungsmaterial. Im Jahr 2012 gingen diese Zahlen mit rund 6 % aller Beschlagnahmen und insgesamt 2 Millionen Waren auf frühere Werte zurück.

Kontrollen von Waren, die zwischen Bulgarien und anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten befördert werden, wurden 2007 mit dem EU-Beitritt abgeschafft. Die Zollbehörden widmen sich nach wie vor der Bekämpfung der Markenpiraterie an den EU-Außengrenzen, während andere Strafverfolgungsbehörden Kontrollen im Binnenmarkt durchführen. Dies betrifft allerdings nicht den Schengen-Besitzstand, der die Abschaffung von Personenkontrollen zum Gegenstand hat.

Der Kommission liegen keine Informationen über die von solchen Zuwiderhandlungen verursachten Verluste vor. Die Kommission hat mit Blick auf transparente Methoden Arbeiten eingeleitet, die objektive Schätzungen dieser Schäden ermöglichen sollen ([1]).

Zwischen 2009 und 2013 meldete Bulgarien in RAPEX ([2]) 35 Fälle von potenziell oder nachweisbar nachgeahmten, gefährlichen Produkten. Von den fünf Ländern mit den häufigsten Meldungen meldete Bulgarien die meisten Fälle ([3]). Dabei handelt es sich oft um Kinderkleidung, Spielzeug und Schwimmzubehör. Nachahmungen stehen häufig nicht mit den Rechtsvorschriften der Union über Produktsicherheit im Einklang und stellen daher eine potenzielle Gefahr für den Verbraucher dar.

Die Anstrengungen der europäischen Zollbehörden werden über den EU-Aktionsplan im Zollbereich zur Bekämpfung von Verletzungen der Rechte des geistigen Eigentums für den Zeitraum 2013-2017 ([4]) koordiniert, der sich auf die effektive Umsetzung der neuen EU-Verordnung zur Durchsetzung der Rechte geistigen Eigentums durch die Zollbehörden ([5]) und auf den Ausbau operativer Tätigkeiten konzentriert, um so vorherrschenden Trends beim Handel mit Waren, mit denen Rechte des geistigen Eigentums verletzt werden, entgegenzuwirken.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/iprenforcement/docs/ipr_infringment-report_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex
([3]) Ungarn 14 Fälle, Spanien 7 Fälle, Deutschland und Vereinigtes Königreich jeweils 6 Fälle.
([4]) ABl. C 80 vom 19.3.2013, S. 1.
([5]) ABl. L 181 vom 29.6.2013, S. 15 (Verordnung (EU) Nr. 608/2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013842/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Counterfeit goods from Bulgaria

According to media reports, 28% of all counterfeit goods (pirate copies) seized in the EU are confiscated at the Bulgarian external border. Bulgaria also leads the way in the manufacture of such goods, as international rankings demonstrate.

The Member State of Bulgaria is listed in these comparisons along with the likes China, Hong Kong and Turkey. The Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, Antonio Tajani, declared in an interview that the manufacture and distribution of pirate goods is a form of corruption.

Since Bulgaria did not meet the Copenhagen criteria at the time of its accession, nor does it currently meet them, the following questions arise:

1. What is the Commission's view on the facts outlined above?

2. Under these circumstances, can Bulgaria really be said to be ready for Schengen at all?

3. Would accession to Schengen not further facilitate trade in counterfeit goods?

4. What is the extent of the losses suffered by EU undertakings as a result of counterfeit goods from Bulgaria or those imported into the Union via Bulgaria?

5. What risks do counterfeit goods from Bulgaria or pirate goods imported via Bulgaria pose to consumers in the EU?

6. How does the Commission intend to tackle the trade in counterfeit goods coming from or via Bulgaria?

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

The reports on EU Customs enforcement of intellectual property rights show that in 2011 28% of the articles detained by EU Customs were detained by Bulgarian Customs. The bulk concerned several large shipments of packaging materials. In 2012, these figures were back to previous levels, with around 6% of all detentions and a total of 2 million articles.

Checks on goods circulating between Bulgaria and other EU Member States were abolished in 2007 at accession to the EU. Customs has continued the fight against counterfeit goods at the EU external borders whereas other law enforcement authorities carry out controls on the internal market. This, however, is independent of the Schengen *acquis*, which focuses on the abolition of checks on persons.

The Commission has no information about the losses caused by such infringements. The Commission is launching work on transparent methodologies that would provide objective estimates of such harms ([1]).

Between 2009 and 2013 Bulgaria reported 35 cases of dangerous products, potentially or known to be counterfeit, in RAPEX ([2]). Amongst the five most frequently notifying countries, Bulgaria reported the highest number of such cases ([3]). Most of these were children's clothing, toys and swimming accessories. Counterfeited products often do not comply with Union legislation on product safety and are therefore likely to constitute a risk for the consumer.

The efforts of European customs are coordinated through the EU Customs Action Plan to combat IPR infringements for the years 2013 to 2017 ([4]), which focuses on the effective implementation of the new EU Regulation on the customs enforcement of IPR ([5]) and on the development of operational activities to tackle major trends in trade of IPR infringing goods.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/iprenforcement/docs/ipr_infringment-report_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex
([3]) Hungary 14 cases, Spain 7 cases, Germany and United Kingdom, 6 cases each.
([4]) OJEU C 80/1 of 19.3.2013.
([5]) OJEU L 181/15 of 29.6.2013 (REGULATION (EU) No 608/2013).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013843/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Aufgabenstellungen und erwartete Ziele der EUBAM Libyen

Nach den vom EAD veröffentlichten Dokumenten dient die „EUBAM Libya"-Mission der Verbesserung und Entwicklung der Sicherheitslage an den libyschen Außengrenzen. Dabei sollen libysche Behörden nur ausgebildet werden, damit diese ihre Land-, See- und Luftgrenzen kontrollieren können. Weitergegeben werde nur „Know-How" und keine europäischen Gelder. Die Kosten von 30 Mio. EUR dienen jedoch großteils der Finanzierung von privaten Sicherheitsdiensten. Die Gehälter der EUBAM-Mitarbeiter sind in diesen Kosten nicht enthalten.

1. Dienen die privaten Sicherheitsdienste nur dem Schutz der EUBAM Mitarbeiter oder werden sie auch für andere Dienste eingesetzt?

2. Falls ja, kann die Kommission begründen, wieso private Sicherheitskräfte geeigneter für die Befriedung einer stark gespaltenen Region erscheinen als Angehörige regulärer Streitkräfte?

3. Sollten heikle Aufgaben, wie zum Beispiel Maßnahmen im Bereich der Stabilisierung einer derart gespaltenen Region, privaten Sicherheitsfirmen übertragen werden?

4. Liegt der Aufgabenbereich von „EUBAM Libya" nur im Grenz-Management (rein unterstützende Maßnahmen wie zum Beispiel die Schulung und Ausbildung von lybischen Grenzschützern) oder auch im Bereich der aktiven Grenz-Kontrolle?

5. Gibt es Überlappungen der Tätigkeiten von EUBAM Mitarbeitern bzw. den zusätzlich engagierten privaten Sicherheitskräften und denen der USA und der UN?

6. Wie werden die libyschen Behörden dahin gehend geschult, die Differenzen zwischen Staat und faktisch herrschenden Milizen zu beseitigen?

7. Liegt der Zweck der EUBAM Libya Mission auch in der Bekämpfung von unkontrollierbaren Flüchtlingsströmen nach Europa, da der Libysche Staat dazu nicht mehr so wie früher in der Lage ist?

8. Ist der Wiederaufbau der Öl-Produktion, bzw. der Schutz dieser Produktion und somit die Sicherung der europäischen Wirtschaftsinteressen, ein maßgeblicher Zweck von EUBAM Libya?

9. Wodurch werden die hohen Kosten von 30,3 Mio. EUR gerechtfertigt?

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

1. Der beauftragte private Sicherheitsdienst wird nur für den Schutz der Mitarbeiter, Ausrüstungen und Räumlichkeiten der EUBAM eingesetzt.

2. –

3. Dies ist nicht gewünscht und war auch nie beabsichtigt.

4. Die EUBAM verfügt über kein Exekutivmandat und leistet kein Grenzmanagement im Namen Libyens. Hierfür ist der libysche Staat zuständig. Die Rolle der EUBAM besteht allein darin, die libyschen Grenzbehörden beim Aufbau und der Verbesserung der Grenzmanagementkapazitäten zu unterstützen.

5. Die EU hat sichergestellt, dass es keine Überschneidungen zwischen ihrer Unterstützung für Libyen im Bereich Grenzmanagement und der Unterstützung anderer internationaler Akteure gibt. Auf der Unterstützungskonferenz für Libyen im Februar 2012 wurde vereinbart, dass die Vereinten Nationen bei der Gesamtkoordinierung der internationalen Hilfe für Libyen die Federführung unter den Gebern übernehmen, während die EU die Führungsrolle bei der Unterstützung für den Bereich Grenzmanagement übernommen hat.

6. Die EUBAM-Mission bietet Unterstützung, Beratung und Schulungen für Personal, das von Libyen bei Grenzschutz und Grenzpolizei, in der Zollverwaltung und bei der Küstenwache eingesetzt wird. Dabei ist man sich zwar durchaus bewusst, in welchem politischen Kontext die Mission tätig ist, es ist jedoch nicht Aufgabe der EUBAM, die Differenzen zwischen Regierung und Milizen auszuräumen.

7. Wenn die EUBAM erfolgreich ist, dürfte Libyen besser in der Lage sein, die Flüchtlingsströme einzudämmen.

8. Das Mandat der EUBAM Libya bezieht sich ausschließlich auf das Grenzmanagement.

9. Der Zivile Operationskommandeur hat eine gesetzliche Sorgfaltspflicht gegenüber dem in GSVP-Missionen eingesetzten Personal, und zwar sowohl gegenüber von Mitgliedstaaten abgeordneten Mitarbeitern als auch gegenüber Vertragspersonal. EUBAM Libya ist die einzige GSVP-Mission, die in einem *kritischen* Sicherheitsumfeld tätig ist, was hohe sicherheitsbezogene Kosten verursacht. Ein Teil der Kosten (8,6 Mio. EUR) betreffen einmalige Investitionsausgaben, die in dieser Höhe nicht erneut anfallen werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013843/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — tasks and expected goals of EUBAM Libya

According to the documents published by the European External Action Service, the purpose of the EUBAM Libya mission is to improve and develop the security of Libya's external borders. To achieve this, the Libyan authorities will simply be trained so that they can monitor their land, sea and air borders. No European funds will be transferred, only know-how. The costs amounting to EUR 30 million will, however, largely serve to finance private security services. The salaries of the EUBAM staff are not included in these costs.

1. Is the purpose of the private security services just to protect the EUBAM staff, or are they being used for other services, too?

2. If so, can the Commission state the reasons why private security forces appear to be more suitable for peace-making in a deeply divided region than members of the regular armed forces?

3. Should delicate tasks like measures relating to the stabilisation of a divided region of this kind be given to private security firms?

4. Do the responsibilities of EUBAM Libya lie in border management only (just support measures, such as the training of Libyan border guards), or also in the area of active border control?

5. Does the work of EUBAM staff or the additionally hired private security forces overlap with those of the US and the UN?

6. How will the Libyan authorities be trained in such a way as to set aside the differences between the State and the de facto ruling militia?

7. Is the purpose of the EUBAM Libya mission also to combat the uncontrollable flow of refugees to Europe, as the Libyan State is no longer able to do this in the same way as it did previously?

8. Is the restoration of oil production, or the protection of this production and thus the securing of European economic interests, a significant purpose of EUBAM Libya?

9. How are the high costs of EUR 30.3 million justified?

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

1. The security company is contracted only to provide protection to EUBAM personnel, equipment and premises.

2. -

3. This is not and never was the intention.

4. EUBAM does not have an executive mandate and does not manage any border on behalf of the Libyans. Responsibility lies with the Libyan government. The role of EUBAM is to assist the Libyan border management authorities in developing and improving the border management capabilities.

5. The EU is well placed to ensure that there is no overlap between its support for the Libyan government in the area of border management and that of other international stakeholders. It was agreed at the Conference on Support to Libya in February 2012 that the UN would take lead on overall international donor coordination to Libya, with the EU to lead on border management assistance.

6. EUBAM supports, advises and provides training to personnel appointed by the Libyan government to serve as border guards or border police, customs personnel and naval coastguards. While the Mission is conscious of the political context in which it operates, it is not the role of the EUBAM to settle the differences between government and militias.

7. If EUBAM is successful, the Libyan authorities should be in a better position to limit the flow of refugees.

8. The mandate of EUBAM Libya is exclusively related to border management.

9. The Civilian Operations Commander has a statutory duty of care responsibility towards personnel deployed in CSDP missions, either seconded by the Member States or contracted. EUBAM Libya is the only CSDP mission operating in a critical security environment, which means that in this case security-related costs are high. Some costs (EUR 8.6 millions) relate to capital expenditure which will not recur at the same scale.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013844/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Kennzeichnungspflicht von allergenen Stoffen bei unverpackten Lebensmitteln

In der VO (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 wird neben der Kennzeichnungspflicht von verpackten Lebensmitteln auch die Kennzeichnungspflicht von unverpackten Lebensmitteln geregelt. Nach den dort aufgeführten Artikeln 2 und 21 sind auch Betreiber von Restaurants und Catering-Unternehmen von der Kennzeichnungspflicht betroffen, soweit die gewerblich angebotenen Endprodukte allergene Stoffe beinhalten oder Lebensmittel verarbeitet wurden, die Allergene aufweisen können.

Die Kennzeichnungspflicht fördert ohne Frage den Verbraucherschutz und ist somit geeignet, betroffene Personen über enthaltene allergene Stoffe zu informieren. Jedoch erscheint fraglich, ob diese weitgehende und quasi-ausnahmslose Kennzeichnung das gelindeste Mittel darstellt, betroffene Personen zu schützen. Daraus ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Wird der betroffenen Personengruppe (2 % der Bevölkerung reagieren auf diese allergenen Stoffe) keine eigenständige Verantwortlichkeit zur Informationsbeschaffung mehr zugetraut?

2. Ist die strikte Kennzeichnung von allergenen Stoffen in den letzten Jahren aufgrund einer Zunahme von allergischen Reaktionen in Restaurants oder Catering-Buffets notwendig geworden?

3. Ist der Grund für die gestiegene Anzahl der Zwischenfälle möglicherweise auf das fehlende Wissen der Betroffenen über die individuelle Unverträglichkeit bestimmter Stoffe zurückzuführen?

4. Plant die Kommission die momentan „freie" Wahl der Kennzeichnungsmethode in den kommenden Jahren durch eine zwingende Form zu ersetzen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(3. Februar 2014)

Die Erfahrungen deuten darauf hin, dass die meisten Zwischenfälle im Zusammenhang mit Lebensmittelallergien und -unverträglichkeiten auf unverpackte Lebensmittel zurückgeführt werden können, die häufig in Gaststätten oder Schnellimbissen verwendet werden ([1]). Verbraucher mit Lebensmittelallergien oder -unverträglichkeiten müssen darüber unterrichtet sein, dass diese Lebensmittel Stoffe enthalten, die solche Allergien oder Unverträglichkeiten hervorrufen, denn nur so können sie eine informierte und sichere Wahl treffen.

Der Kommission liegen keine Hinweise darauf vor, dass die gestiegene Zahl der Zwischenfälle im Zusammenhang mit Lebensmittelallergien und -unverträglichkeiten darauf zurückzuführen wäre, dass die Verbraucher ihre Allergien oder Unverträglichkeiten gegenüber bestimmten Lebensmitteln nicht kennen würden.

Gemäß der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011 betreffend die Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel ([2]) ist die Information über Stoffe, die Allergien oder Unverträglichkeiten hervorrufen, ab 13. Dezember 2014 auch für unverpackte Lebensmittel verpflichtend. Die Mitgliedstaaten können durch nationale Maßnahmen festlegen, in welcher Form die Information über Allergene erfolgen soll. In der Zwischenzeit sind die für verpackte Lebensmittel geltenden Vorschriften der Verordnung in Bezug auf die Kennzeichnung von Stoffen oder Produkten, die Allergien oder Unverträglichkeiten auslösen, ebenfalls auf unverpackte Lebensmittel anwendbar. Dies bedeutet, dass die Information in Schriftform zur Verfügung gestellt wird, solange die Mitgliedstaaten noch keine eigenen nationalen Maßnahmen verabschiedet haben. Die Kommission beabsichtigt nicht, die obengenannten Vorschriften zu ändern.

([1]) SEK(2008)92, Impact Assessment report on general food labelling issues, S. 19.
([2]) ABl. L 304 vom 22.11.2011, S. 18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013844/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Requirement to indicate allergenic substances on the labels of non-prepacked food

In addition to the requirement to label prepacked food, Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 also governs the requirement to label non-prepacked food. In accordance with Articles 2 and 21 of this regulation, operators of restaurants and catering establishments are also subject to the labelling obligation insofar as the end products offered in the course of a business contain allergenic substances or food has been processed which could contain allergens.

The labelling requirement undoubtedly serves to protect consumers and is therefore appropriate for informing the people affected of any allergenic substances contained in the food. It is open to question, however, whether this extensive labelling that has almost no exceptions represents the most moderate means of protecting the people affected. This raises the following questions:

1. Are the people affected (2% of the population react to these allergenic substances) no longer considered capable of taking responsibility themselves for gathering information?

2. Has the strict labelling of allergenic substances become necessary in recent years on account of an increase in allergic reactions in restaurants or at catering counters?

3. Is the reason for the rise in the number of incidents perhaps a result of a lack of knowledge on the part of the people affected as to their individual tolerance of certain substances?

4. Is the Commission planning to replace the current 'free' choice of labelling method with a mandatory form in the next few years?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

Evidence suggests that most food allergy and intolerance incidents can be traced back to non-prepacked food, often served in restaurants or at catering counters ([1]). Consumers with food allergies or intolerances need the information on the presence of substances causing these allergies or intolerances on such products in order to be able to make informed and safe choices.

The Commission is not aware of any evidence suggesting that the rise of the number of food allergy and intolerance incidents is due to consumers who would not be aware of their allergy or intolerance to certain foods.

Under Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), as of 13 December 2014 the information on the presence of substances causing allergies or intolerances will also be mandatory for non-packaged foodstuffs. Member States may adopt national measures concerning the means through which information on allergens will be made available. In their absence, the provisions of the regulation concerning pre-packaged foodstuffs will be applicable to non-prepacked foods as regards the labelling of substances or products causing allergies or intolerances. This means that such information will be provided in a written form as long as Member States have not adopted specific national measures. The Commission is not planning to modify the abovementioned provisions.

([1]) SEC(2008) 92, Impact Assessment report on general food labelling issues, p. 19.
([2]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013845/13
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: PBDE belastetet Kunststoffe in Kinderspielzeug

1. Liegen der Kommission Erkenntnisse aus der wissenschaftlichen Literatur vor über mit Polybromierte Diphenylether (PBDE) belastete Recyclingkunststoffe, die zu Kinderspielzeugen verarbeitet wurden?

2. Hält die Kommission die heutige Kontrolltätigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten auf diesem Gebiet für ausreichend?

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

Alle in der EU in Verkehr gebrachten Spielzeuge müssen den Sicherheitsanforderungen entsprechen, die in der Richtlinie über Spielzeugsicherheit ([1]) enthalten sind; sie unterliegen ferner den Einschränkungen für Stoffe gemäß den EU-Rechtsvorschriften ([2]).

Die Herstellung, das Inverkehrbringen und die Verwendung von PBDE ([3]) (Tetra-, Penta-, Hexa- und Heptabromdiphenylether) ist verboten, es sei denn, sie kommen als unbeabsichtigte Spurenverunreinigungen in Stoffen, Zubereitungen oder Artikeln in Konzentrationen von höchstens 0,001 Gew.-% ([4]) vor. Die Herstellung, das Inverkehrbringen und die Verwendung von Artikeln und Zubereitungen, die diese Stoffe in Konzentrationen von weniger als 0,1 Gew.-% enthalten, ist zulässig, sofern diese teilweise oder vollständig aus verwerteten Materialien oder aus Materialien aus zur Wiederverwendung aufbereiteten Abfällen hergestellt werden, ebenso die Herstellung, das Inverkehrbringen und die Verwendung von Elektro- und Elektronikgeräten, die unter die Richtlinie 2011/65/EU fallen ([5]). Elektro- und Elektronikgeräte, die in Verkehr gebracht werden, dürfen nicht mehr als 0,1 Gew.-% PBDE in homogenen Werkstoffen enthalten.

Artikel mit Diphenylether-Octabromderivat dürfen nicht in Verkehr gebracht werden, wenn sie oder ihre mit Flammschutzmittel behandelten Teile diesen Stoff in einer Konzentration von mehr als 0,1 Gew.-% enthalten ([6]).

Der Kommission liegen keine Erkenntnisse aus der wissenschaftlichen Literatur vor, die sich auf PBDE-belastete Recyclingkunststoffe, die zu Kinderspielzeug verarbeitet werden, beziehen. Die Durchsetzung des EU-Rechts obliegt den Mitgliedstaaten. Die Mitgliedstaaten melden über das Schnellwarnsystem für Non-Food-Erzeugnisse (RAPEX) ([7]) spezifische gefährliche Produkte, die auf dem EU-Markt oder an den Grenzen der EU gefunden werden. Bei der Kommission ist bisher noch keine RAPEX-Meldung aus den Mitgliedstaaten über PBDE in Spielzeugen eingegangen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2009/48/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Juni 2009 über die Sicherheit von Spielzeug (ABl. L 170 vom 30.6.2009, S. 1).
([2]) Anhang II Teil III Nummer 1 der Richtlinie 2009/48/EG.
([3]) Polybromierte Diphenylether.
([4]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 850/2004 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über persistente organische Schadstoffe und zur Änderung der Richtlinie 79/117/EWG (ABl. L 158 vom 30.4.2004).
([5]) Richtlinie 2011/65/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 8. Juni 2011 zur Beschränkung der Verwendung bestimmter gefährlicher Stoffe in Elektro- und Elektronikgeräten (ABl. L 174 vom 1.7.2011).
([6]) Eintrag 45 in Anhang XVII der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1907/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Dezember 2006 zur Registrierung, Bewertung, Zulassung und Beschränkung chemischer Stoffe (REACH) und zur Schaffung einer Europäischen Chemikalienagentur (ABl. L 396 vom 30.12.2006).
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013845/13
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Plastics contaminated with PBDEs in children's toys

1. Does the Commission have any findings from the scientific literature concerning recycled plastics contaminated with polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) that have been used to make children's toys?

2. Does it consider the current checks carried out in this area by the Member States to be adequate?

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

All toys placed on the EU market should comply with the safety requirements laid down in the Toy Safety Directive ([1]) as well as with restrictions on substances laid down in EU legislation ([2]).

The production, placing on the market and use of the PBDEs ([3]) tetra-, penta-, hexa- and heptabromodiphenyl ether are prohibited, unless they occur as an unintentional trace contaminant in substances, preparations or articles in concentrations equal to or below 0.001% by weight ([4]). The production, placing on the market and use of articles and preparations containing those substances in a concentration below 0.1% by weight is allowed when produced partially or fully from recycled materials or materials from waste prepared for re-use, as is the production, placing on the market and use of electrical and electronic equipment within the scope of Directive 2011/65/EU ([5]). Electrical and electronic equipment placed on the market cannot contain more than 0.1% PBDEs by weight in homogeneous materials.

Articles containing octabromodiphenyl ether cannot be placed on the market if they, or their flame-retardant parts, contain that substance in concentrations greater than 0.1% by weight ([6]).

The Commission has no findings from scientific literature relating to recycled plastics contaminated with PBDEs and used to make children's toys. Enforcement of EC law lies with the Member States. Member States report through the EU Rapid Alert System for non-food products (RAPEX) ([7]) about specific dangerous products found on the market or at EU borders. The Commission has so far not received any RAPEX notification from Member States reporting the presence of PBDEs in toys.

([1]) Directive 2009/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the safety of toys, OJ L 170, 30.6.2009.
([2]) Part III, point 1 of Annex II to Directive 2009/48/EC.
([3]) polybrominated diphenyl ethers.
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 850/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on persistent organic pollutants and amending Directive 79/117/EEC OJ L 158, 30.4.2004.
([5]) Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2011 on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment, OJ L 174, 1.7.2011.
([6]) Entry 45 in Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) and establishing a European Chemicals Agency, OJ L 396, 30.12.2006.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013846/13
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Gefahr durch Weichmacher, PBDE, PFOS oder PFOA in Recyclingkreisläufen

1. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung der Wissenschaft, dass die Belastung der europäischen Bevölkerung mit Weichmachern wie DEHP, DiBP oder DnBP aus dem Kunststoffsektor bereits heute zu hoch ist?

2. Wie soll vor diesem Hintergrund das stoffliche Kunststoffrecycling ohne Zielkonflikte ausgebaut werden können?

3. Liegen der Kommission Erkenntnisse über die Belastung von Teppichrückenbeschichtungen mit Polybromierte Diphenylether (PBDE) aus dem PUR-Recycling vor?

4. In welchem Umfang sind nach Erkenntnissen der Kommission perfluorierte Chemikalien wie PFOS oder PFOA bereits in die Kreisläufe des Papierrecyclings eingedrungen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(17. Februar 2014)

1. Nach Prüfung eines Vorschlags für eine weitere Einschränkung der Zahl der Produkte, die DEHP, BBP, D(n)BP oder DiBP enthalten, sind die wissenschaftlichen Ausschüsse der ECHA ([1]) zu dem Schluss gelangt, dass dies nicht gerechtfertigt wäre. Diese Phthalate (mit Ausnahme von DiBP) unterliegen bereits Beschränkungen hinsichtlich der Abgabe an private Verbraucher und der Verwendung in Spielzeug und Babyartikeln. Die Kommission führt derzeit eine Studie zu den Auswirkungen der Weichmacher DEHP, BBP, DBP und DIBP in Elektronikprodukten durch, um eine mögliche Beschränkung nach Artikel 6 der Richtlinie 2011/65/EU ([2]) zu prüfen. In Kunststoffen, die mit Lebensmitteln in Berührung kommen, darf D(i)BP nicht verwendet werden. Durch die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 10/2011 ([3]) wird der Einsatz von D(n)BP und DEHP auf die Verwendung als technisches Hilfsagens in Konzentrationen von unter 0,05 % bzw. 0,1 % sowie auf einige wenige Weichmacher-Anwendungen beschränkt.

2. Im Interesse einer höheren Recyclingrate von Kunststoffen, die die genannten Stoffe enthalten, muss sichergestellt sein, dass sie im Recycling-Verfahren so bald wie möglich vom Abfallstrom getrennt werden, damit diese Stoffe nicht in die Recycling-Produkte gelangen. In Bezug auf PFOS und PBDE beabsichtigt die Kommission, durch Festlegung von Grenzwerten zu definieren, welche Abfälle den Anforderungen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 850/2004 der Kommission über persistente organische Schadstoffe hinsichtlich der Beseitigung unterliegen.

3. Studien in mehreren Mitgliedstaaten deuten darauf hin, dass Teppiche PBDE nicht in bedeutenden Konzentrationen enthalten.

4. PFOS und PFOA werden nicht bei der Papierherstellung selbst, sondern als Ausgangsstoffe für die Herstellung von Fluorpolymeren eingesetzt. Mit Fluorpolymeren behandeltes Papier wird nur in einigen wenigen Anwendungen verwendet, macht nur einen geringen Anteil an der Verpackungspapierherstellung aus und wird gewöhnlich nicht wiederverwertet. Es ist daher unwahrscheinlich, dass bedeutende Mengen an perfluorierten Polymeren in den Papierrecycling-Kreislauf gelangen.

([1]) Europäische Chemikalienagentur.
([2]) ABl. L 174 vom 1.7.2011.
([3]) ABl. L 12 vom 15.1.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013846/13
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Hazard caused by plasticisers, PBDEs, PFOS or PFOA in recycling systems

1. Does the Commission agree with the view of scientists that the European population is exposed to levels of plasticisers like DEHP, DiBP or DnBP from the plastics industry that are already too high?

2. Against this background, how can the recycling of plastics be developed without conflicting objectives?

3. Does the Commission have any findings concerning the contamination of carpet backings with polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) from PUR recycling?

4. To the Commission's knowledge, to what extent have perfluorinated chemicals like PFOS or PFOA already entered the paper recycling system?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

1. Following a proposal to restrict further the range of articles containing DEHP, BBP, D(n)BP and DiBP, ECHA ([1])'s scientific committees concluded that additional restrictions would not be justified. These phthalates (except DiBP) are already restricted for supply to the general public and in toys and childcare articles. The Commission is conducting a study on the impact of plasticisers DEHP, BBP, DBP and DIBP in electronics with a view to restricting their use under Art. 6 of Directive 2011/65/EU ([2]). In plastic food contact materials the use of D(i)BP is not authorised. Regulation (EU) No 10/2011 ([3]) restricts the use of D(n)BP and DEHP to technical support agent in concentrations below 0.05% and 0.1% respectively and a few limited plasticizer applications.

2. To help improve recycling rates of plastics containing the substances referred to it is important to ensure that these plastics are separated from the waste stream as soon as possible in the recycling process to avoid that these substances are contained in the recycled products. For PFOS and PBDEs, the Commission intends setting limit values to define the waste that will fall under the elimination requirements of Regulation (EC) No 850/2004 on persistent organic pollutants.

3. Studies conducted in several Member States suggest that carpets do not contain PBDEs in significant concentrations.

4. PFOS and PFOA are not used as such in paper production process but as starting substances for the manufacture of fluoropolymers. Papers treated with fluoropolymers are produced for very specific applications, represent a small fraction of the packaging paper production and are usually not recycled. It is unlikely that significant amounts of perfluorinated polymers will enter the recycled paper system.

([1]) European Chemicals Agency.
([2]) OJ L 174, 1.7.2011.
([3]) OJ L 12, 15.1.2011.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013848/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Entwicklungshilfegelder für politische Propaganda in Weißrussland

Gleich mehrere MdEP sollen sich ja über den Verbleib des britischen Beitrags in Höhe von jährlich einer Milliarde Pfund zur EU-Entwicklungshilfe — die von Weißrussland zur Finanzierung von Foto-Ausstellungen, zur Förderung der ethnischen Volksmärchen und für TV-Werbung für die EU benutzt wurde — erkundigt haben.

1. Gibt es diesbezüglich schon Ergebnisse?

2. Mit welchen Maßnahmen soll sichergestellt werden, dass Entwicklungshilfe tatsächlich zweckgemäß genutzt wird und nicht (wie etwa im oben stehenden Beispiel für politische Propaganda) zweckentfremdet eingesetzt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(5. Februar 2014)

1. Die EU-Hilfe für Belarus konzentriert sich auf die Unterstützung der Bevölkerung und die Demokratisierung mit Schwerpunkt auf der Unterstützung der Aktivitäten der Zivilgesellschaft.

In diesem Zusammenhang sind von der EU finanzierte Projekte wie Fotoausstellungen und die Förderung von Volksmärchen Teil der EU-Programme zur Stärkung der Rolle der Kultur als Motor für Reformen, die Förderung von Toleranz und den sozialen Zusammenhalt. Die Bedeutung der Zusammenarbeit in Kulturfragen im Rahmen politischer Prozesse und bei der Bewältigung politischer Herausforderungen wurde in den Schlussfolgerungen des Europäischen Rates vom Juni 2008 anerkannt. Der Herr Abgeordnete findet Beschreibungen der laufenden Projekte im Anhang.

Die Werbekampagne im Fernsehen ist Teil der Kommunikationsstrategie der EU, um die Sichtbarkeit des EU-Beitrags zur Zusammenarbeit sicherzustellen.

2. Keines der EU-Projekte in Belarus wurde für politische Propaganda genutzt. Um sicherzustellen, dass die Projekte ihren Zweck erfüllen, überwacht die Kommission diese regelmäßig während ihrer Durchführung und führt zusätzlich eine abschließende Bewertung am Ende des Projekts durch.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013848/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Development aid for political propaganda in Belarus

Several MEPs are said to have enquired about the fate of the UK contribution to EU development aid, amounting to GBP 1 billion a year, which has been used by Belarus to finance photographic exhibitions, to promote ethnic folk tales and for television advertising for the EU.

1. Are there any results yet in this regard?

2. What measures are to be taken to ensure that development aid is actually used for its intended purpose and not for other purposes (as in the above example, for political propaganda)?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

1. EU assistance to Belarus focuses on supporting the needs of the population and democratisation, with a strong focus on supporting civil society activities.

In this context, the EU funded projects which include photographic exhibitions and the promotion of ethnic folk tales are part of the EU programmes to enhance the role of culture as a force for reform, the promotion of tolerance and social cohesion. The importance of cultural cooperation in addressing political processes and challenges was recognised by the conclusions of the European Council in June 2008. The Honourable Member will find the description of on-going projects in annex.

The TV advertising campaign is part of the EU communication strategy to ensure the visibility of the EU contribution to cooperation aid.

2. None of the EU projects has been used for political propaganda in Belarus. To make sure that our projects fulfil their purpose, the Commission monitors projects regularly during implementation, in addition to carrying out a final evaluation at the end of the project.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013849/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Entwurf einer Richtlinie des ECTR

Der „European Council for Tolerance and Reconciliation" (ECTR) hat einen Entwurf vorgelegt, dessen Richtlinien „in den europäischen Staaten gesetzlich verankert werden" sollen. Dem Entwurf des ECTR nach soll in Brüssel darüber nachgedacht werden, dafür zu sorgen, dass das Europaparlament die nationalen Regierungen zur Überwachung von als „intolerant" eingestuften Bürgern verpflichten könne. Offiziell nennt sich der Entwurf „Europäisches Rahmenstatut zur nationalen Förderung der Toleranz". Erarbeitet wurde er vom ECTR, einer Nichtregierungsorganisation, und wurde im vergangenen Monat dem Ausschuss für bürgerliche Freiheiten, Justiz und Inneres (LIBE) des Europaparlaments überreicht. Demnach sollen Äußerungen verboten werden, die „antifeministisch" oder „islamfeindlich" sind.

1. In welcher Verbindung steht der ECTR zur Europäischen Union?

2. Fließen vonseiten der EU Gelder in den ECTR?

3. Wenn ja, in welcher jährlichen Höhe?

4. Aus welchem Budget werden diese Gelder lukriert?

5. Inwieweit geht die Kommission mit dem Entwurf, der immerhin auf dem EU-Parlamentsserver gehostet wird, konform?

6. Inwieweit sieht die Kommission ein Problem mit den Formulierungen des Entwurfs wie etwa „Eliminierung von Kritik", die ja sicherlich nicht mit dem Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung vereinbar ist?

7. Wann ist konkret mit einer Richtlinie zu rechnen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(25. Februar 2014)

Der ECTR ([1]) ist keine Einrichtung der Europäischen Union und die Kommission stellt ihm keinerlei Mittel zur Verfügung.

Das Europäische Rahmenstatut zur nationalen Förderung der Toleranz ist weder ein Dokument der Europäischen Kommission noch der Europäischen Union.

([1]) European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013849/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Draft ECTR directive

The European Council for Tolerance and Reconciliation (ECTR) has presented a draft, the directives of which are to be 'enacted by the legislatures of European States'. According to the ECTR draft, due consideration should be given in Brussels to enabling the European Parliament to require national governments to monitor citizens classed as 'intolerant'. The official title of the draft is 'A European Framework National Statute for the Promotion of Tolerance'. It was drafted by the ECTR, a non-governmental organisation, and was submitted to Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) last month. According to the draft, comments that are 'antifeminist' or 'Islamophobic' are to be prohibited.

1. What is the ECTR's connection with the European Union?

2. Does the EU provide funding to the ECTR?

3. If so, what are the annual amounts?

4. From which budget are these funds taken?

5. To what extent does the Commission agree with the draft, which is, after all, hosted on the European Parliament server?

6. To what extent does it see a problem with the wording of the draft, such as 'elimination of criticism', which is surely not compatible with the right to freedom of expression?

7. When, specifically, can we expect a directive?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

The ECTR ([1]) is not an entity of the European Union and the Commission does not provide any funding to it.

The European Framework National Statute for the Promotion of Tolerance is neither a European Commission, nor a European Union document.

([1]) European Council for Tolerance and Reconciliation.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013850/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Einschleppung von Kinderlähmung und Tuberkulose nach Europa durch Flüchtlinge

Vor allem durch flächendeckende Impfung ist die Zahl der Polio-Erkrankungen auf einen Bruchteil gesunken. So war in Syrien seit 1999 kein Fall mehr bekannt. Nur in drei Ländern ist die Ausrottung nicht gelungen: in Nigeria, Afghanistan und Pakistan. Sobald die hygienischen Zustände schlechter werden und die medizinische Versorgung der Bevölkerung beeinträchtigt ist, sind gefährliche Krankheiten wie Pest, Cholera, Typhus oder Tuberkulose sofort wieder auf dem Vormarsch. Nachdem die Impfung von Kleinkindern wegen des Bürgerkriegs mancherorts zum Erliegen gekommen ist, gab es neue (von der Weltgesundheitsorganisation WHO bestätigte) Poliofälle in Syrien. Der letzte Fall dieser Krankheit war in Österreich im Jahr 1980 aufgetreten, im restlichen Europa wurde die Kinderlähmung offiziell im Jahr 2002 ausgerottet. Nun besteht die Gefahr, dass Krankheiten wie Kinderlähmung, aber auch Tuberkulose durch Flüchtlinge wieder nach Europa und Österreich eingeschleppt werden. Medienberichten zufolge wurden bei vier Asylwerbern in Österreich, die mutmaßlich aus Syrien geflüchtet sind, sogenannte „Enteroviren" nachgewiesen, die Poliomyelitis, also Kinderlähmung verursachen können.

Auch die Zahl der an Tuberkulose Erkrankten wächst weltweit stark und in Europa sind die Masernfälle sprunghaft angestiegen.

1. Inwieweit wird auf EU-Ebene zusammengearbeitet, um eine Wiederkehr von in Europa ausgestorbenen Krankheiten durch Flüchtlinge zu verhindern?

2. In welchem Ausmaß finden im Rahmen von Hilfen für Syrien (Polio-)Impfprogramme Berücksichtigung?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(12. Februar 2014)

Gemäß dem Beschluss Nr. 1082/2013/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zu schwerwiegenden grenzüberschreitenden Gesundheitsgefahren unterliegen übertragbare Krankheiten wie Poliomyelitis und Tuberkulose einer Meldepflicht auf EU-Ebene. Das gilt auch für Fälle der Einschleppung durch Flüchtlinge.

Die Kommission koordiniert gemeinsam mit dem Ausschuss für Gesundheitssicherheit, dessen Mitglieder die Gesundheitsbehörden der Mitgliedstaaten vertreten, mit technischer Unterstützung des Europäischen Zentrums für die Prävention und die Kontrolle von Krankheiten (ECDC) und der Weltgesundheitsorganisation (WHO), die Reaktion der EU auf solche Bedrohungen, um die mögliche Verbreitung übertragbarer Krankheiten, die bereits erfolgreich bekämpft oder ausgerottet wurden — darunter auch Tuberkulose und Poliomyelitis —, auf Unionsebene zu verhindern.

Was den Ausbruch von Polio in Syrien angeht, so sind dort bis heute siebzehn Fälle bestätigt worden. Die Kommission verfolgt die Lage in Syrien und den angrenzenden Ländern aufmerksam und steht im Hinblick auf die Überwachung der Fortschritte bei den Impfmaßnahmen in ständigem Kontakt mit der WHO und anderen Partnern, die im Bereich der Gesundheit aktiv sind.

Unter der Koordinierung der Gesundheitsministerien, der WHO und von Unicef wurde eine regionale Aktionsstrategie ausgearbeitet. Zudem sind in Syrien, Ägypten, dem Irak, Jordanien, dem Libanon, Palästina und der Türkei abgestimmte Impfkampagnen für 23 Millionen Kinder im Alter von unter fünf Jahren entweder geplant oder bereits angelaufen.

Seit Beginn der Syrienkrise hat die Kommission der WHO Mittel in Höhe von 13,5 Mio. EUR für Gesundheitsmaßnahmen zur Verfügung gestellt. Die Kommission ist darauf vorbereitet, bei Bedarf ihre Unterstützung in der Region zu verstärken, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf Polioimpfungen liegt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013850/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Introduction of poliomyelitis and tuberculosis to Europe via refugees

Mainly as a result of universal immunisation, the number of polio cases has been reduced to just a fraction of what it was. Thus, in Syria there had been no known cases since 1999. There are just three countries where it has not been successfully eradicated: Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan. As soon as hygiene standards deteriorate and medical care for the people is reduced, dangerous diseases like plague, cholera, typhus or tuberculosis immediately rise up again. Since the immunisation of young children ceased in many places on account of the civil war, there have been new cases of polio in Syria (confirmed by the World Health Organisation). The last case of this disease occurred in Austria in 1980, and it was officially eradicated in the rest of Europe in 2002. There is now a danger that diseases like polio, but also tuberculosis, will be re-introduced to Europe and Austria via refugees. According to media reports, what are known as 'enteroviruses', which can cause poliomyelitis, have been found in four asylum-seekers in Austria, who are presumed to have fled from Syria.

The number of people with tuberculosis is also rising sharply worldwide, and in Europe cases of measles have increased dramatically.

1. To what extent is there cooperation at EU level to prevent the return, via refugees, of diseases that have been eradicated in Europe?

2. To what extent are (polio) immunisation programmes being considered in the context of aid for Syria?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2014)

Under Decision 1082/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross border threats to health, communicable diseases such as poliomyelitis and tuberculosis are subject to obligatory notification at EU level, including in the case of importation in the Union by refugees.

The Commission, with the Health Security Committee representing the health authorities of the Member States, and the technical support of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), coordinate the EU response to such threats in order to prevent the possible spread at Union level of communicable diseases which have been controlled or eradicated, including tuberculosis and poliomyelitis.

With regards to the polio outbreak inside Syria, to date, seventeen polio cases have been confirmed in Syria. The Commission is closely following the situation inside Syria and neighbouring countries and is in constant contact with WHO and other health partners to monitor the progress of vaccination activities.

Under the coordination of the Ministries of Health, WHO and Unicef, a regional response strategy has been prepared and synchronised vaccination campaigns — targeting 23 million children under five — are planned or underway in Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Turkey.

Since the beginning of the Syria crisis, the Commission has provided WHO with EUR 13.5 million for health activities. The Commission stands ready to increase its support focusing on polio vaccinations in the region if needed.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013851/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Illegaler grenzüberschreitender Müllhandel

Untersuchungen zeigen, dass allein aus Österreich jährlich etwa 15 000 Tonnen alter Elektrogeräte illegal in die Nachbarstaaten gebracht werden. Um den kontinuierlich wachsenden illegalen grenzüberschreitenden Müllhandel zu bekämpfen, wurden im Vorjahr die diesbezüglichen gemeinsamen Maßnahmen intensiviert.

1. Wie ist der Umsetzungsstand der diesbezüglichen Vorschriften?

2. In welchem Ausmaß konnten Fortschritte bei der Bekämpfung des kontinuierlich wachsenden illegalen grenzüberschreitenden Müllhandels erzielt werden?

3. Inwieweit funktioniert in diesem Zusammenhang die grenzübergreifende Zusammenarbeit?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(6. Februar 2014)

Die Mitgliedstaaten sind verpflichtet, die Richtlinie 2012/19/EU über Elektro- und Elektronik-Altgeräte ([1]) bis zum 14. Februar 2014 umzusetzen ([2]). Diese Richtlinie enthält eindeutige Bestimmungen, um das Problem der illegalen grenzüberschreitenden Verbringung dieser Altgeräte anzugehen.

Außerdem hat die Kommission angesichts des anhaltenden Problems der illegalen grenzüberschreitenden Verbringung von Abfällen kürzlich legislative Maßnahmen vorgeschlagen, um die Kontrollen im Rahmen der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1013/2006 über die Verbringung von Abfällen zu verschärfen ([3]). Mit dem neuen Vorschlag sollen die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet werden, Kontrollpläne zu erarbeiten, die auf problematische und mit hohem Risiko behaftete Abfallströme abzielen. Die vorgeschlagenen Pläne umfassen Mittel der Zusammenarbeit zwischen den verschiedenen Behörden, um die Effizienz der Zusammenarbeit zu verbessern. Der Vorschlag wird zurzeit vom Europäischen Parlament geprüft (Berichterstatter: Bart Staes, MdEP).

Die Frage der grenzüberschreitenden Verbringung von Elektro- und Elektronik-Altgeräten wird auch im Rahmen des Basler Übereinkommens über die Kontrolle der grenzüberschreitenden Verbringung gefährlicher Abfälle und ihrer Entsorgung behandelt ([4]).

([1]) ABl. L 197 vom 24.7.2012.
([2]) Weitere Informationen finden sich im zusammenfassenden Bericht der Sitzung des zuständigen Ausschusses vom 29. Oktober 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&/SdewlKgBls8q08QZ07x+U1vTzC+CtnNScjG03zeigyUyRNldL7I/SVpCmnySTSZ
([3]) ABl. L 190 vom 12.7.2006.
([4]) http://www.basel.int/Implementation/TechnicalAssistance/EWaste/tabid/2576/Default.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013851/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Illegal cross-border trade in waste

Investigations reveal that, from Austria alone, around 15 000 tonnes of waste electrical equipment are shipped illegally into neighbouring states each year. In order to tackle the ever increasing illegal cross-border trade in waste, the common measures in this regard were stepped up last year.

1. How far has the transposition of the relevant requirements in this regard progressed?

2. To what extent has progress been made in combating the ever-growing illegal cross-border trade in waste?

3. How effective is cross-border cooperation in this context?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

Member States are obliged to transpose Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) ([1]) by 14 February 2014 ([2]). This directive contains explicit provisions to address the problem of illegal cross-border shipments of WEEE.

On a more general note, the Commission, having recognised the on-going problem of illegal cross-border shipment of waste, has recently proposed legislative action to strengthen inspections under Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste ([3]). The new proposal obliges Member States to establish inspection plans aiming to target problematic and high-risk waste streams. In order to improve the effectiveness of cross-border cooperation, the proposed plans include elements of cooperation between different authorities. The proposal is now under consideration by the European Parliament (rapporteur: Bart Staes, MEP)

The topic of cross-border movement of WEEE is also addressed in the context of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their disposal ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 197, 24.7.2012.
([2]) For more information, see summary record of the meeting of the relevant committee held on 29 October 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=search.documentdetail&/SdewlKgBls8q08QZ07x+U1vTzC+CtnNScjG03zeigyUyRNldL7I/SVpCmnySTSZ
([3]) OJ L 190, 12.7.2006.
([4]) http://www.basel.int/Implementation/TechnicalAssistance/EWaste/tabid/2576/Default.aspx

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013852/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Manipulation von Währungskursen durch Großbanken

Medienberichten zufolge stehen mehrere internationale Großbanken im Verdacht, massiv Währungskurse manipuliert zu haben. Konkret sollen die Banken Geschäfte mit fremden Währungen in der Absicht getätigt haben, den Kurs zu einer bestimmten Uhrzeit zu beeinflussen und so mittels Kurswetten Gewinne zu erzielen. Bereits im Oktober, als die Schweizer Finanzaufsicht mitgeteilt hatte, gegen mehrere Schweizer Institute zu ermitteln, gab es erste Anhaltspunkte für einen derartigen Verdacht. Angeblich soll die Deutsche Bank umfangreiche interne Ermittlung aufgenommen haben.

1. Inwieweit ist die EU-Finanzaufsicht in die laufenden Ermittlungen involviert?

2. Ist gegebenenfalls eine Änderung der Regeln für den Devisenmarkt geplant?

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

Die Finanzmarktaufsicht ist Aufgabe der jeweils zuständigen Behörde, daher ist die Kommission nicht direkt in die laufenden Ermittlungen zu diesem Fall involviert. Sie geht der Sache jedoch aus kartellrechtlicher Sicht nach, da Währungskursmanipulationen durch Marktteilnehmer eine Verletzung des Wettbewerbsrechts der EU darstellen könnten.

Nach den Vorschlägen der Kommission für eine Verordnung über Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation (Marktmissbrauch) sowie für eine Richtlinie über strafrechtliche Sanktionen für Insider-Geschäfte und Marktmanipulation, über die das Europäische Parlament und der Rat im Juni bzw. Dezember 2013 eine politische Einigung erzielten, sind Manipulationen von Benchmarks eindeutig verboten und ziehen verwaltungs- und strafrechtliche Sanktionen nach sich. Am 18. September 2013 legte die Kommission den Entwurf einer Verordnung über Indizes, die bei Finanzinstrumenten und Finanzkontrakten als Benchmark verwendet werden ([1]), vor. Diese soll sicherstellen, dass Benchmarks robust, präzise und zuverlässig sind und nicht Gegenstand von Manipulationen werden. Da die Verhandlungen zu dieser Verordnung noch nicht abgeschlossen sind, wäre es für die Kommission verfrüht, die Notwendigkeit weiterer legislativer Maßnahmen, die über die oben genannten Vorschläge hinausgehen, zu prüfen. Die Kommission beobachtet jedoch alle Entwicklungen aufmerksam.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/benchmarks/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013852/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Manipulation of exchange rates by large banks

According to media reports, several large international banks are suspected of having greatly manipulated exchange rates. Specifically, the banks are said to have carried out transactions using foreign currencies with the intention of influencing the rate at a particular time of the day and so making profits by betting on the rates. The first indications of such suspicions came back in October, when the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority reported that it was investigating several Swiss institutions. Deutsche Bank has reportedly launched an extensive internal investigation.

1. To what extent is the EU financial supervision involved in the ongoing investigations?

2. If necessary, is an amendment to the rules for the foreign exchange market planned?

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

Financial supervision is the responsibility of the relevant competent authority, not the Commission, and therefore the Commission is not directly involved in the ongoing investigations in this matter. However, the European Commission is looking into this matter from an antitrust perspective, since manipulations of forex exchange rates by market operators may constitute violations of EU competition rules.

The Commission proposals for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation (Market Abuse) and for a directive on criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation, politically agreed by the European Parliament and the Council in June and December 2013 respectively, clearly prohibit the manipulation of benchmarks and subject such manipulation to administrative and criminal sanctions. On 18 September 2013 the Commission proposed a draft Regulation on indices used as benchmarks in financial instruments and financial contracts ([1]) which aims to ensure benchmarks are robust, accurate and reliable and not subject to manipulation. Given the pending negotitaions of this regulation, it would be premature for the Commission to consider whether further legislative action beyond the abovementioned proposals is needed. The Commission is however actively monitoring developments.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/securities/benchmarks/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013853/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Transparenz bei Fondsdokumenten

Ein Anleger soll wissen, wo sein Fonds seine Veranlagungsschwerpunkte hat, welche Branchen und Länder vertreten sind, was die größten im Paket enthaltenen Aktien sind und wie lange sein Geld gebunden ist. Konsumentenschutzorganisationen klagen, dass bei 80 % der getesteten heimischen Fonds die Kundeninformationsdokumente — welche ja von der EU für die Käufer von Fonds vorgeschrieben sind — mangelhaft sind. Beispielsweise werden in der dargestellten Wertentwicklung Ausgabe- und Rücknahmespesen nicht eingerechnet und es fehlen Hinweise auf anfallende Depotspesen. Auch sollen die Texte für Kleinanleger kaum verständlich sein.

1. Was genau wird den Fonds hinsichtlich der Kundeninformationsdokumente vorgeschrieben?

2. Wie ist der Umsetzungsstand dieser Vorschriften?

3. Wer kontrolliert die Einhaltung dieser Vorschriften?

4. Sind Änderungen/Anpassungen geplant?

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

Die europäischen Rechtsvorschriften auf dem Gebiet der Investmentfonds bestehen hauptsächlich aus zwei Richtlinien, und zwar der Richtlinie 2009/65/EG zur Koordinierung der Rechts- und Verwaltungsvorschriften betreffend bestimmte Organismen für gemeinsame Anlagen in Wertpapieren (OGAW), die hauptsächlich den Markt für Fonds auf Gegenseitigkeit für private Anleger reguliert, und die Richtlinie 2011/61/EU über die Verwalter alternativer Investmentfonds, die die Verwalter aller anderen Fonds reguliert, bei denen es sich nicht um OGAW handelt, d. h. also in der Praxis die dem nationalen Recht unterworfenen Fonds.

1. Die OGAW müssen ihren Anlegern einen Prospekt, einen Jahresbericht, einen Halbjahresbericht sowie ein Dokument mit wesentlichen Informationen zum Fonds übermitteln. Dieses Basisinformationsblatt wurde konzipiert, um privaten Anlegern eine bessere Einschätzung des Fondswerts unabhängig vom Ziel, den Risiken oder den Kosten des Fonds zu ermöglichen (siehe Artikel 68 bis 82).

Die alternativen Investmentfonds unterliegen zwar hauptsächlich nationalen Vorschriften; die Richtlinie 2011/61/EU sieht aber auch Transparenzanforderungen vor, wie die Vorlage eines Jahresberichts und die Pflicht, den Anleger über alle wichtigen Fonds-Merkmale zu informieren (Artikel 22 und 23).

2. Beide Richtlinien sind in nationales Recht umzusetzen.

3. Die zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten müssen überprüfen, ob die Vorschriften eingehalten werden.

4. Die Kommission hat einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung (KOM(2012)352) vorgelegt, mit dem Privatanleger, die in Anlageprodukte für Kleinanleger wie Fonds investieren, besser informiert werden. So sieht dieser Vorschlag insbesondere eine erhöhte Kostentransparenz vor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013853/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Transparency in connection with fund documents

Investors should know where the focus of investment of their funds is, which sectors and countries are represented, what the largest stocks in the package are and for how long their money will be tied up. Consumer protection organisations complain that, for 80% of the domestic funds tested, the customer information documents — which are indeed required by the EU for purchasers of funds — are deficient. For example, issue and redemption expenses are not included in the performance shown, and there are no indications of the custody fees due. The text is also said to be difficult for small-scale investors to understand.

1. What exactly is required from the funds in terms of customer information documents?

2. How far has the transposition of these requirements progressed?

3. Who checks whether these requirements are met?

4. Are any amendments/adaptations planned?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(10 février 2014)

La législation européenne en matière de fonds d'investissements est principalement composée de deux directives. La directive sur les Organismes de Placement Collectifs en Valeurs Mobilières (OPCVM, 2009/65/CE) régule principalement le marché de fonds mutuels destinés aux investisseurs particuliers. La directive sur les Gestionnaires de Fonds d'Investissement Alternatifs (GFIA, 2011/61/UE) régule les gestionnaires de tous les autres fonds qui ne sont pas des OPCVM, donc en pratique les fonds soumis au droit national.

1. Les fonds OPCVM doivent mettre à disposition de leurs investisseurs un prospectus, un rapport annuel et semi-annuel ainsi qu'un document contenant les informations clés du fonds. Ce document a été conçu pour permettre aux investisseurs particuliers de mieux apprécier la valeur du fonds, que ce soit son objectif, ses risques ou ses coûts (articles 68 à 82).

Les FIA sont principalement soumis aux règles nationales mais la directive GFIA introduit toutefois des obligations de transparence: rapport annuel et obligation d'informer l'investisseur sur toutes les caractéristiques importantes du fonds (articles 22 et 23).

2. Les deux directives doivent avoir été transposées en droit national.

3. Les autorités compétentes des États membres sont responsables pour contrôler si ces obligations sont remplies.

4. La Commission a proposé un projet de règlement (COM(2012)352) qui vise à mieux informer les investisseurs particuliers qui investissent dans des produits packagés tels que les fonds. La proposition prévoit notamment une transparence accrue au niveau des coûts.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013854/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Verringerung der Verwendung von Kunststofftüten

Laut Schätzungen benutzte im Jahr 2010 jeder EU-Bürger 198 Kunststofftüten, wobei rund 8 Milliarden dieser Tüten weggeworfen wurden und sich in der Umwelt häufen, insbesondere in den Meeren. Die weggeworfenen Tüten können dort noch hunderte Jahre überdauern und bedrohen somit weltweit das Ökosystem. Der Verbrauch an Kunststofftüten in der EU variiert je nach Konsumverhalten und Umweltbewusstsein.

Im Mittelpunkt der aktuellen Kritik stehen jene dünnen Plastiksäcke (sog. Knotensackerln), die für Obst und Gemüse verwendet, aber auch an den Kassen oft gratis ausgegeben werden. Bei einigen Obstsorten mag es ein Leichtes sein, diese durch Alternativen (etwa aus Papier) zu ersetzen. Bei anderen gestaltet sich dies schwieriger, so dass in der Praxis wohl eine andere Verpackungsform herhalten muss, die dann wohl wieder aus Plastik wäre.

1. Zielt die Kommission allein auf eine Reduktion der Verwendung von Plastiksackerln ab oder wird auch der Frage nachgegangen, wie diese ins Meer gelangen und wie dies verhindert werden kann?

2. Wird die Forschung nach umweltfreundlichen Alternativen zu Plastiksackerln, die für Obst etc. geeignet sind, etwa Maisstärkesackerl, seitens der EU gefördert?

3. Inwieweit sollen begleitend Projekte laufen, mit denen das diesbezügliche Problembewusstsein der Bevölkerung gestärkt wird?

4. Sind in diesem Zusammenhang hinsichtlich der Verpackungsrichtlinie weitere Änderungen geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(11. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission hat vor kurzem einen Vorschlag angenommen, um den Verbrauch an Tüten aus leichtem Kunststoff zu verringern ([1]). Angestrebt wird, Umwelt- und Gesundheitsschäden vorzubeugen, die durch Kunststoffabfälle, einschließlich solcher in der Meeresumwelt, verursacht werden. Der Vorschlag gibt den Mitgliedstaaten als Ziel vor, Maßnahmen zu ergreifen, um den Verbrauch an Tüten aus leichtem Kunststoff zu reduzieren. Da die Vermüllung in erheblichem Umfang vom Konsum- und Entsorgungsverhalten der Verbraucher abhängt, können Sensibilisierungskampagnen eine wichtige Maßnahme sein, die sowohl die Mitgliedstaaten als auch NRO und Bürgerinitiativen durchführen könnten. Die Kommission unterstützt diese Bemühungen durch Finanzierung der Europäischen Woche der Abfallreduzierung, einschließlich der auf die Schriftliche Erklärung PE457.600v01-00 vom 14.2.2011 des Europäischen Parlaments zurückgehenden Aktivitäten von „Let's Clean Up Europe", im Rahmen des Programms „LIFE".

Die EU begrüßt Forschungsarbeiten über umweltfreundliche Alternativen zu Kunststofftüten. Finanzielle Unterstützung könnte im Rahmen des EU-Programms LIFE ([2]) oder des Forschungsprogramms Horizont 2020 beantragt werden.

Weitere Änderungen der Richtlinie über Verpackungen und Verpackungsabfälle ([3]), die speziell auf die Verwendung von Kunststofftüten abzielen, sind zwar nicht geplant, doch überprüft die Kommission zurzeit im Rahmen der Überarbeitung der Abfallpolitik ([4]) die in der Richtlinie festgelegten Zielvorgaben.

([1]) KOM(2013)761 endg. vom 1.11.2013.
([2]) Vgl.: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) Richtlinie 94/62/EG, ABl. L 365 vom 31.12.1994.
([4]) Vgl.: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/target_review.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013854/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Reducing the use of plastic bags

Each EU citizen is estimated to have used 198 plastic bags in 2010, with around 8 billion of these bags being thrown away and accumulating in the environment, in particular in our seas. The discarded bags can remain there for hundreds of years and are therefore a threat to ecosystems throughout the world. The consumption of plastic bags in the EU varies according to consumer behaviour and environmental awareness.

The focus of the current criticism is on those thin plastic bags used for fruit and vegetables, but also often given out free of charge at the check-out. For some sorts of fruit it may be easy to replace these with alternatives (made of paper, for example). For others it is more difficult, so that, in practice, another form of packaging would probably have to do the job, which would probably again be made of plastic.

1. Is the Commission simply seeking to reduce the use of plastic bags, or is the question of how these bags end up in the sea and how this can be prevented also being investigated?

2. Is the EU supporting research into environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic bags suitable for fruit etc., such as corn starch bags?

3. To what extent should projects run alongside this to increase public awareness of this problem?

4. Are further amendments to the Packaging Directive planned in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The Commission has recently adopted a proposal to reduce the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags ([1]). The objective is to prevent the damage to the environment and health which results from plastic litter, including in the marine environment. This proposal sets the objective for Member States to take measures to achieve a reduction in the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags. As the degree of littering depends to a considerable extent on consumption and disposal behaviour of consumers, awareness-raising campaigns can be one important measure that Member States, NGOs and citizens' groups could take. The Commission is providing some support to such efforts through LIFE Programme funding for the European Week of Waste Reduction, including actions to support 'Let's Clean Up Europe' activities in response to the Parliament's Written Declaration of 14.2.2011 (PE457.600v01-00).

The EU welcomes any research into environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic bags. Financial support could be requested under the EU LIFE programme ([2]) or the Horizon 2020 research programme.

While further amendments to the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive ([3]), specifically focusing on the use of plastic bags are not planned, the Commission is currently reviewing the targets contained in the directive as part of its review of waste policy ([4]).

([1]) COM(2013)761 final of 1.11.2013.
([2]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm
([3]) Directive 94/62/EC, OJ L 365, 31.12.1994.
([4]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/target_review.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013855/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Visa-Erleichterungen für Aserbaidschan und Weißrussland

Beim EU-Gipfel der östlichen Partnerschaft in Litauen paraphierten die früheren Sowjetrepubliken Georgien und Moldau ihre Abkommen für Assoziierung und freien Handel mit der EU. Zudem unterzeichnete Aserbaidschan einen Vertrag zur Visa-Erleichterung und Weißrussland signalisierte, über Visa-Erleichterungen mit der EU verhandeln zu wollen.

1. In der Vergangenheit gab es ja immer wieder Visa-Skandale. Was wurde diesbezüglich unternommen, um regen Visa-Handel möglichst zu verhindern?

2. Welche Bedingungen müssen im Zusammenhang mit möglichen Visa-Erleichterungen für Weißrussland erfüllt sein?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(6. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission hat keine Kenntnis von einem „regen Visa-Handel". In einigen Ländern wie Belarus gibt es immer wieder Probleme mit dem Zugang zu Online-Systemen zur Buchung von Visaaustellungsterminen. Die konsularischen Vertretungen der Mitgliedstaaten sind sich dieses Problems bewusst und passen ihre Websites regelmäßig an, um zu verhindern, dass das System von Personen und Organisationen missbraucht wird, die versuchen, Gewinne zu erzielen, indem sie Antragstellern Termine anbieten.

Im Hinblick auf Visaerleichterungen für Belarus hat die Kommission im Februar 2011 Verhandlungsrichtlinien für den Abschluss eines Visaerleichterungsabkommens mit Belarus erhalten. Dieses Mandat sieht weitreichende Visaerleichterungen für belarussische Bürger vor, darunter ermäßigte Visumgebühren für Kurzaufenthaltsvisa und Befreiung von den Visumgebühren für bestimmte Gruppen von Antragstellern, vereinfachte Verfahren zur Erteilung von Kurzaufenthaltsvisa und spezielle Kriterien für die Ausstellung von Mehrfachvisa mit einer mehrjährigen Gültigkeitsdauer für bestimmte Personengruppen, wobei die Frist für die Bearbeitung eines Visumantrags höchstens 10 Tage betragen darf.

Am 15. Januar 2014 hat Belarus förmlich auf die Aufforderung vom 1. Juni 2011 geantwortet und seine Bereitschaft signalisiert, Verhandlungen über ein Visaerleichterungs- und ein Rückübernahmeabkommen aufzunehmen. Dies war bereits zuvor von Außenminister Makey auf dem Gipfeltreffen der Östlichen Partnerschaft in Vilnius angekündigt worden. Die Europäische Kommission wird nun diese Verhandlungen einleiten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013855/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Visa facilitation for Azerbaijan and Belarus

At the EU Eastern Partnership Summit in Lithuania, the former Soviet republics of Georgia and Moldova initialled their Association and Free Trade Agreements with the EU. Azerbaijan also signed a visa facilitation agreement and Belarus indicated its interest in negotiating visa facilitation with the EU.

1. In the past there have been frequent visa scandals. What was done in this regard in order, as far as possible, to prevent an active trade in visas?

2. What conditions need to be met in connection with possible visa facilitation for Belarus?

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

The Commission is not aware of any 'active trade in visas'. In some locations, including in Belarus, there are recurring problems with access to online systems for booking visa appointments. The consular representations of the Member States are aware of this problem and regularly adapt their websites to avoid the abuse of the system by persons and organisations trying to make profit from offering the appointment slots to visa applicants.

As regards visa facilitation with Belarus, in February 2011 the Commission obtained negotiating directives in view of concluding a Visa Facilitation Agreement with Belarus. This mandate foresees visa facilitations for Belarusian citizens at large, including reduced visa fees for short-stay visas and visa fee waivers for certain categories of applicants, simplified procedures for issuing short-stay visas and defined criteria for issuing multiple-entry visas with a multi-annual validity to specific categories of persons, setting a maximum deadline of 10 days for processing a visa application.

On 15 January 2014, Belarus has replied formally to the invitation of 1 June 2011, announcing that they were willing to launch the negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements. This has been already announced earlier by FM Makey in the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius. The European Commission will now launch these negotiations.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013856/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αριθμός δημοσίων υπαλλήλων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τις δεσμεύσεις του πρώτου Προγράμματος Οικονομικής Προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση προχώρησε στην απογραφή όλων των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων, κατά το έτος 2010, από την οποία προέκυψε ότι ο αριθμός των υπαλλήλων του δημόσιου τομέα είναι 768 009 άτομα. Με δεδομένο ότι πλέον η ελληνική κυβέρνηση και η τρόικα παρακολουθούν την πορεία του αριθμού των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων και με δεδομένο ότι έχουν παρέλθει τρία χρόνια από την παραπάνω απογραφή και, την ίδια στιγμή, έχουν εφαρμοστεί συγκεκριμένα μέτρα αναδιάρθρωσης του δημόσιου τομέα, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποιος είναι ο σημερινός αριθμός των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων στην Ελλάδα; Πώς τον σχολιάζει;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Στο πλαίσιο του πρώτου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, η Ελλάδα δεσμεύθηκε ότι θα προβεί σε καταμέτρηση των εργαζομένων στη δημόσια διοίκηση.

Οι ελληνικές αρχές είναι πλέον σε θέση να παρακολουθούν συστηματικά τον αριθμό των εργαζομένων στη δημόσια διοίκηση με βάση τα επιμέρους τμήματα και ανά είδος σύμβασης, π.χ. δημόσιοι υπάλληλοι, συμβασιούχοι αορίστου/ορισμένου χρόνου. Η εν λόγω παρακολούθηση πραγματοποιείται μέσω της απογραφής με την οποία παρουσιάζονται οι πληροφορίες των υπουργείων, των νομικών προσώπων δημοσίου δικαίου και της τοπικής κυβέρνησης, με βάση τις πληροφορίες που παρείχε το υπουργείο Οικονομικών όσον αφορά τα νομικά πρόσωπα ιδιωτικού δικαίου. Οι πληροφορίες διατίθενται δημόσια στη διεύθυνση: www.apografi.gov.gr Σύμφωνα με περαιτέρω δεσμεύσεις που έχουν αναληφθεί στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος, οι ελληνικές αρχές καταβάλλουν προσπάθειες για να επεκταθεί η απογραφή ώστε να καλύπτει και ορισμένα νομικά πρόσωπα ιδιωτικού δικαίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013856/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The number of public servants in Greece

In line with the commitments made in the first fiscal adjustment programme, the Greek Government conducted a headcount of all public servants during 2010 which showed that the number of public sector employees stood at 768 009. Given that the Greek Government and the Troika now monitor the numbers of public servants, and given that three years have elapsed since the above headcount, with specific public sector restructuring measures implemented in the meantime, will the Commission say:

How many state employees are there in Greece today? What does it have to say about this?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

Under the first Economic Adjustment Programme, Greece committed to produce a headcount of the employees in the public administration.

The Greek authorities are now able to regularly monitor the number of employees in the public administration, including across individual departments and by type of contracts i.e. civil servants, employees with indefinite contracts, employees with temporary contracts. This monitoring is done through the Census which presents the information of the ministries, legal entities of public law and local government and based on the information received by the Ministry of Finance regarding the legal entities of private law. The information is publically available at www.apografi.gov.gr. In line with further commitments under the programme, the Greek authorities are working to expand the coverage of the Census also to a number of the legal entities of private law.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013857/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δημιουργική λογιστική της Γερμανίας

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιεύματα του γερμανικού περιοδικού Der Spiegel, της ιρλανδικής εφημερίδας The Irish Times και του πρακτορείου Bloomberg, η γερμανική κυβέρνηση, το 2005, χρησιμοποίησε συγκεκριμένα χρηματοοικονομικά εργαλεία, με στόχο να περιορίσει τεχνητά τις κυβερνητικές δαπάνες και, επομένως, να εμφανιστεί το έλλειμμα της γενικής κυβέρνησης κάτω από το όριο του 3% που θέτει το Σύμφωνο Σταθερότητας και Ανάπτυξης. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, η γερμανική κυβέρνηση, για να περιορίσει τη συνεισφορά της στο συνταξιοδοτικό ταμείο των γερμανικών ταχυδρομείων, για τα έτη 2005-2007, κατέφυγε σε επενδυτικές τράπεζες, οι οποίες, μέσω ιρλανδικών εταιρειών «σφραγίδων» (Irish Letter-Box Firms), πουλούσαν τιτλοποιήσεις μελλοντικών εσόδων των παραπάνω συνταξιοδοτικών ταμείων, αποφέροντας έσοδα περίπου 8 δις ευρώ.

Αυτή η πρακτική μάλιστα, σύμφωνα με τα δημοσιεύματα, συνεχίστηκε να εφαρμόζεται από τη γερμανική κυβέρνηση παρά τις αντιδράσεις τόσο της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, όσο και του γερμανικού Ελεγκτικού Συνεδρίου. Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποιες ήταν οι αντιδράσεις της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, πολιτικές και νομικές, σχετικά με τις λογιστικές αλχημείες της γερμανικής κυβέρνησης την περίοδο 2005-2007; Γνωρίζει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή εάν η Γερμανία συνεχίζει να πραγματοποιεί χρηματοοικονομικές πράξεις που να αποκρύπτουν τεχνητά το έλλειμμα και το χρέος της;

2. Ποια είναι τα νομικά μέσα που έχει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στη διάθεσή της, στην περίπτωση που διαπιστωθεί ότι η γερμανική κυβέρνηση καταφεύγει σε πράξεις «δημιουργικής λογιστικής» για να αποκρύπτει ελλείμματα και χρέη;

3. Σκοπεύει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και η Eurostat να διενεργήσουν μια ανοικτή έρευνα, σε συνεργασία με το Ευρωκοινοβούλιο, σχετικά με το καθεστώς καταγραφής των στατιστικών δεδομένων των κρατών μελών;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Οι συναλλαγές που αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής, δηλαδή οι τιτλοποιήσεις στις οποίες προέβη η γερμανική κυβέρνηση μέσω ιρλανδικών διαύλων το 2005 και το 2006, είχαν αποτελέσει τότε αντικείμενο ανάλυσης, τόσο από τις γερμανικές αρχές όσο και από την Eurostat, οπότε και εξασφαλίστηκε η ορθή επεξεργασία τους στο πλαίσιο των στοιχείων της διαδικασίας υπερβολικού ελλείμματος (ΔΥΕ), βάσει των σχετικών στατιστικών κανόνων ([1]). Κρίνεται ότι δεν χρειάζεται περαιτέρω διερεύνηση αυτών των συναλλαγών.

Γενικά, η στατιστική επεξεργασία σύνθετων χρηματοοικονομικών δραστηριοτήτων των κυβερνήσεων υπόκειται στον έλεγχο της Eurostat ([2]).

Σε περίπτωση που προκύψει κάποιο θέμα όσον αφορά την ορθότητα των δημοσιονομικών στοιχείων, η Eurostat μπορεί να εκφράσει επιφυλάξεις για την ποιότητα των στοιχείων ή να τροποποιήσει τα αριθμητικά στοιχεία ([3]). Αυτό δεν έγινε στην περίπτωση των γερμανικών στοιχείων της ΔΥΕ.

Εάν ανακύψουν σοβαροί κίνδυνοι ή πιθανά προβλήματα όσον αφορά την ποιότητα των στοιχείων, η Eurostat μπορεί να πραγματοποιήσει μεθοδολογικές επισκέψεις, σχεδιασμένες για την παρακολούθηση των διαδικασιών και των πηγών στις οποίες βασίζεται η συλλογή στοιχείων ([4]).

Όταν υπάρχουν σοβαρές ενδείξεις σχετικά με την υποβολή ψευδών στοιχείων της ΔΥΕ, η Επιτροπή μπορεί να δρομολογήσει έρευνες με σκοπό τον εντοπισμό και την αποκάλυψη της παραποίησης των στατιστικών, ώστε να επιβληθούν οικονομικές κυρώσεις από το Συμβούλιο ([5]).

([1]) Το εννοιολογικό πλαίσιο για τη συλλογή στοιχείων σχετικά με το έλλειμμα και το χρέος είναι το Ευρωπαϊκό Σύστημα Λογαριασμών (τότε, ESA95).
([2]) Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 479/2009 του Συμβουλίου (σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 10 του κανονισμού).
([3]) Το ίδιο (σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 15 παράγραφοι 1 και 2 του κανονισμού).
([4]) Το ίδιο (σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 11 παράγραφος 1 και το άρθρο 11β του κανονισμού).
([5]) Κανονισμός (ΕΕ) αριθ. 1173/2011 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου (σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 8 του κανονισμού) και κατ' εξουσιοδότηση απόφαση της Επιτροπής της 29ης Ιουνίου 2012 (2012/678/ΕΕ).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013857/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Germany's creative accounting

According to the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, the Irish newspaper *The Irish Times* and the Bloomberg agency, the German Government employed specific financial instruments in 2005 aimed at artificially reducing government expenditure and so that the overall government deficit would appear less than the 3% limit set by the Stability and Growth Pact. More specifically, the German Government, in order to reduce its 2005-2007 contribution to the German postal service's pension fund, turned to investment banks which, through the medium of Irish letter-box firms, sold securitisations of future pension fund revenues, generating revenues of almost EUR 8 billion.

According to the publications, moreover, the German Government continued to implement this practice in spite of the reaction not only of the European Commission, but also of the German Court of Auditors.

1. What were the Commission's political and legal reactions to the financial alchemy practised by the German Government in 2005-2007? Does the Commission know whether Germany continues to implement financial operations which artificially conceal its deficit and debt?

2. What legal means does it have at its disposal in case it is found that the German Government is resorting to 'creative accountancy' in order to conceal deficits and debts?

3. Does it intend to conduct an open investigation with Eurostat, in cooperation with the European Parliament, regarding the system under which Member States record statistical data?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The transactions mentioned by the Honourable Member of Parliament, i.e. the securitisation operations of the German Government through Irish-based vehicles in 2005 and 2006, were subject to statistical analysis at the time, both by the German statistical authorities and by Eurostat, ensuring their proper treatment in Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) data under the relevant statistical rules ([1]). No further investigations are considered to be needed for these operations.

In general, the statistical treatment of complex financial operations of governments is subject to the scrutiny of Eurostat ([2]).

Should any issues be identified with regard to accuracy of the fiscal data, Eurostat may express a reservation on quality of the data or amend the figures ([3]). This has not been the case for the German EDP data.

Should substantial risks or potential problems with the quality of the data emerge, Eurostat may conduct methodological visits, designed to monitor the processes and the sources underpinning data compilation ([4]).

Where serious indications of misrepresentation of EDP data exist, the Commission may launch investigations with a view to detecting and exposing manipulation of statistics, leading to financial sanctions imposed by the Council ([5]).

([1]) The conceptual framework for compilation of deficit and debt data is the European System of Accounts (at the time ESA95).
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 479/2009 (pursuant to Article 10 of the regulation).
([3]) Ibid. (pursuant to Article 15 (1) and (2) of the regulation).
([4]) Ibid. (pursuant to Article 11 (1) and Article 11b of the regulation).
([5]) Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council (pursuant to Article 8 of the regulation) and the Commission Delegated Decision of 29 June 2012 (2012/678/EU).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013858/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή συστήματος εισροών και εκροών στην Αγορά Καυσίμων

Σύμφωνα με το ελληνικό πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας, έχουν ληφθεί συγκεκριμένα μέτρα αναφορικά με την πάταξη του λαθρεμπορίου καυσίμων. Εκτός από το μέτρο της εξίσωσης του Ειδικού Φόρου Κατανάλωσης στο πετρέλαιο θέρμανσης και κίνησης, το οποίο έχει οδηγήσει σε θεαματική πτώση των φορολογικών εσόδων και ταυτόχρονα εκατομμύρια έλληνες μένουν χωρίς θέρμανση, το Μνημόνιο προβλέπει και την εγκατάσταση συστήματος εισροών-εκροών σε όλη την αλυσίδα διύλισης, χονδρικού και λιανικού, εμπορίου. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, στην πρόσφατη αναθεώρηση του ελληνικού προγράμματος, προβλέπεται ότι τα συστήματα εισροών-εκροών θα εγκατασταθούν στις περιοχές της Αθήνας και της Θεσσαλονίκης τον Αύγουστο του 2013. Ωστόσο, το σύστημα εισροών-εκροών στα πρατήρια και τα διυλιστήρια της χώρας είναι εκτός λειτουργίας, αφού ακόμα και σήμερα, δεν έχουν συνδεθεί με τις αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες του Υπουργείου Οικονομικών για να γίνονται οι σχετικοί έλεγχοι.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Γνωρίζει πότε θα τεθεί σε λειτουργία το σύστημα εισροών-εκροών που έχει εγκατασταθεί στα διυλιστήρια και πρατήρια της Ελλάδας; Για ποιους λόγους έχει καθυστερήσει το μέτρο αυτό;

2. Πόσα είναι τα έσοδα που έχει αποφέρει η εξίσωση του φόρου πετρελαίου θέρμανσης και κίνησης; Πώς αξιολογεί το μέτρο της εξίσωσης του φόρου στο πετρέλαιο θέρμανσης και κίνησης; Πιστεύει ότι έχει συμβάλει στην πάταξη της λαθρεμπορίας καυσίμων; Τι μέτρα σκοπεύει να προτείνει στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση για την πάταξη του λαθρεμπορίου στο ναυτιλιακό πετρέλαιο;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

1. Το σύστημα ελέγχου εισροών-εκροών αποτελεί σημαντικό μέτρο για την αντιμετώπιση του λαθρεμπορίου καυσίμων που συντελείται ιδίως μέσω της κατάχρησης θαλάσσιων καυσίμων για τα οποία συνήθως προβλέπεται απαλλαγή από τους ειδικούς φόρους κατανάλωσης. Οι ελληνικές αρχές προχωρούν στη θέσπιση των αναγκαίων κανόνων παράγωγου δικαίου, ενώ εκκρεμεί η επίλυση ορισμένων τεχνικών θεμάτων για να ακολουθήσει η πραγματική εγκατάσταση των συστημάτων.

2. Παρότι η εφαρμογή του συστήματος υπήρξε σταδιακή, η πλήρης εξίσωση αναμένεται να αφαιρέσει τα φορολογικά κίνητρα για καταχρηστική συμπεριφορά σε σχέση με το πετρέλαιο ντίζελ που προορίζεται για θέρμανση. Το μέτρο προβλέπεται να έχει θετικές δημοσιονομικές επιπτώσεις. Ωστόσο, εκτιμάται ότι το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών θα δημοσιεύσει τα στατιστικά στοιχεία όσον αφορά τις δημοσιονομικές επιπτώσεις της εξίσωσης στο επόμενο μεσοπρόθεσμο πλαίσιο δημοσιονομικής στρατηγικής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013858/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Implementation of an input/output regime on the fuel market

According to the Greek fiscal adjustment programme, concrete measures have been taken in Greece to combat fuel smuggling. In addition to measures to equalise excise duty on heating fuel and diesel fuel, which have led to a dramatic decline in tax revenue and left millions of Greeks without heating at the same time, the Memorandum requires implementation of an input/output regime throughout the refining chain and the wholesale and retail trades. More specifically, a recent review of the Greek programme provided for an input/output regime to be implemented in the regions of Athens and Thessalonica in August 2013. However, the input/output regime is not operational at retail outlets and the country's refineries, since they have not yet been linked to the relevant Finance Ministry departments so that the relevant controls can take place.

1. Does the Commission know when the input/output regime will be brought into operation, following installation in Greek refineries and retail outlets? Why has this measure been delayed?

2. What revenues have been raised by equalising the tax on heating fuel and diesel fuel? How does the Commission evaluate the measure to equalise the tax on heating and diesel fuel? Does it believe that this has contributed to the fight against fuel smuggling? What measures does it plan to propose to the Greek Government to combat the smuggling of marine fuels?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

1. The input-output system is an important measure to confront fuel smuggling, especially through the misappropriation of maritime fuel which is normally exempt from excise duties. The Greek authorities are adopting the necessary secondary legislation, pending the resolution of some technical issues, which will be followed by the actual installation of the systems.

2. Although its implementation has been gradual overtime, the full equalisation is expected to have removed the tax incentive for misuse of gas oil destined for heating.The measure is expected to have had positive budgetary impact however the relevant statistics regarding the budgetary impact of the equalisation are expected to be published by the Minstry of Finance in the next Medium-Term Fiscal Framework.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013859/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Έρευνες της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σχετικά με φοροαπαλλαγές πολυεθνικών εταιρειών στην ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με δημοσίευμα των Financial Times και σχετική αναφορά του εκπροσώπου τύπου της Γενικής Διεύθυνσης Ανταγωνισμού της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, ξεκινούν έρευνες από πλευράς της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής σχετικά με το φορολογικό καθεστώς που παρέχουν τουλάχιστον 3 κράτη μέλη, και συγκεκριμένα η Ιρλανδία, η Ολλανδία και το Λουξεμβούργο, σε πολυεθνικές επιχειρήσεις.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποιο είναι ακριβώς το αντικείμενο των ερευνών που διεξάγει σχετικά με το φορολογικό καθεστώς των πολυεθνικών εταιρειών στα συγκεκριμένα κράτη μέλη; Υπάρχουν συγκεκριμένες πτυχές της κοινοτικής νομοθεσίας που ενδέχεται να παραβιάζονται στις παραπάνω περιπτώσεις; Εάν ναι, ποιες είναι αυτές;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Τα κράτη μέλη προβαίνουν ελεύθερα στον σχεδιασμό των φορολογικών τους συστημάτων και στην επιλογή της οικονομικής πολιτικής που κρίνουν καταλληλότερη. Ωστόσο, τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να ασκούν την εξουσία αυτή σύμφωνα με το δίκαιο της ΕΕ ([1]). Ειδικότερα, τα κράτη μέλη δεν πρέπει να θεσπίζουν ή να διατηρούν νομοθεσία που συνεπάγεται παράνομη κρατική ενίσχυση ή οιαδήποτε διάκριση που αντιβαίνει στις θεμελιώδεις ελευθερίες.

Σε γενικές γραμμές, οι φορολογικές αποφάσεις των εθνικών φορολογικών αρχών δεν συνιστούν από μόνες τους κρατική ενίσχυση. Οι φορολογικές αποφάσεις διέπονται από τους κανόνες για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις, μόνον εφόσον πληρούν τα κριτήρια του άρθρου 107 παράγραφος 1, και ειδικότερα εφόσον παρέχουν επιλεκτικό πλεονέκτημα σε ορισμένες εταιρείες.

Η Επιτροπή συγκεντρώνει αυτήν την περίοδο πληροφορίες για φορολογικές αποφάσεις. Η συλλογή πληροφοριών βρίσκεται σε αρχικό στάδιο και, συνεπώς, είναι πολύ νωρίς για να προβλεφθεί εάν θα κινηθεί διαδικασία έρευνας για συγκεκριμένη κρατική ενίσχυση. Κατά κανόνα, η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει ισχυρισμούς που δημοσιεύονται στον Τύπο περί παράβασης των κανόνων για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις.

([1]) Βλέπε, μεταξύ άλλων, υπόθεση C-182/08 Glaxo Wellcome, Συλλογή 2009, σ. I-8591, σκέψη 34 και την παρατιθέμενη νομολογία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013859/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: European Commission investigations into tax exemptions for multinationals in the EU

According to a report in the *Financial Times* and related statements by a spokesman of the EU's Directorate General for Competition, the Commission has begun investigating the tax regime provided for multinationals by at least three Member States, specifically Ireland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

What is the aim of the investigations the Commission is conducting into the tax regime for multinationals in these Member States? Are there any specific provisions of Community legislation that may be infringed in the above cases? If so, which ones?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

Member States are free to design their tax systems and decide on the economic policy which they consider most appropriate. Nonetheless, Member States must exercise this competence consistently with Union law ([1]). In particular, Member States must not introduce or maintain legislation which entails unlawful state aid or any discrimination that is contrary to the fundamental freedoms.

In general, it can be said that tax rulings set by national tax administrations do not per se constitute state aid; state aid rules are only concerned if the tax rulings meet the criteria of Article 107(1) , particularly if they provide for a selective advantage to certain companies.

The Commission is currently gathering information about tax rulings. Information gathering is in the early stages and it is too early to speculate on whether this could lead to any specific state aid investigation. The Commission does generally not comment on allegations of infringement of state aid rules in the press.

([1]) See, *inter alia*, Case C-182/08 Glaxo Wellcome [2009] ECR I-8591, paragraph 34 and the case-law cited.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013860/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κινητοποίηση του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης για τεράστιες ζημιές από πλημύρες στα νησιά Ρόδος, Κως, Κάλυμνος και Ψέριμος

Τις προηγούμενες μέρες ένα πρωτόγνωρο κύμα κακοκαιρίας που χαρακτηρίστηκε από πολύ έντονες βροχοπτώσεις και ανέμους, προκάλεσε τεράστιες υλικές ζημιές αλλά και κυρίως την απώλεια ανθρώπινων ζωών στο νησί της Ρόδου. Εκτός από την Ρόδο, πολύ μεγάλες υλικές ζημιές προκλήθηκαν και στα νησιά Κως, Κάλυμνος και Ψέριμος. Οι καταστροφές, που έπληξαν το μεγαλύτερο μέρος του πληθυσμού, οι οποίες έχουν σοβαρές επιπτώσεις στις συνθήκες διαβίωσης, στο φυσικό περιβάλλον και την οικονομία του τόπου, υπολογίζονται σε πολλά εκατομμύρια ευρώ, καθώς, πέρα από ιδιωτικές περιουσίες που καταστράφηκαν (εμπορεύματα, κτηνοτροφικές μονάδες, αγροτικές καλλιέργειες, οικίες), υπάρχουν πολύ μεγάλες καταστροφές σε δημόσιες υποδομές (σε δρόμους, κτίρια, δίκτυα ύδρευσης, αποχέτευσης κ.ά.).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Έχει υποβάλει αίτηση η ελληνική κυβέρνηση για οικονομική ενίσχυση από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης βάσει του Κανονισμού 2012/2002; Αν όχι, ποια είναι η προθεσμία εντός της οποίας θα πρέπει να το πράξει; Αν ναι, ποιο το ποσό της βοήθειας που αιτείται και δυνάμει ποιου άρθρου του κανονισμού; Δεδομένου ότι πρόκειται για καταστροφή που θα έχει πολύ μεγάλο αντίκτυπο στην περιοχή, θα εξέταζε η Επιτροπή να δοθεί ενίσχυση ακόμα και στην περίπτωση που δεν θα πληρούνται τα ποσοτικά κριτήρια, όπως ορίζεται από το άρθρο 2 του Κανονισμού 2012/2002;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Στις 24 Ιανουαρίου, η ελληνική κυβέρνηση ούτε υπέβαλε αίτηση για βοήθεια από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ σχετικά με την υπόθεση που περιγράφει ο κύριος βουλευτής ούτε γνωστοποίησε την πρόθεσή της να το πράξει. Οι εθνικές διοικήσεις, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ελληνικής, γνωρίζουν γενικά τη διαδικασία αίτησης για ενίσχυση από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης. Οι αιτήσεις για το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης πρέπει να υποβληθούν στην Επιτροπή εντός 10 εβδομάδων από την ημερομηνία της πρώτης ζημίας που προκλήθηκε από την καταστροφή. Για να αξιολογηθεί εάν και υπό ποιες διατάξεις του κανονισμού του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης η καταστροφή θα μπορούσε να επιλεγεί για ενίσχυση, θα πρέπει να υποβληθεί αίτηση που να περιέχει τις απαιτούμενες πληροφορίες, ιδίως μια αξιόπιστη εκτίμηση της ζημιάς και των συνεπειών της για τις συνθήκες διαβίωσης και την οικονομία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013860/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Mobilisation of the Solidarity Fund for the massive flood damage on the islands of Rhodes, Kos, Kalymnos and Pserimos

In recent days, an unprecedented weather situation characterised by extremely heavy rainfall and winds has caused huge material damage and, in particular, loss of human life on the island of Rhodes. In addition to Rhodes, massive material damage also resulted on the islands of Kos, Kalymnos and Pserimos. The disasters affected the greater part of the population and have serious consequences for living conditions, the environment and the economy of the area, estimated at many millions of euro, since, apart from the destruction of private property (goods, livestock units, farm crops and houses), there has been major damage to public infrastructure (roads, buildings, water mains and sewers, etc.).

Has the Greek Government submitted a request for financial support from the European Solidarity Fund based on Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002? If not, what is the deadline by which this must be done? If so, what is the amount of assistance requested and under which article of the regulation? Given that the disaster will have a major impact on the region, will the Commission explore the possibility of providing support even if the quantitative criteria set by Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 are not met?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

As of 24 January, the Greek Government has neither submitted an application for EU Solidarity Fund assistance relating to the event described by the Honourable Member nor signalled its intention of doing so. National administrations, including the Greek one, are generally familiar with the procedure to apply for Solidarity Fund assistance. Solidarity Fund applications have to be submitted to the Commission within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage caused by the disaster. Whether and under which provisions of the Solidarity Fund Regulation the disaster could qualify for aid could only be assessed on the basis of an application containing the required information, in particular a solid assessment of the damage and of its consequences on living conditions and the economy.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013861/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πολλές κυβερνήσεις, προωθώντας την λιτότητα, ξέχασαν τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση του Nils Muižnieks, Επιτρόπου για τα Ανθρώπινα Δικαιώματα, στο Συμβούλιο της Ευρώπης ([1]) για τις επιπτώσεις της οικονομικής κρίσης στην προστασία των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων, «πολλές κυβερνήσεις, στην προσπάθεια τους να προωθήσουν τα μέτρα λιτότητας, ξέχασαν τις υποχρεώσεις τους για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα, ιδιαίτερα τα κοινωνικά και οικονομικά δικαιώματα των πιο ευάλωτων, την ανάγκη πρόσβασης στη δικαιοσύνη και το δικαίωμα για ίση μεταχείριση». Ο Επίτροπος επισημαίνει ότι οι διεθνείς δανειστές δεν έχουν ενσωματώσει τα θέματα των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων σε πολλά προγράμματα βοήθειας. Επισημαίνει επίσης, ότι τα μέτρα λιτότητας έχουν υποβαθμίσει τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα με πολλούς τρόπους: οι αποφάσεις σε εθνικό επίπεδο και τα διεθνή πακέτα διάσωσης πάσχουν από έλλειψη διαφάνειας, συμμετοχής του κοινού στη διαβούλευση και δημοκρατικής λογοδοσίας. Σε μερικές περιπτώσεις, έχουν εμποδιστεί κυβερνήσεις να επενδύσουν σε προγράμματα κοινωνικής προστασίας, υγείας και εκπαίδευσης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς θα διασφαλίσει — με δεδομένο ότι παίζει κεντρικό ρόλο στη λήψη αποφάσεων και μέτρων στη διάρκεια της κρίσης — η ίδια ή μέσω της τρόικα ότι οι όροι και τα μέτρα στο πλαίσιο των μνημονίων και των σχεδίων δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής και διάσωσης, ή των όρων δανεισμού, θα λαμβάνουν υπόψη την επίδρασή τους στα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα;

2. Ποιες διορθωτικές κινήσεις προτίθεται να αναλάβει ώστε να περιοριστούν οι επιπτώσεις στα κοινωνικά και οικονομικά δικαιώματα των ευάλωτων ομάδων από τα προγράμματα λιτότητας;

3. Σκοπεύει να επιδιώξει μια διαφανή διαδικασία και δημόσιο διάλογο στο Ευρωκοινοβούλιο και στις χώρες που συμμετέχουν στα προγράμματα δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής για τις αλλαγές που πρέπει να γίνουν στους όρους και στα μέτρα των προγραμμάτων, ώστε να δημιουργηθούν συνθήκες προστασίας αντί υποβάθμισης των ανθρωπίνων και κοινωνικών δικαιωμάτων, ιδιαίτερα όσον αφορά στα παιδιά, στις γυναίκες, στους ηλικιωμένους, στους ασθενείς, στα άτομα με αναπηρία, στους Ρομά, στους μακροχρόνια ανέργους, στους ανασφάλιστους και γενικότερα στις ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες;

4. Σκοπεύει να αναλάβει πρωτοβουλία για να ανανεώσει το «ευρωπαϊκό κοινωνικό μοντέλο που βασίζεται στα θεμέλια της ανθρώπινης αξιοπρέπειας, της αλληλεγγύης μεταξύ των γενεών και της πρόσβασης στη δικαιοσύνη για όλους», όπως προτρέπει ο Επίτροπος Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει ότι τα προγράμματα οικονομικής προσαρμογής που θεσπίστηκαν για την αντιμετώπιση της οικονομικής κρίσης, σχεδιάζονται και υλοποιούνται με πλήρη σεβασμό των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων και του δικαίου της ΕΕ. Ειδικότερα, κατά την εφαρμογή προγραμμάτων οικονομικής προσαρμογής που εμπίπτουν στο δίκαιο της ΕΕ, τα κράτη μέλη οφείλουν να τηρούν τις διατάξεις του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Επισημαίνεται ότι η τήρηση άλλων διεθνών υποχρεώσεων περί ανθρώπινων δικαιωμάτων, όπως εκείνες που απορρέουν από το προαιρετικό Πρωτόκολλο του Διεθνούς Συμφώνου για τα οικονομικά, κοινωνικά και πολιτιστικά δικαιώματα, εμπίπτει στην αρμοδιότητα των οικείων κρατών μελών.

Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί με ιδιαίτερη προσοχή τις κοινωνικές εξελίξεις και τον κοινωνικό αντίκτυπο των μέτρων που θεσπίζονται από τα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των χωρών του προγράμματος. Η εν λόγω προτεραιότητα αποτυπώνεται ιδίως στις ετήσιες εκθέσεις για την ανάπτυξη του 2013 και του 2014, στις οποίες η Επιτροπή συνιστά στα κράτη μέλη: να καταρτίσουν στρατηγική δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης κατά τρόπο ώστε να ελαχιστοποιούνται οι δυσμενείς επιπτώσεις στις χαμηλές εισοδηματικές ομάδες, ιδίως με την απόδοση μεγαλύτερης προσοχής στην επίδραση της δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής στην κοινωνική δικαιοσύνη· και να διατηρήσουν τις δυνατότητες μελλοντικής ανάπτυξης, μεταξύ άλλων, προστατεύοντας τις επενδύσεις στην εκπαίδευση και εκσυγχρονίζοντας τα συστήματα κοινωνικής προστασίας.

([1]) http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/austerity-measures-across-europe-have-undermined-human-rights?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fcommissioner%2Fhome%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_8EfTacFqd2H9%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-1%26p_p_col_count%3D5#8EfTacFqd2H9
https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2130915

Αποτυπώνεται επίσης στην ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής για την ενίσχυση της κοινωνικής διάστασης της ΟΝΕ ([2]), στην οποία προτείνεται ενίσχυση των εργαλείων ελέγχου στον τομέα της απασχόλησης και τον κοινωνικό τομέα, κυρίως με τη χρήση βασικών δεικτών απασχόλησης και κοινωνικών δεικτών στο πλαίσιο του ευρωπαϊκού εξαμήνου. Ο πίνακας «κοινωνικών αποτελεσμάτων» που περιλαμβάνεται στο σχέδιο της κοινής έκθεσης για την απασχόληση, το οποίο συνοδεύει την ετήσια έκθεση για την ανάπτυξη του 2014 ([3]), αποτελεί μια πρώτη εφαρμογή της προτεινόμενης πολιτικής.

([2]) COM(2013)690 τελικό της 2 Οκτωβρίου 2013.
([3]) COM(2013)801 τελικό της 13 Νοεμβρίου 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013861/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Many governments forget human rights in the push for austerity

According to the report ([1]) from the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, Nils Muižnieks, on the impact of the economic crisis on human rights protection, 'in the effort to pursue austerity measures, many governments have forgotten their obligations regarding human rights, particularly the social and economic rights of the most vulnerable, the need for access to justice and the right to equal treatment'. The Commissioner emphasises that international lenders have not included human rights issues in assistance programmes. He also points out that austerity measures have downgraded human rights in many ways: national level decisions and international rescue packages suffer from a lack of transparency, public participation and democratic accountability. In some cases, governments have been prevented from investing in programmes for social protection, health and education.

1. Given its central role in the process for adopting decisions and measures during the crisis, how will the Commission ensure — itself or through the Troika — that the terms and measures of the Memoranda and the fiscal adjustment programmes or the lending terms take account of the impact on human rights?

2. Which corrective steps does it intend to take so that the impact of the austerity programmes on the social and economic rights of vulnerable groups will be minimised?

3. Does it intend to pursue a transparent process and public dialogue at the European Parliament and in the countries participating in the fiscal adjustment programmes so that the necessary changes can be made to the terms of the programmes, creating the conditions for safeguarding instead of downgrading human and social rights, particularly in relation to children, women, the elderly, patients, disabled people, Roma, the long-term unemployed, the uninsured and vulnerable social groups in general?

4. Does it intend to take the initiative to renew the 'European social model based on the foundations of human dignity, intergenerational solidarity and access to justice for all', as urged by the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2014)

The Commission recalls that the economic adjustment programmes adopted in response to the economic crisis are designed and implemented in full respect for fundamental rights and EC law. In particular, Member States (MS) have to respect the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union when implementing an economic adjustment programme pertaining to EC law. It should be noted that compliance with other international human rights obligations, such as those resulting from the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, falls under the responsibility of concerned MS.

The Commission pays close attention to social developments and to the social impact of measures decided in the MS, including in programme countries. This is reflected in particular in the Annual Growth Surveys for 2013 and 2014, where the Commission recommends MS to devise fiscal consolidation in such a way to minimise adverse effects on low-income groups, notably by paying increased attention to the influence of fiscal policy on social equity, and to preserve future growth potential, including by protecting investment in education and by modernising social protection systems.

It is also reflected in the Commission Communication on strengthening the Social Dimension of the EMU ([2]), which proposes to reinforce the monitoring tools in the employment and social field, notably by using key employment and social indicators within the European Semester. A first application of this has been conducted via the inclusion of the so-called social scoreboard in the draft Joint Employment Report accompanying the Annual Growth Survey 2014 ([3]).

([1]) http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/austerity-measures-across-europe-have-undermined-human-rights?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fcommissioner%2Fhome%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_8EfTacFqd2H9%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-1%26p_p_col_count%3D5#8EfTacFqd2H9
https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2130915

([2]) COM(2013) 690 final of 2 October 2013.

([3]) COM(2013) 801 final of 13 November 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013862/13
Komisii
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Definícia pojmu rodová rovnosť

Vyzývame Komisiu, aby predložila svoju definíciu pojmu rodová rovnosť.

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(29. januára 2014)

Váženej pani poslankyni sa dávajú do pozornosti odpovede na otázky E-007514/2012 a P-006182/2013 ([1]), ktoré sa týkajú tej istej záležitosti.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013862/13
to the Commission
Anna Záborská (PPE)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Definition of 'gender equality'

The Commission is invited to provide its definition of 'gender equality'.

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

The Honourable Member can be referred to the replies given to questions E-007514/2012 and P-006182/2013 ([1]) on the same issue.

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013865/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Vražda antifašistického aktivistu v Grécku

Nie je to tak dávno, čo bol v noci v Aténach na smrť dobodaný antifašistický aktivista. Podľa doterajších zistení spáchala tento odsúdeniahodný čin údajne skupina patriaca ku krajne pravicovej strane, ktorá má svojich členov dokonca i v parlamente. Útoky na cudzincov, prisťahovalcov či ľavicových aktivistov a ich zabíjanie nevedú k riešeniu problematiky sociálnych nerovností ani neriešia ekonomické problémy v Grécku. Domnievam sa, že je opodstatnené, aby boli vyvodené zodpovedajúce závery, ktorými sa jednoznačne odsúdi takéto konanie.

Je v možnostiach Komisie prispieť k riešeniu vzniknutej situácie, resp. pričiniť sa o opatrenia, vďaka ktorým by k obdobným činom v budúcnosti nedochádzalo?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(24. januára 2014)

Komisia odkazuje váženú pani poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomné otázky E-003715/2013, E-004465/2013 a E-004894/2013, ktoré spoločne pokrývajú obsah predloženej otázky.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013865/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Murder of an antifascist activist in Greece

It was not so long ago that an antifascist activist in Athens was stabbed to death at night. According to the existing findings, this deplorable act was allegedly committed by a group in a far-right party that even has members in Parliament. Attacking and killing foreigners, immigrants and left-wing activists will not resolve the issue of social inequality or address the economic problems in Greece. I believe that it is reasonable that the appropriate conclusions clearly condemning such behaviour should be drawn.

Is within the Commission's reach to contribute to the resolution of the situation or to press for measures that would prevent a similar crime being committed in the future?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-003715/2013, E-004465/2013 and E-004894/2013 which together cover the substance of the present question.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013866/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Zvyšovanie cien za elektrickú energiu

Európske združenie Eurelectric nedávno predložilo svoju pravidelnú správu o stave odvetvia elektrickej energie a jeho vývoji v Európe. Vo svojej správe Eurelectric poukazuje na neustále zvyšovanie cien, ktoré nastoľuje otázku cenovej dostupnosti a konkurencieschopnosti v tejto oblasti. V správe sa uvádza, že náklady zavádzané politickými rozhodnutiami v podobe daní a poplatkov rastú až trikrát rýchlejšie ako ostatné zložky ceny elektriny a v súčasnosti tvoria viac ako štvrtinu priemerného účtu európskej domácnosti. Náklady zavádzané politickými rozhodnutiami v podobe daní a poplatkov narástli v období rokov 2008 – 2012 trikrát rýchlejšie, teda až o 29 %.

Bude sa Komisia výsledkami predmetnej správy zaoberať?

Je podľa názoru Komisie takéto zvyšovanie účtov za elektrinu pre európske domácnosti primerané?

Odpoveď pána Oettingera v mene Komisie
(5. februára 2014)

Komisia vie o správe združenia Eurelectric. Na žiadosť Európskej rady reagovala Komisia uverejnením oznámenia a pracovného dokumentu útvarov Komisie o cenách energie a nákladoch na energiu v Európe, ktoré sa vzťahujú na trhy s plynom a elektrinou. Zdá sa, že ceny energie sa vo väčšine členských štátov zvýšili, pričom sú medzi jednotlivými krajinami, spotrebiteľmi a odvetviami výrazné rozdiely. Zvyšovanie cien často prevýšilo infláciu. V správe združenia Eurelectric sa zdôrazňuje aj dôležitosť preskúmania faktorov zvyšovania cien elektriny a nákladov na ňu. Je to mimoriadne dôležité na to, aby EÚ, členské štáty a spotrebitelia energie mohli prijať opatrenia na zníženie rastúcich nákladov, ako aj na zabezpečenie toho, aby sa európsky trh s energiou stal konkurencieschopným a aby energia zostala cenovo dostupná. Oznámenie a súvisiaci pracovný dokument útvarov Komisie boli uverejnené 22. 1. 2014 a sú k dispozícii na týchto webových adresách:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/2030/20140122_communication_energy_prices.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/2030/20140122_swd_prices.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013866/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Increases in electricity prices

The European association Eurelectric has recently presented its periodic report on the state of the electricity sector and its development in Europe. In its report, Eurelectric points out the continual increase in prices, which raises the question of affordability and competitiveness in this field. The report states that the costs of implemented policy decisions in the form of taxes and fees are rising up to three times faster than other components of electricity prices and now make up more than a quarter of the average European household bill. Costs introduced by policy decisions in the form of taxes and duties increased three times faster in the 2008-2012 period, i.e. by as much as 29%.

Will the Commission consider the results of the report?

In the opinion of the Commission, is this increase in European household electricity bills reasonable?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the Eurelectric report. In response to the request of the European Council, the Commission has published a communication and a Staff Working Document on energy prices and costs in Europe, covering the gas and electricity markets. Energy prices appear to have risen in most Member States, with significant variations between countries, consumers and industries. Price increases have frequently been above inflation. The Eurelectric report also underlines the importance of examining the drivers of electricity prices and costs. This is of particular importance in order to enable the EU, Member States and energy consumers to take measures to mitigate rising costs as well as to ensure Europe's energy market becomes competitive and that energy remains affordable. The communication and the associated Staff Working Document were published on 22.1.2014 and are available here:
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/2030/20140122_communication_energy_prices.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/2030/20140122_swd_prices.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013867/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Vytváranie pracovných príležitostí v Únii

V uplynulom období bola jednou z diskutovaných i otázka sociálnej spravodlivosti a vytvárania pracovných príležitostí pre všetkých. Už nie je viac prípustné prizerať sa nezamestnanosti, predovšetkým nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí, ktorá v niektorých členských štátoch stúpa až k hranici 60 %. V tejto súvislosti považujem za opodstatnené zaoberať sa možnosťou zavedenia tzv. európskej záruky pre mladých. Európska komisia predstavila túto problematiku na európskej úrovni. Avšak aj samotné členské štáty by mali vynakladať úsilie o uvedenie tohto „nástroja" do praxe.

Je v možnostiach Komisie napomôcť účinné uplatňovanie európskej záruky pre mladých v jednotlivých členských štátoch?

Odpoveď pána Andora v mene Komisie
(29. januára 2014)

Komisia plne súhlasí s názorom váženej pani poslankyne, že v súčasnosti musia byť najväčšou prioritou rázne opatrenia zamerané na boj proti nezamestnanosti mladých ľudí. Odporúčanie Rady z 22. apríla 2013 o zavedení záruky pre mladých ľudí predstavuje významný krok správnym smerom. Ako už Komisia potvrdila vo svojom oznámení „Výzva na prijatie opatrení proti nezamestnanosti mládeže" ([1]) z júna 2013, pripisuje podpore zavádzania záruky pre mladých ľudí v členských štátoch (aj prostredníctvom podpory z fondov Únie) mimoriadnu dôležitosť. Komisia zaviedla niekoľko opatrení, ktoré majú pomôcť členským štátom pripraviť ich plány na zavedenie záruky pre mladých do decembra 2013 alebo do jari 2014, a navrhla zriadenie osobitného finančného nástroja s názvom „Iniciatíva na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí".

K podporným opatreniam patria pracovný seminár pre odborníkov, ktorý sa konal v októbri 2013, špecializovaná webová lokalita, telefonická linka, na ktorej možno požiadať o informácie a pomoc, a vypracovanie obsiahleho zoznamu najčastejších otázok.

Prebehlo tiež niekoľko iniciatív zameraných na podporu konkrétnych aspektov zavádzania záruky pre mladých ľudí. Najvýraznejšími z nich boli zriadenie Európskeho združenia učňovskej prípravy v júli 2013 a návrhu Komisie k odporúčaniu Rady o rámci kvality pre stáže ([2]) predloženého začiatkom decembra.

Komisia bude pozorne monitorovať zavádzanie záruky pre mladých ľudí a bude aj naďalej podporovať úplné využívanie dostupných finančných prostriedkov EÚ najmä prostredníctvom Európskeho sociálneho fondu, pričom vnútroštátne finančné zdroje a prostriedky z ESF sú doplnené aj o finančné prostriedky z Iniciatívy na podporu zamestnanosti mladých ľudí a Európskej investičnej banky.

([1]) „Spoločne pre mladých ľudí Európy: Výzva na prijatie opatrení proti nezamestnanosti mládeže" [COM(2013) 447 final z 19. júna 2013].
([2]) COM(2013) 857 final zo 4. decembra 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013867/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Creation of job opportunities in the EU

One of the most discussed issues recently has been social justice and the creation of job opportunities for all. It is no longer acceptable stand idly by as unemployment, especially youth unemployment, rises to the 60% level in some Member States. In this regard, I consider it justified to consider the possibility of introducing the 'European guarantee for young people'. The European Commission has presented this issue at the European level. However, the Member States themselves should also make efforts to introduce this 'tool' into practice.

Is within the reach of the Commission to provide effective help in the implementation of European guarantee for young people in the different Member States?

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

The Commission fully shares the Honourable Member's view that determined action to combat unemployment among young people must now be a top priority. The Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (YG) was a major step in the right direction. As the Commission confirmed in its June 2013 communication 'Call to Action on Youth Unemployment' ([1]), it attaches the utmost importance to supporting the implementation of the YG in the Member States including through the support of Union funds. It has deployed a range of measures paving the way for the Member States to prepare their YG implementation plans by December 2013 or spring 2014 and proposed the setting up of a dedicated financial tool — the Youth Employment Initiative.

Support measures include a working seminar for practitioners in October 2013, a dedicated website, a hotline where information and guidance can be requested, and comprehensive 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

Several initiatives are also being taken to support specific aspects of the YG's implementation, notably the setting-up of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships in July 2013 and the Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships ([2]) presented in early December.

The Commission will carefully monitor the YG's implementation and will continue to promote the full use of EU funding available mainly through the European Social Fund, although the Youth Employment Initiative and European Investment Bank funding supplement national and ESF funding.

([1]) 'Working together for Europe's young people: A call to action on youth unemployment' (COM(2013) 447 final of 19 June 2013).
([2]) COM(2013) 857 final of 4 December 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013868/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Väčšia bezpečnosť pacienta v prípade používania zdravotníckych pomôcok

Prsné či bedrové implantáty, chirurgické nástroje alebo tehotenské testy by mali byť v rámci Európskej únie v budúcnosti monitorované oveľa účinnejšie. Práve séria škandálov odhalených v nedávnej minulosti v rámci danej problematiky viedla v konečnom dôsledku k sprísneniu systému schvaľovania zdravotníckych pomôcok. Pacienti tak budú lepšie chránení pred chybnými výrobkami a pomôckami. Nový systém má napríklad umožniť, aby klinické testy boli bezpečnejšie a vždy mali na zreteli predovšetkým bezpečnosť a zdravie pacientov.

Je v možnostiach Komisie zabezpečiť, aby deklarované zámery boli v celom rozsahu riadne dodržiavané i v praxi? Akým spôsobom možno dosiahnuť, aby za každých okolností boli na prvom mieste záujmy a zdravie pacientov?

Odpoveď pána Mimicu v mene Komisie
(31. januára 2014)

V nadväznosti na prípad prsníkových implantátov od firmy PIP Komisia predložila plán okamžitých opatrení s cieľom zlepšiť vykonávanie platných právnych predpisov o zdravotníckych pomôckach. Komisia a členské štáty v súčasnosti spolupracujú na vykonávaní tohto plánu opatrení, a to napríklad prostredníctvom spoločných posudzovaní notifikovaných orgánov tímami, ktoré sú zložené z audítorov z niekoľkých členských štátov a Komisie. Komisia teraz pripravuje dokument, v ktorom vysvetlí dosiahnuté výsledky a navrhne, aby sa niektoré opatrenia predĺžili a prehĺbili ešte pred tým, ako nadobudnú účinnosť nové právne predpisy.

Nová legislatíva je nevyhnutná na dosiahnutie viacerých zásadných zlepšení regulačného rámca. Návrhy nariadenia o zdravotníckych pomôckach ([1]) a nariadenia o diagnostických zdravotníckych pomôckach in vitro ([2]), ktoré pripravila Komisia, posilňujú systém udeľovania povolení v prípade vysokorizikových pomôcok, zavádzajú prísnejšie pravidlá pre menovanie a monitorovanie notifikovaných orgánov, sprísňujú požiadavky na klinické dôkazy a posilňujú vigilanciu a dohľad nad trhom. V súčasnosti prebiehajú rokovania spoluzákonodarcov o týchto návrhoch, ktoré by sa mali už čoskoro ukončiť.

([1]) Návrh nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o zdravotníckych pomôckach a ktorým sa mení a dopĺňa smernica 2001/83/ES, nariadenie (ES) č. 178/2002 a nariadenie (ES) č. 1223/2009, COM(2012) 542 final, Brusel, 26.9.2012.

([2]) Návrh nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o diagnostických zdravotníckych pomôckach in vitro, COM(2012) 541final, Brusel, 26.9.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013868/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Greater patient safety in the use of medical devices

In the future, breast and hip implants, surgical instruments and pregnancy tests should be monitored much more effectively within the European Union. A series of scandals uncovered in the recent past relating to this issue ultimately led to a tightening of the system for approving medical devices. Patients will thus be better protected against defective products and devices. The new system should, for example, enable clinical trials to be safer, and will always take particular account of the safety and health of patients.

Is within the reach of the Commission to ensure that the declared intentions are fully respected in practice? How can it be ensured that the interests and health of patients are paramount under all circumstances?

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

Following the PIP breast implants case, the Commission put forward a Plan for Immediate Action in order to improve the implementation of the current legislation on medical devices. The Commission and the Member States are working at present on the implementation of the action plan, for example through joint assessments of notified bodies by teams consisting of auditors of several Member States and the Commission. The Commission is currently preparing a document that will explain the results achieved and propose to continue and deepen some actions prior to the entry into force of the new legislation.

The new legislation is indispensable to achieve more fundamental improvements of the regulatory framework. The Commission proposals for a regulation on medical devices ([1]) and for a regulation on *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices ([2]) reinforce the approval system for high-risk devices, introduce stricter rules for designation and monitoring of notified bodies, reinforce the requirements for clinical evidence and strengthen vigilance and market surveillance. These proposals are currently discussed by the co-legislators and should be completed swiftly.

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

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013869/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Európsky deň zdravotne postihnutých osôb

Dňa 3. decembra sme si pripomenuli Európsky deň zdravotne postihnutých osôb. Z údajov Európskej komisie je zrejmé, že v Európskej únii žije približne 80 miliónov ľudí so zdravotným postihnutím, čo tvorí až jednu šestinu európskej populácie. Navyše je počet osôb, ktoré žijú v chudobe, medzi zdravotne hendikepovanými ľuďmi až o 70 % vyšší než priemer. Viac ako 30 % ľudí starších ako 75 rokov je určitým spôsobom hendikepovaných a viac ako 20 % je hendikepovaných závažným spôsobom. Spolu so starnutím európskeho obyvateľstva bude neustále narastať aj počet hendikepovaných ľudí. Zdravotne postihnuté osoby však majú rovnaké práva ako zdraví obyvatelia Európskej únie. Je však pre nich omnoho ťažšie uplatniť sa v spoločnosti a viesť plnohodnotný život, na ktorý majú právo. Za opatrenia súvisiace so zdravotným postihnutím osôb sú síce zodpovedné primárne jednotlivé členské štáty, úlohou Európskej únie je však vnútroštátne opatrenia dopĺňať a vytvárať vhodné podmienky pre ďalšie postupy.

Aké konkrétne opatrenia zamerané na zlepšenie kvality života ľudí so zdravotným postihnutím prijala Komisia v poslednej dobe a aké sa chystá prijať v dobe najbližšej?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(14. februára 2014)

Komisia prostredníctvom stratégie EÚ pre oblasť zdravotného postihnutia na roky 2010 – 2020 ([1]) pomáha ľuďom so zdravotným postihnutím, aby sa mohli v plnej miere zúčastňovať na živote spoločnosti, a zabezpečuje účinné vykonávanie Dohovoru OSN o právach osôb so zdravotným postihnutím, ktorého je EÚ zmluvnou stranou. K oznámeniu o tejto stratégii z roku 2010 je priložený zoznam opatrení ([2]).

Dňa 3. decembra 2012 Komisia prijala návrh smernice o dostupnosti webových stránok orgánov verejného sektora ([3]), o ktorom práve rokujú spoluzákonodarcovia.

Dôležitým úspechom zaznamenaným v júni 2013 bolo prijatie v Marakéšskej zmluvy ([4]) v rámci Svetovej organizácie duševného vlastníctva. Táto zmluva by mohla výrazne zlepšiť prístup k znalostiam, vzdelávaniu a vede pre nevidiacich a osoby so zrakovým postihnutím alebo s inou poruchou čítania. Komisia v decembri 2013 navrhla Rade, aby schválila podpísanie uvedenej zmluvy zo strany Únie.

V rámci stratégie Európa 2020 Komisia venuje pozornosť tomu, ako členské štáty napredujú v plnení vnútroštátnych cieľov v oblasti zamestnanosti, vzdelávania a sociálneho začlenenia a akým spôsobom riešia existujúce rozdiely medzi ľuďmi so zdravotným postihnutím a bez neho v týchto oblastiach ([5]). Komisia takisto vydáva osobitné politické odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny a v prípade potreby varovania členským štátom na úrovni politík, ktoré sa zakladajú na analýze správ o pokroku v plnení vnútroštátnych cieľov predkladaných členskými štátmi.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2010:1324:FIN:en:PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/web-accessibility
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/international/wipo/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013869/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: European Day of Disabled Persons

We celebrated the European Day of Disabled Persons on 3 December. European Commission data show that there are about 80 million people with disabilities in the European Union, making up one-sixth of the European population. Moreover, the number of people living in poverty is fully 70% higher among the handicapped than the average. More than 30% of people older than 75 years are handicapped in some way, and more than 20% are seriously handicapped. Together with the aging the European population, the number of people with disabilities will continue to grow. Disabled people, however, have the same rights as the EU's healthy citizens. It is nevertheless much more difficult for them to assert themselves in society and to lead the fulfilling life to which they are entitled. The primary responsibility for measures related to disabled people rests with the individual Member States, while the EU's role is to complement the national measures and to create favourable conditions for further steps.

What concrete measures to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities has the Commission adopted recently, and what measures is it preparing to adopt in the near future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

The Commission through the EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) empowers people with disabilities in order to participate fully in society and ensures the effective implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), to which the EU is a party. A List of Actions accompanies the 2010 Communication about the strategy ([2]).

On 3 December 2012, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites ([3]) that is currently being negotiated between co-legislators.

An important achievement in June 2013 was the adoption of the Marrakesh Treaty ([4]) in the World Intellectual Property Organisation. This Treaty could substantially improve access to knowledge, education, and science for persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled. In December 2013, the Commission proposed to the Council to authorise the signature of the Treaty by the Union.

In the frame of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission pays attention to how Member States make progress on national targets for employment, education and social inclusion and to how they tackle existing gaps in these areas between disabled and non-disabled persons ([5]). The Commission also issues country specific policy recommendations and, if necessary, policy warnings to Member States, based on its analysis of their reports on progress towards national targets.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2010:1324:FIN:en:PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/web-accessibility
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/international/wipo/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/annual-growth-surveys/index_en.htm

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013870/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Poplatky za roaming

V ostatnom období bolo v rámci Európskej únie uskutočnených už niekoľko reforiem, ktoré si dali za cieľ zmeniť formu poskytovania telekomunikačných služieb vo všetkých členských štátoch. Ide predovšetkým o opatrenia vedúce k zrušeniu poplatkov za roaming. Zároveň je tiež snahou dosiahnuť nápravu čo sa týka zlepšenia prístupnosti internetu a mobilných služieb. Samotná Európska komisia už predostrela plán reformy telekomunikačného trhu.

Je v možnostiach Komisie dosiahnuť, resp. napomôcť tomu, aby reforma skutočne priniesla zníženie poplatkov spotrebiteľov či zjednodušenie byrokracie v rámci poskytovania telekomunikačných služieb?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(17. januára 2014)

Cieľom regulačného rámca EÚ pre elektronickú komunikáciu je podporovať hospodársku súťaž a zabezpečiť, aby spotrebitelia mohli v maximálnej možnej miere využívať výhody z hľadiska výberu, ceny a kvality. Tento rámec už priniesol zákazníkom v EÚ výhody v rôznych podobách: či už priamo (ako v prípade roamingu), alebo nepriamo tým, že sa zaoberá spôsobom, akým jednotlivé trhy fungujú na veľkoobchodnej úrovni, a rieši problémy, ktoré vo významnej miere ovplyvňujú ceny pre koncového používateľa. Čo sa týka medzinárodných aj vnútroštátnych hovorov, Komisia sa zaoberá dôležitým problémom, ktorý vo výraznej miere prispieva k cenám pre koncových používateľov. Ide konkrétne o sadzby, ktoré si operátori navzájom účtujú pri ukončení hovorov v ich príslušných sieťach ([1]). V tomto konkrétnom príklade obsahuje odporúčanie Komisie usmernenie pre národné regulačné orgány, podľa ktorého by sa mala výška takýchto prepojovacích poplatkov nastaviť na úroveň zodpovedajúcu účinne vynaloženým nákladom. Zavedením nákladovo orientovaných prepojovacích poplatkov sa znížia náklady za vnútroštátne aj medzinárodné hovory, čo by na konkurenčnom trhu malo viesť aj k zníženiu maloobchodných cien.

S cieľom dosiahnuť vybudovanie jednotného telekomunikačného trhu prijala Komisia 11. septembra 2013 rozsiahly návrh, ktorý má pomôcť riešiť zostávajúce problémy zamerané na zlepšovanie fungovania telekomunikačného trhu a poskytovanie ďalších záruk a možností pre zákazníkov vrátane opatrení na zrušenie roamingových poplatkov do roku 2016.

([1]) Odporúčanie Komisie 2009/396/ES o regulačnom zaobchádzaní s prepojovacími poplatkami v pevných a mobilných telefónnych sieťach v EÚ, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:124:0067:0074:SK:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013870/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Roaming charges

A number of reforms have recently been implemented in the European Union that aim to change the form of telecommunications services provision in all Member States. They are in particular measures leading towards the abolition of roaming charges. They are also an attempt to provide redress with regard to improving the accessibility of the Internet and mobile services. The European Commission itself has put forward a plan of reforms of the telecommunications market.

Is within the reach of the Commission to achieve or help bring about a reform that will truly lead to a reduction in consumer charges or to a simplification of bureaucracy in the provision of telecommunications services?

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

The EU regulatory framework for electronic communications aims at promoting competition and ensuring that consumers derive maximum benefits in terms of choice, price and quality. It has brought benefits to EU customers in different forms, either directly (as in the case of roaming) or indirectly by dealing with the way markets operate at wholesale level by addressing issues which contribute substantially to end-user prices. With regard to both international and domestic calls, the Commission has addressed an important issue which contributes substantially to end-user prices, namely the rates operators charge to each other when terminating calls on their respective networks ([1]). In this particular example, Commission's recommendation includes guidance for National Regulatory Authorities to set these termination charges at the level which corresponds to the efficient costs. Application of cost-oriented termination charges will lower the wholesale costs for both domestic and international calls, which in a competitive market should also lead to lower retail prices.

In order to achieve a true Telecoms Single Market, the Commission has adopted, on 11 September 2013, a wide-ranging proposal to tackle the remaining issues aiming to enhance the way telecommunication market operate and to provide further safeguards and options for customers, including measures to end roaming surcharges by 2016.

([1]) Commission Recommendation 2009/396/EC on the Regulatory Treatment of Fixed and Mobile Termination Rates in the EU, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:124:0067:0074:EN:PDF

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013871/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Podpora kultúrneho a kreatívneho priemyslu

Kultúrny a kreatívny priemysel pozostávajúci zo subjektov činných napríklad v architektúre, v umeleckom remesle alebo vo výtvarnom či divadelnom umení má v Európskej únii významné postavenie. Európa je neustále lídrom, pokiaľ ide o export výsledkov práve kreatívneho priemyslu. Aby o toto postavenie neprišla, javia sa ako žiaduce ďalšie investície do tohto odvetvia.

Akými konkrétnymi krokmi zvažuje Komisia podporiť európske odvetvia kultúry a tvorivej činnosti v nadchádzajúcom období?

Je zrejmé, že i kreatívny priemysel sa môže boriť s rôznymi ťažkosťami. Akým spôsobom by bolo možné efektívne posilňovať jeho konkurencieschopnosť a rozvoj?

Odpoveď pani Vassiliouovej v mene Komisie
(12. februára 2014)

Kultúrna rozmanitosť a bohaté kultúrne dedičstvo Európy – spoločne s jej talentovanými umelcami, spoločnosťami z oblasti kultúry a tvorivých činností a kvalitným vzdelaním – predstavujú pri exporte výsledkov tvorivých odvetví konkurenčnú výhodu. Komisia je presvedčená, že na posilnenie konkurencieschopnosti kultúrnych a tvorivých odvetví, ktoré zápasia s problémami plynúcimi z prechodu na digitálne technológie, globalizácie, fragmentácie trhu a náročného prístupu k financiám, sú nevyhnutné inteligentné investície.

Nové programy Komisie sa budú zaoberať týmito problémami. Program Tvorivá Európa bude napríklad poskytovať finančné prostriedky na výmenu a experimentovanie s novými obchodnými modelmi v kultúrnych a tvorivých odvetviach a zavedie nástroj záruky za úver, ktorý malým firmám a organizáciám uľahčí prístup k bankovým úverom. V rámci programu COSME sa plánujú opatrenia na posilnenie konkurencieschopnosti a udržateľnosti firiem a MSP v EÚ a na presadzovanie podnikateľskej kultúry v tvorivých odvetviach. K opatreniam programu COSME patria činnosti zamerané na podporu vývoja klastrov a obchodných sietí, posilnenie konkurencieschopnosti MSP na svetovom trhu a urýchlenie vzniku konkurencieschopných priemyslov založených na medzisektorových činnostiach (čo je mimoriadne dôležité práve v prípade kultúry a tvorivých odvetví). Plánujú sa tiež opatrenia v módnom priemysle, ako napríklad program WORTH Market Update, ktorý má podnietiť šírenie tvorivých riešení a v nadväznosti na pilotný projekt WORTH má zároveň posilniť úlohu dizajnu v rámci výrobných MSP. Napokon je tu iniciatíva Horizont 2020, ktorá bude podporovať výskumné a inovačné aktivity a presadzovať lepšie využívanie obchodného potenciálu politík v oblasti výskumu a inovácií, a to aj v kultúrnych a tvorivých odvetviach.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013871/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Support for the cultural and creative industry

The cultural and creative industry, consisting of entities active, for example, in architecture, crafts or the visual or performing arts, occupies an important position in the European Union. Europe remains the leader when it comes to exporting the output of its creative industries. In order not to lose that status, it seems desirable to make further investments in the sector.

What specific steps is the Commission considering taking in the cultural and creative sector in the near future?

It is clear that the creative industry, too, may face various difficulties. How could its competitiveness and development be strengthened effectively?

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

Europe's cultural diversity and rich heritage-combined with its talented artists, cultural and creative companies, and high-quality education-form a competitive advantage in terms of exporting the output of creative industries. The Commission believes that smart investments are crucial to strengthening the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors, which face challenges that stem from the digital shift, globalisation, market fragmentation, and difficulties in accessing finance.

The Commission's new programmes will address those challenges. Notably, Creative Europe will fund exchanges and experimentation on new business models in the cultural and creative industries and set up a loan guarantee facility to facilitate access to bank loans for small enterprises and organisations. The COSME programme foresees actions to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of EU enterprises and SMEs, and will encourage an entrepreneurial culture within the creative sectors. Measures under COSME include actions to foster the development of clusters and business networks; reinforce SMEs' competitiveness on the global market; and accelerate the emergence of competitive industries based on cross-sectoral activities (particularly relevant for cultural and creative sectors). Measures are also foreseen for the fashion industries, e.g. 'WORTH Market Uptake' to encourage the uptake of creative solutions, and follow up to 'WORTH Pilot Project' to increase the role of design in manufacturing SMEs. Finally, Horizon 2020 will support research and innovation activities and promote improved exploitation of the commercial potential, including within the cultural and creative sectors, of innovation and research policies.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013872/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Konkurencieschopnosť priemyslu

Zo správy Európskej komisie ohľadom konkurencieschopnosti priemyslu je možné vyčítať jeho pokles, a to na 15,1 % európskeho HDP. Cieľom Únie v rámci stratégie Európa 2020 však bolo jednoznačne zvýšiť jeho podiel. V záujme zvýšenia konkurencieschopnosti priemyslu bola nová priemyselná politika Komisiou zverejnená ešte v uplynulom roku. Za cieľ si kládla niekoľko priorít, kam možno zaradiť napríklad implementáciu vyspelých výrobných technológií, výrobu z bio materiálov či rozvoj tzv. čistej dopravy a inteligentných sietí. Existujú však pochybnosti o tom, či sa skutočne podarí vytýčené ciele naplniť. Komisia na aktuálny vývoj zareagovala návrhom priemyselného kompaktu.

Možno od daných opatrení reálne očakávať, že skutočne napomôžu k pozdvihnutiu konkurencieschopnosti európskeho priemyslu?

Odpoveď pána Tajaniho v mene Komisie
(3. februára 2014)

Komisia zabezpečuje stále monitorovanie konkurencieschopnosti priemyslu EÚ, ktoré sa vykonáva prostredníctvom ročných správ o európskej konkurencieschopnosti ([1]), dvojročnej správy o priemyselnej štruktúre EÚ ([2]), ako aj mesačnej správy o ukazovateľoch a analýze priemyselnej politiky ([3]).

Je pravda, že podiel výroby vyjadrený celkovou pridanou hodnotou v EÚ v druhom štvrťroku 2013 klesol na 15,1 %, čo je o jeden percentuálny bod menej ako úroveň pred krízou a čo je ďaleko od ambicózneho cieľa 20 % stanoveného v oznámení o priemyselnej politike z roku 2012 ([4]). V dôsledku toho sa zdôrazňuje potreba zabezpečiť pevné a trvalé oživenie hospodárstva v EÚ.

Opatrenia priemyselnej politiky zdôrazňované v oznámení z roku 2012 a hlavná iniciatíva ([5])v oznámení z roku 2010 sú určené na riešenie hlavných oblastí záujmu, ktoré sa týkajú vývoja priemyselnej konkurencieschopnosti EÚ: priemyselnej inovácie, lepších trhových podmienok, prístupu k financiám, ľudskému kapitálu a kvalifikáciám.

Správa zo septembra 2013 o výkonnosti členských štátov v oblasti konkurencieschopnosti a vykonávania priemyselnej politiky EÚ ([6]) obsahuje podrobný opis aktuálneho stavu rôznych iniciatív, ktoré Komisia začala vykonávať, vrátane prioritných akčných smerov, na ktoré odkazuje vážená pani poslankyňa.

Nové oznámenie „Za obnovenie európskeho priemyslu", bolo prijaté 22. januára 2014 s cieľom ďalej posilniť tento proces reindustrializácie.

Komisia sa domnieva, že opatrenia, ktoré sa začali vykonávať na základe oznámení priemyselnej politiky z roku 2010, 2012 a 2014 sú realistické a v konečnom dôsledku by mali prispieť k zlepšeniu konkurencieschopnosti priemyslu EÚ.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/competitiveness-analysis/european-competitiveness-report/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/competitiveness-analysis/eu-industrial-structure/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/economic-crisis/index_en.htm
([4]) „Silnejší európsky priemysel v prospech rastu a oživenia hospodárstva: Aktualizácia oznámenia o priemyselnej politike", COM(2012) 582 z 10.10.2012.
([5]) „Integrovaná priemyselná politika vo veku globalizácie: Konkurencieschopnosť a udržateľnosť v popredí záujmu", KOM(2010) 614 z 28.10.2010.
([6]) SWD(2013) 346, 20.9.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013872/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Competitiveness of industry

A European Commission report shows that the competitiveness of industry has declined to 15.1% of European GDP. The objective of the EU under the Europe 2020 strategy was clearly, however, to increase its share. In order to increase industrial competitiveness, the Commission has published a new industrial policy in the past year. It set out a number of priority objectives including, for example, the implementation of advanced manufacturing technologies, production from organic materials, and the development of clean transport and smart grids. There are doubts, however, as to whether it will actually be possible to meet the set objectives. The Commission has responded to the recent developments by proposing an industrial compact.

Can it realistically be expected that these measures will truly help to increase the competitiveness of European industry?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

The Commission constantly monitors the competitiveness of the EU industry. This is done, i.e. through the annual European Competitiveness Report ([1]), the biannual EU Industrial Structure report ([2]) as well as the Monthly note on industrial policy indicators and analysis ([3]).

It is true that the share of manufacturing in the total value added of the EU has fallen in the second quarter of 2013 to 15.1%, one p.p. less than pre-crisis levels and far from the aspirational goal of 20% set in the 2012 Industrial Policy Communication ([4]). This highlights the need to secure a strong and durable economic recovery in the EU.

The industrial policy measures highlighted in the 2012 Communication and, before that in the 2010 flagship initiative ([5]), are designed to address the main areas of concern related to developments of EU industrial competitiveness: industrial innovation, better market conditions, access to finance, human capital and skills.

The September 2013 report on Member States' Competitiveness Performance and Implementation of EU Industrial Policy ([6]) includes a detailed description of the state of play of the different initiatives launched by the Commission, including the priority action lines referred to by the Honourable Member.

A new Communication 'For a European Industrial Renaissance' was adopted on 22 January 2014 to further reinforce this process of reindustrialisation.

The Commission believes that the measures launched under the 2010, 2012 and 2014 industrial policy communications are realistic and should ultimately contribute to improving the competitiveness of EU industry.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/competitiveness-analysis/european-competitiveness-report/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/competitiveness-analysis/eu-industrial-structure/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/economic-crisis/index_en.htm
([4]) 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery: Industrial Policy Communication Update', COM(2012) 582 of 10.10.2012.
([5]) 'An Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era: Putting Competitiveness and Sustainability at Centre Stage', COM(2010) 614 of 28.10.2010.
([6]) SWD(2013) 346 of 20.9.2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013873/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Práva žien v arabskom svete

Začiatkom októbra sa v priestoroch Európskeho parlamentu v Bruseli konal seminár a uskutočnila sa aj prezentácia filmu upozorňujúceho na otázky spoločenských zmien v arabskom svete. Seminár ponúkol príležitosť porozumieť postaveniu a úlohe žien v islamskej spoločnosti a upozornil na dôležité aspekty tejto problematiky. Dôraz bol kladený predovšetkým vo vzťahu k právam žien a k otázkam rodovej rovnosti. Veľkým problémom je sexuálne obťažovanie žien v arabských krajinách, a to na uliciach, v školách, doma, či na pracovisku. Toto dokonca v arabskom svete ani nie je trestné. Medzi bežné praktiky patrí fyzické násilie či polievanie kyselinou. Práva žien v týchto krajinách sú neustále porušované a výrazným spôsobom sa narušuje ich fyzická integrita.

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom sa Komisia v poslednom čase zasadila za dôsledné dodržiavanie ľudských práv a základných slobôd žien v arabských krajinách?

Odpoveď vysokej predstaviteľky a podpredsedníčky Komisie Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(11. februára 2014)

Hoci je situácia žien v arabskom svete stále rozdielna medzi jednotlivými krajinami v regióne, niektoré spoločné problémy vyplývajúce z právnych a kultúrnych faktorov naďalej pretrvávajú. S cieľom dosiahnuť pokrok v rámci programu rodovej rovnosti a práv žien v euro-stredozemskom regióne vysoká predstaviteľka/podpredsedníčka Komisie spolu s vládami Jordánska a Francúzska zvolali 12. septembra 2013 ministerskú konferenciu na tému „Posilnenie úlohy žien v spoločnosti" v rámci Únie pre Stredozemie. Ministri sa zaviazali ku konkrétnym opatreniam na dosiahnutie špecifických cieľov vrátane rodovej rovnosti, účasti žien v politickej a ekonomickej oblasti, ako aj boja proti násiliu páchanému na ženách.

Na regionálnej úrovni posilnili EÚ a Liga arabských štátov vzájomné vzťahy a dohodli sa na viacerých činnostiach spolupráce v oblasti ľudských práv vrátane posilnenia postavenia žien a rodovej rovnosti. V októbri 2012 začali EÚ a OSN Ženy s realizáciou programu s názvom *„Spring Forward for Women"* (Jar pre ženy). Je to spoločný regionálny program pre južné Stredozemie, ktorý poskytuje mechanizmus na podporu politickej účasti žien a posilnenia ich ekonomického postavenia v tomto regióne. Okrem toho sa v apríli 2013 z iniciatívy vysokej predstaviteľky/podpredsedníčky Komisie konalo v Bruseli podujatie na vysokej úrovni o vedúcom postavení žien v regióne Sahel, ktorého cieľom bolo stanoviť iniciatívy a ďalšie kroky zamerané na podporu rodovej rovnosti a vedúceho postavenia žien v reakcii na krízu v regióne Sahel. Komisia v súčasnosti financuje 70 projektov osobitne zameraných na podporu rodovej rovnosti a práv žien, spolu vo výške 87 miliónov EUR. Okrem toho je uplatňovanie hľadiska rodovej rovnosti neoddeliteľnou súčasťou všetkých projektov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013873/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Women's rights in the Arab world

Early in October, a seminar was organised at the European Parliament in Brussels, and a film was shown that drew attention to social change issues in the Arab world. The seminar provided an opportunity to understand the status and role of women in Islamic society and highlighted important aspects of this issue. Emphasis was placed above all on the rights of women and gender equality issues. A major problem is the sexual harassment of women in Arab countries, whether on the street, at school, at home or at work. This is not even punishable in the Arab world. Common practices include physical violence and acid attacks. The rights of women in these countries are constantly being violated, and the physical integrity of women is being substantially breached.

Exactly how has the Commission recently pressed for scrupulous respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women in Arab countries?

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

Although the situation of women in the Arab world still differs across countries in the region, some common problems based on legal and cultural factors continue to exist. In order to advance the agenda on gender equality and women's rights in the Euro-Mediterranean region, on 12 September 2013, the HR/VP has, together with the Governments of Jordan and France, convened a Ministerial Conference on 'Strengthening the Role of Women in Society' within the Union for the Mediterranean. The ministers have committed themselves to concrete measures in order to achieve specific objectives, including gender equality, women's participation in the political and economic spheres, and combatting violence against women.

At the regional level, the EU and the League of Arab States have strengthened their relationship and have agreed to a number of cooperation activities in the area of human rights, including women's empowerment and gender equality. In October 2012 the EU and UN Women launched 'Spring Forward for Women', a joint regional programme for the South Mediterranean Region, which provides a mechanism to advance the political participation and economic empowerment of women in the Southern Mediterranean region. Furthermore, a High Level event 'Women's Leadership in the Sahel region' was organised by the HR/VP in Brussels in April 2013 aiming at identifying initiatives and next steps to advance gender equality and women's leadership in response to the crisis in Sahel. The Commission is currently financing 70 projects specifically in support of gender equality and women's rights, amounting to EUR 87 million. In addition, gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all projects.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013875/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Postavenie žien v severnej Afrike

Vzhľadom na porevolučnú klímu v oblasti severnej Afriky je dôležité, aby ženy nadobudli rovnoprávne postavenie, pokiaľ hovoríme o procese demokratizácie a zostavovania vlády, politických strán, odborov a občianskych organizácií. Súbežne s prioritami v problematike rodovej rovnosti je potrebné zasadiť sa za rovnoprávne postavenie žien v prístupe k vzdelaniu a zamestnaniu, a rovnako tak zabezpečiť ich účasť na politickom a verejnom živote. V neposlednom rade by boj za ich sexuálne a reprodukčné práva mal tiež byť neoddeliteľnou súčasťou politickej agendy.

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom prispela k naplneniu spomenutých cieľov Komisia v poslednej dobe, resp. akým spôsobom plánuje v tejto súvislosti konať do budúcna?

Odpoveď vysokej predstaviteľky a podpredsedníčky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(4. februára 2014)

Pokiaľ ide o postavenie žien v severnej Afrike, vysoká predstaviteľka/podpredsedníčka Komisie má rovnaké obavy a ciele a neustále venuje veľkú pozornosť tejto problematike.

S cieľom dosiahnuť pokrok v rámci programu rodovej rovnosti a práv žien v euro-stredozemskom regióne vysoká predstaviteľka/podpredsedníčka Komisie spolu s vládami Jordánska a Francúzska zvolali 12. septembra 2013 ministerskú konferenciu na tému „Posilnenie úlohy žien v spoločnosti" v rámci Únie pre Stredozemie. V prijatom vyhlásení ministri znovu potvrdili záväzky a povinnosti, a to rovnako tie, ktoré sa prijali na dvoch predchádzajúcich regionálnych konferenciách ministrov týkajúcich sa rovnakej témy, ako aj tie, ktoré boli prijaté na medzinárodnej úrovni. Ministri sa zaviazali aj ku konkrétnym opatreniam na dosiahnutie špecifických cieľov vrátane rodovej rovnosti, účasti žien v politickej a ekonomickej oblasti, ako aj boja proti násiliu páchanému na ženách. Bol dohodnutý osobitný mechanizmus následných opatrení, ktorý zahŕňa pravidelné hodnotenie pokroku pri vykonávaní konkrétnych opatrení, ako aj konkrétne projekty s cieľom podporiť implementáciu dohodnutých opatrení.

Na širšej regionálnej úrovni EÚ a Liga arabských štátov začali realizovať spoločný pracovný program, na ktorom sa dohodli ministri zahraničných vecí EÚ a Ligy arabských štátov na spoločnom zasadnutí v novembri 2012. Pracovný program zahŕňa spoluprácu v oblasti ľudských práv vrátane posilnenia postavenia žien a v oblasti občianskej spoločnosti, v rámci ktorej sa uskutočňuje celý rad aktivít.

EÚ v súčasnosti financuje 70 projektov osobitne zameraných na podporu rodovej rovnosti a práv žien, spolu vo výške 87 miliónov EUR. Okrem toho je uplatňovanie hľadiska rodovej rovnosti neoddeliteľnou súčasťou všetkých projektov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013875/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The status of women in North Africa

Given the post-revolution climate in North Africa, it is important that women gain an equal status with regard to the democratisation process and the composition of governments, political parties, trade unions and civil society organisations. In parallel with the priorities in gender equality issues, it is necessary to press for the equal status of women in access to education and employment, and likewise to ensure their participation in political and public life. Last but not least, the fight for their sexual and reproductive rights should also be an integral part of the political agenda.

How specifically has the Commission contributed to fulfilling the above objectives recently, and how does it plan to act in this respect in the future?

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

The HR/VP shares the concerns and objectives regarding the status of women in North Africa and continues to devote much of her attention to this issue.

In order to advance the agenda on gender equality and women's rights in the Euro-Mediterranean region, on 12 September 2013, the HR/VP has, together with the governments of Jordan and France, convened a Ministerial Conference on 'Strengthening the Role of Women in Society' within the Union for the Mediterranean. In their adopted Declaration the Ministers reaffirmed the commitments and obligations — both those made at the two preceding regional Ministerial Conferences on the same subject, and those made at the international level. The ministers have also committed themselves to concrete measures in order to achieve specific objectives, including gender equality, women's participation in the political and economic spheres, and combatting violence against women. A dedicated follow-up mechanism was agreed which involves regular stock-taking on progress in implementing the concrete measures as well as concrete projects in order to underpin implementation of the agreed measures.

At the wider regional level, the EU and the League of Arab States have commenced implementation of the joint work programme agreed by the EU and LAS Foreign Ministers at their joint meeting in November 2012. The work programme includes cooperation in the area of human rights, including women's empowerment, and civil society, where a series of activities is being implemented.

The EU is currently financing 70 projects specifically in support of gender equality and women's rights, amounting to EUR 87 million. In addition, gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all projects.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013876/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Problematika extrémizmu voči rómskej menšine

Európa čelí skutočnej výzve: ako efektívne reagovať na rastúci extrémizmus voči Rómom. K zhoršovaniu situácie prispieva i pretrvávajúca hospodárska a sociálna kríza a jej negatívne dôsledky na každodenný život európskych obyvateľov. Rómovia sú vytláčaní na periférium spoločnosti a zatváraní v mestských a vidieckych getách. Sú pomerne ľahkým terčom pre nenávisť. Situácia sa stáva čoraz znepokojujúcejšou, a ohrozuje tak základné hodnoty nielen v jednotlivých členských štátoch, ale i Európskej únii ako celku.

Aké konkrétne kroky plánuje Komisia podniknúť s cieľom zmierniť napätú situáciu v rámci celej Európskej únie a akým konkrétnym spôsobom plánuje prispieť k uspokojivému riešeniu „rómskej otázky"?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(14. februára 2014)

Komisia veľmi dôsledne sleduje pokrok dosiahnutý v súvislosti so situáciou Rómov v Európskej únii. Dňa 26. júna 2013 Komisia prijala svoju druhú správu, v ktorej hodnotí pokrok členských štátov pri zabezpečovaní nevyhnutných predpokladov úspešnej implementácie stratégií. Komisia v súčasnosti pripravuje svoju tretiu správu, ktorá bude zverejnená na jar roku 2014.

Spolu s uvedenou druhou správou Komisia prijala návrh odporúčania Rady s cieľom zvýšiť účinnosť opatrení určených na dosiahnutie integrácie Rómov. Rada prijala toto odporúčanie, ktoré je úplne prvým právnym nástrojom v oblasti začlenenia Rómov na úrovni EÚ, dňa 9. decembra 2013. Odporúčaním sa nielen posilňuje rámec EÚ pre vnútroštátne stratégie integrácie Rómov v štyroch kľúčových oblastiach, ktorými sú vzdelávanie, zamestnanosť, zdravotná starostlivosť a bývanie, ale zdôrazňuje sa v ňom aj význam prierezových otázok, ako napríklad situácia rómskych detí a žien či miestna a nadnárodná spolupráca.

Komisia medzitým pozorne sleduje úsilie členských štátov vynakladané pri vykonávaní ich stratégií tak v rámci procesu Európa 2020, ako aj v špecifickom kontexte rámca EÚ. S cieľom posilniť európsku finančnú podporu pre problematiku začlenenia Rómov nový viacročný finančný rámec (2014 – 2020) uľahčuje členským štátom využívanie fondov EÚ na účely integrácie Rómov.

Komisia ostro odsudzuje všetky prejavy rasizmu a xenofóbie, keďže tieto javy sú nezlučiteľné s hodnotami, na ktorých je EÚ založená. Úlohou Komisie je zabezpečiť, aby členské štáty správne vykonávali a uplatňovali právny rámec ([1]).

([1]) Rámcové rozhodnutie Rady 2008/913/SVV z 28. novembra 2008 o boji proti niektorým formám a prejavom rasizmu a xenofóbie prostredníctvom trestného práva, Ú. v. EÚ L 328, 6.12.2008, s. 55 a smernica Rady 2000/43/ES z 29. júna 2000, ktorou sa zavádza zásada rovnakého zaobchádzania s osobami bez ohľadu na rasový alebo etnický pôvod, Ú. v. ES L 180, 19.7.2000, s. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013876/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The issue of extremism against the Roma minority

Europe is facing a real challenge: how to respond effectively to rising extremism against Roma. The enduring economic and social crisis and its negative impact on the daily lives of European citizens contribute to the deterioration of the situation. Roma are pushed to the periphery of society and are closed off in urban and rural ghettos. They are a relatively easy target for hatred. The situation is becoming increasingly worrying, and it undermines fundamental values not only in the Member States but also the European Union as a whole.

What concrete steps does the Commission intend to take to mitigate the tense situation across the EU, and exactly how does it plan to contribute to a satisfactory solution to the 'Roma question'?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

The Commission is following very closely the progress made on the situation of Roma in the European Union. On 26 June 2013, the Commission adopted its second report assessing progress made by the Member States in setting the necessary preconditions for a successful implementation of the strategies. The Commission is currently preparing its third report, which will be published in Spring 2014.

Jointly with the second report, the Commission adopted its proposal for a Council Recommendation in order to enhance the effectiveness of measures to achieve Roma integration. The recommendation, which is the first ever EU-level legal instrument for Roma inclusion, was adopted by the Council on 9 December 2013. It reinforces the EU Framework for National Roma Integration strategies not only in the four key areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing but also by stressing the importance of cross-cutting issues, such as situation of Roma children, Roma women, local and transnational cooperation.

Meanwhile, the Commission is monitoring closely Member States' efforts in implementing their strategies both within the Europe 2020 process and in the specific context of the EU Framework. In order to reinforce European financial support to Roma inclusion, the new multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 facilitates for Member States the use of EU funds for Roma integration

The Commission strongly condemns all manifestations of racism and xenophobia, as these phenomena are incompatible with the values and principles on which the EU is based. The Commission's role is to ensure that the Member States correctly implement and apply the legal framework ([1]).

([1]) 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 and Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013877/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Boj proti korupcii a vzdelávanie

Jednou z problematík, ktorej je vzhľadom na súčasnú situáciu vo svete, a teda aj v rámci celej Európskej únie nutné venovať zvýšenú mieru pozornosti, je problematika korupcie vo verejnom a súkromnom sektore. S korupciou sú úzko späté podvody, vydieranie, zneužívanie rozhodovacej právomoci, zvýhodňovanie či klientelizmus, a často je spojená s organizovanou trestnou činnosťou, ktorá sa odohráva pod kolektívnym vedením súbežne s verejnou mocou. Toto všetko má negatívny vplyv na ľudské práva obyvateľstva a ohrozuje zásadu demokracie, dobrej správy verejných vecí a právneho štátu. Je potrebné posilniť konanie zamerané proti korupčnému správaniu a zásadným spôsobom sprísniť legislatívu. Doposiaľ prijaté opatrenia sa javia ako nedostatočne účinné. Dôležitá je najmä kultúra a vnímanie korupcie zo strany obyvateľstva, pretože mnohokrát je korupcia zakorenená hlboko v mentalite spoločnosti.

Plánuje sa Komisia v boji proti korupcii zamerať aj na vzdelávacie programy, a to s cieľom zvýšiť povedomie o negatívnych aspektoch korupcie už u ľudí v čo najranejšom veku?

Odpoveď pani Vassiliouovej v mene Komisie
(11. februára 2014)

Všetky zainteresované strany v demokratickej spoločnosti rozhodne venujú problematike korupcie vo verejnom aj súkromnom sektore veľkú pozornosť. Najmä mladých ľudí by bolo treba učiť čestnosti a bezúhonnosti – túto úlohu by mali plniť hlavne rodičia a rodinní príslušníci aj s podporou školského prostredia.

Chceli by sme upozorniť váženú pani poslankyňu, že v súlade s článkom 165 Zmluvy o fungovaní Európskej únie zodpovednosť za obsah a organizáciu systémov vzdelávania a odbornej prípravy nesú výlučne členské štáty. Avšak aktívne občianstvo, podpora ľudských práv a boj proti všetkým druhom diskriminácie sú zakotvené v zmluvách EÚ a predstavujú prvky stratégie Európa 2020 pre udržateľný a inkluzívny rast. Toto zameranie v stratégii Európa 2020 sa premieta do nového programu na financovanie vzdelávania, odbornej prípravy, mládeže a športu Erasmus+. Tento program poskytne príležitosti na podporu projektov, ktoré majú vplyv na riešenie súvisiacich otázok, ako je napríklad podpora kladných hodnôt a aktívneho občianstva prostredníctvom vzdelávania.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013877/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Education and the fight against corruption

One issue that must be paid greater attention given the current situation in the world, and therefore throughout the European Union, is that of corruption in both the public and private sectors. Corruption is closely linked to fraud, extortion, abuse of discretion, favouritism and cronyism, and it is often connected with organised crime, which takes place under collective leadership in parallel with public power. All this has a negative impact on the human rights of the population and undermines the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law. We need to strengthen operations that counter corrupt practices and substantially tighten legislation. The measures taken to date appear to be insufficiently effective. Of particular importance is the culture and perception of corruption amongst the population, because corruption is often deeply rooted in the mentality of society.

In combating corruption, does the Commission also plan to focus on educational programmes and to raise awareness of the negative aspects of corruption in the very young?

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

Corruption in both the public and private sectors is certainly a matter of great concern to all stakeholders within a democratic society. Young people, in particular, should be taught honesty and integrity — mainly by their parents and family members, but also with the support of the schooling environment.

The Honourable Member will be aware that, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. However, active citizenship, the promotion of human rights, and the fight against any kind of discrimination are embedded in the EU Treaties and constitute components of the Europe2020 strategy for sustainable and inclusive growth. This focus in Europe 2020 is reflected in Erasmus+, the new funding programme for education, training, youth and sport. Erasmus+ will provide opportunities for support to projects that have an impact on addressing related issues, such as promoting positive values and active citizenship through education.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013878/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Boj proti gendercíde

Európsky parlament v uplynulých dňoch vyzval vlády členských štátov, aby sa zamerali na boj proti gendercíde. Týmto pojmom možno označiť systematické, zámerné zabíjanie ľudí na základe pohlavia. Ide o závažný, narastajúci globálny problém, ktorý sa netýka iba afrických či ázijských krajín, ale vyskytuje sa aj v Európe a Severnej a Latinskej Amerike. Nedávne odhady pomeru pohlaví v rámci svetovej populácie poukazujú na takmer 200 miliónov „chýbajúcich" žien. Tie boli obeťami výberu, resp. preferencie pohlavia počas tehotenstva. Je dôležité efektívne zakročiť v boji proti nekalým praktikám selektívneho výberu pohlavia a zachraňovať tak životy žien.

Plánuje toto úsilie podporiť aj Komisia? Ak áno, akým konkrétnym spôsobom?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(30. januára 2014)

Vyvražďovanie žien je najextrémnejším dôsledkom rodovej nerovnosti a násilia založeného na rodovej príslušnosti. Boj proti násiliu voči ženám je prioritou Komisie, ako sa uvádza v Akčnom pláne na implementáciu Štokholmského programu, Charte žien a v Stratégii rovnosti žien a mužov (2010 – 2015). Medzi naše hlavné iniciatívy na podporu členských štátov pri odstraňovaní násilia voči ženám bude aj naďalej patriť prijímanie legislatívnych opatrení vždy, keď je to možné, boj proti diskriminácii a posilňovanie postavenia žien, rozširovanie poznatkov, výmeny osvedčených postupov, zvyšovanie informovanosti a poskytovanie finančných prostriedkov.

Navyše, v usmerneniach EÚ týkajúcich sa boja proti násiliu voči ženám a dievčatám a proti všetkým formám ich diskriminácie ([1]) sú stanovené operačné ciele a intervenčné nástroje EÚ zamerané na jej vonkajšiu činnosť v oblasti boja proti násiliu páchanému na ženách a dievčatách. Táto otázka je súčasťou politiky EÚ a dialógov o ľudských právach s partnerskými krajinami. Komisia takisto podpísala zmluvu so subjektom OSN pre rodové otázky (OSN Ženy), ktorej cieľom je riešenie problému vyvražďovania žien v Mexiku. Okrem toho bola vyhlásená výzva na predkladanie návrhov (v súčasnosti prebieha výberový proces) na účel boja proti zabíjaniu novorodencov ženského pohlavia. Vybrané projekty budú brať do úvahy miestne a kultúrne faktory, ako aj dôsledky nadmerného zastúpenia mužov, ako je napríklad nárast kriminality, porušovanie ľudských práv a zvýšenie miery samovrážd žien. Okrem toho bola v rámci programu Európsky nástroj pre demokraciu a ľudské práva uverejnená výzva na predkladanie návrhov s cieľom zvýšiť informovanosť o probléme zabíjania novorodencov ženského pohlavia a selektívneho prerušenia tehotenstva na základe pohlavia plodu. Útvary Komisie v súčasnosti uskutočňujú výber projektov, ktorý sa ukončí do marca 2014.

([1]) Rada pre všeobecné záležitosti ich schválila 8. decembra 2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013878/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Combatting gendercide

The European Parliament has recently called on the governments of the Member States to focus on the fight against gendercide. This term may designate the systematic, intentional killing of people based on their gender. This is a serious, growing global problem that affects not only African and Asian countries, but also occurs in Europe and North and Latin America. Recent estimates of the gender ratio in the global population indicate that nearly 200 million women are 'missing'. They were victims of gender selection or preference during pregnancy. It is important to intervene effectively in the fight against the wicked practice of sex selection, thus saving women's lives.

Does the Commission plan to support these efforts? If so, how exactly?

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

Femicide is the most extreme consequence of gender inequalities and gender-based violence. Combating violence against women is a priority of the Commission, as shown in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015). Adoption of legislative measures when possible, fighting against discrimination and empowering women, improving knowledge, exchanging good practices, raising awareness and providing funding will remain our main initiatives to support the Member States in eliminating violence against women.

Furthermore, the EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them ([1]) set out the EU's operational objectives and intervention tools for its external action combating violence against women and girls. This issue is incorporated in the EU's policy and human rights dialogues with partner countries. The Commission has also signed a contract with UN Women to tackle femicide in Mexico. A call for proposals (currently under selection) has also been launched to tackle female infanticide. The selected projects will take into consideration location-specific and cultural factors, as well as the consequences of the over-representation of men, such as the increase in crime, human rights violations and female suicide rates. In addition, the European Instrument for Human Rights and Democracy programme published a call for proposals to raise awareness of female infanticide and sex selective abortion. The Commission services are now in the selection process of the projects which will be concluded by March 2014.

([1]) Adopted by the General Affairs Council of 8 December 2008.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013879/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Migračná politika

Začiatkom októbra svetom otriasla ďalšia tragédia utečencov, keď stovky ľudí prišli o život pri potopení lode s migrantmi pochádzajúcimi prevažne z Eritrey a Somálska. Potopená loď prepravovala vyše 500 utečencov, zachrániť sa však podarilo iba 155 ľudí. Možno povedať, že vinu za smrť stoviek obetí nesie Európska únia ako celok. Javí sa preto ako nanajvýš žiaduce radikálne zmeniť európsku migračnú politiku, pretože súčasná migračná politika Európskej únie očividne nie je postačujúca. V Európskom parlamente sme nedávno schválili program na ochranu vonkajších hraníc Eurosur, ktorý by mal zabrániť stratám na životoch utečencov pri ich snahe dostať sa do členských štátov Európskej únie.

Aká bude, s ohľadom na nový systém Eurosur, nasledovná úloha európskej agentúry pre správu vonkajších hraníc Frontex?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(21. februára 2014)

Eurosur je viacúčelový systém určený na odhaľovanie a predchádzanie cezhraničnej trestnej činnosti, ako je napríklad obchodovanie s drogami, ako aj na to, aby prispieval k záchrane životov migrantov na vonkajších hraniciach schengenského priestoru.

Nariadenie o systéme Eurosur požaduje, aby agentúra Frontex ([1]) a dotknuté členské štáty úzko spolupracovali.

Základný pilier systému Eurosur predstavujú „národné koordinačné centrá", prostredníctvom ktorých sa požaduje spolupráca a koordinácia činností všetkých vnútroštátnych orgánov zodpovedných za hraničný dozor (napríklad pohraničná stráž, polícia, pobrežná stráž, námorné sily). Informácie o incidentoch, ktoré sa vyskytnú na vonkajších hraniciach, o stave a polohe hliadok, ako aj analytické správy, sa zdieľajú prostredníctvom „národných situačných prehľadov".

Frontex, agentúra EÚ pre správu hraníc, zohráva dôležitú úlohu pri zlučovaní a analýze informácií zhromaždených členskými štátmi v rámci „európskeho situačného prehľadu", a tým odhaľuje zmeny trás alebo nové metódy.

Eurosur prispeje k efektívnejšiemu odhaľovaniu migrantov cestujúcich v malých plavidlách, ktoré nie sú vhodné na plavbu po mori prostredníctvom zlepšenia výmeny informácií a spolupráce na národnej aj európskej úrovni.

Čo sa týka národnej úrovne, nariadenie o systéme Eurosur požaduje včasnú výmenu informácií medzi národnými koordinačnými centrami a námornými centrami na koordináciu záchrannej činnosti.

Čo sa týka európskej úrovne, agentúra Frontex spolupracuje s Európskou námornou bezpečnostnou agentúrou a satelitným centrom EÚ s cieľom zlučovať informácie získané z rozličných nástrojov hraničného dozoru, ako sú systémy hlásenia lodí a satelitné snímanie, a tým včas identifikovať plavidlá s migrantmi.

([1]) Európska agentúra pre riadenie operačnej spolupráce na vonkajších hraniciach členských štátov Európskej únie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013879/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Migration policy

In early October, another refugee tragedy shook the world when hundreds of people lost their lives as a boat of migrants, coming mainly from Eritrea and Somalia, sank. The sunken ship was carrying more than 500 refugees; however, only 155 people could be saved. It can be said that the blame for the hundreds of deaths lies at the door of the European Union as a whole. It thus appears highly desirable to make radical changes to European migration policy, since the current EU migration policy is clearly inadequate. In the European Parliament, we recently approved the Eurosur programme for the protection of the external borders, which should prevent refugees from losing their lives as they attempt to get to the EU Member States.

With regard to the new Eurosur system, what will be the future role of the European Agency for the Management of External Borders, Frontex?

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

Eurosur is a multipurpose system designed to detect and prevent cross-border crime, such as drug trafficking, as well as to contribute to saving migrants lives at the external borders of the Schengen area.

The Eurosur Regulation requires Frontex ([1]) and the Member States to closely cooperate with each other:

The backbone of Eurosur is formed by 'national coordination centres', via which all national authorities with a responsibility for border surveillance (e.g. border guard, police, coast guard, navy) are required to cooperate and to coordinate their activities. Information on incidents occurring at the external borders, the status and position of patrols as well as analytical reports are shared via 'national situational pictures'.

The EU border agency Frontex plays an important role in merging and analysing in the 'European situational picture' information collected by Member States, thereby detecting changed routes or new methods.

Eurosur will help better to detect migrants travelling in small and unseaworthy vessels by improving the information exchange and cooperation at national and European level.

At national level the Eurosur Regulation requires the timely information exchange between the national coordination centres and the maritime rescue coordination centres.

At European level Frontex is cooperating with the European Maritime Safety Agency and the EU Satellite Centre to combine information derived from different surveillance tools, such as ship reporting systems and satellite imagery, thereby helping earlier to identify vessels with migrants.

([1]) The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013880/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Problematika elektronických cigariet

V súvislosti s revíziou smernice o tabaku, o ktorej ešte stále prebieha medziinštitucionálna diskusia, je problematickou otázka elektronických cigariet. Od roku 2001, kedy vstúpila pôvodná smernica o tabaku do platnosti, prešiel tabakový priemysel rozsiahlym vývojom. Regulácia elektronických cigariet je v každom členskom štáte rozdielna. Komisia navrhuje sprísnenie režimu pre elektronické cigarety a zosúladenie týchto režimov. Podľa návrhu by elektronické cigarety, ktoré prekročia určitú stanovenú úroveň nikotínu, podliehali schvaľovaciemu režimu ako liečivá, napríklad v rámci nikotínovej substitučnej terapie pri odvykaní od fajčenia. Zástancovia elektronických cigariet však upozorňujú na skutočnosť, že takáto regulácia bude mať negatívny vplyv na ponuku a cenu, čo môže v konečnom dôsledku znížiť počet ľudí, ktorí sa pokúšajú prestať fajčiť, teda potenciálnych nefajčiarov.

Aký je postoj Komisie voči týmto varovaniam zástancov elektronických cigariet?

Odpoveď pána Borga v mene Komisie
(28. januára 2014)

Komisia si uvedomuje, že používanie elektronických cigariet je čoraz rozšírenejšie a predaj týchto výrobkov sa za posledné roky výrazne zvýšil.

V posúdení vplyvu, ktoré vypracovala Komisia ako sprievodný dokument k svojmu návrhu týkajúcemu sa prepracovanej smernice o tabakových výrobkoch, sa uvádza posúdenie trendov na trhu v súvislosti s elektronickými cigaretami. ([1]) Neočakáva sa, že návrh Komisie bude mať neprimeraný vplyv na trh EÚ, keďže jeho hlavným cieľom je podporiť výskum, inováciu a vývoj elektronických cigariet, ako aj potenciál týchto výrobkov ako pomôcok pri odvykaní od fajčenia.

Európsky parlament a Rada dospeli na základe návrhu Komisie k dohode o harmonizovanej regulácii elektronických cigariet. Skôr ako toto kompromisné znenie nadobudne účinnosť, musí ho však prijať Rada ministrov a odhlasovať Európsky parlament.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final, s. 15 – 17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013880/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The issue of electronic cigarettes

The problematic issue of electronic cigarettes is associated with the revision of the directive on tobacco, which is still undergoing interinstitutional discussion. Since 2001, when the original directive on tobacco entered into force, the tobacco industry has seen extensive development. The regulation of electronic cigarettes differs from one Member State to another. The Commission proposes the tightening and harmonisation of the regulations governing electronic cigarettes. According to the proposal, electronic cigarettes that exceed a specified level of nicotine will be subject to an approval procedure as pharmaceuticals, for example in nicotine replacement therapy for stopping smoking. However, proponents of electronic cigarettes point out that such regulations will have a negative impact on supply and prices, which may ultimately reduce the number of people who try to stop smoking, that is, potential non-smokers.

What is the opinion of the Commission about these warnings made by supporters of electronic cigarettes?

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

The Commission is aware of the fact that the use of electronic cigarettes is growing quickly and the sales of these products have substantially increased in recent years.

The Commission's assessment of the market trends with regard to electronic cigarettes has been set out in the Commission's Impact Assessment accompanying its proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive. ([1]) The Commission's proposal is not expected to impact disproportionately on the EU market, in particular as the proposal seeks to encourage research, innovation and development of electronic cigarettes as well as the potential of these products as a smoking cessation aid.

On the basis of the Commission's proposal, the European Parliament and Council have reached an agreement on a harmonised regulation of electronic cigarettes. This compromise text must now be adopted by the Council of Ministers and voted in the European Parliament before it enters into force.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final, pp. 15-17.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013881/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Vyšší počet žien vo vedúcich funkciách vo veľkých spoločnostiach

Vychádzajúc z údajov zverejnených Európskou komisiou, podiel žien v správnych radách veľkých spoločností v Európe neprekročil v apríli tohto roka 16,6 %, čo je v porovnaní s 15,8 % pred rokom len skutočne minimálny nárast. Podľa dohody, ku ktorej nedávno dospeli zástupcovia európskych inštitúcii, všetky veľké spoločnosti musia zabezpečiť, aby podiel žien vo vedúcich funkciách a dozorných radách predstavoval do roku 2020 podiel najmenej 40 %. Všetky spoločnosti sú povinné aplikovať transparentné a otvorené výberové konania na vymenovanie svojich členov do správnych rád. Európske ženy v sebe nesú veľký potenciál a i v tomto kontexte nemožno dovoliť, aby bola vo vedúcich funkciách uprednostňovaná mužská časť populácie.

Aké úsilie plánuje vyvinúť Komisia, aby zmieňovaná 40 % kvóta pre ženy na vedúcich postoch vo veľkých korporáciách bola rešpektovaná a dôsledne dodržiavaná?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(22. januára 2014)

O návrhu smernice o zlepšení rodovej vyváženosti medzi nevýkonnými riadiacimi pracovníkmi spoločností kótovaných na burze ([1]), na ktorú sa vážená pani poslankyňa odvoláva, sa v súčasnosti rokuje na pôde Parlamentu a Rady. Parlament prijal 20. novembra 2013 správu z prvého čítania o návrhu ([2]). Rada EPSCO rokovala 9. decembra 2013 o správe litovského predsedníctva o pokroku ([3]).

Komisia bude aj naďalej prikladať veľký význam prebiehajúcim rokovaniam v záujme čo najrýchlejšieho prijatia smernice. Keď sa smernica prijme a nadobudne účinnosť, Komisia zaistí jej správnu transpozíciu a uplatňovanie v členských štátoch v súlade so zmluvami.

([1]) COM(2012)614.
([2]) P7_TA(2013)0488.
([3]) 16437/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013881/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Higher number of women in leading positions in large companies

Based on data published by the European Commission, the proportion of women on the boards of large companies in Europe did not exceed 16.6% in April this year, which, compared to 15.8% a year ago, is really only a minimal increase. Under an agreement recently reached by representatives of the EU institutions, all large companies have to ensure that the proportion of women in management positions and supervisory boards will be at least 40% by 2020. All companies are required to apply transparent and open selection proceedings when appointing its members to the board of directors. European women hold great potential and, in this context, it cannot be allowed that the male part of the population is preferred for management roles.

What efforts does the Commission intend to make to ensure that the 40% quota referred to above for women in managerial positions in large corporations is respected and strictly adhered to?

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

The proposal for a directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges ([1]), to which the Honourable Member refers, is currently being negotiated by the Parliament and the Council. On 20 November 2013 the Parliament adopted its first reading report on the proposal ([2]). On 9 December 2013 the EPSCO Council discussed a progress report of the Lithuanian Presidency ([3]).

The Commission will continue to give high priority to the on-going negotiations with a view to the adoption of a directive as quickly as possible. Once the directive is adopted and enters into force the Commission will ensure its correct transposition and application by the Member States, in accordance with the Treaties.

([1]) COM(2012) 614.
([2]) P7_TA(2013)0488.
([3]) 16437/13.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-013882/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5. decembra 2013)

Vec: Sexuálne násilie a sexuálny nátlak medzi mladými ľuďmi

Sexuálne násilie a sexuálny nátlak medzi mladými ľuďmi predstavujú obrovský problém, ktorý závažným spôsobom vplýva na zdravie a blaho mladých ľudí. Ich formy pokrývajú celé spektrum, od sexuálneho obťažovania, násilia, odmietnutia akceptovať osobné hranice, požadovania sexu za lásku alebo priateľstvo až po sexuálne zločiny z nenávisti na základe sexuálnej orientácie alebo rodovej identity a znásilnenie. Sexuálne a rodovo podmienené násilie je medzi mladými ľuďmi v Európe značne rozšírené.

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom bojuje Komisia proti sexuálnemu násiliu medzi mladými ľuďmi?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(20. februára 2014)

Komisia sa výrazne zasadzuje za ochranu detí a mladých ľudí pred všetkými druhmi násilia. Oznámenie Komisie s názvom „Program EÚ v oblasti práv dieťaťa“ ([1]) sa zameriava na rad konkrétnych opatrení v oblastiach, v ktorých môže EÚ priniesť skutočnú pridanú hodnotu, ako je justičný systém zohľadňujúci potreby detí, ochrana detí v zraniteľných situáciách a boj proti násiliu páchanom na deťoch či už v rámci Európskej únie, alebo mimo nej. Uvedený program EÚ nerozlišuje osobitne medzi násilím, ktoré na deťoch páchajú dospelí, a medzi násilím medzi osobami v rovnocennom postavení.

Smernica č. 2011/92/EÚ o boji proti sexuálnemu zneužívaniu a sexuálnemu vykorisťovaniu detí a proti detskej pornografii ukladá členským štátom povinnosť stanoviť vo svojich vnútroštátnych právnych predpisoch trestnoprávne sankcie v súlade s ustanoveniami práva Únie o boji proti sexuálnemu zneužívaniu a sexuálnemu vykorisťovaniu detí a detskej pornografii. Malo by sa však takisto zdôrazniť, že v súlade s článkom 8 uvedenej smernice sa členské štáty môžu rozhodnúť, či sa určité trestné činy uvedené v článkoch 3 a 4 vzťahujú na sexuálne aktivity vykonávané so súhlasom medzi osobami v rovnocennom postavení, ktoré sú si blízke vekom a stupňom duševného a telesného vývoja alebo zrelosti , pokiaľ pri nich nedošlo k zneužitiu.

([1]) Program EÚ v oblasti práv dieťaťa KOM/2011/0060 v konečnom znení, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060:sk:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013882/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Sexual violence and sexual coercion among young people

Sexual violence and sexual coercion among young people are an enormous problem that seriously affects the health and well-being of young people. Their forms cover the whole spectrum, from sexual harassment, violence, refusal to accept personal boundaries and demanding sex for love or friendship, to sexual hate crimes based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and rape. Sexual and gender-based violence is widespread among young people in Europe.

Exactly how is the Commission combatting sexual violence among young people?

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

The Commission is strongly committed to the protection of children and young people against all forms of violence. The Commission's communication 'EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child' ([1]) focuses on a number of concrete actions in areas where the EU can bring real added value, such as child-friendly justice, protecting children in vulnerable situations and fighting violence against children both inside the European Union and externally. The EU Agenda does not apply a specific distinction between violence committed against children by adults and violence between peers.

Directive 2011/92/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography obliges Member States to provide for criminal penalties in their national legislation in respect of the provisions of Union law on combating sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. However, it should also be pointed out that according to Article 8 of the directive it is left within the discretion of Member States to decide whether certain of the offences mentioned in Articles 3 and 4 apply to consensual sexual activities between peers who are close in age and degree of psychological and physical development or maturity, in so far as the acts did not involve any abuse or exploitation.

([1]) An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child COM/2011/0060 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060:en:NOT

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013883/13
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: Impacto das medidas de austeridade na vida das pessoas com deficiência

É inaceitável o contexto social em que comemoramos o Dia Internacional da Pessoa com Deficiência. Em Portugal, a situação das pessoas com deficiência tem-se agravado drasticamente. Em maio de 2011 a Comissão assinou, através da troika, um memorando de entendimento com o Governo português (apoiado pelos partidos PSD, PS e CDS-PP) que refere a intenção de «Melhorar o funcionamento da administração central, eliminando duplicações, aumentando a eficiência, reduzindo e extinguindo serviços que não representem uma utilização eficaz de fundos públicos. Tal deverá resultar em poupanças anuais de, pelo menos, 500 milhões de euros». Um estudo recente intitulado «Assessing the impact of European Governments' austerity plans on the rights of people with disabilities», realizado pelo Centro Europeu de Fundações, refere que, em Portugal, as pessoas com deficiência têm uma taxa de risco de pobreza 25 % superior à das pessoas sem qualquer deficiência, consequência da implementação das medidas de austeridade. No que se refere aos serviços sociais, o relatório refere que «os apoios para os serviços de intervenção precoce da Segurança Social sofreram uma redução entre 160 euros e 240 euros por criança» e que Portugal foi um dos países onde foi dispensado pessoal de apoio ao ensino especial e onde os cortes nos apoios técnicos e tecnologias especiais atingiram os 37 %. Salienta que a Rede Nacional de Cuidados Integrados sofreu uma redução de 30 % desde 2008, que o número de horas de formação profissional para pessoas com deficiência teve um corte de 50 % e os salários subsidiados pelo Estado para pessoas com deficiência foram eliminados. A diminuição das comparticipações e o aumento dos custos dos medicamentos e cuidados de saúde afetam, de forma particular, as pessoas com deficiência. E, segundo outras fontes, os subsídios de apoio para pagamentos de acompanhantes tornaram-se irrisórios (100 euros/mês) o que tem conduzido a um aumento da institucionalização das pessoas com deficiência.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Como analisa a evolução da situação das pessoas com deficiência na UE e, particularmente, em Portugal, desde 2011?

2. Considera que a sua atuação no quadro da troika é consentânea com a sua comunicação de 15 de novembro de 2010, referente à Estratégia Europeia para a Deficiência 2010-2020 onde é dito que «A Comissão irá trabalhar com os Estados-Membros para suprir os obstáculos que se colocam a uma Europa sem barreiras»?

3. Quando pretende apresentar uma avaliação intercalar da Estratégia Europeia para a Deficiência 2010-2020?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(14 de fevereiro de 2014)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-010955/2013 ([1]).

Além disso, está em curso uma análise da aplicação das diferentes medidas da Estratégia Europeia para a Deficiência 2010-2020 ([2]), com vista a apresentar um relatório sobre os progressos efetuados em 2014 e a preparar uma lista atualizada de medidas a implementar a partir de 2016, tal como previsto na Estratégia.

Está a ser atualmente efetuado um estudo para auxiliar a Comissão na recolha de dados e de informação para preparar o referido relatório ([3]). Esse estudo irá igualmente analisar o impacto e os efeitos gerais da Estratégia Europeia para a Deficiência nas políticas em matéria de deficiência dos Estados-Membros e a aplicação prática por parte destes da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência (Cnudpd).

Desde 2008, a Comissão e o grupo de alto nível para a Deficiência (GAN) têm publicado um relatório anual conjunto sobre a execução da Cnudpd ([4]). O relatório do GAN contem informações sobre os progressos realizados pela UE e pelos Estados-Membros no desenvolvimento e aplicação de estratégias nacionais e medidas para pôr em prática de forma eficaz a Convenção, bem como sobre o estabelecimento do quadro institucional necessário previsto pela Cnudpd.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/pt/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([3]) JUST/2012/DISC/PR/0072/A4 — «Estudo sobre os progressos realizados na execução por parte da UE da Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre os direitos das pessoas com deficiência e da Estratégia Europeia para a Deficiência 2010-2020».
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/document/index_en.htm#h2-5

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013883/13
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: The impact of austerity measures on the lives of persons with disabilities

The social context in which we mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities is unacceptable. In Portugal, disabled people are facing increasingly difficult circumstances. In May 2011, the Commission signed, as part of the troika, a memorandum of understanding with the Portuguese Government (supported by the Social Democratic Party [PSD], Socialist Party [PS] and Democratic and Social Centre — People's Party [CDS-PP]) that refers to the intention of 'improving the operation of central government, eliminating duplications, increasing efficiency and reducing and cancelling services that to not represent effective use of public funds. This shall lead to annual savings of at least EUR 500 million'. A recent study entitled 'Assessing the impact of European Governments' austerity plans on the rights of people with disabilities', conducted by the European Foundation Centre, states that in Portugal persons with disabilities are at 25% greater risk of poverty than persons without disabilities. With regard to social services, the report states that 'providers of early intervention services for children with disabilities saw their monthly allocation of funding reduced from EUR 240 to EUR 160 per child' and that Portugal was one of the countries where special training support staff were dismissed and cuts in technical aids and special technologies reached 37%. It highlights that the national network for integrated continuous care has been subjected to cuts of 30% since 2008, that the number of hours of professional training for disabled persons has been cut by 50% and government wage subsidies for persons with disabilities have been eliminated. Persons with disabilities are particularly affected by increased costs of drugs and healthcare and reduced contributions towards them. According to other sources, benefits for paying support workers have become derisory (EUR 100 per month), which has led to an increase in the number of persons with disabilities who are institutionalised.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of how the situation of persons with disabilities has changed in the EU, particularly in Portugal, since 2011?

2. Does the Commission believe that its performance as part of the troika is consistent with its communication of 15 November 2011, relating to the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, where it states 'the Commission will work together with the Member States to tackle the obstacles to a barrier-free Europe'?

3. When does it intend to present its mid-term review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its answer to Written Question E-010955/2013 ([1]).

In addition, a review of the implementation of the various actions of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([2]) is on-going with a view to report in 2014 on progress made and to prepare an updated list of actions from 2016, as foreseen in the strategy.

A study is currently being carried out to support the Commission in gathering data and information to prepare this report ([3]). The study will also look at the impact and broader effects of the European Disability Strategy on the Member States disability policies and their practical implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Since 2008 the Commission and the Disability High-Level Group (HLG) have published an annual joint report on the implementation of the UNCRPD ([4]). The HLG reports include information on progress made by the EU and the Member States in developing and implementing national strategies and actions to effectively put in practice the Convention as well as in establishing the necessary institutional arrangements provided for by the UNCRPD.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([3]) JUST/2012/DISC/PR/0072/A4 — 'Study on progress achieved in the implementation by the EU of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020'.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/document/index_en.htm#h2-5

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013884/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: Ajudas nacionais e comunitárias ao sector da construção naval

Tendo em conta as especificidades do setor da construção naval e as consequências para a indústria europeia das negociações feitas pela UE, no plano internacional, visando a sua liberalização, desde há muito que existem regulamentos com um enquadramento específico das «ajudas estatais» neste setor.

Assim, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o montante total das ajudas nacionais ao setor da construção naval, por país, durante as décadas de 90 e 2000, e ainda nos anos de 2010, 2011 e 2012?

2. Qual o montante total das ajudas comunitárias ao setor da construção naval, por país, durante as décadas de 90 e 2000, e ainda nos anos de 2010, 2011 e 2012?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(30 de janeiro de 2014)

Os auxílios estatais nacionais concedidos ao setor da construção naval, por país e por ano para o período de 1992-2012, estão publicados nos quadros anuais do painel de avaliação dos auxílios estatais da DG Concorrência ([1]). Os dados relativos aos anos anteriores a 1992 não estão disponíveis.

A soma dos auxílios, por ano e por país, para o período de 1992-1999 e de 2000-2009, pode ser facilmente calculada a partir deste quadro pormenorizado.

No que respeita à UE, os auxílios estatais ao setor da construção naval ascenderam a 73,7 milhões de euros em 2010; 96,8 milhões de euros em 2011 ([2]) e 214,4 milhões de euros em 2012 ([3]). Foram concedidos por sete Estados-Membros ([4]). Os auxílios foram principalmente concedidos pela Alemanha (entre 21 e 170 milhões de euros).

O Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) e o Fundo de Coesão de apoio não concederam apoio à indústria da construção naval em grande escala. O FEDER é executado através de uma gestão partilhada com as autoridades nacionais ou regionais encarregadas de tarefas como a definição de estratégias, a seleção e o acompanhamento dos projetos. O apoio do FEDER a empresas é predominantemente orientado para as PME. No período de 2007-2013, alguns programas comunicaram projetos no vasto setor económico da fabricação de equipamento de transporte ([5]). O apoio a empresas que exercem atividades de construção naval ou de manutenção de dimensão reduzida pode ser integrado nesse apoio. Os Estados-Membros não comunicam à Comissão os projetos selecionados especificamente no setor da construção naval (ou outros setores industriais específicos). No caso de reconversão das economias regionais anteriormente dependentes de indústrias como o carvão, o aço e a construção naval, por vezes, o FEDER tem, por vezes, apoiado a inovação e a diversificação das atividades. No entanto, a Comissão não dispõe de uma visão sistémica desse financiamento especificamente ligado à construção naval. Qualquer apoio da UE proveniente do FEDER destinado a atividades ligadas à construção naval tem de cumprir as regras relevantes em matéria de auxílios estatais.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm_comp/refreshTableAction.do;jsessionid=9ea7d07d30f0ca2745c568a14929833e9c97f0278dde.e34MbxeSaxaSc40LbNiMbxeNaNqLe0?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=comp_css_01&language=en

([2]) Em 2010 e 2011, a maior parte dos auxílios à construção naval foram concedidos à investigação, desenvolvimento e inovação (81 % e 46 %) e ao desenvolvimento setorial (17 % e 53 %).

([3]) Em 2012, 71 % do total dos auxílios à construção naval foram consagrados a situações de emergência e reestruturação, dos quais 152,4 milhões de euros a título da medida SA. 34920 Rettungsbeihilfe zugunsten der P+S Werften GmbH. 21 % dos fundos foram atribuídos ao desenvolvimento setorial.

([4]) Bulgária, Alemanha, Espanha, Malta, Países Baixos, Polónia, Finlândia.

([5]) 1,3 mil milhões de euros de um total de 55 mil milhões de euros no que respeita ao apoio empresarial global programado.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013884/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: National and EU aid to the shipbuilding sector

Given the peculiarities of the shipbuilding sector and the consequences for EU industry of the negotiations conducted by the EU at international level for its liberalisation, there have long been regulations addressing 'state aid' for this sector.

1. Can the Commission provide information on the total sum of national aid to the shipbuilding sector, by country, during the 1990s and 2000s, and for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012?

2. Can it provide information on the total sum of EU aid to the shipbuilding sector, by country, during the 1990s and 2000s, and for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012?

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

The national state aid to the sector 'Building of ships and boats', by country and by year for the period 1992-2012 is published in DG Competition's annual state aid scoreboard tables ([1]). Data for the years prior to 1992 are not available.

Sum of aid, by year and country, for the period 1992-1999 and 2000-2009 can be easily calculated from this detailed table.

For the EU, State aid to the shipbuilding sector amounted to EUR 73.7 million in 2010; EUR 96.8 million in 2011 ([2]) and EUR 214.4 million in 2012 ([3]). It was granted by 7 Member States ([4]). Aid was mainly granted by Germany (between EUR 21 and EUR 170 million).

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund support have not been provided to large scale shipbuilding industry. The ERDF is delivered through shared management with national or regional authorities charged with tasks such as setting strategies, project selection and monitoring. ERDF support to enterprises is predominantly directed to SMEs. In the period 2007-2013 some programmes have reported projects in the broad economic sector of manufacture of transport equipment ([5]). Support to enterprises engaged on small scale shipbuilding or maintenance could be encompassed in such support. The Member States do not report to the Commission on the projects selected specifically in shipbuilding (or other specific industrial sectors). In the case of reconversion of regional economies previously dependent on industries such as coal, steel and shipbuilding the ERDF has on occasion supported innovation and diversification. However, the Commission has no systemic overview of such financing specifically linked to shipbuilding. Any EU support from the ERDF delivered to activities linked to shipbuilding must comply with relevant state aid rules.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm_comp/refreshTableAction.do;jsessionid=9ea7d07d30f0ca2745c568a14929833e9c97f0278dde.e34MbxeSaxaSc40LbNiMbxeNaNqLe0?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=comp_css_01&language=en

([2]) In 2010 and 2011 most shipbuilding aid was earmarked for research, development and innovation (81% and 46%) and for sectoral development (17% and 53%).

([3]) In 2012, 71% of the total aid to shipbuilding was devoted to rescue end restructuring; of which EUR 152.4 million under the measure SA.34920 Rettungsbeihilfe zugunsten der P+S Werften GmbH. 21% went to sectoral development.

([4]) Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Finland.

([5]) EUR 1.3 billion out of a total of EUR 55 billion in overall enterprise support programmed.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013885/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: Importação de ramas de cana-de-açúcar para abastecimento da indústria refinadora

Em aditamento à pergunta E-007261/2012, relativa à situação das refinarias a tempo inteiro na UE face à escassez de matéria-prima, e tendo em conta:

— A persistência das dificuldades que os refinadores a tempo inteiro de cana-de-açúcar enfrentam para assegurar o abastecimento de matéria-prima em quantidade suficiente, nomeadamente em Portugal;

— Que o resultado da negociação da futura OCM Única não produziu melhorias estruturais para estes refinadores;

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre as medidas que pensa tomar para assegurar novas correntes comerciais que melhorem o abastecimento destas unidades industriais. Em particular, solicito que me informe sobre as medidas que estão previstas para o alargamento das origens preferenciais.

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(29 de janeiro de 2014)

O principal objetivo da política da UE para o setor do açúcar é garantir um abastecimento suficiente do mercado interno, tendo em conta os interesses das diferentes partes envolvidas na respetiva cadeia de abastecimento.

As importações de cana-de-açúcar para refinação têm vindo a aumentar de ano para ano. Desde 2006, a UE aumentou as suas importações de açúcar em bruto para refinação. As importações, que ascendiam a 1,6 milhões de toneladas na campanha de 2005/2006, atingiram na campanha de 2012/2013 o valor sem precedentes de 2,7 milhões de toneladas.

Com base na procura e na oferta atualmente estimadas para 2013/2014, prevê-se que as existências em final de campanha no mercado do açúcar sejam inferiores às de 2011/2012 em pelo menos 250 000 toneladas. Essa previsão poderá conduzir a medidas destinadas a cobrir essa diferença, incluindo novas importações de açúcar em bruto para refinação. O valor apresentado já tem em consideração as importações de países terceiros que beneficiam de determinados novos acordos preferenciais: América Central, Colômbia e Peru. Além disso, a UE está a negociar diversos ACL nos quais o açúcar está a ser objeto de discussão.

Se as quantidades de açúcar se vierem a revelar insuficientes, a UE continuará a adotar as medidas necessárias para assegurar um abastecimento suficiente do mercado da UE, tal como tem feito ao longo das anteriores campanhas de comercialização.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013885/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Imports of sugar cane to supply the refining industry

Further to Question E-007261/2012, regarding the situation of full-time sugar refineries in the EU facing shortages of raw material, and considering:

— The continuing difficulties that full-time sugar cane refineries are facing to secure supplies of sufficient raw material.

— That the results of the negotiation for the future single common market organisation have not led to structural improvements for these refineries.

What measures does the Commission intend to introduce to ensure new commercial flows to improve the supply to these industrial facilities? In particular, what measures are planned for expanding the preferential origins for supplies?

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

The main objective of the EU sugar policy is to guarantee a sufficient supply of the internal market, taking into account the interests of the different stakeholders in the sugar supply chain.

The imports of sugar cane for refining are gradually increasing year by year. Since 2006, the EU has increased raw sugar imports for refining. In marketing year 2005/06 they were 1.6 million tonnes while in 2012/13 they have reached the unprecedented level of 2.7 million tonnes.

Based on the current supply and demand estimates for the 2013/2014 marketing year, ending stocks for the sugar market are expected to be lower by at least 250 000 tonnes compared to 2012/2013. This expectation may lead to measures to cover this gap including additional raw sugar imports. This figure already takes into account the imports from third countries benefiting of certain new preferential agreements: Central America, Colombia and Peru. Furthermore, EU is negotiating several FTA's in which sugar is a subject of discussion.

In case there is not enough sugar the EU will continue to take the necessary measures to secure sufficient supply of sugar to the EU market, as it has done in previous marketing years.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013886/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: Decisão sobre os Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo

Em resposta à pergunta E-011396/2013, datada de 22 de novembro passado, refere-se que «a Comissão decidiu, em 23 de janeiro de 2013, dar início ao procedimento formal de investigação em relação a um certo número de medidas, alegadamente concedidas por Portugal aos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo, S.A. (ENVC) no passado. Desde então, a Comissão teve diversas trocas de correspondência com as autoridades portuguesas e está presentemente a avaliar as informações apresentadas por essas autoridades. Além disso, a Comissão está a acompanhar de perto a mais recente evolução da situação dos ENVC».

Refere-se ainda que «ao avaliar a compatibilidade das medidas, a Comissão terá em conta todas as disposições da UE aplicáveis em matéria de auxílios estatais. No entanto, como já foi mencionado na sua resposta à pergunta E-005205/2013, a Comissão não pode ainda tomar uma posição sobre se as medidas são compatíveis ou incompatíveis com o mercado interno».

Ora, em declarações proferidas hoje na Comissão de Defesa da Assembleia da República, o Ministro da Defesa Nacional afirmou que a Direção-Geral da Concorrência (DG COMP) considera que o montante de 180 milhões de euros não poderá ser juridicamente justificado, e que está, desde há vários meses, a negociar com o Governo português uma solução para contornar essa situação. Afirma mesmo que a DG COMP terá anuído à solução de liquidação da empresa e terá mesmo articulado com o Governo português as soluções concretas para o futuro da mesma.

Em face do exposto e das contradições evidentes, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe do seguinte:

1. Que contactos foram estabelecidos entre a DG COMP e o Governo português sobre os Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo?

2. A DG COMP informou o Governo português de que os montantes em causa constituem ajudas de Estado, incompatíveis com o mercado interno?

3. A DG COMP deu o seu acordo ao atual processo de subconcessão dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(5 de fevereiro de 2014)

Tal como indicado na resposta à pergunta E-011396/2013, a Comissão tem estado em contacto com as autoridades portuguesas no âmbito do processo SA.35546 (2013/C) — Medidas anteriores a favor dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo S.A. (ENVC). Desde o início do procedimento formal de investigação, em 23 de janeiro de 2013, a Comissão e as autoridades portuguesas têm trocado correspondência e organizado várias teleconferências, como em qualquer outro procedimento formal de investigação.

A Comissão apresentou uma súmula da sua avaliação preliminar das medidas de auxílio concedidas no passado aos ENVC na sua decisão de início do procedimento, de 23 de janeiro de 2013. Uma vez que a decisão final ainda não foi adotada, a Comissão não pode, por enquanto, tomar posição sobre se as medidas em apreciação implicam um auxílio estatal e, em caso afirmativo, se tais auxílios são compatíveis ou não com o mercado interno.

A Comissão não avaliou o procedimento de subconcessão.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013886/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Decision about the shipyard Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo

The answer of 22 November 2013 to Question E-011396/2013 states 'the Commission decided on 23 January 2013 to initiate the formal investigation procedure in relation to a number of measures allegedly granted by Portugal to Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo (ENVC) in the past'. Since then, the Commission has had several exchanges of correspondence with the Portuguese authorities and is currently assessing the information submitted. In addition, the Commission is closely following the latest developments in relation to the ENVC.

It also states, 'In assessing the compatibility of the measures, the Commission will have regard to all applicable EU State aid rules. However, as already indicated in its reply to Question E-005205/2013, the Commission cannot yet take a view on whether the measures are compatible or incompatible with the internal market.'

In statements made today before the Assembly of the Republic Defence Committee, the Portuguese Minister of Defence stated that the opinion of the Directorate-General for Competition (DG COMP) is that the sum of EUR 180 million cannot be legally justified, and that it has been negotiating a solution to the problem with the Portuguese Government for some months. He also stated that DG COMP will agree a solution to liquidating the company and will communicate concrete solutions for its future to the Portuguese Government.

1. What contacts were established between DG COMP and the Portuguese Government about the shipyard Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo?

2. Did DG COMP inform the Portuguese Government that the sums involved constitute state aid, that is not compatible with the internal market?

3. Did DG COMP agree to the current sub-concession process for the Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

As already stated in its reply to Question E-011396/2013, the Commission has been in contact with the Portuguese authorities in the context of case SA.35546 (2013/C) — Past measures in favour of Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo S.A. (ENVC). Since the opening of the formal investigation procedure on 23 January 2013, the Commission and the Portuguese authorities have exchanged correspondence and held conference calls on several occasions, as in any other formal investigation procedure.

The Commission outlined its preliminary assessment of the measures granted to ENVC in the past in its opening decision of 23 January 2013. No final decision has been adopted yet and therefore the Commission cannot yet take a view on whether the measures under assessment entail state aid and, if so, whether they would be compatible or not with the internal market.

The Commission has not assessed the sub-concession procedure.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-013890/13
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 de dezembro de 2013)

Assunto: Proposta de programa cautelar para a Irlanda

No contexto do término do programa de intervenção UE-FMI na Irlanda, solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre qual o conteúdo e condições do programa cautelar proposto para este país e que acabou por ser rejeitado pelas suas autoridades, que abdicaram assim de qualquer programa deste tipo.

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(6 de fevereiro de 2014)

Durante as missões periódicas de avaliação, a Comissão Europeia, na qualidade de membro da Troica, debateu com as autoridades irlandesas as opções para uma saída bem sucedida do programa de assistência. Neste contexto, a Troica forneceu informações sobre os diferentes critérios de elegibilidade a respeitar para se aceder aos instrumentos do MEE e do FMI pós-programa, de acordo com as respetivas diretrizes. A decisão final sobre a adoção ou não de um programa cautelar foi das autoridades irlandesas, que optaram por não aderir.

No que respeita aos instrumentos europeus, e segundo as diretrizes do MEE, as negociações sobre as condicionalidades políticas de um programa cautelar só podem encetar-se após o Estado-Membro o ter solicitado formalmente. Uma vez que não houve um pedido oficial, não houve nenhuma negociação sobre o conteúdo do programa nem sobre as condicionalidades políticas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013890/13
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(5 December 2013)

Subject: Proposed precautionary credit facility for Ireland

As the EU-IMF intervention programme in Ireland comes to an end, can the Commission provide details of the content and conditions of the precautionary credit facility proposed for the country which its authorities have rejected, and have declined to enter any such facility?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

During the regular review missions, the European Commission, as part of the Troika, has discussed with the Irish authorities the options for a successful exit. In this context, the Troika has provided information concerning the various eligibility criteria that are to be met to qualify for ESM and the IMF post-programme instruments according to the respective guidelines. The final decision on whether to have a follow-on precautionary arrangement has been with the Irish authorities, and they have decided not to ask for one.

As regards the European instruments, and according to ESM guidelines, negotiations on policy conditionality for a precautionary programme can only occur after the concerned Member State formally requests such an arrangement. Since there was no official request, no negotiations on programme content and policy conditionality have taken place.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-013891/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Rafforzamento di sinergie scientifiche tra i paesi dell'UE e i paesi del Mediterraneo

Nella metà degli anni '90 l'Unione europea ha avviato, con la Conferenza di Barcellona del 1995, una politica di vicinato con la quale si propone di includere tutto il Mediterraneo nel quadro delle relazioni privilegiate europee e di promuovere l'integrazione economica e politica tra le due sponde.

Mediante il Partenariato euromediterraneo, che coinvolgeva tutti i membri dell'UE di allora e i seguenti paesi terzi: Algeria, Cipro, Egitto, Israele, Giordania, Libano, Malta, Marocco, Siria, Tunisia, Turchia e Autorità Palestinese, si intendeva sviluppare la cooperazione multilaterale in tre dimensioni: politica, economico-finanziaria e socio-culturale.

Dalla Dichiarazione di Barcellona ad oggi molte cose sono cambiate: due paesi terzi firmatari degli accordi (Cipro e Malta) sono divenuti membri dell'Unione europea, la Turchia ha ottenuto lo status di candidato e numerosi Stati hanno vissuto delle trasformazioni radicali che non accadevano dalla fine del colonialismo.

Nel corso dei decenni l'UE si è dotata di vari strumenti finanziari quali MEDA e ENPI, tesi a realizzare gli obiettivi stabiliti dal Partenariato, e nuovi canali di finanziamento saranno garantiti nel settennio prossimo.

La cooperazione transnazionale in ambito scientifico rappresenta una delle priorità che l'Unione europea intende perseguire, come testimoniato dalla volontà di creare uno spazio unico di ricerca e dai cospicui investimenti che saranno dispiegati mediante il programma Horizon 2020.

In tale ambito, la Commissione intende favorire la mobilità dei ricercatori e la costruzione di reti mondiali che possano permettere agli istituti di ricerca di tutti i paesi terzi di accedere ai programmi in materia di R&S.

Numerose società hanno perseguito nel corso degli anni finalità scientifiche tese a rafforzare la cooperazione con la sponda sud del Mediterraneo e tra queste la Società Internazionale di Patologia e Chirurgia Vascolare Latino Mediterranea (SOPACHIVALAME), che ha come obiettivo di rafforzare le collaborazioni.

Considerato quanto precede, quali azioni intende intraprendere l'UE per promuovere il rafforzamento di sinergie scientifiche tra i paesi dell'UE e i paesi del Mediterraneo? Attraverso quali canali di finanziamento potrà realizzarsi uno scambio di «best practice» tra i due mondi scientifici?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(17 gennaio 2014)

Nell'ambito degli ultimi inviti a presentare proposte del 7° PQ ([1]), nel 2013 sono stati avviati diversi nuovi progetti rivolti ai paesi del Mediterraneo meridionale, in particolare attraverso azioni regionali, ad esempio il progetto INCO-Net MEDSPRING (Mediterranean Science, Policy, Research and Innovation Gateway ([2])) e il progetto ERANETMED ([3]), intesi a intensificare il coordinamento tra i programmi di ricerca nazionali degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea, dei paesi associati e dei paesi partner del Mediterraneo.

Di recente sono stati anche avviati progetti R2I (Research to Innovation) volti a colmare il divario tra ricerca e innovazione. Nel novembre 2013 ha avuto luogo una prima riunione di coordinamento tra i 13 progetti R2I selezionati a seguito dell'ultimo invito a presentare proposte FP7-INCO del 2013 (di cui sei concernenti la regione del Mediterraneo meridionale).

Inoltre, nell'ambito dell'ultimo invito a presentare proposte del 7° PQ, alcuni programmi tematici hanno avviato azioni di cooperazione nel campo della ricerca rivolte ai paesi del Mediterraneo meridionale e riguardanti i seguenti settori: energia, salute, ambiente, trasporto e scienze sociali e umane.

I primi inviti a presentare proposte nell'ambito del programma Orizzonte 2020, pubblicati l'11 dicembre 2013, riguardano una serie di tematiche di ricerca che toccano da vicino la regione del Mediterraneo meridionale, ad esempio nel campo dell'ambiente, della ricerca agronomica, dell'osservazione della Terra e delle infrastrutture di ricerca, nonché azioni a sostegno del dialogo con il Medio Oriente e il Mediterraneo meridionale sulle politiche relative a scienza, tecnologia e innovazione.

([1]) Settimo programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013).
([2]) http://www.medspring.eu/
([3]) http://www.eranetmed.eu/

Nel contesto delle azioni a favore della mobilità previste da Orizzonte 2020, il programma RISE (R&I Staff Exchange), successore del programma IRSES sostenuto nell'ambito del 7° PQ, consente scambi internazionali di personale altamente qualificato nel campo della ricerca e dell'innovazione. Gli scambi con istituti extraeuropei offrono grande flessibilità in quanto possono essere sia intersettoriali (scambi tra mondo accademico e mondo non accademico) sia intrasettoriali.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013891/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Closer scientific collaboration between EU and Mediterranean countries

With the 1995 Barcelona Conference, the European Union launched a neighbourhood policy seeking to encompass the entire Mediterranean area in European privileged partnership arrangements and promote economic and political integration between the two sides.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, encompassing all EU Members at the time, together with Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority, was intended to develop multilateral cooperation in three directions: political, economic and financial and socio-cultural.

Since the Barcelona Declaration, much has changed. Two of the third countries signatory to the Agreement (Cyprus and Malta) have become EU Member States, while Turkey has obtained candidate status and numerous other countries have undergone the most radical transformation since the end of the colonialist era.

Over the decades, the EU has sought to achieve partnership objectives through the adoption of financial instruments such as the MEDA programme and the ENPI, with further sources of funding to be secured over the next seven years.

One of the EU priorities for the future is cross-border scientific cooperation, as evidenced by its efforts to create a single research area and the substantial investment earmarked for this project under the Horizon 2020 programme.

In this context, the Commission intends to encourage the mobility of researchers and the development of international networks enabling research institutes from all third countries to access R&B programmes.

Many companies have over the years been seeking to forge closer scientific links with southern Mediterranean organisations, including the Southern Mediterranean Society for Pathology and Vascular Surgery (SOPACHIVALAME).

In view of this, what action will the EU take to promote closer scientific collaboration between EU Member States and Mediterranean countries? What funding can be provided for exchanges of best practice between the two scientific communities?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(17 January 2014)

Several new projects under the FP7 ([1]) last calls have been launched in 2013 targeting the Southern Mediterranean, in particular through regional actions, such as the INCO-Net project MEDSPRING (Mediterranean Science, Policy, Research and Innovation Gateway ([2])) and the ERANETMED project ([3]) aiming at increasing the coordination amongst the European Member States, the Associated Countries and the Mediterranean Partner Countries' national research programmes.

R2I Research to Innovation projects on bridging the gap between research and innovation also started recently. A first coordination meeting between the 13 R2I projects selected following the last FP7 INCO Call 2013 (amongst them six projects in the Southern Med region) took place in November 2013.

In addition, in the last FP7 call, some thematic programmes launched research collaborative actions targeted to Southern Mediterranean countries in the fields of energy, health, environment, transport and social sciences and humanities.

The first Horizon 2020 calls published on 11 December 2013 include a number of research topics of direct interest to the Southern Mediterranean region such as in the areas of environment, agronomic research, earth observation, research infrastructures as well as action in support of STI policy dialogue with the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean.

Within the Mobility part of H2020, the R&I Staff Exchange programme (RISE, successor to the FP7 supported IRSES programme) allows international exchanges of highly skilled research and innovation staff. Exchanges with institutions from outside Europe are very flexible as they can be both inter-sector (e.g. Academia ↔Non Academia) and within the same sector.

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([2]) http://www.medspring.eu/
([3]) http://www.eranetmed.eu/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-013893/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(6 décembre 2013)

Objet: La Commission européenne et l'espionnage américain

Depuis le mois de juillet, j'interroge régulièrement la Commission quant à l'espionnage pratiqué par les États-Unis contre l'Union européenne. Ses réponses alambiquées sont révélatrices de son impuissance face aux États-Unis.

Alors que je lui demande quelles ont été les réponses du ministre américain de la justice aux demandes de clarification sur les programmes d'espionnage américains, voici sa réponse: «M. Holder a fourni des éclaircissements et proposé de fournir des informations complémentaires au niveau des experts».

Mais quelles sont précisément ces éclaircissements? M. Holder a-t-il réellement fourni des informations? Et à quels experts?

La Commission semble tout de même se préoccuper de cette situation. «En outre, la Commission a mis en place, conjointement avec la présidence du Conseil de l'UE, un groupe de travail ad hoc entre l'UE et les États-Unis afin d'examiner ces questions de manière plus approfondie. Ce groupe s'est réuni à trois reprises, en juillet, septembre et novembre. Sur la base des informations recueillies, la Commission fera rapport au Parlement européen et au Conseil». Mais tout cela paraît bien faible face aux actes mis en cause. Par ailleurs les parlementaires attendent toujours le rapport de la Commission à ce sujet. Quand ce rapport nous sera-t-il transmis?

Mme Reding conclut en indiquant qu'elle «a fait passer le message selon lequel l'Union européenne entend être traitée comme le partenaire stratégique qu'elle est, et non pas comme une cible». Mme Reding considère-t-elle qu'en nous espionnant et en refusant de donner des éclaircissements, les États-Unis traitent l'Union comme un partenaire stratégique?

Réponse donnée par Mme Reding au nom de la Commission
(14 février 2014)

Le groupe de travail ad hoc UE-États-Unis a été créé en juillet 2013, des médias ayant affirmé que les autorités américaines accédaient aux données des Européens en utilisant les grands prestataires de services en ligne américains et traitaient ces données, à grande échelle ([1]). Du côté des États-Unis, les participants à ce groupe étaient de hauts fonctionnaires du Département de la justice, du Bureau du directeur du renseignement national, du Département d'État et du Département de la sécurité intérieure, qui ont fourni des éclaircissements sur les questions posées.

Les résultats des discussions du groupe de travail ad hoc sont présentés dans le rapport relatif aux conclusions des coprésidents de l'UE du groupe de travail ad hoc UE-États-Unis sur la protection des données ([2]). Ce rapport inclut les éclaircissements et informations complémentaires fournis par les États-Unis et explicite le cadre juridique américain en la matière. Le 27 novembre 2013, la Commission a publié une communication au Parlement européen et au Conseil intitulée «Rétablir la confiance dans les flux de données entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis d'Amérique» ([3]), ainsi qu'une communication relative au fonctionnement de la sphère de sécurité du point de vue des citoyens de l'Union et des entreprises établies sur son territoire ([4]).

Ces documents décrivent dans les grandes lignes la position et les attentes de la Commission dans l'optique d'un rétablissement de la confiance dans les flux transatlantiques. La Commission tient un dialogue permanent avec les États-Unis sur cette question, notamment dans le cadre des négociations sur un accord global sur la protection des données et le respect de la vie privée dans le domaine répressif.

([1]) Il avait pour objectif d'établir les principaux éléments concernant les programmes de surveillance américains, ainsi que leur impact sur les droits fondamentaux dans l'UE et les données à caractère personnel des citoyens européens.
([2]) Disponible (en anglais) à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/report-findings-of-the-ad-hoc-eu-us-working-group-on-data-protection.pdf
([3]) COM(2013)846.
([4]) COM(2013)847.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013893/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: The European Commission and espionage by the United States

I have submitted regular questions to the Commission since July about the United States' spying on the European Union. Its convoluted answers are indicative of its inability to take any action against the United States.

When I asked the Commission how the US Ministry of Justice had responded to the request for clarification regarding US espionage programmes, it answered, 'Mr Holder provided clarifications and offered to provide further information at expert level.'

What was the exact nature of these clarifications? Did Mr Holder really provide any information? If so, to which experts?

The Commission does nevertheless appear to be concerned about the situation, since it stated that, 'In addition, the Commission has set up, together with the Presidency of the Council of the EU, an ad-hoc EU-US working group to examine these issues further. This working group has met three times, in July, September and November. Based on the information gathered, the Commission will report back to the European Parliament and the Council.' In view of what is at stake, however, this response appears wholly inadequate. What is more, MEPs are still waiting for the Commission to report back to them. When will this happen?

Ms Reding concluded her answer by saying that she has, 'conveyed the message that the EU expects to be treated as the strategic partner that it is, not as a target.' Does Ms Reding believe that the US is treating the EU like a strategic partner by spying on us and refusing to provide us with clarifications?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

The ad hoc EU-US Working Group was set up in July 2013 to examine the issues raised by media reports that US authorities are accessing and processing, on a large scale, the data of Europeans using major US online service providers ([1]). In the group participated, on the US side, senior officials from the Department of Justice, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the State Department and the Department of Homeland Security who provided clarifications on questions raised.

The outcome of the discussions of the ad hoc EU-US Working Group is presented in the report on the findings by the EU Co-chairs of the ad hoc EU-US Working Group on Data Protection ([2]). The report includes the clarifications and further information given by the US, while shedding light on the US legal framework in this field. On 27 November 2013, the Commission published a communication to the European Parliament and the Council on Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows ([3]) as well as a communication on the functioning of the Safe Harbour from the perspective of EU citizens and companies established in the EU ([4]).

These papers outline the Commission position and expectations in a bid to restore trust in transatlantic flows. The Commission has an ongoing dialogue with the US on this issue, including in the framework of the negotiations for a comprehensive data protection and privacy agreement in the field of law enforcement.

([1]) Its purpose was to establish the facts about US surveillance programmes and their impact on fundamental rights in the EU and personal data of EU citizens.
([2]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/report-findings-of-the-ad-hoc-eu-us-working-group-on-data-protection.pdf
([3]) COM(2013) 846.
([4]) COM(2013) 847.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013894/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Προβλήματα ατόμων με αναπηρίες στην Κύπρο

Η Κυπριακή Συνομοσπονδία Οργανώσεων Αναπήρων (ΚΥΣΟΑ), με την ευκαιρία της 3ης Δεκεμβρίου, Διεθνούς Ημέρας των Ατόμων με Αναπηρίες, εκράζει έντονη αντίδραση για τις συνέπειες της εφαρμογής του Μνημονίου στην Κύπρο. Καταγγέλλει, μεταξύ άλλων, σημαντικές περικοπές στις κοινωνικές δαπάνες, περιλαμβανομένων των ατομικών και κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών, σχεδίων και παροχών προς τις ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες. Επικαλούμενη τη Σύμβαση του Οργανισμού Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα Δικαιώματα των Ατόμων με Αναπηρίες, προειδοποιεί:

«υψώνουμε φωνή διαμαρτυρίας για την τραγική θέση στην οποία έχουμε περιέλθει και διακηρύττουμε ότι δεν θα πληρώσουμε εμείς, τα άτομα με αναπηρία και οι οικογένειές μας, την κρίση, για την οποία δεν ευθυνόμαστε.»

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί εύλογες τις διαμαρτυρίες της ΚΥΣΟΑ;

2. Θα μπορούσαν να γίνουν ειδικές διευθετήσεις στα πλαίσια του Μνημονίου για εξαίρεση των ατόμων με αναπηρία από τις περικοπές των παροχών;

3. Με ποιους τρόπους θα μπορούσε να βοηθήσει για τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής των ατόμων με αναπηρία στην Κύπρο;

4. Υπάρχουν συγκεκριμένα ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα/κονδύλια που θα μπορούσαν να βοηθήσουν τα άτομα με αναπηρία να αντιμετωπίσουν τις συνέπειες της κρίσης και τις περικοπές του Μνημονίου;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει την αξιότιμη κ. βουλευτή στην απάντησή της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-010955/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013894/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Problems faced by disabled people in Cyprus

On the occasion of 3 December — the International Day of Persons with Disabilities — the Cyprus Confederation of Organisations of the Disabled (CCOD) has spoken out strongly about the consequences of the implementation of the Memorandum in Cyprus. Among other things, it has protested about the major cuts to social expenditure, including individual and social services, and programmes and benefits for vulnerable social groups. Invoking the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it stated that:

'we raise our voices in protest against the tragic situation in which we find ourselves, and we declare that we — people with disabilities and their families — will not pay for a crisis for which we are not responsible.'

1. Does the Commission consider the protests of the CCOD to be justified?

2. Could there be special arrangements within the framework of the Memorandum to exempt persons with disabilities from benefit cuts?

3. In what ways could it help to improve quality of life for persons with disabilities in Cyprus?

4. Are there any specific European programmes or funds that might help persons with disabilities to cope with the consequences of the crisis and the Memorandum cuts?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010955/2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013895/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Υπέρογκες διατραπεζικές προμήθειες στις κάρτες πληρωμής

Στο μανιφέστο της για τις επικείμενες ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές, η HOTREC, οργάνωση εκπροσώπησης του κλάδου φιλοξενίας στην ΕΕ, εγείρει το ζήτημα των υπέρογκων διατραπεζικών προμηθειών στις κάρτες πληρωμής.

1. Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με την άποψη της HOTREC ότι οι διατραπεζικές προμήθειες παραβιάζουν τη νομοθεσία περί ανταγωνισμού, αυξάνουν τις τιμές και υπερβαίνουν κατά πολύ το πραγματικό κόστος που εμπεριέχει η επεξεργασία των καρτών;

2. Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με την πρόταση της HOTREC για απαγόρευση των διατραπεζικών προμηθειών για τις χρεωστικές κάρτες και καθιέρωση ανώτατου ορίου για τις πιστωτικές κάρτες;

3. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει δράση προκειμένου να μειωθούν οι διατραπεζικές προμήθειες και να ενισχυθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα του ευρωπαϊκού κλάδου φιλοξενίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή και οι αρχές ανταγωνισμού των κρατών μελών ασχολούνται με το θέμα των διατραπεζικών προμηθειών στις κάρτες πληρωμής επί εικοσαετία και πλέον. Η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε πολλές αποφάσεις στο πλαίσιο των αντιμονοπωλιακών κανόνων της ΕΕ, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της απόφασης MasterCard του Δεκεμβρίου του 2007. Η απόφαση του Γενικού Δικαστηρίου της ΕΕ του Μαΐου του 2012 στην υπόθεση MasterCard ([1]) επιβεβαίωσε την εκτίμηση της Επιτροπής σύμφωνα με την οποία οι πολυμερείς διατραπεζικές προμήθειες περιορίζουν τον ανταγωνισμό και δεν δικαιολογούνται επαρκώς από την άποψη δυνητικών οφελών για τους εμπόρους και τους καταναλωτές. Η MasterCard άσκησε έφεση κατά της απόφασης.

Τον Ιούλιο του 2013, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε επίσης κανονισμό σχετικά με τις διατραπεζικές προμήθειες για τις πληρωμές με κάρτα, ο οποίος προβλέπει, μεταξύ άλλων, ανώτατα όρια 0,2% και 0,3% ανά συναλλαγή όσον αφορά τις διατραπεζικές προμήθειες που ισχύουν αντιστοίχως για τις καταναλωτικές χρεωστικές και πιστωτικές κάρτες, με ετεροχρονισμένη εφαρμογή έπειτα από δύο έτη για τις εγχώριες συναλλαγές έναντι των διασυνοριακών συναλλαγών.

Τα ανώτατα όρια καθορίζονται σύμφωνα με τα τα επίπεδα που προτείνονται από τα συστήματα ([2]) στο πλαίσιο των διαδικασιών ανταγωνισμού και γίνονται αποδεκτά από τις αρχές ανταγωνισμού χωρίς να απαιτούνται περαιτέρω ενέργειες. Τα εν λόγω επίπεδα βασίζονται στη «δοκιμή του αδιάφορου εμπόρου», η οποία προσδιορίζει το επίπεδο προμήθειας συγκρίνοντας τα καθαρά συναλλακτικά οφέλη που εισπράττει ο έμπορος με και χωρίς τη χρήση κάρτας πληρωμών. Παρόλο που κατά την αξιολόγηση επιπτώσεων εξετάστηκε το ενδεχόμενο κατάργησης των διατραπεζικών προμηθειών για τις χρεωστικές κάρτες, η Επιτροπή έκρινε ότι η ωριμότητα των ευρωπαϊκών αγορών όσον αφορά την έκδοση και χορήγηση χρεωστικών καρτών θα πρέπει να εξεταστεί διεξοδικότερα πριν προωθηθεί περαιτέρω αυτή η επιλογή.

Όπως αναλύεται στην αξιολόγηση επιπτώσεων, η άμεση εξοικονόμηση πόρων από τα ανώτατα όρια εκτιμάται σε 6 δισεκατ. ευρώ. Ως εκ τούτου, ο κανονισμός περί διατραπεζικών προμηθειών αναμένεται να συμβάλει στην ανταγωνιστικότητα του ευρωπαϊκού κλάδου φιλοξενίας και εν τέλει να ωφελήσει τους καταναλωτές.

([1]) T-111/08.
([2]) Visa Europe, MasterCard, Groupement des Cartes Bancaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013895/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Excessive interchange fees on payment cards

In its manifesto for the forthcoming European elections, HOTREC, an organisation representing the hospitality industry in the EU, raises the problem of excessive interchange fees (IFs) on payment cards.

1. Does the Commission agree with HOTREC's view that IFs violate competition law, increase prices and are well above the real costs involved in processing cards?

2. Does the Commission agree with HOTREC's recommendation that IFs should be banned for debit cards and capped for credit cards?

3. Does the Commission intend to take any action with a view to bringing down IFs and boosting the competitiveness of the European hospitality industry?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

The Commission and National Competition Authorities have been dealing with interchange fees on payment cards for more than twenty years. The Commission has adopted several decisions under EU antitrust rules, including the MasterCard Decision of December 2007. The MasterCard judgment ([1]) of the EU General Court of May 2012 confirmed the Commission's assessment that the collectively agreed interbank fees restrict competition and lacked justification in terms of benefits for merchants and consumers. MasterCard has appealed the judgment.

The Commission also proposed in July 2013 a regulation on interchange fees for card payments including caps of 0.2% and 0.3% per transaction for interchange fees applicable to consumer debit and credit cards respectively, with a deferred application of two years for domestic as opposed to cross-border transactions.

The cap levels take into account the levels proposed by schemes ([2]) in competition proceedings and accepted by the competition authorities as not requiring further action. They are based on the 'Merchant Indifference Test', which identifies the fee level where a merchant receives net transactional benefits from a customer's use of a payment card compared to non-card payments. Although eliminating interchange fees for debit cards was examined in the impact assessment, the Commission considered that the maturity of European markets as regards issuing and acquiring of debit cards must be examined in more depth before such an option is put forward.

As further detailed in the impact assessment, direct savings from the caps are estimated at EUR 6 billion. The interchange fees regulation will thus contribute to the competitiveness of the European hospitality industry, and ultimately benefit consumers.

([1]) T-111/08.
([2]) Visa Europe, MasterCard, Groupement des cartes bancaires.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013896/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικά καταλύματα στον τουρισμό: ανάγκη για ίσους όρους ανταγωνισμού για όλους τους ενδιαφερόμενους

Σύμφωνα με την HOTREC, την οργάνωση εκπροσώπησης του ευρωπαϊκού κλάδου φιλοξενίας, «ο διαρκώς αυξανόμενος αριθμός ιδιοκτητών οι οποίοι ενοικιάζουν ιδιωτικά διαμερίσματα και εξοχικές κατοικίες ως τουριστικά καταλύματα, ιδίως μέσω διαδικτυακών διαύλων διάθεσης, και χωρίς να τηρούνται πάντα οι κανονισμοί που ισχύουν στον τομέα της φιλοξενίας, αποτελεί απειλή για την προστασία των καταναλωτών και τις θέσεις εργασίας στον ξενοδοχειακό κλάδο».

Η Επιτροπή καλείται να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα ερωτήματα:

1. Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή ότι ένας αυξανόμενος αριθμός ιδιοκτητών οι οποίοι ενοικιάζουν ιδιωτικά διαμερίσματα και εξοχικές κατοικίες δεν τηρούν τους κανονισμούς που ισχύουν στον τομέα της φιλοξενίας στην Ευρώπη, όπως ορίζει το μανιφέστο της HOTREC;

2. Εάν ναι, ποιοι κανονισμοί παραβιάζονται;

3. Σκοπεύει η Επιτροπή να αναλάβει δράση προκειμένου να θέσει τέλος σε αυτές τις παραβάσεις και να προστατέψει τους ευρωπαίους καταναλωτές;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Το μανιφέστο της HOTREC δεν προσδιορίζει συγκεκριμένους κανόνες της ΕΕ που ισχύουν για τον κλάδο φιλοξενίας με τους οποίους εικάζεται ότι δεν συμμορφώνονται οι ιδιοκτήτες που ενοικιάζουν ιδιωτικά διαμερίσματα και εξοχικές κατοικίες και δεν περιλαμβάνει καμία πληροφορία σχετικά με πιθανές παραβάσεις συγκεκριμένων μέσων της ΕΕ για την προστασία των καταναλωτών. Σε αυτή τη βάση, η Επιτροπή δεν είναι σε θέση να εξετάσει τη σκοπιμότητα ανάληψης δράσης.

Σε γενικές γραμμές, οι κανόνες προστασίας των καταναλωτών της ΕΕ που αφορούν τις συμβάσεις και την εμπορία, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των οδηγιών 2011/83/ΕΕ ([1]) σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα των καταναλωτών, 2005/29/ΕΚ ([2]) για τις αθέμιτες εμπορικές πρακτικές των επιχειρήσεων προς τους καταναλωτές στην εσωτερική αγορά, καθώς και της οδηγίας 93/13/ΕΟΚ ([3]) για τις καταχρηστικές ρήτρες σε καταναλωτικές συμβάσεις, ισχύουν μόνο για τις σχέσεις επιχειρήσεων-καταναλωτών. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι το ένα μέρος πρέπει να είναι έμπορος, δηλ. κάποιος που ενεργεί για σκοπούς οι οποίοι σχετίζονται με την εμπορική, επιχειρηματική, βιοτεχνική ή επαγγελματική του δραστηριότητα. Η οδηγία 2008/122/ΕΚ ([4]) για ορισμένες πτυχές της χρονομεριστικής μίσθωσης, των μακροπρόθεσμων προϊόντων διακοπών, της μεταπώλησης και της ανταλλαγής ρυθμίζει ένα διαφορετικό θέμα και η οδηγία 90/314/ΕΟΚ ([5]) για τα οργανωμένα ταξίδια και τις οργανωμένες διακοπές και περιηγήσεις· εφαρμόζεται αποκλειστικά σε συνδυασμούς διαφορετικών ταξιδιωτικών υπηρεσιών.

([1]) ΕΕ L 304 της 22.11.2011, σ. 64-88.
([2]) ΕΕ L 149 της 11.6.2005, σ. 22-39.
([3]) ΕΕ L 95 της 21.4.1993, σ. 29-34.
([4]) ΕΕ L 33 της 3.2.2009, σ. 10-30.
([5]) ΕΕ L 158 της 23.6.1990, σ. 59-64.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013896/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Private accommodation in tourism: need for level playing field for all participants

According to HOTREC, the representative organisation of the European hospitality industry, 'The ever increasing number of owners renting private apartments and holiday homes as tourist accommodation, especially through online distribution channels, and without always having to abide by the regulations applying to the hospitality sector, constitutes a threat to consumer protection and to jobs in the hotel industry.'

The Commission is asked to respond to the following:

1. Does it agree that an increasing number of owners renting private apartments and holiday homes do not abide by the regulations applying to the hospitality sector in Europe, as stated in HOTREC's manifesto?

2. If so, which regulations are being breached?

3. Does the Commission intend to take action to halt these infractions and protect European consumers?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

HOTREC's manifesto does not identify specific EU rules applying to the hospitality sector which owners renting private apartments and holiday homes allegedly do not abide by and does not contain any information on possible infringements of specific EU consumer protection instruments. On this basis the Commission is unable to consider any action.

Generally speaking EU consumer protection rules relating to contracts and marketing, including Directives 2011/83/EU ([1]) on consumer rights, 2005/29/EC ([2]) concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and Directive 93/13/EEC ([3]) on unfair terms in consumer contracts apply only to business-to-consumer relationships. This means that one party has to be a trader, i.e. somebody who is acting for purposes relating to his trade, business, craft or profession. Directive 2008/122/EC ([4]) on certain aspects of timeshare, long-term holiday product, resale and exchange contracts regulates a different subject-matter and Directive 90/314/EEC ([5]) on package travel, package holidays and package tours applies exclusively to combinations of different travel services.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 64-88.
([2]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22-39.
([3]) OJ L 95, 21.4.1993, p. 29-34.
([4]) OJ L 33, 3.2.2009, p. 10-30.
([5]) OJ L 158, 23.6.1990, p. 59-64.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013898/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: TV rights

In 2001 the Commission expressed its objections to UEFA's arrangements for the selling of rights to televise the UEFA Champions League. It said that selling the rights 'on an exclusive basis to a single broadcaster per territory for a period lasting several years may be incompatible with European Commission competition law' ([1]).

In 2005 the Commission required the FA Premier League to end their practice of selling live rights to a sole broadcaster under Treaty competition rules on restrictive business practices ([2]).

Television company BT has secured exclusive rights from UEFA to televise all live UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League football matches in the UK for three seasons from 2015, i.e. some 350 games.

Previously UEFA had awarded 'packages' of rights to competing broadcasters in the UK. This is the first time one broadcaster has secured all the available live packages.

Has the Commission made any assessment of whether the BT-UEFA deal is compatible with European Union law?

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

The Commission follows closely the developments in the broadcasting markets in the European Union. In past cases (concerning the UEFA Champions League ([3]), Bundesliga ([4]), the FA Premier League ([5])), the Commission investigated joint selling of football media rights and accepted such arrangements after certain case-by-case modifications and commitments offered by the leagues. In FA Premier League, the Premier League offered, *inter alia*, commitments involving e.g. short duration of the contracts, selling the rights in separate rights packages and a transparent bidding procedure. Due to the special circumstances of the UK market no single buyer was allowed to buy all the live rights packages. [The commitments were binding on the FA Premier League until 30 June 2013.]

The Commission has not made an assessment of the agreements between UEFA and BT as a matter of course because undertakings no longer notify their agreements to the Commission. It should also be noted that national competition authorities can directly apply EU competition law when a competition issue has principally a national dimension. If such assessment were to be made, all relevant factors would be taken into consideration, including the importance of the Champions League rights in the UK and the market position of the parties in question. For example, in FA Premier League, the Commission took into consideration BSkyB's strong market power and vertical integration, and the particular importance of Premier League matches in the UK market.

([1]) IP/01/1043.
([2]) IP/05/1441.
([3]) Case 37398, UEFA Champions league of 23 July 2003, OJ 2003 L 291/25.
([4]) Case 37214, Bundesliga of 19 January 2005, OJ 2005 L 134/46.
([5]) FA Premier League of 22 March 2006, OJ 2008 C 7/18.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013899/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: State aid and the UK Carbon Price Floor

As the Commission recognises, it is vital to provide compensation for costs associated with decarbonisation policies in order to protect energy-intensive industries that are at risk of carbon leakage. While compensation has been approved by the Commission for industries facing indirect costs associated with the EU ETS, the UK Government has not yet been notified whether the Commission will allow compensation for the UK Carbon Price Floor. Several UK companies have expressed serious concerns about delays in approving this compensation, which is having a negative impact on businesses.

In light of the above, could the Commission clarify the following:

What is the timeline for approving compensation for the UK Carbon Price Floor? Has a timetable for notification been agreed with the UK Government?

Will compensation be backdated to cover the costs of the Carbon Price Floor, which entered into force in April 2013?

Are there any obstacles delaying approval or the backdating of compensation for the Carbon Price Floor that need to be addressed?

Does the Commission intend to approve compensation for the UK Carbon Price Floor under the existing state aid guidelines?

If not, will the new state aid guidelines be designed to ensure that compensation can be provided for the UK Carbon Price Floor, and will this be backdated?

Does the Commission recognise the need to compensate energy-intensive industries for cumulative costs associated with the full range of decarbonisation policies rather than just renewable subsidies, and will this be explicitly permitted in the new state aid guidelines?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

The ETS Guidelines ([1]) recognise the need to prevent carbon leakage in the EU and to allow aid to that end. Public consultation on a draft text of the Energy and Environmental Aid Guidelines (EEAG), which are to replace the current Environmental Aid Guidelines (EAG), was launched on 18 December 2013 ([2]). It includes rules which provide a legal basis to allow compensation for the costs deriving from renewable support. The published version of these Guidelines indicates how the Commission may assess the compensation of energy-intensive industries in the future. The publication is meant to gather comments from stakeholders.

Against this background, the Commission and the UK Government are discussing in detail the planned measures compensating energy-intensive users for the indirect costs imposed by the Carbon Price Floor. In order to establish legal certainty for the potential beneficiaries as quickly as possible, the Commission and the UK authorities are treating this case with high priority.

The ETS Guidelines and EAG do not contain specific criteria for compatibility of this type of measure. The current draft EEAG include provisions for the assessment of similar measures in Section 5.6. Concerning the application *ratione temporis* of the draft Guidelines, Section 7 of the draft Guidelines provides proposed rules on applicability of the new Guidelines.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:158:0004:0022:EN:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_state_aid_environment/index_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013900/13
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Environmental support for Turkish Cypriots

Will the Commission state in what ways it has supported improvements for Turkish Cypriots in the fields of public health, food safety and the environment, and what projects, if any, it is minded to support?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

Since 2006, the European Commission has been implementing an Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community under Council Regulation 389/2006 with the overall objective to facilitate the reunification of Cyprus by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community.

The Commission annually reports to the Council and the European Parliament on the implementation of the regulation, and the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the Seventh Annual Report as a departure point. ([1]) Further information can also be found in the latest brochure on EU assistance to the Turkish Cypriot community. ([2])

Between 2006 and the end of 2013, EUR 337 million was programmed for operations under the Aid Regulation (excluding support and logistics). The area of intervention is very broad and includes considerable input on water, wastewater, solid waste management, nature protection, air quality and on plant and animal health, all with the aim of achieving standards equivalent to those required by the *acquis*. Health is not a prominent topic in the assistance programme since it is not emphasised in the aid regulation.

([1]) COM(2013) 332
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/20121128_assistance_to_tcc_brochure.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013902/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Informe de la OCDE sobre información fiscal

El pasado 22 de noviembre, el Foro Mundial sobre la transparencia y el intercambio de informaciones fiscales, creado en el marco de la OCDE, publicó un informe relativo a la aplicación conforme de las normas de transparencia y de intercambio de información fiscal en cincuenta países. El informe evalúa la conformidad del marco legal y reglamentario y la aplicación eficaz de las normas fiscales globales. Estos informes incluyen notas relativas a la disponibilidad, el acceso y el intercambio de información.

La clasificación revela las deficiencias de tres Estados miembros de la UE que han recibido la notación de «no conformidad» en dos casos (Chipre y Luxemburgo) y la de «parcialmente conforme» en un caso. Particularmente, el Gran Ducado de Luxemburgo y Chipre presentan carencias en relación con la disponibilidad de información sobre la propiedad de las cuentas bancarias, con la facilidad de acceso a la información y con los instrumentos de intercambio de información. En menor medida, Austria también presenta elementos no conformes con los estándares establecidos.

A la luz de la información revelada en dicho informe, pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión que tres Estados miembros presenten deficiencias en sus ordenamientos jurídicos y sean considerados no conformes con las normas internacionales de transparencia e intercambio de información fiscal?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión tomar medidas para corregir la situación y evitar la competencia desleal en materia fiscal que existe en el seno de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de febrero de 2014)

1. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-013254/2013. Tal y como ya se ha afirmado, la Comisión apoya sin reservas la labor del Foro Mundial en materia de promoción de buena gobernanza fiscal internacional y ha tomado nota de los resultados de los análisis de la fase 2 correspondientes a una serie de Estados de la UE, que cubren el período hasta mediados de 2012. Ahora es importante estudiar las razones que llevaron al Foro Mundial a considerar que algunos Estados miembros de la UE no cumplían o incumplían parcialmente las normas internacionales, así como los progresos registrados por esos países para abordar las insuficiencias detectadas.

2. La Comisión está comprometida con la lucha contra el fraude y la evasión fiscales y la promoción de niveles de buena gobernanza en asuntos fiscales, por lo que ha presentado un Plan de Acción global a este respecto ([1]). En el ámbito de la fiscalidad directa, la Comisión tiene competencias para presentar propuestas de normativa de la UE para mejorar el funcionamiento del Mercado Interior, pero las propuestas se convierten en Derecho solo si los Estados miembros de la UE las aprueban por unanimidad. La Directiva 2011/16/UE ([2]) entró en vigor en 2013 y prevé niveles de cooperación administrativa que van mucho más allá de los requisitos internacionales. En los próximos meses se dispondrá de información sobre su primer año de aplicación y si esta pusiera de manifiesto la aplicación incorrecta de la Directiva, la Comisión tomará todas las medidas necesarias para velar por el cumplimiento total del Derecho de la UE. Asimismo, en junio de 2013 la Comisión también presentó una propuesta para ampliar las normas sobre el intercambio automático de información recogido en la Directiva a, entre otras, la renta generada en relación con los activos mantenidos en una cuenta financiera y a los saldos en cuentas ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/tax_fraud_evasion/missing-part_es.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/tax_cooperation/mutual_assistance/direct_tax_directive /index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2013) 348 final de 12 de junio de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013902/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on fiscal information

On 22 November 2013, the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, created within the framework of the OECD, published a report on the level of compliance with the standards for transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes in 50 countries. The report evaluates compliance with the legal and regulatory framework and the effective application of international fiscal standards. These reports include ratings regarding the availability of information, access to information and the exchange of information.

The classification reveals deficiencies in three EU Member States, which have received a rating of 'non-compliant' in two cases (Cyprus and Luxembourg) and 'partially compliant' in one case. Specifically, in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and in Cyprus, there are shortcomings in relation to the availability of information on the ownership of bank accounts, the ease of access to information and the instruments for exchanging information. To a lesser degree, in Austria, there are also elements that do not comply with the standards laid down.

In view of the information revealed in the report:

1. What is the Commission's opinion of the fact that three Member States have deficiencies in their national legislation and are considered not to be in compliance with international standards on transparency and the exchange of information for tax purposes?

2. Does the Commission intend to take steps to remedy the situation and combat the unfair competition on tax matters that currently exists within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2014)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-013254/2013. As stated previously, the Commission very much supports the work of the Global Forum in promoting tax good governance internationally and has taken note of the results of the phase 2 reviews for a number of EU Member States which cover the period until mid 2012. It will now be important to look into the reasons that led the Global Forum to consider some EU Member States as non-compliant or partially compliant with the international standards and the progress made by these countries to address any deficiencies identified.

2. The Commission is committed to fighting tax fraud and evasion and promoting standards of good governance in tax matters and has presented a comprehensive Action Plan in this regard ([1]). In the direct taxation area, the Commission has the power to make proposals for EU legislation to improve the functioning of the internal market but the proposals will only become law if EU Member States unanimously agree to them. Directive 2011/16/EU ([2]) entered into force in 2013 and foresees standards of administrative cooperation that go above and beyond international requirements. Feedback on the first year of application of the directive will become available in the coming months. If this should reveal incorrect application of the directive, the Commission will take all necessary steps to ensure full compliance with EC law. The Commission also tabled in June 2013 a proposal to extend the rules on automatic exchange of information contained in the directive to, *inter alia*, income generated with respect to the assets held in a financial account, and account balances ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/tax_fraud_evasion/missing-part_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/tax_cooperation/mutual_assistance/direct_tax_directive /index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2013) 348 final of 12 June 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013903/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Repercusión de la Ley Habilitante aprobada en Venezuela en el acuerdo de asociación que se negocia con Mercosur

La Asamblea Nacional de Venezuela aprobó recientemente la Ley Habilitante, que otorga poderes especiales en materia económica y de lucha contra la corrupción al presidente Maduro para legislar por decreto durante un año, mecanismo al que ya se recurrió en la etapa chavista. La aprobación de una norma de este tipo genera preocupación en el ámbito internacional, al considerarse que puede poner en riesgo un elemento esencial de la democracia como es la separación de poderes.

El Presidente de Venezuela ha aprobado, en el marco de estos poderes especiales, dos leyes económicas, una de ellas destinada a regular toda la actividad del país en cuanto a importaciones y exportaciones. El propósito de esta ley es crear el Centro y la Corporación nacionales de Comercio Exterior y que esos organismos, por una parte, ordenen la actividad comercial de la nación y, por otra, supervisen sus importaciones. Una de las medidas más controvertidas es la creación de un registro de importadores y exportadores que el Gobierno pueda utilizar como herramienta para ejercer discriminaciones económicas y políticas si lo ve oportuno.

En la actualidad, los países del Mercosur, bloque al que pertenece Venezuela, están ultimando una propuesta de acuerdo comercial con la Unión Europea que desearían fuera presentada antes de final de año y que debería incluir una lista de bienes para los que el bloque estaría dispuesto a eliminar aranceles comerciales. La actitud adoptada por Venezuela con relación a su política comercial y a los mecanismos aprobados en las últimas semanas parece alejar a ese país de la firma el acuerdo de asociación que desde años negocia el ejecutivo europeo.

Por todo lo expuesto, pregunto a la Comisión:

¿Considera que la aprobación de la Ley Habilitante en favor del presidente Maduro puede afectar, directa o indirectamente, a la negociación del Acuerdo de Asociación con Mercosur?

¿Observa algún riesgo en cuanto al mantenimiento de la democracia en ese país teniendo en cuenta que la separación de poderes no es respetada, ya que las normas adoptadas en el marco de la Ley Habilitante no requieren convalidación alguna por parte del poder legislativo?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de enero de 2014)

Desde hace algún tiempo y como país candidato a la adhesión al Mercosur, Venezuela asiste en calidad de observador a las negociaciones del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur Sin embargo, tras su adhesión al Mercosur el 12 de agosto de 2012, Venezuela indicó que, de momento, seguiría siendo observadora en las negociaciones, puesto que su prioridad es la plena integración en el Mercosur. De acuerdo con el Protocolo de Adhesión de Venezuela, este país debe adoptar el Arancel Exterior Común (CET) del Mercosur, así como el acervo del Mercosur, en 2016 a más tardar. Habida cuenta del papel que desempeña actualmente Venezuela en las negociaciones, los recientes acontecimientos políticos en este país no constituyen un aspecto a tener en cuenta en relación con el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur.

No obstante, la Comisión es consciente de la adopción de la Ley Habilitante y, con ayuda de la Delegación de la UE en Caracas, sigue de cerca la aplicación de dicha Ley, incluida la normativa relativa a las importaciones y las exportaciones. La Ley Habilitante está prevista en la Constitución de Venezuela y ha sido ampliamente utilizada en el pasado, aunque ha recibido la crítica de la oposición.

La UE sigue de cerca la evolución de la situación en lo que se refiere a la democracia en Venezuela, incluidas cuestiones tales como la libertad de reunión y la libertad de expresión, que se trataron en el Examen Periódico Universal del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas a que se sometió Venezuela en 2012. Además, la misión de observación electoral de la UE de 2006 hizo una serie de observaciones del sistema electoral que también son pertinentes en este contexto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013903/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Impact of the Enabling Act adopted in Venezuela on the association agreement being negotiated with Mercosur

Recently, Venezuela's national assembly adopted the Enabling Act, which grants special powers to President Maduro in the economic sphere and in relation to combating corruption, so that you can legislate by decree for a year. This mechanism has been used before, during the period of the Chávez Government. The adoption of a measure of this kind is giving rise to concerns internationally, with fears that it could endanger the separation of powers, which is a vital element of democracy.

Within the framework of these special powers, the President of Venezuela has adopted two economic laws, one of which is designed to govern all the country's activity regarding imports and exports. This law sets out to create the Centre for Foreign Trade and the Corporation for Foreign Trade. It states that these bodies shall both order the nation's trade activities and supervise its imports. One of the most controversial measures is the creation of a register of importers and exporters that the government could use as a tool to carry out economic and political discrimination, if it deems this appropriate.

Currently, the countries of Mercosur, a block to which Venezuela belongs, are finalising a proposal for a trade agreement with the European Union which they would like to be submitted before the end of the year, and which should include a list of goods for which the bloc would be prepared to remove duties. The attitude taken by Venezuela in relation to its trade policy and the mechanisms adopted in recent weeks seems to be taking the country further away from signing the association agreement which the European executive has been negotiating for years.

Therefore, I would like to ask the Commission:

Does it consider the adoption of the Enabling Act granting powers to President Maduro might affect, whether directly or indirectly, the negotiation of the association agreement with Mercosur?

Does it see any risks to the maintenance of democracy in Venezuela, since the separation of powers is not being complied with, as the provisions adopted under the Enabling Act do not require any ratification by the legislature?

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

Venezuela has been an observer in the negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement as a candidate country for accesssion to Mercosur for some time now. Following its accession to Mercosur on 12 August 2012, Venezuela has indicated however that it will remain an observer in the negotiations for the time being, its priority being full integration within Mercosur. According to Venezuela's Accession Protocol, Venezuela is only expected to adopt the Common External Tariff (CET) of Mercosur and the Mercosur *acquis* by 2016. Given the current role of Venezuela in the negotiations, the recent policy developments in Venezuela have not become an issue related to the negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

Nevertheless, the Commission is aware of the adoption of the Enabling Act and is following closely, with the help of the EU Delegation in Caracas, the application of that Act, including the regulation of imports and exports. The enabling law is foreseen by the Venezuelan Constitution and has been used extensively in the past — albeit not without criticism from the opposition.

The EU is following closely developments with regards to democracy in Venezuela including issues such as freedom of assembly and of expression, which were dealt with in the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Peer Review (UPR) that Venezuela underwent in 2012. Furthermore, the EU Election Observation Mission of 2006 made a number of remarks concerning the electoral system that are also relevant in this context.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013904/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανεξάρτητη ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης 2014 — φαινόμενα εθνικισμού, εξτρεμισμού και ευρωσκεπτικισμού στην ΕΕ

Η ανεξάρτητη ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης (iAGS) 2014 επικρίνει τις οικονομικές πολιτικές της ΕΕ ως προς την αδυναμία αντιμετώπισης της τρέχουσας οικονομικής και χρηματοοικονομικής κρίσης, αναφέροντας τα εξής:

«Το τίμημα (της κρίσης) δεν είναι μόνο οικονομικό, αλλά και πολιτικό. Σήμερα, έξι μήνες πριν από τις ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές του Μαΐου 2014, η εμπιστοσύνη στους ευρωπαϊκούς θεσμούς βρίσκεται στο ναδίρ, γεγονός που δείχνει ότι οι πολίτες έχουν σημειώσει την παραπάνω αποτυχία. Σύμφωνα με την τελευταία έρευνα του Ευρωβαρόμετρου "η εμπιστοσύνη στην ΕΕ" και "η εμπιστοσύνη στα εθνικά κοινοβούλια και τις εθνικές κυβερνήσεις" βρίσκεται στα χαμηλότερα επίπεδα από το 2004, ενώ βασικές ανησυχίες αποτελούν η ανεργία (για το 51% του πληθυσμού της ΕΕ) και οι οικονομικές συνθήκες (για το 33%)».

Συμφωνεί η Επιτροπή με την αξιολόγηση της iAGS, ότι η Ευρώπη βρίσκεται σήμερα αντιμέτωπη με πολιτική όσο και οικονομική κρίση ως αποτέλεσμα αποτυχημένων οικονομικών πολιτικών;

Ποια μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει η Επιτροπή προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσει τα επικίνδυνα φαινόμενα της αύξησης του εθνικισμού, του εξτρεμισμού και του ευρωσκεπτικισμού, τα οποία εξαπλώνονται με ανησυχητικό ρυθμό σε όλη την Ευρώπη;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή αναμένει ότι η σταδιακή ανάκαμψη, η οποία βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη αυτή τη στιγμή στην Ευρώπη, θα συνεχιστεί με μέτρια επιτάχυνση κατά την επόμενη διετία. Επιπλέον, υπάρχουν ορατές ενδείξεις ότι προχωρά η αποκατάσταση της οικονομικής ισορροπίας. Η οικονομική στρατηγική που ακολουθείται αποδίδει όσον αφορά τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και των δημοσιονομικών και εξωτερικών λογαριασμών. Σύμφωνα με την ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης που δημοσιεύτηκε τον Νοέμβριο του 2013, η μεγαλύτερη πρόκληση πλέον συνιστάται στη διατήρηση του ρυθμού των μεταρρυθμίσεων ώστε να βελτιωθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα και να εξασφαλισθεί μακροχρόνια ανάκαμψη, με βάση την ίδια ισορροπημένη στρατηγική για την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση που ακολουθήθηκε το 2013, μετατοπίζοντας το κέντρο βάρους ώστε οι προτεραιότητες να προσαρμοστούν στην οικονομική και κοινωνική κατάσταση που υφίσταται κατά το τρέχον στάδιο της ανάκαμψης.

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει στη δήλωσή της, της 9ης Οκτωβρίου 2013 προς το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο σχετικά με την άνοδο του ακροδεξιού εξτρεμισμού στην Ευρώπη.

Η απόφαση-πλαίσιο 2008/913/ΔΕΥ υποχρεώνει όλα τα κράτη μέλη να επιβάλλουν ποινικές κυρώσεις για την εκ προθέσεως δημόσια υποκίνηση βίας και μίσους κατά ομάδων ή ατόμων βάσει της φυλής, του χρώματος, της θρησκείας, των γενεαλογικών καταβολών, της εθνοτικής ή εθνικής καταγωγής τους, καθώς και να προβλέψουν επιβαρυντικές περιστάσεις όσον αφορά εγκληματικές πράξεις με ρατσιστικά ή ξενοφοβικά κίνητρα. Στις 27 Ιανουαρίου 2014 η Επιτροπή παρουσίασε έκθεση σχετικά με τα μέτρα που έλαβαν τα κράτη μέλη για να συμμορφωθούν με τις διατάξεις της απόφασης-πλαισίου ([1]).

Η έρευνα μεμονωμένων περιστατικών ρατσισμού και ξενοφοβίας και η εφαρμογή των νομοθετικών πράξεων που μεταφέρουν στο εθνικό δίκαιο την απόφαση-πλαίσιο εμπίπτουν στην αρμοδιότητα των εθνικών αρχών. Εναπόκειται στα εθνικά δικαστήρια να αποφανθούν, ανάλογα με τις εκάστοτε περιστάσεις και τις συνθήκες, αν συγκεκριμένο περιστατικό συνιστά υποκίνηση βίας ή μίσους.

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει στη διάθεσή της συγκεκριμένα στοιχεία σχετικά με την ύπαρξη άμεσης σχέσης μεταξύ της οικονομικής κρίσης και του εξτρεμισμού.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2014:0027:FIN:EL:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2014:0027:FIN:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013904/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Independent Annual Growth Survey 2014 — phenomena of nationalism, extremism and euroscepticism in the EU

The independent Annual Growth Survey (iAGS) 2014 criticises the EU's economic policies for failing to combat the current economic and financial crisis, stating:

'The cost (of the crisis) is not only economical but political as well. Six months now before the 2014 May European Parliament elections, the trust in European institutions is at rock bottom, showing that the failure has not remained unseen by the people. According to the latest Eurobarometer [survey], "trust in European Union" and "trust in national parliaments or governments" are at the lowest level since 2004, the main concerns being unemployment (according to 51% of the EU population) and the economic situation (according to 33%).'

Does the Commission agree with the assessment of the iAGS that Europe, as a result of failed economic policies, is now faced with a political as well as an economic crisis?

What measures does it intend to take in order to combat the dangerous phenomena of increased nationalism, extremism and euroscepticism, which are spreading at an alarming rate throughout Europe?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The Commission expects the gradual recovery currently underway in Europe to continue with a moderate acceleration over the next two years. Furthermore, there are visible signs that the economic rebalancing is proceeding. The economic strategy pursued is paying off in terms of improvement in competitiveness as well as fiscal and external accounts. As set out in the Annual Growth Survey published November 2013, the biggest challenge now is to keep up the pace of reform to improve competitiveness and secure a lasting recovery, building on the same balanced strategy for growth and jobs as in 2013 while shifting emphasis to adapt the priorities to the economic and social situation faced in the current recovery phase.

The Commission refers to its statement of 9 October 2013 to the European Parliament about the rise of right-wing extremism in Europe.

Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA obliges all Member States to sanction with criminal penalties the intentional public incitement to violence and hatred based on race, colour, descent, religion, or ethnic or national origin, as well as to provide for aggravating circumstances in relation to crimes with a racist or xenophobic motivation. The Commission has presented a report on the Member States' compliance with the provisions of the framework Decision on 27 January 2014 ([1]).

The investigation of individual situations of racism or xenophobia and the application of national laws transposing the framework Decision belongs to national authorities. It is for national courts to determine, according to the circumstances and context, whether a situation represents an incitement to violence or hatred.

The Commission does not have concrete data about a direct link between the economic crisis and extremism.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2014:0027:FIN:EN:PDF
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2014:0027:FIN:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013906/13
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: EU competition law and mobile application market

The EU has strong competition law that prevents the abuse of a dominant market position. These rules have been effective in ensuring fair competition on the EU internal market. Many cases have been launched involving companies suspected of breaching these laws, including in the information technology sector. For example, large technology companies such as Microsoft have been found to have abused their dominant position on the PC operating system market.

I am concerned that a similar abuse of dominant position is occurring on the mobile phone application market. Apple currently prevents users from downloading competing mobile applications onto their iPhones. For example, Apple has recently removed the HMV application because it allows music to be purchased for download in competition with its own application, iTunes.

Is the Commission aware of this situation, and has it looked into the matter?

Which EU competition laws apply in this case?

Is Apple in breach of EU competition law? If so, how?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-013770/2013 ([1]).

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013907/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI) en Lucas Hartong (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: Noorse minister erkent financiering Palestijnse terroristen

Jaarlijks maakt de Noorse regering 40 miljoen euro over aan de Palestijnse Autoriteit (PA). De Noorse minister van Buitenlandse Zaken, Espen Barth Eide, heeft verklaard dat Oslo is misleid toen de PA beweerde dat deze fondsen niet werden gebruikt om de moordenaars van Israëliërs te belonen ([1]). De verklaring van minister Eide volgde nadat het ministerie informatie had gekregen waaruit bleek dat de PA sinds 2003 elke maand geld overmaakt aan Palestijnse gevangenen in Israël. Die betalingen zijn in 2011 zelfs met 300% verhoogd.

Bij verschillende gelegenheden heb ik mijn zorg geuit over de financiering van projecten van de Palestijnse Autoriteit door de EU. De besteding van deze gelden wordt onvoldoende gecontroleerd waardoor Europees belastinggeld terechtkomt op plaatsen waarvoor dat niet is bestemd (E-008299/2012, E-011818/2013).

1. Is de Commissie bekend met deze verklaring van minister Eide?

2. Kan de Commissie mij verzekeren dat er geen eurocent van de hulpfondsen van de EU via de PA wordt overgemaakt aan Palestijnse terroristen en dat daarvoor alleen Noors geld wordt misbruikt?

3. Zo neen, kan de Commissie bevestigen dat de PA onwaarheden vertelt als die beweert dat er geen geld vanuit de EU-hulpfondsen wordt doorgesluisd naar Palestijnse terroristen?

4. Is de verklaring van minister Eide een reden voor de Commissie om de verstrekking van financiële hulp aan de PA stop te zetten?

5. Zo neen, waarom financiert de EU Palestijnse terroristen?

6. Zo ja, met ingang van welke datum wordt de financiële hulp aan de PA stopgezet?

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

1. De Commissie heeft weet van de mededeling in kwestie.

2. De Commissie blijft bij haar standpunt over deze zaak zoals die als antwoord is gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-008299/2012. Er zijn geen EU-middelen verstrekt aan Palestijnse terroristen.

De EU zal cruciale hulp blijven verlenen aan de Palestijnse Autoriteit en de Palestijnse bevolking via het mechanisme voor directe financiële steun, Pegase.

([1]) http://likud.nl/2013/03/noorse-minister-erkent-leugen-de-ontwikkelingshulp-gaat-wel-naar-palestijnse-terroristen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013907/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI) and Lucas Hartong (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Norwegian minister admits the funding of Palestinian terrorists

The Norwegian Government gives the Palestinian Authority (PA) EUR 40 million every year. The Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Espen Barth Eide, has stated that Oslo was misled when the PA claimed that these funds were not used to pay those who have murdered Israelis ([1]). Mr Eide's statement came in the wake of the discovery by his ministry that the PA has been transferring money to Palestinian prisoners in Israel every month since 2003. Such payments even increased by 300% in 2011.

On various occasions, I have expressed my concerns about the EU funding projects for the Palestinian Authority. There is inadequate monitoring of how these funds are spent, as a result of which European taxpayers' money ends up being used for things for which it was not intended (E-008299/2012, E-011818/2013).

1. Is the Commission aware of Mr Eide's statement?

2. Can the Commission assure me that not one cent of EU aid has been given to Palestinian terrorists by the PA, and that only Norwegian money has been misused in this way?

3. If not, can the Commission confirm that the PA is failing to speak the truth when it claims that no money from EU aid is being passed on to Palestinian terrorists?

4. Does the minister's statement provide the Commission with a reason to end the granting of financial aid to the PA?

5. If not, why is the EU funding Palestinian terrorists?

6. If it does, from what date will financial aid to the PA be ceased?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the statement in question.

2. The Commission stands by its position on this matter given in reply to Written Question E-008299/2012. No EU funds have been given to Palestinian terrorists.

The EU will continue providing the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people with crucial aid through its PEGASE Direct Financial Support mechanism.

([1]) http://likud.nl/2013/03/noorse-minister-erkent-leugen-de-ontwikkelingshulp-gaat-wel-naar-palestijnse-terroristen

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013908/13
до Комисията
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(6 декември 2013 г.)

Относно: Забавяне при определянето на територии от значение за Общността в планина Рила, България

Съгласно Договора за присъединяване на България правителството беше длъжно да определи всички територии по „Натура 2000“ в страната преди 1 януари 2007 г. Националният списък на България на територии от значение за Общността, който беше съставен в съответствие с изискванията на Директивата за местообитанията (Директива 92/43/ЕИО на Съвета), се оказа недостатъчен след проведения през юни 2008 г. биогеографски семинар за България. Комисията и българските представители решиха, че научните пропуски ще бъдат проучени и съответната документация ще бъде представена до 1 септември 2009 г.

Въпреки това повече от пет години по-късно територията, предложена от българските екологични и научни общности в буферната зона около Национален парк „Рила“, все още не е определена за територия по „Натура 2000“ от българското правителство. Доказано е, че тази територия е от изключително значение за опазването на кафявата мечка, Cottus gobio, и редица други приоритетни видове.

1. С оглед на горепосоченото може ли Комисията да посочи дали българското правителство е представило документация относно определянето на територия от значение за Общността в буферната зона на Национален парк „Рила“?

2. Ако отговорът е „не“, какви мерки ще предприеме Комисията, за да гарантира успешното приключване на процеса на определяне на територии по „Натура 2000“ в планина Рила?

Отговор, даден от Янез Поточник от името на Комисията
(11 февруари 2014 г.)

Мрежата „Натура 2000“ вече обхваща 34 % от територията на България. Съгласно всички налични научни данни „Натура 2000“ е добре установена в страната и е с много високо ниво на покритие. В нея, обаче, все още не са включени някои важни и ценни местообитания — например тези на кафявата мечка и главоча (Cottus gobio) в Рила.

Комисията поиска от България да уреди допълнителното определяне на необходимите защитени зони в Рила. Комисията следи отблизо този въпрос и в зависимост от отговора на българските компетентни органи ще вземе съответното решение относно подходящите действия.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013908/13
to the Commission
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Delay in the designation of Sites of Community importance in the Rila mountains, Bulgaria

According to the Accession Treaty of Bulgaria the Government was obliged to designate all Natura 2000 sites in the country before 1 January 2007. Bulgaria's national list of Sites of Community Importance, which was drawn up in compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), was found to be insufficient following the biogeographic seminar for Bulgaria held in June 2008. The Commission and the Bulgarian representatives decided that scientific insufficiencies would be examined and the relevant documentation submitted by 1 September 2009.

Nevertheless, more than five years later the site proposed by the Bulgarian environmental and scientific communities in the buffer zone around Rila National park has still not been designated a Natura 2000 site by the Bulgarian Government. This area was shown to be of exceptional importance for the protection of the brown bear, Cottus gobio, and a number of other priority species.

1. With regard to the above, can the Commission state whether or not the Bulgarian Government has submitted any documentation on the designation of a site of Community importance in the buffer zone of Rila National Park?

2. If not, what measures will the Commission take to guarantee the successful completion of the Natura 2000 designation process in the Rila Mountains?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The Bulgarian Natura 2000 network already covers 34% of the national territory. According to all available scientific data, the Bulgarian Natura 2000 network is now well established and has a very high level of coverage. However, important and valuable habitats have not been included in the Natura 2000 network, for example that of the Brown bear and the European Bullhead species located in the Rila mountain,.

The Commission has asked Bulgaria to provide the necessary additional designation in the Rila Mountain. The Commission is following this issue closely and, subject to the response of the Bulgarian authorities, will decide accordingly on the appropriate course of action.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013909/13
до Комисията
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(6 декември 2013 г.)

Относно: България — предполагаема държавна помощ под формата на замяна на собственост върху частно притежавани горски имоти с държавни (Държавна помощ SA.26212)

В началото на 2009 г. българското правителство беше принудено да забрани добре известната практика да се заменя земя с частни лица и да се внасят последващи промени в използването на въпросната земя. Правителството реагира едва след подаването на множество жалби в Комисията относно предполагаемото нарушение на правилата на ЕС за държавната помощ. По предварителна оценка има голяма разлика между пазарната цена, която е била предлагана при замяната, и действителната пазарна цена на държавните горски и земеделски земи. Общият размер на предполагаемата нерегулирана държавна помощ, която е била предоставяна при замяната на горски и земеделски земи в България, се оценява на не по-малко от два милиарда евро.

На 29 юни 2011 г. Комисията започна официална процедура по разследване съгласно член 108, параграф 2 от Договора за функционирането на Европейския съюз (ДФЕС), чиято цел е да определи дали при замяната на държавни гори за частни е отпускана държавна помощ, която практика е несъвместима с вътрешния пазар по смисъла на член 107, параграф 1 от ДФЕС. Такава процедура се започва във връзка с предполагаемото отпускане на държавна помощ под формата на замяна на земеделски земи.

Повече от две години след започването на официалната процедура по разследване Комисията все още не е взела решение по този случай от висш обществен интерес.

При тези обстоятелства:

1. Какъв е постигнатият от Комисията напредък по разследването за предполагаемото отпускане на държавна помощ на частни инвеститори чрез замяна на горски и земеделски земи в България?

2. Като се има предвид постигнатият напредък, кога се очаква да бъде взето окончателно решение по горепосоченото официално разследване?

3. Ще изиска ли Комисията от българските органи да възстановят цялата нерегулирана държавна помощ, произтичаща от замяната на горски и земеделски земи?

Отговор, даден от г-н Алмуния от името на Комисията
(5 февруари 2014 г.)

На 29 юни 2011 г. Комисията откри официална процедура по разследване съгласно член 108, параграф 2 от ДФЕС по отношение на сделки за замяна на гори в България. Целта е да се определи дали е била предоставена държавна помощ (съгласно член 107, параграф 1 от ДФЕС) и ако това е така, дали тази помощ е съвместима с вътрешния пазар.

Комисията оценява големия обществен интерес в България към разследването във връзка със сделките за замяна на гори, но желае да подчертае, че това е много сложен случай.

Що се отнася до напредъка на официалното разследване на сделките за замяна на гори, неотдавна българските органи изпратиха информация, която Комисията трябва да разгледа, преди да приеме окончателна позиция по случая.

Проблемите, свързани със сделките за замяна на земеделска земя, са подобни на тези, свързани със замяната на гори. Поради това Комисията предпочита първо да приключи оценката по официалното разследване по отношение на сделките за замяна на гори. В зависимост от резултата от това разследване Комисията ще вземе решение относно последващите стъпки във връзка със сделките за замяна на земеделска земя.

В момента Комисията приключва работата по оценката си на сделките за замяна на гори и се надява да приеме окончателно решение по случая през първата половина на 2014 г.

Ако Комисията установи, че в контекста на сделките за замяна на гори е била отпусната държавна помощ, тя ще вземе решение относно съвместимостта на тези мерки с вътрешния пазар. В случай че Комисията установи наличие на несъвместима помощ при сделките за замяна на гори, съгласно правилата на ЕС за държавните помощи на България следва да бъде наредено да възстанови тази несъвместима помощ от получателите. От получателите ще бъде изискано да възстановят на българския държавен бюджет сумата на получената несъвместима държавна помощ (с начислените приложими лихви).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013909/13
to the Commission
Svetoslav Hristov Malinov (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Bulgaria — alleged state aid in the form of swap of ownership of privately owned forest estates for the governmental ones (state aid SA.26212)

In early 2009 the Bulgarian Government was forced to ban the notorious practice of land swaps with private parties and subsequent changes to the use of the land in question. A government response came only after numerous complaints were lodged at the Commission concerning the alleged violation of EU state aid rules. According to preliminary assessments, there has been a large gap between the market prices offered for swaps and the actual market prices of the state-owned forest lands and farmlands. The total amount of the alleged unregulated state aid involved in the swap of forest lands and farmlands in Bulgaria is estimated at no less than EUR 2 billion.

On 29 June 2011, the Commission initiated a formal investigation procedure under Article 108(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which aims to determine if the swap of state forests for private ones involves state aid, a practice which is incompatible with the internal market as defined under Article 107(1) TFEU. Such a procedure is to be initiated with respect to the alleged allocation of state aid in the form of swaps of farmlands.

More than two years after the formal investigation procedure was launched, the Commission has yet to come to a decision on this case of overriding public interest.

In this context,

1. What progress has the Commission made on the investigation of the alleged state aid granted to private investors through the swapping of forest lands and farmlands in Bulgaria?

2. Having regard to the progress made, when is the final decision on the aforementioned formal investigation expected to be made?

3. Will the Commission require the Bulgarian authorities to recover all unregulated state aid resulting from the swapping of forest lands and farmlands?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

On 29 June 2011 the Commission initiated a formal investigation procedure under Article 108(2) of the TFEU into the Bulgarian forest swap transactions. The goal is to determine if any state aid (defined in Article 107(1) TFEU) was granted and, should that be the case, if such aid is compatible with the internal market.

The Commission appreciates the high public interest in Bulgaria for the forest swap investigation, but wishes to underline that this is a very complex case.

Regarding progress on the formal investigation into the forest swap transactions, the Bulgarian authorities have recently submitted information which must be evaluated by the Commission before taking a final position on the case.

The issues raised in the farmland swaps case are similar to the forest swaps. The Commission, therefore, preferred first to finalise the assessment of the formal investigation into the forest swaps. Depending on the outcome of that investigation the Commission will decide on the follow-up for the farmland swaps case.

The Commission is currently finalising its assessment of the forest swaps case and hopes to adopt a final decision during the first half of 2014.

Should the Commission find that state aid was granted in the context of forest swaps, it will decide on the compatibility of such measures with the internal market. In case the Commission finds that the forest swaps indeed involved incompatible aid, EU state aid rules provide that Bulgaria should be ordered to recover this incompatible aid from the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries will then be required to pay back to the Bulgarian State budget the amount of the incompatible state aid received (increased by the applicable interest).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013911/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(6 grudnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Epidemia dengi w Nikaragui

Od początku tego roku do sierpnia w całej Ameryce Środkowej odnotowano więcej przypadków zachorowań na dengę niż w całym 2012 r. W związku z panującą w ostatnich miesiącach porą deszczowa warunki dla komarów roznoszących chorobę są wręcz idealne.

W Nikaragui w ostatnich dniach liczba zachorowań zbliżyła się do dziewięciu tysięcy, a ponad tysiąc dwieście osób zostało hospitalizowanych w związku z zakażeniem dengą. Najwięcej infekcji zaobserwowano w stolicy kraju – Managui. Do pozostałych najbardziej dotkniętych regionów należą zachodnie prowincje Leon i Chinandega, centralna prowincja Chontales i Masaya. Władze Nikaragui ogłosiły już czerwony alarm sanitarny na poziomie krajowym.

Czy Komisja Europejska monitoruje sytuację w Nikaragui związaną z rozprzestrzeniającą się epidemią dengi?

Czy Komisja Europejska zamierza podjąć stosowne działania w tej sprawie? Jeśli tak, to jakie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Kristalinę Georgijewą w imieniu Komisji
(6 lutego 2014 r.)

Komisja Europejska ściśle monitoruje sytuację epidemii dengi w Nikaragui i w innych krajach w Ameryce Środkowej, gdzie w 2013 r. zarejestrowano więcej jej przypadków niż w latach poprzednich.

Występowanie dengi w regionie powtarza się. Krajowe systemy opieki zdrowotnej są przygotowane do radzenia sobie z przypadkami dengi w placówkach służby zdrowia i wdrażania środków zapobiegawczych w celu kontroli rozprzestrzeniania się tej choroby. Komisja uważnie śledzi reakcję nikaraguańskiego sektora zdrowia utrzymując regularne kontakty z właściwymi organami ds. zdrowia publicznego, instytucjami i partnerami zaangażowanymi w pomoc humanitarną. Podjęto odpowiednie działania, bez potrzeby wsparcia zewnętrznego, w celu wzmocnienia potencjału ośrodków zdrowia i środków mających zmniejszyć liczbę nosicieli.

W pozostałych krajach Ameryki Środkowej, gdzie zanotowano przypadki epidemii dengi, Komisja udzieliła wsparcia obszarom, do których krajowe i lokalne organy ds. zdrowia publicznego nie mają dostępu z uwagi na występujące tam zorganizowane akty przemocy.

Epidemia dengi jest obecnie pod kontrolą we wszystkich krajach Ameryki Środkowej, z wyjątkiem Panamy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013911/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Epidemic of dengue fever in Nicaragua

The figure for dengue fever cases recorded throughout Central America between the start of the year and August was higher than the figure for the whole of 2012. The last few months have seen the arrival of the rainy season, which provides the perfect conditions for the mosquitos which spread the disease.

The number of cases of dengue fever reported in Nicaragua has reached almost 9 000 in the past few days, and over 1 200 people have been hospitalised in connection with the disease. Managui, the country's capital, has suffered the highest rate of infection, while the other regions hit hardest include the western provinces of León and Chinandega and the central provinces of Chontales and Masaya. The Nicaraguan authorities have already declared a national public health emergency.

Is the European Commission monitoring the situation in Nicaragua in connection with the rapidly spreading epidemic of dengue fever?

Does the Commission intend to take appropriate action in this respect, and if so what?

Answer given by Mrs Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

The European Commission has been closely monitoring the situation of dengue in Nicaragua and in other countries in Central America where in 2013 more cases have been registered than in previous years.

Dengue outbreaks are recurrent in the region. National health systems know how to manage dengue cases in health facilities and implement preventive measures to control the spread of the disease. The Commission has closely followed the response given by the Nicaraguan health sector through regular contacts with health authorities, institutions and humanitarian partners. Appropriate measures have been taken — without requiring external support — to reinforce the capacity of health centres and vector control measures.

In other Central American countries with dengue fever outbreaks, the Commission provided support in those areas, to which national and local health authorities had no access due to the situation of organised violence.

The dengue epidemic is now under control in all Central American countries, except in Panama.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-013912/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(6 grudnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Seksualny wyzysk dzieci w internecie

Holenderska organizacja, działająca na rzecz obrony praw dziecka, stworzyła niedawno projekt zwracający uwagę na wyzysk seksualny dzieci w internecie. W ramach projektu wygenerowany komputerowo wizerunek dziesięcioletniej dziewczynki udostępniono na czacie z kamerami. Rezultat okazał się szokujący, po dziesięciu tygodniach około tysiąc mężczyzn z całego świata zgłosiło się do oglądania dziewczynki nago. Niektórzy prosili ją o zdjęcia i proponowali pieniądze za obnażanie się przed internetową kamerką, czyli za tzw. „sex show". Dziewczynka nie oferowała niczego, po prostu była na czacie.

Przedstawiciele organizacji ostrzegają o gwałtownym narastaniu zjawiska określanego mianem „dziecięcej seksturystyki przez kamerę internetową". Z badania przeprowadzonego przez brytyjskie Stowarzyszenie na rzecz Przeciwdziałania Przemocy wobec Dzieci (NSPCC) wynika, że jedno na pięcioro dzieci korzystających z portali społecznościowych padło ofiarą nękania, wiadomości z podtekstem seksualnym czy wywierania presji.

Jakie kroki Komisja Europejska zamierza podjąć w sprawie przeciwdziałania temu zjawisku?

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

Dyrektywa dotycząca walki z wykorzystywaniem seksualnym dzieci zbliża ustawodawstwa krajowe ukierunkowane na zwalczanie takich przestępstw. ([1]) W dyrektywie uznaje się za przestępstwo i określa minimalne poziomy kar w szczególności za zmuszanie lub nakłanianie dziecka do udziału w przedstawieniach pornograficznych, w tym nad wykorzystaniem kamer sieciowych, czerpanie z tego zysku, albo wykorzystywanie dziecka w inny sposób do takich celów, świadome uzyskiwanie dostępu, za pośrednictwem technologii informatyczno-komunikacyjnych, do pornografii dziecięcej, jak również na uwodzenie i nagabywanie dzieci. Państwa członkowskie są zobowiązane do powołania jednostek śledczych do identyfikacji pokrzywdzonych dzieci w wyniku analizy pornografii dziecięcej i mogą stosować specjalne narzędzia dochodzeniowe. Komisja dokonuje obecnie oceny wdrożenia dyrektywy.

Zwalczanie seksualnego wykorzystywania dzieci w internecie jest jednym z priorytetów Europejskiego Centrum ds. Walki z Cyberprzestępczością w Europolu. Centrum ma stanowić punkt koordynacji w zakresie zwalczania cyberprzestępczości w UE poprzez budowanie zdolności operacyjnych i analitycznych do prowadzenia dochodzeń i współpracę z międzynarodowymi partnerami.

Dzięki programowi „Bezpieczniejszy internet" Komisja wspiera międzynarodową sieć numerów interwencyjnych koordynowaną przez INHOPE, gdzie użytkownicy internetu mogą zgłaszać materiały przedstawiające seksualne wykorzystywanie dzieci. Materiały niezgodne z prawem zostaną przekazane organom śledczym i dostawcy usług internetowych ·w celu przeprowadzenia dochodzenia i ich usunięcia. ([2]) Środki na finansowanie unijnych numerów interwencyjnych zostały przewidziane w ramach instrumentu „Łącząc Europę".

Współpraca międzynarodowa między wszystkimi podmiotami jest kluczowa. Komisja wspiera uruchomienie światowego sojuszu przeciwko niegodziwemu traktowaniu dzieci w internecie w celach seksualnych, a 52 kraje zobowiązały się do zwiększenia wysiłków w zakresie identyfikacji dzieci będących ofiarami, usprawnienia dochodzeń, podnoszenia świadomości społecznej oraz ograniczenia dostępu do pornografii dziecięcej.

([1]) Dyrektywa Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady 2011/93/UE z dnia 13 grudnia 2011 r. w sprawie zwalczania niegodziwego traktowania w celach seksualnych i wykorzystywania seksualnego dzieci oraz pornografii dziecięcej, zastępująca decyzję ramową Rady 2004/68/WSiSW.

([2]) Dostawca usług internetowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013912/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Sexual exploitation of children on the Internet

A Dutch children's rights organisation recently launched a project to raise awareness of the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet, which involved making a computer-generated image of a 10-year-old girl available for webcam chats. The results were shocking; over a period of 10 weeks, around 1 000 men from around the world asked to see the girl naked. Some asked for photos and offered the girl money to strip on webcam, or to perform a 'sex show'. The girl herself suggested nothing; she was merely online in the chat rooms.

The organisation's representatives have warned about the rapid growth of 'webcam child sex tourism'. A study carried out by the UK's National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) showed that one in five children who use social networking sites have experienced harassment, unwanted sexual messages or bullying.

What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent this phenomenon?

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

The Child Sexual Exploitation Directive ([1]) approximates national legislation to fight such crimes. It criminalises and sets minimum levels of penalties in particular for causing or recruiting a child to participate in pornographic performance, including over webcams, profiting from or otherwise exploiting a child for such purposes, knowingly obtaining access, by means of information and communication technology, to child pornography, as well as for grooming and solicitation of children. Member States are required to set up investigative units to identify child victims by analysing child pornography and may use special investigative tools. The Commission is currently in the process of assessing its implementation.

The European Cybercrime Centre at Europol has included the fight against online child sexual exploitation as one of its priorities. It aims to become the focal point in the EU's fight against cybercrime, by building operational and analytical capacity for investigations and cooperation with international partners.

Through the Safer Internet Programme, the Commission is supporting an international network of hotlines, coordinated by INHOPE, to which Internet users can report child sex abuse material. Illegal material will be passed on to law enforcement and the hosting ISP ([2]) for investigation and removal. Future funding of EU hotlines is foreseen under the Connecting Europe Facility.

International cooperation among all actors is essential. The Commission has supported the launch of the Global Alliance against child sexual abuse online, whereby 52 countries have committed to step up the identification of child victims, improve investigations, enhance public awareness and reduce the availability of child pornography.

([1]) Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA.

([2]) Internet Service Provider.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013914/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: Europees openbaar ministerie weggestemd

Een grote minderheid van nationale parlementen heeft zich verzet tegen het voorstel voor de oprichting van het Europees openbaar ministerie (EPPO), waarbij 11 nationale parlementen voldoende stemmen behaalden om de gelekaartprocedure tegen het voorstel in werking te stellen. Diverse eerste en tweede kamers van de lidstaten hebben 19 stemmen tegen het voorstel uitgebracht, waar 14 al had volstaan. Ondanks deze gele kaarten blijven bepaalde EU-bronnen beweren dat het EPPO vroeg of laat zal worden opgericht via de procedure van nauwere samenwerking waarin artikel 20 van het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie (VEU) voorziet ([1]).

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

2. Hoe interpreteert de Commissie het resultaat van de geslaagde gelekaartprocedure?

In artikel 20 VEU is bepaald dat een van de basiseisen voor een procedure van nauwere samenwerking is dat deze de doelstellingen van de Unie moet bevorderen en haar integratieproces moet versterken.

3. Is de Commissie het er mee eens dat bovengenoemde geslaagde gelekaartprocedure een sterke aanwijzing is dat de lidstaten zich tegen het EPPO-voorstel van de Commissie verzetten en dat dit niet kan worden beschouwd als een „versterking" van het integratieproces?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de inwerkingstelling van een gelekaartprocedure niet mag worden genegeerd wanneer een procedure van nauwere samenwerking over dezelfde kwestie wordt ingeleid?

5. Beschouwt de Commissie deze gelekaartprocedure als een expliciete aanwijzing van de lidstaten dat zij wensen dat de Commissie haar EPPO-voorstel herziet? Aanvaardt zij verder, gezien het verzet van de lidstaten, dat het EPPO niet spoedig kan worden opgericht?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(13 februari 2014)

Momenteel wordt er in de Raad onderhandeld over het voorstel van de Commissie voor een verordening van de Raad tot instelling van het Europees openbaar ministerie ([2]) (EPPO).

De nationale parlementen van elf lidstaten hebben met redenen omklede adviezen aangenomen waarin zij hun bezorgdheid uiten over de conformiteit van het voorstel van de Commissie met het subsidiariteitsbeginsel in het kader van het controlemechanisme van Protocol nr. 2. De Commissie heeft alle argumenten van de nationale parlementen in detail onderzocht. Naar aanleiding van de argumenten met betrekking tot subsidiariteit heeft de Commissie haar voorstel herzien en beslist om het te handhaven omdat de Commissie meent dat het voorstel in overeenstemming is met het subsidiariteitsbeginsel ([3]). Tegelijkertijd heeft de Commissie toegezegd om bij de lopende onderhandelingen naar behoren rekening te houden met de met redenen omklede adviezen. De Commissie zet de politieke dialoog met nationale parlementen voort.

Is er geen eenparigheid, dan voorziet Artikel 86 VWEU (de rechtsgrondslag voor de ontwerpverordening) in een bijzondere procedure in de Raad, waarbij een groep van minstens negen lidstaten mag voorstellen om nauwer samen te werken.

([1]) Zie http://euobserver.com/justice/121959.
([2]) COM(2013) 534.
([3]) COM(2013) 851.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013914/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: European Public Prosecutor's Office voted down

A large minority of national parliaments opposed the proposal for the creation of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), with 11 national parliaments attaining a sufficient number of votes to trigger the yellow card procedure against the proposal. 19 votes were cast against the proposal by Member States' upper and lower houses parliament, although 14 would have been enough. Despite the issuing of yellow cards, certain EU sources still predict that the EPPO will be established sooner or later using the enhanced cooperation procedure provided for under Article 20 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). ([1])

1. Is the Commission aware of this suggestion?

2. How does the Commission interpret the outcome of the successful yellow card procedure?

Under Article 20 TEU, one of the basic requirements for the establishment of an enhanced cooperation procedure is that it must aim to further the objectives of the Union and reinforce its integration process.

3. Does the Commission agree that the aforementioned successful yellow card procedure is a strong indication of opposition from Member States against the Commission's EPPO proposal that cannot be understood as a 'way forward' in the integration process?

4. Does the Commission share the view that the issuing of a yellow card procedure must not be ignored when establishing an enhanced cooperation procedure on the same matter?

5. Does the Commission view this yellow card procedure as an explicit indication by Member States of their desire for a reconsideration of the EPPO proposal? Does it also accept, in light of the opposition expressed by Member States, that the EPPO cannot be established in a timely manner?

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

The negotiations on the Commission's proposal for a Council Regulation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office ([2]) (EPPO) are on-going in the Council.

The national Parliaments of eleven Member States adopted reasoned opinions raising concerns about the compliance with the principle of subsidiarity of the Commission's proposal in the context of the control mechanism of Protocol No 2. The Commission undertook a detailed analysis of all the arguments put forward by national Parliaments. In response to the arguments related to subsidiarity, the Commission reviewed its proposal and decided to maintain it because, in its view, the proposal is compatible with the principle of subsidiarity ([3]). At the same time, the Commission made a commitment to take due account of the reasoned opinions in the on-going negotiations. The Commission pursues the political dialogue with national Parliaments.

In the absence of unanimity, Article 86 TFEU — the legal basis of the draft Regulation — foresees a special procedure in the Council where a group of at least nine Member States may propose to establish an enhanced cooperation.

([1]) http://euobserver.com/justice/121959
([2]) COM(2013) 534.
([3]) COM(2013) 851.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013915/13
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Acciones inmediatas para facilitar el resarcimiento de los consumidores afectados por el escándalo del Euribor

La Comisión ha decidido multar a varios bancos tras demostrar que, durante años, han venido manipulando índices de referencia como el Euribor y fijando los precios de mercado, lucrándose ilegítimamente a costa de los consumidores que han podido ver incrementados de manera fraudulenta los intereses de sus hipotecas. Entre las entidades infractoras, se encuentran Barclays, Deutche Bank, Société Génerale y Royal Bank of Scotland.

Sin entrar en detalles sobre la cuantía de las multas —que dista mucho de los beneficios obtenidos por estos bancos a costa de los consumidores engañados—, no solo preocupa el riesgo de que éstas acaben siendo pagadas por los ciudadanos europeos a través de sus impuestos, sino también el perjuicio directo al consumidor. La preocupación no es baladí, teniendo en cuenta el número de ciudadanos que se han visto tristemente desahuciados en los últimos tiempos.

Si bien la Comisión ha lanzado una importante iniciativa legislativa para evitar que este tipo de manipulaciones financieras vuelva a repetirse en Europa (COM(2013) 641 final-2013/0314 (COD)), entiendo que no es suficiente y que la Comisión debe aclarar de inmediato cómo afecta este fraude a los subscriptores de hipotecas y otros derivados, cuanto más teniendo en cuenta que, a la vista de las últimas sentencias del Tribunal de Justicia de la UE referidas a mi país, como la del caso Aziz (14.3.2013) o , en otro ámbito de consumo, la del caso Duarte (3.10.2013), ha quedado demostrado que la legislación nacional no permite el ejercicio «eficaz» de los derechos de los consumidores, haciendo «imposible o excesivamente difícil, aplicar la protección» que las Directivas europeas les confieren.

En este contexto, ¿qué puede hacer la Comisión para proteger de manera efectiva a los consumidores afectados por este último escándalo bancario? ¿Qué información puede suministrar la Comisión a los consumidores afectados por este fraude para facilitar su resarcimiento? ¿Qué acciones tiene previsto tomar la Comisión para asegurar que los Estados miembros garanticen el derecho de los consumidores afectados a reclamar de manera efectiva la devolución de los intereses cobrados en exceso?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de febrero de 2014)

Se ha comprobado que varios bancos han manipulado índices de referencia (p. ej., Libor, Euribor) y la Comisión ha impuesto cuantiosas multas por las infracciones del Derecho de competencia aplicable ([1]).

En lo que respecta a las acciones por daños y perjuicios por el incumplimiento del Derecho de competencia de la UE, incluidas las infracciones del artículo 101 del TFUE, los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales tienen la competencia exclusiva para intervenir sobre la base de las pruebas presentadas por los demandantes. La Comisión no tiene ninguna competencia en materia de litigios civiles. La Comisión propuso el 11 de junio de 2013 una Directiva sobre las acciones por daños y perjuicios ([2]), que tiene por objeto facilitar a los ciudadanos exigir indemnizaciones a escala nacional sobre la base de su norma antimonopolio. Los colegisladores están debatiendo la propuesta.

La propuesta de Reglamento sobre los índices de referencia ([3]), adoptada por la Comisión el 18 de septiembre de 2013, tiene por objeto aumentar la solidez y fiabilidad de los índices de referencia, incluidos los tipos de referencia para las hipotecas de interés variable como Libor and Euribor. También facilitará la prevención y la detección de su manipulación y precisará la responsabilidad de su supervisión. En virtud de la Directiva sobre el crédito hipotecario, que entrará en vigor en marzo de 2014, los Estados miembros también tendrán que velar por que los índices o tipos de referencia utilizados para calcular el tipo deudor sean claros, comprensibles, objetivos y comprobables por las Partes. Los proveedores de índices o acreedores también tendrán que mantener registros históricos de los índices.

Los asuntos judiciales (Aziz, Duarte) no parecen estar directamente ligados a los asuntos de los índices de referencia o las indemnizaciones.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1208_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/antitrust/actionsdamages/documents.html
([3]) COM(2013) 0641 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013915/13
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Immediate steps to facilitate the compensation of consumers affected by the Euribor scandal

The Commission has decided to impose fines on various banks after having shown that, for years, they have been manipulating benchmarks such as Euribor and fixing market prices, unlawfully profiteering at the expense of consumers, who have seen the interest on their mortgages increase in a fraudulent manner. The bodies that have broken the rules include Barclays, Deutsche Bank, Société Génerale and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Without going into details on the amounts of the fines — which are much lower than the profits made by these banks at the expense of the defrauded consumers — there is cause for concern both in relation to the risk that these fines may end up being paid by European citizens in their taxes, and also the direct loss to consumers. This concern is not insignificant, in view of the number of citizens that have been tragically evicted recently.

Although the Commission has launched a significant legislative initiative to prevent financial manipulation of this kind recurring in Europe (COM(2013) 641 final-2013/0314 (COD)), I believe that this is not sufficient, and that the Commission should immediately clarify how this fraud affects holders of mortgages and other derivatives. This is underlined by the most recent rulings by the Court of Justice of the EU in reference to Spain, such as the Aziz case (14 March 2013) or, in another field of consumption, the Duarte case (3 October 2013), which held that national law does not permit the 'effective' exercise of consumers' rights, making it 'impossible or excessively difficult to apply the protection' which the European directives confer on them.

In this context, what can the Commission do to effectively protect consumers affected by this latest banking scandal? What information can the Commission provide to consumers affected by this fraud, so as to facilitate compensation being given to them? What steps does the Commission plan to take to ensure that Member States guarantee the right of consumers affected to successfully claim payment of the excess interest they have paid?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

A number of banks have been found to have manipulated benchmark indices (e.g. Libor, Euribor) and fines have been imposed upon by the Commission for breaches of the applicable competition law ([1]).

As regards action for damages for breaches of EU Competition law, including infringements of Article 101 TFEU, national courts have exclusive competence to intervene on the basis of the evidence put forward by the applicants. The Commission has no competence in respect of civil litigations. The Commission proposed on 11 June 2013 a directive on Antitrust Damages Actions ([2]) with the aim of facilitating for citizens to claim compensation at national level on the basis of anti-trust rulings. The proposal is currently discussed by co-legislators.

The proposal for a regulation on benchmarks ([3]) adopted by the Commission on 18 September 2013 aims at enhanced robustness and reliability of benchmarks, including interest rate benchmarks used to reference variable rate mortgages, such as Libor and Euribor. It will facilitate the prevention and detection of their manipulation and clarify the responsibility for their supervision. Under the Mortgage Credit Directive, which is expected to enter into force in March 2014, Member States will also have to ensure that any indices or reference rates used to calculate the borrowing rate are clear, accessible, objective and verifiable by the parties. Providers of indices and creditors will also have to maintain historical records of those indexes.

The Court cases (Aziz, Duarte) seem not to be directly linked to the benchmark or compensation issue.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1208_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/antitrust/actionsdamages/documents.html
([3]) COM/2013/0641 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013917/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: Terugnameovereenkomst EU-Turkije in ruil voor visumliberalisatie

Op 16 december 2013 zal Turkije de „terugnameovereenkomst voor mensen uit derde landen" ondertekenen. Deze overeenkomst verplicht Turkije ertoe om personen, die via dit land illegaal de EU zijn binnengekomen, terug te nemen. Turkije heeft zich altijd onwelwillend opgesteld: in ruil voor ondertekening van de overeenkomst wil het land visumliberalisatie voor alle Turken. De Turkse chantage lijkt „succesvol": na ondertekening van de overeenkomst zullen de EU en Turkije werken aan visumliberalisatie ([1]). Ondertussen gaat de chantage verder: Turkije dreigt bij voorbaat de terugname van illegalen stop te zetten als de EU de visumliberalisatie, althans in Turkse ogen, zou traineren ([2]).

Ahmet Davutoğlu, de Turkse minister van Buitenlandse Zaken, zegt stellig: „Turken hebben uiterlijk over 3,5 jaar geen visum meer nodig om de Europese Unie binnen te komen". Štefan Füle, eurocommissaris van Uitbreiding, spreekt over een „nieuwe dynamiek in de verhouding tussen Ankara en de EU". Zélf wil hij geen uiterlijk moment noemen waarop de visumliberalisatie gereed zou zijn.

1. Hoe verantwoordt de Commissie het dat zij heeft gebogen voor de Turkse chantage door het land visumliberalisatie in het vooruitzicht te stellen in ruil voor ondertekening van de terugnameovereenkomst door Turkije? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat van nota bene een kandidaat-EU-lidstaat simpelweg mag worden verwacht dat het, zonder er in alle arrogantie iets tegenover te stellen, een dergelijke overeenkomst ondertekent? Hoe verklaart de Commissie aldus haar slappe knieën?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het dat Turkije al bij voorbaat dreigt de terugname van illegalen stop te zetten als de EU de visumliberalisatie zou traineren? Deel de Commissie de mening dat dit dreigement van een kandidaat-EU-lidstaat onacceptabel is? Deelt de Commissie dientengevolge de mening dat de arrogante houding van Turkije geenszins „beloond", maar juist „gestraft" dient te worden, en wel door de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en het land onmiddellijk te beëindigen? Zo neen, hoe garandeert de Commissie dat in de toekomst de inwilliging van onacceptabele Turkse eisen achterwege zal blijven?

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

Op 16 december 2013 besliste de Commissie om in dialoog te treden met de Turkse autoriteiten over visumliberalisering, parallel met de ondertekening van de overnameovereenkomst tussen de EU en Turkije. Deze beslissing werd genomen in overeenstemming met de conclusies van de Raad van 21 juni 2012 over „de ontwikkeling van samenwerking met Turkije op het gebied van justitie en binnenlandse zaken" en met de resolutie van het Europees Parlement op 18 april 2013 over „het voortgangsverslag 2011 betreffende Turkije".

De Commissie verwacht dat de overnameovereenkomst zo snel mogelijk door beide partijen wordt geratificeerd. Wanneer deze overeenkomst eenmaal in werking is getreden, zal de Commissie nauwlettend toezien op de volledige en daadwerkelijke uitvoering ervan.

De Commissie rekent op een goede samenwerking tussen Turkije en de EU en verwacht dat de overnameovereenkomst volledig en daadwerkelijk zal worden uitgevoerd om de dialoog over de visumliberalisering te bevorderen. Voor de Commissie is de overnameovereenkomst immers een van de cruciale stappen in het „stappenplan voor visumvrijstelling met Turkije".

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2013/12/20131204_en.htm
([2]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2800/Europese-Unie/article/detail/3556757/2013/12/05/Turken-mogen-zonder-visum-naar-EU-als-Turkije-illegale-immigrant-terugneemt.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013917/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: EU-Turkey readmission agreement in return for visa liberalisation

On 16 December 2013, Turkey is due to sign the 'Readmission agreement for third-country citizens'. The agreement obliges Turkey to take back persons who have entered the EU illegally through that country. Turkey has never hidden its unsympathetic attitude: in return for signing the agreement, it wants visa liberalisation for all Turks. Turkey's blackmail seems to have 'succeeded' — after signing the agreement, the EU and Turkey are set to work on visa liberalisation ([1]). Meanwhile, the blackmail continues — Turkey is threatening in advance to halt the readmission of irregular migrants if the EU were to drag its feet — as Turkey sees it — on visa liberalisation ([2]).

Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey's Minister for Foreign Affairs, has firmly asserted that Turks will no longer need a visa to enter the European Union in 'no more than three and a half years'. Štefan Füle, the EU's Commissioner for Enlargement, has talked of a 'new dynamic in relations between Ankara and the EU'. Mr Füle, however, does not wish to put a deadline on the completion of visa liberalisation.

1. How does the Commission justify the fact that it has given in to Turkish blackmail by holding out the prospect of visa liberalisation for Turkey in return for it signing the readmission agreement? Does the Commission share the view that it would not be unreasonable to expect what is, after all, a candidate country for EU membership to simply sign an agreement of this nature without in all arrogance demanding something in return? In that context, then, how does the Commission explain its spinelessness?

2. What is the Commission's assessment of the fact that Turkey is already threatening, in advance, to halt the readmission of irregular migrants if the EU were to drag its feet on visa liberalisation? Does the Commission share the view that threatening behaviour of this kind is unacceptable from a candidate country for EU membership? Does the Commission consequently share the view that Turkey's arrogant behaviour should in no way be 'rewarded' but instead 'punished', and that that should be done by means of putting an immediate stop to the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? If not, how will the Commission guarantee that unacceptable Turkish demands will not be acceded to in future?

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

The decision of the Commission to start the visa liberalisation dialogue with Turkish authorities on 16 December 2013 in parallel with the signature of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement, was taken in line with the Council conclusions of 21 June 2012 on 'developing cooperation with Turkey in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs' and with the European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2013 'on the 2012 Progress Report on Turkey'.

The Commission looks forward to see the readmission agreement ratified by the two sides as soon as possible. Once entered into force, the Commission will closely monitor its full and effective implementation.

The Commission counts on good cooperation between Turkey and the EU and that full and effective implementation of the Readmission agreement — which represents one of the key requirements set by the Commission in its 'Roadmap towards free-regime with Turkey' — will be done in order to allow progress in the visa dialogue.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2013/12/20131204_en.htm
([2]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2800/Europese-Unie/article/detail/3556757/2013/12/05/Turken-mogen-zonder-visum-naar-EU-als-Turkije-illegale-immigrant-terugneemt.dhtml

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013918/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: Terugnameovereenkomst EU-Turkije in ruil voor visumliberalisatie

Op 16 december 2013 zal Turkije de „terugnameovereenkomst voor mensen uit derde landen" ondertekenen. Deze overeenkomst verplicht Turkije ertoe om personen, die via dit land illegaal de EU zijn binnengekomen, terug te nemen. Turkije heeft zich altijd onwelwillend opgesteld: in ruil voor ondertekening van de overeenkomst wil het land visumliberalisatie voor alle Turken. De Turkse chantage lijkt „succesvol": na ondertekening van de overeenkomst zullen de EU en Turkije werken aan visumliberalisatie ([1]). Ondertussen gaat de chantage verder: Turkije dreigt bij voorbaat de terugname van illegalen stop te zetten als de EU de visumliberalisatie, althans in Turkse ogen, zou traineren ([2]).

Ahmet Davutoğlu, de Turkse minister van Buitenlandse Zaken, zegt stellig: „Turken hebben uiterlijk over 3,5 jaar geen visum meer nodig om de Europese Unie binnen te komen". Štefan Füle, eurocommissaris van Uitbreiding, spreekt over een „nieuwe dynamiek in de verhouding tussen Ankara en de EU". Zélf wil hij geen uiterlijk moment noemen waarop de visumliberalisatie gereed zou zijn.

1. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat de heer Davutoğlu heeft gesteld dat Turken uiterlijk over 3,5 jaar geen visum meer nodig zouden hebben om de EU binnen te komen — hoewel de Commissie zélf zich niet op een dergelijk uiterlijk moment wil vastpinnen? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de heer Davutoğlu hiermee louter druk wil zetten op het proces naar visumliberalisatie, en dat hij daarmee het proces juist ondermijnt? Zo neen, hoe ziet de Commissie dit dan wél?

2. Is de Commissie zich ervan bewust dat, wanneer de terugnameovereenkomst van kracht is, Turkije weliswaar illegalen uit de EU zal terugnemen, maar dat tegelijkertijd 80 miljoen Turken, én alle niet-Turken die het land een verblijfsstatus verleent, legaal de EU mogen binnenkomen? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat aldus het ene probleem voor het andere wordt verruild? Zo neen, welke positieve gevolgen voor de EU heeft visumliberalisatie dan wél? Hoe verklaart de Commissie, in deze context, de door de heer Füle genoemde „nieuwe dynamiek in de verhouding tussen Ankara en de EU"?

3. Conclusie: deelt de Commissie de mening dat dit horrorscenario hoe dan ook moet worden voorkomen? Is zij er derhalve toe bereid haar besluit tot visumliberalisatie in te trekken? Zo neen, staat de Commissie dan ook in voor alle negatieve gevolgen hiervan, zoals in subvraag 2 aangeduid?

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

Op 16 december 2013 heeft de EU-commissaris voor Binnenlandse Zaken de overnameovereenkomst tussen de EU en Turkije ondertekend en de dialoog over visumliberalisering aangevat met de Turkse autoriteiten.

De beslissing om deze twee stappen tegelijkertijd te ondernemen, is in overeenstemming met de conclusies van de Raad van 21 juni 2012 over „de ontwikkeling van de samenwerking met Turkije op het gebied van justitie en binnenlandse zaken" en overeenkomstig de resolutie van het Europees Parlement van 18 april 2013 „over het voortgangsverslag 2012 betreffende Turkije".

De dialoog over visumliberalisering heeft geen bepaalde termijn en is gebaseerd op verdienste. Deze dialoog zal blijven duren totdat Turkije voldoet aan de eisen die zijn aangegeven in de „Routekaart voor een visumvrije regeling met Turkije", die voor dit doel is opgesteld door de Commissie.

Wanneer dit gebeurt, zal de Commissie een voorstel indienen tot wijziging van Verordening (EG) nr. 539/2001 om de visumverplichtingen van Schengen voor Turkse burgers op te heffen. Dit voorstel moet daarna worden goedgekeurd door het Europees Parlement en de Raad. In ieder geval zal de visumliberalisering geen betrekking hebben op onderdanen van derde landen die in Turkije verblijven.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2013/12/20131204_en.htm
([2]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2800/Europese-Unie/article/detail/3556757/2013/12/05/Turken-mogen-zonder-visum-naar-EU-als-Turkije-illegale-immigrant-terugneemt.dhtml.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013918/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: EU-Turkey readmission agreement in return for visa liberalisation

On 16 December 2013, Turkey is due to sign the 'Readmission agreement for third-country citizens'. The agreement obliges Turkey to take back persons who have entered the EU illegally through that country. Turkey has never hidden its unsympathetic attitude: in return for signing the agreement, it wants visa liberalisation for all Turks. Turkey's blackmail seems to have 'succeeded' — after signing the agreement, the EU and Turkey are set to work on visa liberalisation ([1]). Meanwhile, the blackmail continues — Turkey is threatening in advance to halt the readmission of irregular migrants if the EU were to drag its feet — as Turkey sees it — on visa liberalisation ([2]).

Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey's Minister for Foreign Affairs, has firmly asserted that Turks will no longer need a visa to enter the European Union in 'no more than three and a half years'. Štefan Füle, the EU's Commissioner for Enlargement, has talked of a 'new dynamic in relations between Ankara and the EU'. Mr Füle, however, does not wish to put a deadline on the completion of visa liberalisation.

1. How does the Commission view the fact that Mr Davutoğlu has stated that Turks will no longer need a visa to enter the EU in no more than three and a half years, while the Commission itself refuses to be pinned down on a deadline for this? Does the Commission share the view that, with his statement, Mr Davutoğlu is simply attempting to put pressure on the visa liberalisation process, a course of action that actually undermines the said process? If not, what is the Commission's interpretation?

2. Is the Commission aware that, once the readmission agreement is in force, while Turkey will accept back irregular migrants to the EU, at the same time 80 million Turks, as well as all the non-Turks that have been granted resident status there, will be able to enter the EU legally? Does the Commission share the view that this is thus trading one problem for another? If not, what positive impact on the EU does it see as resulting from visa liberalisation? In light of this, how does the Commission explicate what Commissioner Füle has referred to as the 'new dynamic in relations between Ankara and the EU'?

3. To conclude, does the Commission share the view that this horror scenario must, in any case, be avoided? Is it, as a result, prepared to reverse its decision on visa liberalisation? If not, is the Commission therefore willing to take responsibility for all the detrimental consequences that this will have, as referred to in sub-question 2?

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

On 16 December 2013 the Member of the Commission responsible for Home Affairs signed the EU-Turkey Readmission agreement and started the visa liberalisation dialogue with Turkish authorities.

The decision to take these two steps at the same time is in line with the Council conclusions of 21 June 2012 on 'developing cooperation with Turkey in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs' and with the European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2013 'on the 2012 Progress Report on Turkey'.

The visa liberalisation dialogue has no deadline and is merit-based. It will last until Turkey fulfils the requirements set by the 'Roadmap towards visa free-regime with Turkey', elaborated by the Commission for this exercise.

If and once this happens, the Commission will propose to amend the Council Regulation (EC)539/2001 in order to lift the Schengen visa obligations imposed on the Turkish citizens. This proposal will have then to be agreed by the European Parliament and the Council. In any case, the visa liberalisation will not consider third-country nationals residing in Turkey.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2013/12/20131204_en.htm
([2]) http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2800/Europese-Unie/article/detail/3556757/2013/12/05/Turken-mogen-zonder-visum-naar-EU-als-Turkije-illegale-immigrant-terugneemt.dhtml

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013919/13
alla Commissione
Potito Salatto (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Oreste Rossi (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Antonello Antinoro (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Diffusione del programma «OTV» senza impedimenti da parte delle autorità romene

OTV Srl è un soggetto giuridico di diritto italiano, con sede in Roma, via Germanico n.107, autorizzato alla diffusione via satellite del programma «OTV», giusta delibera del 30 settembre 2013 emessa dall'Autorità per la garanzia nelle telecomunicazioni della Repubblica italiana. Sin dall'inizio delle trasmissioni via satellite del programma «OTV» iniziate dall'OTV Srl nel mese di ottobre, si è registrato un atteggiamento arbitrario e ostile delle autorità romene, che hanno cercato di impedire la diffusione del programma «OTV» via satellite in Romania, pur essendo la OTV Srl in possesso di tutti i requisiti richiesti dalle rispettive normative nazionali e dalla normativa dell'UE per trasmettere via satellite anche in Romania.

Il governo romeno ha inviato direttamente alle società di gestione dei satelliti comunicazioni lesive dei diritti e delle prerogative scaturenti dalle legittime autorizzazioni italiane di OTV Srl, cercando di evitare la trasmissione e la diffusione del programma «OTV» in Romania, e l'ente governativo romeno CNA (Consiglio nazionale dell'audiovisivo) ha cercato di impedire la trasmissione del programma «OTV» in Romania con delibere pretestuose e non opponibili a una società estera, poiché basate su problematiche riguardanti soggetti giuridici e politici romeni.

Poiché OTV Srl è un soggetto giuridico italiano, il comportamento posto sin qui in essere dalle autorità romene si appalesa illegittimo, pretestuoso, arbitrario e lesivo sia dei diritti di OTV Srl che delle normative dell'UE in tema di libertà di espressione e d'informazione, configurandosi l'atteggiamento attuato dalle Autorità romene come un illegittimo tentativo di limitazione dei diritti fondamentali e fondanti dell'UE e come un tentativo di censura indiretta nei confronti di un soggetto giuridico italiano che agisce nel pieno rispetto della normativa UE.

Sulla base degli elementi ripresi qui sopra, cosa intende fare la Commissione europea per consentire la diffusione del programma «OTV» senza impedimenti da parte delle autorità romene?

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

La direttiva sui servizi di media audiovisivi ([1])[1] disciplina la fornitura di servizi di media audiovisivi nell'UE. In base alla direttiva, i fornitori di servizi di media rientrano nella giurisdizione di un unico Stato membro, il quale deve garantire che detti fornitori di servizi rispettino le norme nazionali che recepiscono la direttiva. L'obbligo imposto allo Stato membro di origine di verificare che le trasmissioni siano conformi al diritto nazionale è sufficiente per assicurare la libera circolazione delle trasmissioni senza un secondo controllo analogo nello Stato membro ricevente. A titolo eccezionale, se le condizioni di cui all'articolo 3, paragrafo 2, della direttiva sono soddisfatte e nel rispetto della procedura ivi stabilita (cui partecipano la Commissione e lo Stato membro emittente), lo Stato membro o gli Stati membri riceventi possono sospendere provvisoriamente la ritrasmissione di programmi nel loro territorio.

Inoltre, conformemente all'articolo 4 della direttiva, uno Stato membro che ha adottato norme più particolareggiate o più rigorose nei settori coordinati dalla direttiva può avviare una procedura di accertamento dell'elusione qualora ritenga che un'emittente soggetta alla giurisdizione di un altro Stato membro si sia stabilita nel suo territorio al fine di aggirare norme più severe. Ciò si applica quando tale emittente fornisce servizi televisivi (la cui trasmissione è destinata in tutto o per la maggior parte al proprio territorio).

Gli onorevoli parlamentari non forniscono sufficienti informazioni sulle ragioni che giustificano il presunto comportamento ostruzionistico da parte delle autorità rumene. La Commissione non è stata contattata dall'emittente italiana e, pertanto, non è in grado di valutare se vi sia stata violazione delle disposizioni della direttiva.

([1]) Direttiva 2010/13/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 10 marzo 2010, relativa al coordinamento di determinate disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative degli Stati membri concernenti la fornitura di servizi di media audiovisivi (direttiva sui servizi di media audiovisivi).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013919/13
to the Commission
Potito Salatto (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Oreste Rossi (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Antonello Antinoro (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Broadcasting of the 'OTV' programme unimpeded by the Romanian authorities

OTV Srl is an Italian company with registered office at via Germanico 107, Rome, Italy, and is authorised to broadcast the 'OTV' programme via satellite by decision of the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority of 30 September 2013. Since OTV Srl began broadcasting the programme via satellite in October, the Romanian authorities have displayed an arbitrary and hostile attitude, attempting to prevent the programme from being broadcast in Romania, even though OTV Srl fulfils all the requirements of domestic and EU legislation for satellite broadcasting, including in Romania.

The Romanian government has sent letters directly to the satellite communications management companies that violate the rights and prerogatives arising from the legitimate Italian authorisations held by OTV Srl, seeking to prevent the 'OTV' programme from being broadcast in Romania. The Romanian government body CNA (National Audiovisual Council) has also tried to prevent the programme from being broadcast in Romania by issuing spurious resolutions that cannot be enforced against a foreign company because they raise issues that are only relevant to Romanian legal and political entities.

Since OTV Srl is an Italian company, the measures taken to date by the Romanian authorities are plainly unlawful, spurious and arbitrary, and violate both the rights of OTV Srl and EU legislation on freedom of expression and information. The attitude taken by the Romanian authorities is an unlawful attempt to restrict the fundamental and founding rights of the EU, as well as indirectly to censor an Italian company acting in full compliance with EU legislation.

In view of the above, what steps does the Commission intend to take to allow the 'OTV' programme to be broadcast unimpeded by the Romanian authorities?

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

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([1]) (AVMSD) regulates the provision of audiovisual media services in the EU. According to AVMSD, media services providers come under the jurisdiction of a single Member State. The Member State must ensure that media services providers under its jurisdiction comply with the national law transposing the AVMSD. The requirement that the originating Member State should verify that broadcasts comply with national is sufficient to ensure free movement of broadcasts without secondary control on the same grounds in the receiving Member State. By way of exception, if the conditions of Article 3(2) of the AVMSD are fulfilled and following the procedure set therein (involving the Commission and the transmitting Member State), the receiving Member State(s) may, provisionally suspend the retransmission of broadcasts in its (their) territory.

Moreover, in accordance with Article 4 of the AVMSD, a Member State which adopted more detailed or stricter rules in the fields coordinated by the directive can start a circumvention procedure if it considers that a broadcaster under the jurisdiction of another Member State established itself in that Member State in order to circumvent those stricter rules. This will apply when such broadcaster provides a television (broadcast which is wholly or mostly directed towards its territory.

The Honourable Members do not provide sufficient information on the reasons justifying the alleged obstructive behaviour of the Romanian authorities. The Commission has not been contacted by the Italian broadcaster and as such is not able to assess whether the provisions of the AVMSD have been infringed.

([1]) Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media Services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013922/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Angekündigte Kompetenzausweitung der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft (EPPO)

Bei der Veranstaltung „Vorschlag für eine Richtlinie zur Einrichtung einer Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft: Probleme und Perspektiven" in Brüssel am 28. und 29. November 2013 kündigte der OLAF-Generaldirektor an, dass die Kompetenzen des vorgeschlagenen Europäischen Staatsanwalts auf schwere Verbrechen mit einer grenzüberschreitenden Dimension, wie Menschenhandel, organisierte Kriminalität und Terrorismus, ausgeweitet würden.

1. Wie passt diese angekündigte Kompetenzausweitung zu den Bedenken der elf nationalen Parlamente (Subsidiaritätsrüge)?

2. Wie erklärt die Europäische Kommission diese Mandatsausweitung des EPPO? Welche Rechtsgrundlage sieht sie dafür?

3. Wann wird es einen entsprechenden Vorschlag der Europäischen Kommission geben?

4. Wann unternimmt die Kommission eine entsprechende Initiative, um diejenigen Staaten, die eine Subsidiaritätsrüge zum Vorschlag der Kommission eingereicht haben, von dieser Kompetenzausweitung zu überzeugen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(10. Februar 2014)

Der Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Verordnung des Rates über die Errichtung der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft ([1]) gründet auf Artikel 86 Absatz 1 AEUV. Im Einklang mit dieser Bestimmung ist der Vorschlag der Kommission auf Straftaten zum Nachteil der finanziellen Interessen der Europäischen Union beschränkt.

Nach Artikel 86 Absatz 4 AEUV können die Befugnisse der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft durch einstimmigen Beschluss des Europäischen Rates nach Zustimmung des Europäischen Parlaments auf die Bekämpfung der schweren Kriminalität mit grenzüberschreitender Dimension ausgedehnt werden. In ihrer begleitenden Mitteilung vom 17. Juli 2013 ([2]) zum Vorschlag für eine Verordnung kündigte die Kommission an, das Mandat der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft nach ihrer Errichtung zu prüfen. Artikel 74 des Vorschlags sieht vor, dass eine solche Überprüfung spätestens fünf Jahre nach Inkrafttreten der Verordnung erfolgt.

Die nationalen Parlamente einiger Mitgliedstaaten verabschiedeten im Rahmen des Subsidiaritätskontrollmechanismus gemäß Protokoll Nr. 2 begründete Stellungnahmen. Die Kommission hat alle von den nationalen Parlamenten vorgebrachten Argumente eingehend analysiert. Als Reaktion auf die Argumente in Bezug auf den Subsidiaritätsgrundsatz überprüfte die Kommission ihren Vorschlag und beschloss, an ihm festzuhalten ([3]). Dabei verpflichtete sie sich, den begründeten Stellungnahmen gebührend Rechnung zu tragen. Dementsprechend setzt die Kommission den politischen Dialog mit den nationalen Parlamenten fort.

([1]) KOM(2013)534.
([2]) KOM(2013)532.
([3]) KOM(2013)851.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013922/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Announcement of a wider remit for the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO)

At the event entitled 'Proposal for a directive to establish a European Public Prosecutor's Office: problems and prospects' held in Brussels on 28 and 29 November 2013, the Director-General of OLAF announced that the remit of the proposed EPPO was to be widened to cover serious cross-border crimes, such as human trafficking, organised crime and terrorism.

1. How can this announcement be reconciled with the misgivings expressed by the 11 national parliaments which have objected to the proposal on the grounds that it breaches the subsidiarity principle?

2. What explanation can the Commission give for widening the EPPO's remit? What is the legal basis for this?

3. When will the Commission put forward a corresponding proposal?

4. When will the Commission take steps to convince those states which are claiming that the proposal breaches the subsidiarity principle of the benefits of the wider remit?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 February 2014)

The Commission's proposal for a Council Regulation establishing the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) ([1]) is based on Article 86 paragraph 1 TFEU. In accordance with this Treaty provision the Commission's proposal is limited to crimes affecting the financial interests of the Union.

Article 86 paragraph 4 TFEU provides for the possibility to extend the powers of the EPPO to include serious crime having a cross-border dimension through a unanimous decision of the European Council after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament. In its communication of 17 July 2013 ([2]) accompanying the proposal for a regulation the Commission stated that it will examine the mandate of the European Public Prosecutor's Office after it is established. Article 74 of the proposal itself provides for such a review to be conducted five years after the regulation's application.

The national Parliaments of some Member States adopted reasoned opinions within the subsidiarity control mechanism of Protocol 2. The Commission undertook a detailed analysis of all arguments put forward by national Parliaments. In response to subsidiarity related arguments the Commission reviewed its proposal and decided to maintain it ([3]) while making a commitment to take due account of the reasoned opinions. Accordingly, the Commission pursues the political dialogue with national Parliaments.

([1]) COM(2013) 534.
([2]) COM(2013) 532.
([3]) COM(2013) 851.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-013924/13
till kommissionen
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 december 2013)

Angående: Antibiotikaresistens hos djur

Antimikrobiell resistens hos djur är ett växande problem i Europa. Genom omfattande användande av veterinärmedicinska läkemedel innehållande antibiotika ökar den antimikrobiella resistensen hos djur. Detta har negativa effekter för både djur- och folkhälsan.

Resistenta bakterier, som ökar risken för infektioner och kan resultera i sjuklighet och dödlighet, kan spridas mellan djur och i miljön och även överföras till människor. Dessutom kan bakterier sinsemellan utbyta resistensgener, vilket bidrar till spridningen av resistens.

Användningen av antibiotika i djurvården skiljer sig mycket mellan olika medlemsländer. Spridningen av resistens ställer emellertid krav på effektiv resistensövervakning på lokal, nationell och europeisk nivå. Det är viktigt att kartlägga användandet av veterinärmedicinska läkemedel innehållande antibiotika i EU:s medlemsländer för att sedan kunna göra jämförelser länder emellan och för att kunna sätta upp reduceringsmål.

Håller kommissionen med om att den ökande antibiotikaresistensen hos djur är ett växande problem för såväl djur- som folkhälsan i EU?

Vad gör kommissionen för att kartlägga användningen av antimikrobiella medel i djurvården på nationell nivå och EU-nivå?

När planerar kommissionen att etablera reduceringsmål för användandet av antimikrobiella medel i djurvården?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(29 januari 2014)

När det gäller frågor om antimikrobiell resistens hos djur och de åtgärder som kommissionen vidtagit i denna fråga, hänvisar kommissionen till sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-011036/2013.

Kommissionen har inga planer på att fastställa reduceringsmål för unionen om användningen av antimikrobiella medel inom djurhållningen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013924/13
to the Commission
Åsa Westlund (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Antibiotics resistance in animals

Antimicrobial resistance in animals is a growing problem in Europe. As a result of the extensive use of veterinary medicinal products containing antibiotics, antimicrobial resistance in animals is increasing. This has adverse effects for both animal and human health.

Resistant bacteria, which increase the risk of infections and can result in morbidity and mortality, can spread between animals and in the environment, and can also be transferred to people. Bacteria can also exchange resistance genes among themselves, which helps to spread the resistance.

The use of antibiotics in the care of animals differs greatly between different Member States. However, the spread of resistance requires effective resistance monitoring at local, national and European level. It is important to chart the use of veterinary medicinal products containing antibiotics in the EU Member States in order to then be able to draw up comparisons between countries and set reduction targets.

Does the Commission agree that the increasing level of antibiotics resistance in animals is a growing problem for both animal and human health in the EU?

What is it doing to chart the use of antimicrobials in animal care at national and EU level?

When is it planning to establish reduction targets for the use of antimicrobials in animal care?

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

Regarding the questions about Antimicrobial resistance in animals and the actions taken by the Commission on this issue, the Commission refers to its answers to previous Written Question E-011036/2013.

The Commission is not planning to establish EU reduction targets on the use of antimicrobials in animal husbandry.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013925/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(6 december 2013)

Betreft: Turkije hanteert afstammingscodes om niet-moslims te catalogiseren

In Turkije kwam aan het licht dat de overheid afstammingscodes gebruikt om niet-moslims in kaart te brengen ([1]).

De bal kwam aan het rollen nadat een moeder in Istanbul haar kind wilde inschrijven in een Armeense school. Zoals veel Armeniërs had haar familie zich (voor en na de Armeense genocide) bekeerd tot de islam, maar de vrouw wilde opnieuw ten volle haar Armeense identiteit beleven. Ze liet zich dopen, en liet zich in haar identiteitspapieren vermelden als christen. Om haar kind te kunnen inschrijven in een Armeense school bleek ze ook een certificaat te moeten aanvragen bij het Nationaal Onderwijsbureau, maar daar liet men weten dat er een vonnis van een rechtbank nodig was om de verandering van godsdienst te officialiseren. Zo moest voor de betrokken vrouw in het bevolkingsregister de „code 2" vermeld staan.

Na onderzoek van onder meer de krant Radikal blijkt de Turkse staat een geheime code te hanteren om niet-moslims te catalogiseren. Voor Grieken geldt bijvoorbeeld code 1, voor Armeniërs code 2, voor joden code 3.

Deze praktijk is wellicht één van de redenen waarom er in Turkije nauwelijks of geen niet-moslims te vinden zijn op hoge posten in het leger, de administratie of gerechtshoven.

Is de Commissie van oordeel dat het geheim catalogiseren van burgers volgens hun godsdienst in overeenstemming is met het acquis communautaire en de criteria van Kopenhagen?

Nam de Commissie hierover al contact op met de Turkse regering? Zo neen, welke stappen overweegt de Commissie hierover te zetten?

Welke gevolgen hebben deze praktijken voor het verder verloop van de toetredingsonderhandelingen?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(17 februari 2014)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op vraag E-009440/2013 ([2]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013925/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Turkey uses ancestry codes to catalogue non-Muslims

In Turkey, it has been discovered that the Government uses ancestry codes to register non-Muslims ([1]).

The genesis of the story came when a mother in Istanbul wanted to enrol her child in an Armenian school. Like many Armenians (both before and after the Armenian Genocide), her family had converted to Islam, but this woman wanted to fully re-assert her Armenian identity. She had herself baptised, and listed herself as a Christian in her identity documents. In order to be able to enrol her child in an Armenian school, she also apparently had to request a certificate from the National Education Office, but she was then told that she needed a court judgment in order to make her change in religion official. The woman in question therefore had to have 'code 2' beside her entry in the population register.

After research by the newspaper Radikal, among others, it emerged that the Turkish state uses a secret code in order to catalogue non-Muslims. Greeks, for example, are given the code 1. For Armenians the code is 2, and for Jews, code 3 applies.

This practice is perhaps one reason why there are few or no non-Muslims in powerful positions in the Turkish army, administration and courts.

Does the Commission believe that the secret cataloguing of citizens according to their religion is in line with the *acquis communautaire* and the Copenhagen criteria?

Has the Commission already been in contact with the Turkish government on this matter? If not, what steps does it plan to take with regard to this issue?

What consequences will these practices have for the future course of the accession negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-009440/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/08/turkish-ancestry-codes.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-013928/13
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2013 m. gruodžio 6 d.)

Tema: Nacionalinių energetikos projektų įtraukimas į bendros svarbos projektų sąrašą

Gerbiamas Komisare, dėkoju už Jūsų pateiktus atsakymus į mano rašytinius klausimus dėl galimo ES finansavimo suskystintų dujų terminalo statybai Klaipėdoje. 2013 m. spalio 14 d. Komisijos paskelbtame bendros svarbos energetikos projektų sąraše Klaipėdos SGDT nebuvo prisikirtas prie bendros svarbos projektų, nors Jūs savo atsakyme teigėte, kad regioninis SGDT yra naudingiausias sprendimas žvelgiant iš regioninės 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". Regioninio SGDT statybą numatoma baigti tik 2030 m., t. y. po 17 metų, kai tuo tarpu Klaipėdos SGDT pradės veikti jau 2015 m.

Baltijos jūros regiono valstybėms narėms yra labai svarbu kuo skubiau mažinti energetinę priklausomybę bei turėti alternatyvius dujų tiekimo šaltinius. Be to, Europos dujų perdavimo sistemos operatorių tinklo (angl. ENTSO-G) parengtame dešimties metų BEMIP dujų infrastruktūros regioninių investicijų plėtros plane 2013-2022 m. Klaipėdos suskystintų dujų terminalas yra įtrauktas į svarbių Baltijos regiono projektų sąrašą. Pabrėžiama ir šio projekto tarpvalstybinė nauda: šio terminalo buvimas sudarytų sąlygas nacionalinei bei regioninėms dujų rinkoms ateityje tiekti dujas ir į kaimynines šalis. Atsižvelgiant į tai, Klaipėdoje statomas SGDT atitinka ES energetikos politikos tikslus ir prisidės prie viso Baltijos regiono energetinio saugumo didinimo. Savo atsakyme Jūs teigėte, jog „esminis BEMIP principas – solidarumas siekiant skatinti energijos sistemų integraciją". Į bendros svarbos projektų sąrašą įtraukti kitų valstybių narių modernizuojami ar plečiami jau esančios energetikos infrastruktūros nacionalinio pobūdžio objektai, pvz., Lenkijoje plečiamas ir modernizuojamas Swinoujiscie SGDT, kai tuo tarpu Klaipėdos SGDT, kuris išsprendžia visus klausimus, į šį sąrašą nebuvo įtrauktas. Klaipėdos SGDT turi ne tik didelę ekonominę, bet ir politinę reikšmę Lietuvai ir visam Baltijos regionui.

Norėjau sužinoti, kodėl ir kokiu pagrindu buvo vykdoma nacionalinio pobūdžio energetikos projektų, kuriems gali būti skiriama ES finansinė parama, diferenciacija ir kodėl nebuvo atsižvelgta į Klaipėdos SGDT svarbą ne tik Lietuvai, bet ir kaimyninėms valstybėms narėms, ir šis projektas nebuvo įtrauktas į bendros svarbos projektų sąrašą?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. sausio 29 d.)

Reglamente 1391/2013 ([1]) pateiktas Sąjungos bendro intereso projektų sąrašas yra sudarytas remiantis regioniniais sąrašais, kuriuos parengė dvylika regioninių grupių, sudarytų iš valstybių narių, nacionalinių reguliavimo institucijų, projekto vykdytojų, Energetikos reguliavimo institucijų bendradarbiavimo agentūros (ACER) ir Europos dujų perdavimo sistemos operatorių tinklo (ENTSOG) atstovų. Kiekvienas potencialus bendro intereso projektas, pateiktas projekto vykdytojų buvo vertinamas remiantis Reglamento 347/2013 ([2]) 4 straipsnyje nustatytais kriterijais, siekiant patikrinti, ar jis yra tarpvalstybinės reikšmės ir ar jis padeda siekti ES energetikos politikos tikslų, įskaitant rinkos integraciją ir konkurenciją, tiekimo saugumą ir tvarumą. Prieš regioninių grupių sprendimus priimantiems organams (valstybės narės ir Komisija) patvirtinant regioninius sąrašus, šie sąrašai buvo pateikti įvertinti ACER. Sąjungos sąrašas bus peržiūrimas kas dvejus metus.

Komisija sutinka su tuo, kad suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalas Klaipėdoje yra svarbus tiekimo saugumui Lietuvoje ir atitinka ES energetikos politikos tikslus. Projekto įtraukimas į Sąjungos sąrašą nebuvo svarstomas todėl, kad projekto vykdytojas nepateikė jo kaip potencialaus bendro intereso projekto regioninei grupei įvertinti, kaip reikalaujama pagal Reglamento 347/2013 III priedo 2.1 punktą.

Komisija informuoja gerbiamą narį, kad daugiau informacijos apie regioninių ir Sąjungos sąrašų sudarymą galima rasti Reglamento 347/2013 3 ir 4 straipsniuose ir III priede.

([1]) 2013 m. spalio 14 d. Komisijos deleguotasis reglamentas (ES) Nr. 1391/2013, kuriuo, sudarant Sąjungos bendro intereso projektų sąrašą, iš dalies keičiamas Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamentas (ES) Nr. 347/2013 dėl transeuropinės energetikos infrastruktūros gairių (OL L 349/28, 2013 12 21).

([2]) 2013 m. balandžio 17 d. Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamentas (ES) Nr. 347/2013 dėl transeuropinės energetikos infrastruktūros gairių, kuriuo panaikinamas Sprendimas Nr. 1364/2006/EB ir kuriuo iš dalies keičiami reglamentai (EB) Nr. 713/2009, (EB) Nr. 714/2009 ir (EB) Nr. 715/2009 (OL L 115/39, 2013 4 25).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013928/13
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Inclusion of national energy projects on the list of projects of common interest

Commissioner, thank you for your answers to my written questions on possible EU financing of the construction of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Klaipėda. The Klaipėda LNG terminal was not included among projects of common interest on the list of energy projects of common interest published by the Commission on 14 October 2013, although in your answer you maintained that a regional LNG terminal is the most advantageous solution from a regional perspective, but 'this does not mean that EU support cannot consequently be allocated to projects like Klaipėda LNG terminal through which individual Member States are striving to ensure security of supply as a matter of urgency'. The construction of the regional LNG terminal is not due to be completed until 2030, i.e. in 17 years time, whereas the Klaipėda LNG terminal will enter service as early as 2015.

It is very important for countries in the Baltic Sea region to reduce energy dependence and have alternative sources of gas supply. Furthermore, the 10-year BEMIP Gas Infrastructure Regional Investment Plan 2013-2022 drafted by the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas includes Klaipėda's liquefied natural gas terminal on the list of important projects in the Baltic region. This project's international benefits are also underlined: the existence of this terminal would create the conditions for national and regional gas markets to also supply gas to neighbouring countries in the future. Consequently, the LNG terminal being constructed in Klaipėda is in line with EU energy policy objectives and will help to increase the energy security of the entire Baltic region. In your answer you stated that 'the underlying principle of BEMIP is solidarity with the aim to promote the integration of the energy systems'. Existing national energy infrastructure objects being modernised or expanded by other Member States, such as the Świnoujście LNG terminal being expanded and modernised in Poland, were included on the list of projects of common interest, whereas the Klaipėda LNG terminal which addresses all of the issues was not included on the list. The Klaipėda LNG terminal is not only of great economic significance, but also of political importance for Lithuania and the whole Baltic region.

I wanted to know why and on what basis national energy projects eligible for EU financial assistance were differentiated and why the importance of Klaipėda's LNG terminal not just for Lithuania but also for neighbouring Member States was not taken into account and this project was not included on the list of projects of common interest?

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

The Union list of projects of commont interest (PCIs) laid down by Regulation 1391/2013 ([1]) has been established on the basis of the regional lists drawn up by twelve Regional Groups consisting of representatives of the Member States, national regulatory authorities, project promoters, the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) and the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSO-G). Each potential PCI submitted by a project promoter was assessed against the criteria laid down in Article 4 of Regulation 347/2013 ([2]) to check whether it has a cross-border relevance and contributes to the EU energy policy objectives, including market integration and competition, security of supply and sustainability. Before the adoption of the regional lists by the decision-making bodies of the Regional Groups (Member States and Commission), the lists had been submitted to ACER for its assessment. The Union list is to be reviewed every two years.

The Commission agrees that the liquified natural gas (LNG) terminal in Klaipeda is important for security of supply in Lithuania and is in line with the EU energy policy objectives. The project was not considered for inclusion in the Union list because the project promoter has not submitted it as a potential PCI to the regional group for the evaluation, as required by point 2.1 of Annex III to Regulation 347/2013.

For more information on the process of establishing the regional and Union lists, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to Articles 3 and 4 of and Annex III to Regulation 347/2013.

([1]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1391/2013 of 14 October 2013 amending Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure as regards the Union list of projects of common interest (OJ L 349/28, 21.12.2013).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC and amending Regulations (EC) No 713/2009, (EC) No 714/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 (OJ L 115/39, 25.4.2013).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013929/13
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(6 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Ley española para la Protección de la Seguridad Ciudadana

El actual Gobierno español ha aprobado el anteproyecto de Ley para la Protección de la Seguridad Ciudadana ([1]), el cual incluye algunos puntos controvertidos, como la imposición de multas de hasta 600 000 euros por manifestarse sin autorización ante instituciones gubernamentales.

El Consejo de Europa, como organismo internacional relevante en el escenario europeo y promotor de la democracia, los derechos humanos y el Estado de Derecho, ya ha emitido su opinión al respecto, y considera esta ley como desproporcionada y transgresora de los derechos de reunión y manifestación y, en última instancia, de libre expresión, ya que a todo ciudadano debe permitírsele expresar su desacuerdo con las medidas de su gobierno de una manera pacífica.

¿Pretende la Comisión, como institución oficial de la Unión Europea, seguir la evolución de esta ley?

¿Emitirá la Comisión una opinión y/o recomendación al Gobierno de España sobre la posible vulneración de derechos fundamentales de los ciudadanos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de febrero de 2014)

En el marco de sus competencias, la Comisión siempre ha estado firmemente comprometida a garantizar que la libertad de expresión y la libertad de reunión se respeten estrictamente, puesto que constituyen la base de una sociedad libre, democrática y pluralista. Sin embargo, la Comisión no dispone de una competencia general en lo que respecta a los derechos fundamentales. De conformidad con su artículo 51, la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales se dirige a los Estados miembros únicamente cuando aplican el Derecho de la Unión.

El mantenimiento del orden público y la salvaguardia de la seguridad interior en los Estados miembros son de competencia nacional y, por tanto, quedan fuera del Derecho de la Unión (artículo 72 del TFUE).

Con todo, esto no significa que no exista ninguna protección de los derechos fundamentales en asuntos no contemplados por el Derecho de la Unión. En estos casos, corresponde a las autoridades nacionales garantizar el cumplimiento de las obligaciones relativas a los derechos fundamentales derivadas de acuerdos internacionales o de su Derecho interno.

España, como todos los demás Estados miembros de la UE, está obligada a respetar el Convenio Europeo para la Protección de los Derechos Humanos y de las Libertades Fundamentales, que consagra la libertad de expresión y la libertad de reunión. La Comisión es consciente de los comentarios realizados por el Comisario de Derechos Humanos del Consejo de Europa sobre el proyecto de ley española.

La Comisión confía plenamente en la voluntad de las autoridades españolas para garantizar el respeto de todos los derechos fundamentales como exigen su propia Constitución y las obligaciones internacionales.

([1]) http://www.interior.gob.es/press/aprobado-el-nuevo-texto-normativo-del-anteproyecto-de-ley-para-la-proteccion-de-la-seguridad-ciudadana-16127

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013929/13
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Spanish law for the protection of citizens' safety

The current Spanish Government has approved a draft bill ([1]) designed to protect citizens' safety which includes some controversial points, such as the imposing of fines of up to EUR 600 000 for unauthorised demonstrations in front of government institutions.

As an important international body on the European stage and an advocate for democracy, the Council of Europe has already issued its opinion on the bill. It considers the law to be disproportionate and an infringement of the rights to meet and demonstrate and, ultimately, the right of free expression, since any citizen should be permitted to express his disagreement with his government's actions in a peaceful manner.

Does the Commission, as an official institution of the European Union, plan to monitor developments in connection with this law?

Will the Commission issue an opinion and/or recommendation to the Spanish Government on the possible infringement of the fundamental rights of citizens?

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

Within its competences, the Commission has always been strongly committed to ensuring that freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are strictly respected since they lie at the very base of a free, democratic and pluralist society. However, the Commission does not have a general competence as regards fundamental rights. According to its Article 51, the Charter of Fundamental Rights is addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

The maintenance of law and order and the safeguarding of internal security in the Member States fall within national competence and thus outside Union law (Article 72 TFEU).

However this does not mean that there is no fundamental rights protection in issues falling outside Union law. In these cases, it is for the national authorities to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from internal legislation — are respected.

Spain, like all the other EU Member States, is bound to respect the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which enshrines freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. The Commission is aware of the comments made by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe on the Spanish draft law.

The Commission has full confidence in the willingness of Spanish authorities to ensure the respect for all fundamental rights as required by their own constitutions and international obligations.

([1]) http://www.interior.gob.es/press/aprobado-el-nuevo-texto-normativo-del-anteproyecto-de-ley-para-la-proteccion-de-la-seguridad-ciudadana-16127

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013932/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Contraffazione alimentare del «made in Italy»

In questi giorni numerose associazioni che raggruppano i consorzi alimentari italiani stanno portando avanti forti proteste per spronare i legislatori a una difesa più efficace dei prodotti «made in Italy», che trovano concorrenza sleale nella contraffazione sempre più diffusa.

Da un'analisi condotta da un importante consorzio alimentare italiano relativamente ai primi nove mesi del 2013 rispetto all'inizio della crisi nel 2007 emerge che, con la crisi in atto, in Italia sono state chiuse circa 140 000 stalle e aziende anche a causa della concorrenza sleale dei prodotti di minor qualità importati dall'estero, che vengono spacciati come «made in Italy».

Prodotti alimentari senza corretta timbratura e documentazione provenienti da Germania, Polonia, Belgio e altri paesi europei vengono scoperti sempre più frequentemente ai confini italiani delle autostrade da parte delle forze dell'ordine italiane.

In aggiunta, i parametri italiani per la sicurezza alimentare permettono all'Italia di essere il Paese con il minor numero di prodotti agroalimentari con residui chimici oltre il limite (0,3 %), inferiori di cinque volte a quelli della media europea (1,5 % di irregolarità) e addirittura di 26 volte a quelli extracomunitari (7,9 % di irregolarità), secondo un'analisi condotta sulla base di dati dell'EFSA.

Vista la proposta della commissione IMCO recentemente approvata sulla «crisi alimentare, le frodi nella catena alimentare e il loro controllo» che include l'obbligo dell'indicazione di origine e che indica come inadeguato il riferimento alle pratiche fraudolente contenuto nella legislazione alimentare generale, si chiede alla Commissione:

— di fornire una definizione di frode più stringente che includa il profitto economico e le intenzioni delle pratiche fraudolente;

— se ritiene sia necessario adeguare le penali attualmente applicate nel settore alimentare per la prevenzione delle frodi e introdurre sanzioni più severe e più dissuasive;

— se sia possibile migliorare la collaborazione tra tutti gli enti pubblici interessati e gli operatori del settore alimentare e aumentare le capacità antifrode per implementare un azione proattiva, piuttosto che reattiva.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2014)

Nella legislazione dell'UE non vi è attualmente una definizione di frode alimentare e le legislazioni nazionali di ciascuno Stato membro forniscono definizioni diverse per fatti che configurano violazioni intenzionali della legge motivate dall'avidità di lucro. Anche se nel 2014 verrà avviato uno studio per accertare se ciò si ripercuota negativamente sull'enforcement della normativa relativa alla filiera agroalimentare, l'assenza di una definizione armonizzata di frode alimentare non impedisce alla Commissione di compiere progressi nella lotta contro tale fattispecie.

Per quanto concerne le sanzioni, l'articolo 55 del regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 ([1]) fa obbligo agli Stati membri di stabilire le regole in materia di sanzioni applicabili in caso di violazioni della normativa sui mangimi e sugli alimenti e di prendere tutte le misure necessarie per assicurare che siano attuate. Le sanzioni previste devono essere efficaci, proporzionate e dissuasive.

Il 6 maggio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di riesame del regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 al fine di rafforzare il sistema esistente, compresa la lotta contro le frodi alimentari. La proposta comprende una disposizione che fa obbligo di fissare sanzioni pecuniarie in caso di violazioni intenzionali, sanzioni che devono consistere di un importo tale da controbilanciare il vantaggio economico perseguito con la violazione, al fine di assicurare il carattere dissuasivo della sanzione. Tale proposta è ora all'esame del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio in prima lettura.

Un migliore coordinamento tra le autorità competenti degli Stati membri è effettivamente essenziale per migliorare la loro capacità di prevenzione, rilevazione e dissuasione per quanto concerne le attività fraudolente. È stata costituita una rete contro le frodi alimentari in cui interagiscono i 28 Stati membri e la Commissione per citare una tra le diverse iniziative già poste in atto dalla Commissione in seguito alla frode dell'anno scorso avente per oggetto le carni equine.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normative 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-013932/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Counterfeiting of 'Made in Italy' foods

Many Italian associations representing food production consortia have recently been lobbying strongly for legislators to provide more effective protection for 'Made in Italy' products, which are facing unfair competition from increasingly widespread counterfeiting.

An analysis carried out by a major Italian food production consortium for the first nine months of 2013, compared with the start of the economic crisis in 2007, shows that around 140 000 shops and businesses have closed, partly due to unfair competition from lower-quality imported products being sold as 'Made in Italy'.

Food products without proper stamping and documentation, originating from Germany, Poland, Belgium and other European countries, are increasingly being found by Italian police forces at motorway border crossings.

Italian food safety standards mean that Italy has the lowest number of agrifood products with chemical residues above the permitted limit (0.3%), five times lower than the EU average (1.5%) and a full 26 times lower than the level for non-EU countries (7.9%), according to an analysis based on EFSA data.

In view of the recently approved proposal of the IMCO Committee on the 'food crisis, fraud in the food chain and control thereof', which includes the obligation to indicate the origin and describes the reference to fraudulent practices in general food law as 'inadequate', can the Commission answer the following questions:

Can it provide a more stringent definition of fraud that includes economic profit and fraudulent intent?

Does it believe it is necessary to adjust the penalties currently applied in the food sector to prevent fraud, and to introduce new sanctions that are more severe and have a more deterrent effect?

Is it possible to improve cooperation between all the public agencies concerned and operators in the food sector, and to improve the capacity to prevent fraud by taking proactive rather than reactive measures?

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

There is currently no definition of food fraud in EU legislation, and national laws in each Member State provide different definitions for facts that represent intentional violations of statutory requirements motivated by the prospect of financial gain. While a study will be launched in 2014 to explore whether this is adversely impacting the enforcement of agri-food chain law, surely the lack of a harmonised definition of food fraud is not preventing the Commission from progressing in the fight against food fraud.

Concerning penalties, Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([1]) requires Member States to set rules on sanctions applicable to infringements of feed and food law and to take all the necessary measures to ensure they are implemented. Sanctions provided for must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.

The Commission has adopted a proposal on 6 May 2013 to review Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 with the aim to strengthen the existing system, including the fight against food fraud. The proposal includes a provision requiring financial penalties provided for cases of intentional violations to be set at amounts which offset the economic advantage sought through the violation, so as to ensure the dissuasive character of the sanction. This proposal is now under consideration in its first reading by the European Parliament and the Council.

A better coordination between competent authorities of the Member States is indeed essential to improve their capabilities to prevent, detect and deter fraudulent activities. A Food Fraud network comprising the 28 Member States and the Commission has been established, among several initiatives already developed by the Commission after last year's horsemeat fraud.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the 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).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013933/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Misure dell'UE per incrementare l'igiene nei negozi e nelle attività alimentari

In Galles è stata recentemente approvata una normativa che obbliga tutti i negozi e le attività che servono o vendono alimenti a esporre all'entrata un documento che riporta la valutazione delle autorità locali sull'igiene alimentare e dei locali.

La valutazione igienica delle attività commerciali che trattano alimenti è stata introdotta in Gran Bretagna nel novembre 2010 ed è affidata alle autorità locali, in collaborazione con la «Food Standards Agency», che pubblica sul proprio sito la valutazione di tutte le ispezioni, anche di coloro che decidono di non esporre al pubblico la valutazione ricevuta.

Fino a qualche giorno fa, infatti, l'esposizione di tale documento era volontaria in tutta la Gran Bretagna. Ora, come già detto, è stato introdotto l'obbligo, ma solo in Galles.

Tale provvedimento non è tuttavia un caso isolato, in quanto vi sono esempi da tutto il mondo. A New York i ristoranti sono obbligati a esporre sulla porta d'ingresso un cartello colorato con la lettera dell'alfabeto corrispondente al giudizio sull'igiene, assegnato nel corso di un'ispezione annuale.

Un meccanismo similare è anche previsto in città come Toronto e Los Angeles, nonché in Danimarca.

Considerato che:

— vi sono diverse normative europee in tema di sicurezza e igiene alimentare, tra cui il regolamento (CE) n. 852/2004 e il regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002, ma non vi è uniformità su tutto il territorio dell'Unione europea in merito all'esibizione dei risultati delle ispezioni;

— la possibilità che il consumatore possa conoscere la valutazione igienica potrebbe stimolare gli esercenti delle attività e negozi alimentari a porre maggior attenzione su queste tematiche,

si chiede alla Commissione:

— ritiene che l'esperienza del Galles possa essere di esempio per tutti gli Stati membri?

— oltre alle sanzioni già previste dalla normativa europea, l'esibizione dei risultati delle ispezioni può effettivamente spingere gli operatori del settore a rispettare le condizioni igieniche?

— pensa che possa rivelarsi utile finanziare dei corsi di formazione e/o aggiornamento destinato al personale che opera in quest'ambito?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(29 gennaio 2014)

Il 6 maggio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta volta a rivedere le regole attuali sui controlli ufficiali lungo la filiera agroalimentare ([1]), che intende fornire alle autorità nazionali di forza pubblica uno strumento di enforcement più rigoroso nell'espletamento dei loro compiti di controllo.

Tra le altre cose, la proposta richiede un livello elevato di trasparenza dei controlli ufficiali eseguiti dalle autorità competenti in modo da assicurare la pubblicazione regolare e tempestiva di informazioni sul tipo, sul numero e sui risultati dei controlli ufficiali (articolo 10, paragrafo 1). L'articolo 7, paragrafo 3, della proposta stabilisce che gli obblighi di riservatezza del personale delle autorità competenti non ostano a che la autorità competenti pubblichino o rendano altrimenti disponibili al pubblico informazioni sui risultati dei controlli ufficiali in merito a singoli operatori laddove l'operatore in questione abbia avuto la possibilità di formulare commenti su tali informazioni prima della loro pubblicazione e se di tali commenti si sia tenuto conto nell'ambito di dette informazioni ovvero se questi siano stati pubblicati o resi disponibili assieme ad esse.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo 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.

La proposta offre inoltre alle autorità competenti la possibilità di pubblicare o rendere altrimenti disponibili al pubblico informazioni sulla valutazione dei singoli operatori basate sui risultati dei controlli ufficiali, a patto che i criteri di valutazione siano obiettivi, trasparenti e pubblicamente disponibili e che vengano poste in atto soluzioni appropriate per assicurare la coerenza e la trasparenza del processo di valutazione (articolo 10, paragrafo 3).

Infine, la proposta prevede una formazione obbligatoria da svilupparsi e implementarsi ad opera delle autorità competenti all'indirizzo del personale che esegue i controlli ufficiali al fine di consentirgli di espletare i suoi compiti in modo competente e di eseguire i controlli ufficiali con coerenza, oltre a prevedere l'aggiornamento del personale (articolo 4, paragrafo 2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013933/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: EU measures to improve hygiene in shops and food businesses

Legislation has recently been passed in Wales that requires all shops and businesses serving or selling food to display, at the entrance, a certificate of inspection by the local authorities regarding food hygiene and environmental health.

Hygiene inspections for businesses that handle foods were introduced in Great Britain in November 2010 and entrusted to local authorities, in collaboration with the Food Standards Agency, which publishes all inspection results on its website, including those relating to businesses that decide not to display their results to the public.

Until a few days ago, displaying this certificate was voluntary throughout the whole of Great Britain. This has now been made compulsory, but only in Wales.

However, this measure is not an isolated case, since there are examples from all over the world. In New York, restaurants are obliged to display a colour-coded sign on their door showing the letter of the alphabet that corresponds to the hygiene rating awarded during the course of an annual inspection.

Similar systems are also in place in cities such as Toronto and Los Angeles, as well as in Denmark.

There are various pieces of European legislation governing food health and hygiene, such as Regulation (CE) No 852/2004 and Regulation (CE) No 178/2002, but there is no uniformity across the EU with regard to displaying the results of inspections.

If consumers were informed of the hygiene rating, this might motivate the operators of food businesses and shops to pay greater attention to these matters.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

Does it believe that the Welsh experience could serve as a model for all the Member States?

In addition to the sanctions already provided for by EU legislation, might the obligation to display the results of inspections encourage businesses in this sector to ensure proper hygiene?

Does it believe it might be useful to finance training and/or refresher courses for people who work in this field?

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

On 6 May 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal to review the current rules on official controls along the agri-food chain ([1]), which aims to provide national enforcers with a stronger enforcement tool to deliver on their control duties.

Among other things, the proposal requires a high level of transparency of official controls performed by competent authorities, which shall ensure the regular and timely publication of information on the type, number and outcome of official controls (Article 10(1)). Article 7(3) of the proposal states that confidentiality obligations of the staff of the competent authorities shall not prevent competent authorities from publishing or making otherwise available to the public information about the outcome of official controls regarding individual operators, where the operator concerned is given the opportunity to comment on that information prior to its release and those comments are taken into account in that information or comments received are published or released together with it.

Furthermore, the proposal gives the competent authorities the possibility to publish or make otherwise available to the public information about the rating of individual operators based on the outcome of official controls, provided that the rating criteria are objective, transparent and publicly available and appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure the consistency and transparency of the rating process (Article 10(3)).

([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.

Finally, the proposal provides for mandatory training to be developed and implemented by competent authorities for staff performing official controls, in order to enable it to undertake its duties competently and perform official controls consistently, and to keep staff up to date (Article 4 (2)).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013934/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Scarsa informazione a seguito di allarmi alimentari in Italia

Ogni anno centinaia di prodotti vengono ritirati dal mercato perché ci sono degli errori sulle etichette, oppure perché le date di scadenza sono inesatte o, ancora, perché ritenuti pericolosi (ad esempio, in quanto contengono corpi estranei o sono contaminati da batteri patogeni). Tuttavia, in Italia raramente i consumatori vengono correttamente informati, nonostante si tratti di prodotti dannosi per la salute.

Si possono citare alcuni esempi di quest'anno: innanzitutto il caso relativo ai lotti di frutti di bosco surgelati che ha provocato 400 casi di epatite A. Il ministero della Salute italiano ha diffuso un comunicato solamente dopo diverse settimane, mentre alcune aziende coinvolte nella vicenda non hanno pubblicato neanche un annuncio sul proprio sito. Molti consumatori, pertanto, non ne sono stati informati e hanno contratto la malattia.

Alla fine di luglio, allo stesso modo, è scattata l'allerta botulino per alcune confezioni di pesto. Anche in questo caso, il ministero e i punti di vendita coinvolti hanno fornito le informazioni con un rilevante ritardo.

Considerato che:

— la Direzione generale per la Protezione della salute e dei consumatori della Commissione europea ha elaborato «una guida agli interventi correttivi, richiamo compreso», in cui si descrive come si dovrebbe dare comunicazione di eventuali prodotti pericolosi;

— in Italia l'articolo 19 del regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 obbliga i produttori e i supermercati a informare i consumatori in maniera efficace e accurata, del motivo del ritiro e, se necessario, a richiamare i prodotti già venduti per tutelare la salute;

— altri paesi europei pubblicizzano regolarmente le campagne di richiamo,

si chiede alla Commissione:

— è a conoscenza della problematica relativa la scarsa diffusione di tali informazioni in Italia?

— Pensa che sia necessaria una campagna di sensibilizzazione e informazione su queste tematiche sia a livello istituzionale sia a livello di imprese distributrici?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(6 febbraio 2014)

Conformemente alla relazione annuale 2012 del Sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti ed i mangimi (RASFF), l'Italia è tra gli Stati membri più attivi nell'inviare notifiche in materia di alimenti e mangimi tramite questo sistema europeo ([1]). I consumatori e gli altri stakeholder dell'industria alimentare hanno accesso alle parti pubbliche di tali notifiche per il tramite del portale RASFF.

Per quanto concerne i richiami pubblici, l'articolo 19 del regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 ([2]) fa in effetti obbligo agli operatori del settore alimentare di informare i consumatori nei casi in cui alimenti a rischio possono aver raggiunto la catena di distribuzione. Se del caso, e qualora altre misure non siano sufficienti, si deve provvedere a un richiamo del prodotto dal mercato al fine di assicurare un livello elevato di protezione della salute. L'autorità competente e gli operatori del settore alimentare devono decidere, nell'ambito delle rispettive competenze, se un richiamo pubblico sia giustificato.

La conservazione della salute e della fiducia dei consumatori è un obiettivo importante per tutte le autorità competenti interessate.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/rasff_publications_en.htm
([2]) GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013934/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Scarcity of information following food scares in Italy

Every year, hundreds of products are withdrawn from the market due to labelling errors, incorrect expiry dates or dangers, including the presence of foreign bodies or contamination with pathogenic bacteria. In Italy, however, consumers are rarely given proper information, despite the products being harmful to health.

Earlier this year, batches of frozen berries caused 400 cases of hepatitis A but the Italian Ministry of Health took several weeks to issue a statement, while some of the companies involved in the affair failed even to publish an announcement on their websites. As a result, many consumers were not informed of the problem and contracted the disease.

Similarly, at the end of July there was a botulism scare relating to some jars of pesto. Again there was a substantial delay before the Ministry and the stores involved provided information.

The European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection has drafted a 'guide to corrective actions including recalls', which sets out how information should be provided about any dangerous products.

In Italy, Article 19 of Regulation (CE) No 178/2002 obliges producers and supermarkets to inform consumers effectively and precisely about the reason for the withdrawal, and if necessary to recall the products already sold in order to protect public health.

Other European countries publicise recall campaigns as a matter of course.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

Is it aware of the problem of poor circulation of this information in Italy?

Does it think there should be a campaign to raise awareness and provide information about these issues, both at institutional level and among distribution companies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

According to the Annual Report 2012 of the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), Italy is among the most active Member States reporting alerts on feed and food via this European system ([1]). Consumers and other stakeholders of the food industry have access to the public elements of these notifications via the RASFF Portal.

Concerning public recalls, Article 19 of Regulation (EC) Nr 178/2002 ([2]) indeed obliges food business operators to inform consumers in cases where hazardous food may have reached the consumer. If necessary, and if other measures are not sufficient, a recall from the market has to be carried out to achieve a high level of health protection. The competent authority and the food business operators have to decide within their competencies whether a public recall is justified.

Maintaining the health and the trust of the consumer is an important objective for all involved competent authorities.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/rasff_publications_en.htm
([2]) OJ L 31/1 1.2.2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013935/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Problematiche relative alla consapevolezza in tema HIV/AIDS

L'infezione da HIV/AIDS è da sempre un importante problema di salute pubblica in Europa, dove la situazione epidemiologica è eterogenea, in particolare se osservata per le diverse aree geografiche.

I dati diffusi dal Centro di controllo e prevenzione europeo (ECDC) mostrano come nel 2012 le infezioni da HIV diagnosticate in Europa siano aumentate dell'8 % e nel 2012 siano stati registrati 29 000 nuovi casi nell'Unione europea e nei paesi dello spazio economico europeo. Le diagnosi riguardano nel 40 % dei casi persone omosessuali, ma il dato relativo alla trasmissione eterosessuale è quasi altrettanto allarmante (33 %), mentre nel 18 % dei casi l'origine dell'infezione è sconosciuta.

Dal 1981 l'AIDS ha ucciso oltre 25 milioni di persone, diventando una delle epidemie più mortali mai registrate. Oggi le cure farmacologiche aiutano a sopravvivere, ma la malattia è ancora un problema rilevante. Un direttore del dipartimento del farmaco dell'ISS ha recentemente affermato che la percezione sociale della malattia non corrisponde più ai dati reali, i quali confermano come la lotta contro l'HIV sia ancora aperta e da combattere.

— Considerato che una recente indagine statistica afferma che un giovane su tre non considera l'AIDS un rischio reale e ritiene che «non faccia più vittime». Solo il 35 % dei ragazzi e delle ragazze in Italia usa metodi contraccettivi, nonostante sappiano perfettamente che la via di trasmissione principale è quella sessuale, e appena il 29 % dichiara di aver fatto il test dell'HIV; inoltre un giovane su 5 è a rischio perché non ha ricevuto sufficienti informazioni a scuola e dai media;

— viste la strategia UNAIDS 2011-2015 e la strategia mondiale del settore sanitario contro l'HIV/AIDS per il periodo 2011-2015 dell'Assemblea mondiale della sanità, che individua gli obiettivi mondiali esistenti e concordati per motivare i paesi a prevedere risposte all'HIV/AIDS fino al 2015,

si chiede alla Commissione:

— se intende prendere visione di queste ultime ricerche e indagini ed esprimere un parere al riguardo;

— se intende esprimersi in merito a una nuova campagna di sensibilizzazione sui temi della lotta all'HIV/AIDS.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle recenti pubblicazioni sulla situazione del HIV/AIDS nel mondo e in particolare nell'Unione europea, tra cui le recenti indagini che hanno posto in rilievo la necessità di prevenire l'infezione da HIV nelle fasce d'età più giovani.

La Commissione opera in stretta collaborazione con gli stakeholder e gli Stati membri attraverso il forum della società civile HIV/AIDS e il gruppo di riflessione sul HIV/AIDS al fine di rinnovare gli impegni nei confronti dell'obiettivo di UNAIDS «Nessuna nuova infezione, nessuna discriminazione e nessuna morte da AIDS».

Il programma unionale Salute finanzia diverse iniziative e azioni per sostenere esperti provenienti da organizzazioni governative e della società civile, operatori sanitari, sociologi, ricercatori, decisori politici e persone affette da HIV, onde far opera di sensibilizzazione e monitorare gli sviluppi in modo da definire le risposte appropriate.

Dal 2003 il programma Salute ha sostenuto più di 60 progetti in tema di HIV/AIDS. La priorità essenziale per il 2013 consisteva nel migliorare la diagnosi precoce del HIV/AIDS per assicurare un trattamento e una cura tempestivi sia per i gruppi vulnerabili che per le regioni prioritarie. Raggiungere le popolazioni maggiormente a rischio offrendo loro una prevenzione, una diagnosi e un trattamento adeguati è importante per ridurre la trasmissione del HIV/AIDS così da contenere l'attuale epidemia di HIV/AIDS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013935/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: HIV/AIDS awareness issues

HIV/AIDS has always been a major public health problem in Europe, where the rate of transmission varies, particularly between geographical areas.

Figures issued by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) show that in 2012 the number of diagnosed cases of HIV infection in Europe rose by 8%, with 29,000 new cases recorded in the EU and the countries of the European Economic Area. 40% of people diagnosed were homosexuals, but the figure for heterosexual transmission is almost as alarming (33%), while in 18% of cases the origin of the infection is unknown.

AIDS has killed more than 25 million people since 1981, making it one of the most deadly epidemics in recorded history. Drug treatments are now helping people to survive, but the illness remains a major problem. A director of the pharmacology department of the ISS [National Institute of Health] recently said that the public perception of the disease no longer corresponds to actual data, which confirms that the battle against HIV is not yet won and still needs to be fought.

According to a recent survey, one in three young people do not regard AIDS as a real risk and believe that 'it's no longer claiming victims'. Only 35% of young people in Italy use any form of contraception, even though they know perfectly well that sexual intercourse is the main route of transmission, and just 29% say they have taken an HIV test. Furthermore, one young person in five is at risk due to not having received sufficient information at school and in the media.

In view of the UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015 and the WHO Global Health Sector Strategy on HIV/AIDS for 2011-2015, which identifies the existing and agreed global objectives for encouraging countries to prepare responses to HIV/AIDS until 2015,

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

Does it intend to examine these recent studies and surveys, and to issue an opinion on the matter?

Does it intend to make any statement about a new campaign to raise awareness about the fight against HIV/AIDS?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the recent publications related to the HIV/AIDS situation worldwide and in particular in the European Union, including the recent surveys which have shown the need to prevent the HIV infection among the younger age-groups.

The Commission is working closely with stakeholders and Member States, through the HIV/AIDS Civil Society Forum and the EU Think Tank on HIV/AIDS to renew the Union commitments towards the UNAIDS vision of 'Zero new infections, Zero discrimination and Zero AIDS-related deaths'.

The EU Health Programme funds a number of initiatives and actions to support experts from governmental and civil society organisations, health professionals, social scientists, researchers, policy-makers and people living with HIV, to raise awareness and monitor developments so as to define appropriate responses.

Since 2003, the Health programme supported over 60 projects addressing HIV/AIDS. The main priority for 2013 was to improve the early diagnosis of HIV/AIDS and to provide timely treatment and care for both vulnerable groups and priority regions. Reaching out to populations most at risk with appropriate prevention, diagnosis and treatment is important to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDS so as to curb the current HIV/AIDS epidemic.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013937/13
to the Commission
Nigel Farage (EFD)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: European Court of Human Rights

Bearing in mind its answer to Question E-001802/2011, namely:

'According to Article 6(3) of the Treaty on European Union, the fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms constitute general principles of the Union's law. The general principles of the Union's law are part of the Union's primary law',

can the Commission confirm that the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights underpins and explains the general principles of the Union's law and thus also forms part of the Union's primary law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

As mentioned in the reply to Question E-001802/2011, under Article 6(3) of the Treaty on European Union, the fundamental rights as guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) constitute general principles of Union's law.

Furthermore, according to Article 52(3) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, in so far as the Charter contains rights which correspond to rights guaranteed by the ECHR, the meaning and scope of those rights shall be the same as those laid down by the ECHR. This provision shall not prevent Union law providing more extensive protection.

As a result, the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights is of particular relevance for the system of fundamental rights protection in Union law. The link between Union law and the ECHR will be reinforced with the planned accession of the European Union to the ECHR.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013938/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Centri di cura in Europa e cure farmacologiche di una malattia rara quale la tracheobroncomalacia

La tracheobroncomalacia (TBM) è una malattia caratterizzata dall'eccessivo collasso delle grandi vie aeree dovuto al rammollimento delle strutture cartilaginee di supporto e/o a ridondanza della parete posteriore membranacea della trachea. Tale malattia provoca quindi il collasso della trachea associato a quello dei grossi bronchi. Purtroppo l'alterazione anatomica causale della TBM è poco conosciuta per la rarità dei reperti istologici e la diagnosi è abitualmente broncoscopica.

Relativamente alla cura di questa malattia, considerata rara, almeno in Italia non risultano farmaci indicati per la sua cura e/o terapie farmacologiche in fase sperimentale. Inoltre in Italia, le terapie destinate a malattie riconosciute come rare, ossia i farmaci orfani, non vengono autorizzate a livello nazionale ma vengono gestite da una commissione apposita che opera in seno all'Agenzia europea dei medicinali (EMA).

Ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. è al corrente di centri ospedalieri in Europa che curano la tracheobroncomalacia?

2. sono previsti finanziamenti nell'ambito della programmazione 2014-2020 a favore della ricerca di cure delle malattie rare, tra cui la TBM?

3. è al corrente o può interpellare l'Agenzia europea dei medicinali per avere informazioni su farmaci e/o cure farmacologiche esistenti e/o in fase di sperimentazione per questa malattia?

4. può fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione non dispone di una politica specifica per la tracheobronchomalacia. I pazienti affetti da tracheobronchomalacia potrebbero beneficiare delle azioni sviluppate nell'ambito della politica generale dell'UE sulle malattie rare. Per ulteriori informazioni sui lavori nel campo delle malattie rare la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputata alle proprie risposte alle interrogazioni scritte E-010728-12 ([1]), E-006307/2012 ([2]) ed E-009253-12 ([3])sullo stesso argomento.

Inoltre, la base dati Orphanet ([4]) sostenuta dal programma Salute fornisce informazioni estese sulle malattie rare tra cui la tracheomalacia. Tra le informazioni disponibili vi sono elenchi di cliniche nell'UE specializzate nella diagnosi e nel trattamento della tracheomalacia.

La Commissione europea, in cooperazione con l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, è impegnata a sostenere lo sviluppo e l'autorizzazione dei medicinali orfani per curare i pazienti affetti da malattie rare. Sinora la Commissione non ha autorizzato nessun medicinale orfano per trattare la tracheobronchomalacia.

Il programma Orizzonte 2020 (2014-2020) ([5]) promuoverà la ricerca sulle malattie rare nel contesto delle attività da finanziarsi nell'ambito della sfida societale «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere». Il programma di lavoro 2014-2015 ([6]) comprende un'area riservata ai trattamenti e alle tecnologie innovativi, tra cui le nuove terapie per le malattie rare e la ricerca clinica sulla medicina rigenerativa.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-010728&language=IT
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006307&language=IT
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-009253&language=IT
([4]) http://www.orpha.net/consor/cgi-bin/index.php
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-health_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013938/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Treatment centres in Europe and pharmacological treatments for the rare disease tracheobronchomalacia

Tracheobronchomalacia (TBM) is a disease characterised by the major airways becoming excessively narrow due to softening of the cartilaginous support structures and/or redundancy of the posterior membranous wall of the trachea. This disease thus causes the trachea and the main bronchi to collapse. Unfortunately, the anatomical alteration that causes TBM is not well understood due to the scarcity of histological findings; diagnosis is usually made by bronchoscopy.

When it comes to treating this rare disease, there are no drugs indicated for treatment of it and/or experimental pharmacological treatments, at least in Italy. Moreover, in Italy, treatments for rare diseases, known as orphan drugs, are not authorised nationally but are managed by a committee within the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

1. Is the Commission aware of any hospitals in Europe that treat tracheobronchomalacia?

2. Is any funding planned in the programming period 2014-2020 to promote research into and treatments for rare diseases, including TBM?

3. Is the Commission aware of any existing and/or experimental drugs and/or pharmacological treatments for this disease or can it ask the European Medicines Agency for information on them?

4. Can it provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

The Commission has no specific policy for tracheobronchomalacia. Patients with tracheobronchomalacia could benefit from actions developed under the EU general rare diseases policy. For more information regarding rare diseases work, the Commission would refer to its answers to Written Questions E-010728-12 ([1]), E-006307/2012 ([2]) and E-009253-12 ([3]) on the same subject.

In addition, the Orphanet ([4]) database supported by Health Programme provides comprehensive information about rare diseases including tracheomalacia. The information available includes lists of clinics in the EU specialised on the diagnosis and treatment of tracheomalacia.

The European Commission, in cooperation with the European Medicines Agency, is committed to support the development and the authorisation of orphan medicines to treat patients affected by rare diseases. So far the Commission has not authorised any orphan medicine to treat tracheobronchomalacia.

The Horizon 2020 programme (2014-2020) ([5]) will promote research on rare diseases as part of the activities to be funded in the societal challenge of health, demographic change and wellbeing. Work Programme 2014-2015 ([6]) encompasses an area for innovative treatments and technologies including new therapies for rare diseases and clinical research on regenerative medicine.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-010728&language=EN
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-006307&language=EN
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-009253&language=EN
([4]) http://www.orpha.net/consor/cgi-bin/index.php
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-health_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-013939/13
adresată Consiliului
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(6 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Proiectul de regulament general privind protecția datelor

Comisia și-a publicat, la 25 ianuarie 2012, proiectul de propunere legislativă privind protecția persoanelor cu privire la prelucrarea datelor personale și libera circulație a acestor date, cunoscut sub numele de proiect de regulament general privind protecția datelor. Propunerea are drept scop instituirea unor norme armonizate în 28 de state membre, care stabilesc condițiile în care datele personale pot fi colectate, schimbate, transferate sau utilizate în orice alt mod de terți („prelucrarea" datelor). Proiectul de regulament va înlocui directiva anterioară privind protecția datelor (95/46/EC).

Ce părere are Consiliul despre sprijinirea unei derogări de la cerința privind consimțământul prealabil pentru registrele de populație, cum ar fi registrele privind cazurile de cancer?

O astfel de derogare este esențială. Niciun registru privind cazurile de cancer nu funcționează (sau nu a funcționat vreodată) eficient prin consimțământ prealabil. Acolo unde s-a încercat, s-a eșuat, provocându-se închiderea efectivă a registrelor privind cazurile de cancer (de exemplu, în Germania, în 1990 și în Ungaria, în 1992) și o discontinuitate de 7-10 ani în furnizarea de informații privind cancerul.

Răspuns
(17 februarie 2014)

Consiliul dorește să o informeze pe distinsa doamnă deputat că subiectul registrelor privind cazurile de cancer, la care se referă domnia sa, nu a fost discutat până în prezent în cadrul Consiliului în contextul negocierilor pe marginea Regulamentului general privind protecția datelor.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013939/13
to the Council
Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Draft General Data Protection Regulation

The Commission published its draft legislative proposal on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, also known as the draft General Data Protection Regulation, on 25 January 2012. The proposal aims to put in place rules that are harmonised across the 28 Member States, setting out the conditions under which the personal data of individuals can be collected, altered, transferred or used in any other way by third parties ('processing' of data). The draft regulation will replace the previous Directive on Data Protection (95/46/EC).

What is the Council's opinion regarding the endorsement of a derogation from the requirement of informed consent for population-based registries, such as cancer registries?

Such a derogation is essential. No cancer registry operates (or has ever operated) effectively with informed consent. Where this has been tried, it has failed, causing actual closure of cancer registries (e.g. in Germany in1990, and in Hungary in 1992) and a 7-10 year discontinuity in the provision of cancer information.

Reply
(17 February 2014)

The Council would inform the Honourable Member that the issue of cancer registers, to which she refers, has so far not been discussed in the Council in the context of the negotiations on the General Data Protection Regulation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013940/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per il Comune di Cartoceto

Cartoceto, Comune italiano delle Marche di 8.000 abitanti, nell'ultimo anno è stato interessato da ben due crolli della cinta muraria medievale, verificatisi a poca distanza da abitazioni e frequentati luoghi di ritrovo dei cittadini.

È stato dunque disposto lo sgombro di diverse abitazioni oltre alla chiusura del bar della piazza principale — a sua volta per gran parte transennata — e della piazza del teatro.

L'amministrazione e i cittadini di Cartoceto temono inoltre che il maltempo, responsabile proprio in questo periodo di numerose catastrofi nel territorio italiano, possa irrimediabilmente aggravare la situazione.

Data l'intensità e la gravita dei danni, gli stanziamenti disposti dalle autorità regionali non sono sufficienti a far fronte alle differenti opere di manutenzione straordinaria, ripristino e restauro.

Considerato che i crolli in questione hanno già provocato ingenti danni economici e storico-culturali, oltre ad aver privato gli abitanti di Cartoceto dei loro principali luoghi di ritrovo, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se e in che modo intende attivare il Fondo di solidarietà europeo al fine di arginare la situazione di pericolo che ha colpito il Comune di Cartoceto;

— se e in che modo, al medesimo fine, intende attivare i Fondi strutturali europei;

— se e in che modo intende varare finanziamenti europei per la cultura, considerato l'alto valore storico-culturale della medioevale cinta muraria colpita;

— un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2014)

1. Il crollo delle mura storiche della città in quanto evento isolato non sembra rientrare nel campo di applicazione del Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE che può essere mobilitato quando una grande catastrofe, con gravi ripercussioni sulle condizioni di vita, sull'ambiente naturale o sull'economia di una o più regioni o di uno o più paesi, colpisce il territorio di detto Stato. Inoltre, il Fondo può essere mobilitato esclusivamente in seguito a una domanda delle autorità nazionali dello Stato membro colpito da presentarsi entro dieci settimane dalla data del primo danno. La soglia normale applicabile all'Italia per attivare il Fondo è rappresentata da un danno diretto che supera i 3 miliardi di euro ai prezzi del 2002 (attualmente 3,7 miliardi di euro). Finora, la Commissione non ha ricevuto dall'Italia nessuna domanda in relazione all'evento descritto dall'Onorevole deputata.

2. Il programma regionale Marche 2007-2013, cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR), prevede il finanziamento di interventi di recupero dei luoghi in seguito a crisi ambientali e la prevenzione dei rischi naturali a livello locale. Conformemente al principio di gestione concorrente che si applica al FESR, la selezione e la realizzazione dei progetti è di competenza delle autorità di gestione. La Commissione suggerisce all'Onorevole deputata di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione ([1]).

3. Nell'ambito del programma Europa Creativa ([2]) non sono previste azioni per sostenere la ricostruzione di siti storici o del patrimonio culturale.

4. La Commissione suggerisce all'onorevole deputata di consultare i seguenti siti: http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/; http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_it.cfm

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([1]) Autorità di Gestione POR FESR Marche 2007-13,via G. da Fabriano, 2/4, 60125 Ancona. funzione.politichecomunitarie@regione.marche.it.

([2]) Gli inviti a presentare proposte nell'ambito del programma Europa Creativa sono consultabili all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/calls/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013940/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the Municipality of Cartoceto

In the last two years, Cartoceto, an Italian municipality in the Marche region with a population of 8 000, has suffered two collapses of the medieval city wall, just a short distance from residential housing and busy public spaces.

This has resulted in the evacuation of a number of houses and the closure of the bar on the main square — most of which is cordoned off — and of the theatre square.

The administration and the citizens of Cartoceto also fear that bad weather, which has caused numerous catastrophes throughout Italy in recent times, could aggravate the situation beyond repair.

Given the scale and gravity of the damage, the funds provided by the regional authorities are insufficient to cover the various unscheduled maintenance, repair and restoration works.

The collapses in question have already caused enormous damage to the town's economy and its historical and cultural heritage, as well as depriving Cartoceto's residents of their main meeting places.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

Does it intend to activate the EU Solidarity Fund in order to contain the dangerous situation affecting the Municipality of Cartoceto? If so, how?

Does it intend, for the same purpose, to activate the EU Structural Funds? If so, how?

Does it intend to provide EU culture funding, in view of the great historical and cultural value of the damaged medieval wall?

Can it give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

1. The collapse of historic city walls as an isolated event does not seem to fall within the field of application of the EU Solidarity Fund which may be mobilised when a major natural disaster with serious repercussions on living conditions, the natural environment or the economy in one or more regions or one or more countries occurs on the territory of that State. Moreover, it may only be mobilised following an application from the national authorities of the affected Member State, to be submitted within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage. The normal threshold applicable for Italy for activating the Fund is direct damage exceeding EUR 3 billion in 2002 prices (currently EUR 3.7 billion). So far, the Commission has not received any application from Italy in relation to the event described by the Honourable Member.

2. The Regional Programme for the Marche 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), provides for the financing of interventions to repair damage to sites following environmental crises and for the prevention of natural disasters at local level. In accordance with the principle of shared management applicable to the ERDF, the Managing Authorities are responsible for selecting and implementing projects. The Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the Managing Authority directly ([1]).

3. No specific action to support the reconstruction of historic or heritage sites exists under the Creative Europe programme ([2]).

4. The Commission suggests that the Honourable Member consult the following websites: http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm

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([1]) Managing Authority for the Marche 2007-13 ERDF ROP, Via G. da Fabriano, 2/4, 60125 Ancona. funzione.politichecomunitarie@regione.marche.it

([2]) The calls for proposals under Creative Europe are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/calls/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013941/13
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Gibraltar border

Further to my previous parliamentary question on this issue (E-007697/2013), can the Commission outline the procedures and timetable put in place to ensure that its practical recommendations for easing frontier and customs delays at the Gibraltar-Spanish border are implemented in a timely manner?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-013389/13 by Mr James Nicholson ([1]).

In addition, the Commission is in contact with the authorities of Spain and of the United Kingdom to monitor, already before the expiration of the six-month deadline, how the recommendations of 15 November 2013 are implemented by the two countries.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013943/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: European Regional Development Funds criteria — pedestrians and cyclists

Is the Commission aware that European Regional Development Funds have been spent in developing the Western Distributor Road in Galway, Ireland, which is three km long, features six roundabouts, suffers from enormous traffic congestion and does not have a single pedestrian-priority crossing in its entire length?

Does the Commission ensure, or intend to ensure, that certain minimum criteria are applied to such EU-funded projects, to protect pedestrians and cyclists?

The road in question is the main access route to and from schools, shops, and local amenities in the nearby, densely populated residential area. Does the Commission undertake any checks to ensure that EU money is not being spent in a manner that undermines everyday access to such services?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

The Western Distributor Road in Galway City was co-financed by Ireland's Department of the Environment and Local Government and the European Regional Development Fund as a Non-National Road Improvement Scheme under the Border, Midland and Western Regional 2000-2006 programme. The total public grant from the Department for the project over the 1997-2001 period was EUR 4.3 million, including an ERDF contribution of EUR 1 million.

The Commission recognises the importance of road safety. Under EU rules, Member States are required to establish and implement procedures relating to road safety impact assessments, road safety audits, the management of road network safety and safety inspections by the Member States. The road to which the Honourable Member refers has been built before the entry into force of these rules.

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, which has assumed responsibility for non-national roads policy, has confirmed that current road projects of a similar nature to the Western Distributor Road in Galway are subject to full road safety and road user audits which address, *inter alia*, pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Galway City Council has confirmed that they have requested funding from the National Transport Authority (NTA) of Ireland to develop designs for pedestrian crossing facilities, with a view to their implementation on the Western Distributor Road in Galway.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013944/13
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(6 December 2013)

Subject: Interest rate rigging

As recently announced, the action taken by the EU competition authorities imposing a record fine of EUR 1.71 billion on six banks for interest rate rigging is welcome and appreciated. However, a number of my constituents from London have contacted my office to enquire as to whether or not they will be able to claim compensation for this manipulation of rigging and fixing key rates in financial markets to the detriment of small and medium-sized business owners.

Can the Commission state whether or not there will be an opportunity for SMEs affected by interest rate rigging to claim adequate compensation?

If yes, could it provide more information on the practical procedure to be followed?

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

The Commission adopted on 4 December 2013 two decisions fining eight international financial institutions a total of EUR 1 712 468 000 for participating in illegal cartels in markets for financial derivatives covering the European Economic Area (EEA). Four of the institutions ([1]) participated in a cartel relating to the interest rate derivatives denominated in euro ([2]). Six ([3]) participated in one or more bilateral cartels relating to interest rates denominated in Japanese yen ([4]). Such collusion between competitors is prohibited by Article 101 TFEU.

For further information on these two cases please see the Commission press release IP 13/1208 and MEMO/13/1090, both available on this website: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1208_en.htm.

As for damages actions for breaches of EU competition law including infringement of Article 101 TFEU, national judicatures have the exclusive competence to intervene on the basis of the evidence put forward by the applicants. The EU institutions, including the European Commission, have no competence in respect of civil litigations. In this connection, please note that the Commission's investigations focus only on interest-rate derivative products linked to the EURIBOR, LIBOR and TIBOR benchmark rates.

In this context please also note that on 11 June 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive on damages actions for breaches of EU Competition law.

For further information on the Commission proposal for a directive on damages actions for breaches of EU Competition law, please see the Commission press release IP 13/525 and MEMO/13/531, both available on this website:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/antitrust/actionsdamages/proposed_directive_en.html

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([1]) Barclays, Deutsche Bank, Société Générale and The Royal Bank of Scotland.
([2]) AT 39914 — Euro Interest Rate Derivatives (EIRD).
([3]) UBS, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Deutsche Bank, Citigroup, JPMorgan and RP Martin.
([4]) AT 39861 — Yen Interest Rate Derivatives (YIRD).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013945/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Impianti industriali in zone densamente popolate: effetti sulla salute e misure specifiche per la tutela dei cittadini

Una recente relazione consegnata ad alcune istituzioni della regione del Nordovest italiano ha messo in luce come l'incidenza delle patologie da mesoteliomapleurico — patologia tipicamente causata da esposizione all'amianto — è quadrupla rispetto alla media nazionale.

In particolare risulta allarmante come le vittime siano cittadini in larga maggioranza ex-lavoratori (e relativi famigliari) alle dipendenze di tre grandi industrie metallurgiche che ancora oggi hanno sedi attive in territori ad alta densità di popolazione.

Il processo «Eternit», celebrato presso il Tribunale di Torino, ha provato che l'incidenza delle patologie correlate all'esposizione all'amianto non si limita al singolo luogo di lavoro, ma colpisce l'intera comunità locale. In Italia, diverse sono le realtà in cui la presenza di grosse industrie in contesti urbani si associa a un elevato tasso di patologie tumorali.

La Direttiva 2003/18/CE e atti collegati non prevedono alcun provvedimento specifico riguardo la localizzazione in aree urbane o densamente popolate di impianti industriali ad alto rischio inquinante data l'emissione di sostanze nocive.Il periodo di latenza di alcune sostanze tossiche impiegate nei decenni passati (ad es. amianto e cromo esavalente) può causare patologie cancerogene anche a distanza di diversi anni.

Date queste premesse, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se è a conoscenza delle numerose realtà italiane ed europee che affrontano emergenze sanitarie causate dalla presenza di realtà industriali inquinanti in aree densamente popolate e se a riguardo intende promuovere uno studio che possa fornire un quadro completo del contesto europeo e dei tassi di incidenza di ogni realtà coinvolta;

— se intende adottare misure di prevenzione e di messa in sicurezza specifiche e più severe per la misurazione della presenza di tali sostanze o materiali in territori ad alta densità di popolazione;

— se intende promuovere modelli particolari di gestione sanitaria per tali zone e relative patologie specifiche che insorgono con tali incidenze in suddette zone?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(20 febbraio 2014)

Si annoverano solo pochissimi tentativi di quantificare l'incidenza globale del mesotelioma provocato dall'amianto. Tuttavia, il progetto Rarecare ([1]) stima che nell'UE ogni anno si verifichino circa 8 000 nuovi casi e decessi ascrivibili a questa patologia.

La Commissione ha avviato un'azione di sostegno ([2]) alla creazione di una rete per la diffusione di informazioni sulle migliori pratiche in materia di trattamento del mesotelioma polmonare.

La normativa UE per la protezione dell'ambiente e della salute umana dagli inquinanti emessi da attività industriali, in particolare l'amianto, comprende la direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali ([3]) e la direttiva 87/217/CEE del Consiglio relativa all'amianto ([4]).

La direttiva 2009/148/CE ([5]) stabilisce requisiti minimi per la protezione dei lavoratori in connessione alla loro esposizione all'amianto. Essa fissa valori limite, prescrive la valutazione dell'esposizione dei lavoratori e, a seconda dei risultati, lo svolgimento di misurazioni periodiche, la messa in opera di misure per ridurre tale esposizione e obblighi specifici per i datori di lavoro nel caso in cui i valori limite vengano superati.

Gli Stati membri sono tenuti a garantire la corretta attuazione della normativa. Ciò può includere il monitoraggio dell'ambiente al fine di individuare le zone nelle quali i cittadini rischiano di essere esposti a sostanze pericolose. La Commissione non prevede di promuovere ulteriori modelli di gestione sanitaria per tali zone.

([1]) http://www.rarecare.eu/aims/aims_ita.asp
([2]) «Sostegno a una rete d'informazione sul mesotelioma polmonare» all'interno del piano di lavoro 2013 per l'attuazione del programma in materia di salute, un'azione che dovrebbe essere avviata all'inizio del 2014 sotto la direzione dell'università di Torino.
([3]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010.
([4]) GU L 85 del 28.3.1987.
([5]) GU L 330 del 16.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013945/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Industrial plants in densely populated areas: effects on health and specific measures to protect public health

According to a recent report issued to various institutions in north-western Italy, the incidence of pleural mesothelioma — a disease typically caused by exposure to asbestos — is four times higher there than the national average.

One particularly alarming finding is that the victims are largely people (and their relatives) who used to work in the three major metal companies that today remain in operation in very densely populated areas.

The 'Eternit' trial, held at the Court of Turin, proved that the incidence of diseases linked to asbestos exposure does not just affect the workplace, but the local community as a whole. There are several parts of Italy where the presence of heavy industry in urban areas goes hand in hand with a high incidence of cancers.

Directive 2003/18/EC and related texts do not lay down any specific measures with regard to industrial plants, which carry a high risk of pollution, as they emit harmful substances, being located in urban or densely populated areas. The latency period of some toxins used in past decades (such as asbestos and hexavalent chromium) can lead to cancer developing even after many years.

— Is the Commission aware of the many parts of Italy and Europe that are dealing with health crises caused by polluting industrial sites being located in densely populated areas, and will it promote a study to give an overview of the situation in Europe and the incidence rates in each area affected?

— Will the Commission take preventive measures and specific and stricter safety measures for measuring the presence of these substances or materials in densely populated areas?

— Will it promote specific health management models for such areas and the specific related diseases that are so common in these areas?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2014)

There have been only few attempts to quantify the global incidence of mesothelioma caused by asbestos. However, the RARECARE Project ([1]) estimated for the EU around 8,000 new cases and deaths per year.

The Commission has launched an action ([2]) to support the creation of an information network on best practices for treatment of lung mesothelioma.

EU legislation aiming at the protection of the environment and human health from pollutants emitted by industrial activities, in particular asbestos, includes Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions ([3]) and Council Directive 87/217/EEC ([4]) concerning asbestos.

Directive 2009/148/EC ([5]) sets minimum requirements for the protection of workers related to their exposure to asbestos. It establishes limit values, an assessment of workers' exposure and, depending on the findings, regular measurements, measures to reduce workers' exposure and specific obligations for employers where limit values are exceeded.

Member States are responsible for ensuring correct implementation. This may include the monitoring of the environment in order to identify zones where people risk being exposed to hazardous substances. The Commission has no plans to promote additional health management models for such areas.

([1]) http://www.rarecare.eu/aims/aims.asp
([2]) 'Support to an information network on lung mesothelioma' under the Work Plan 2013 for the Implementation of the Health Programme, action to be started at the beginning 2014 under the leading of University of Torino, Italy.
([3]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.
([4]) OJ L 85, 28.3.1987.
([5]) OJ L 330, 16.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013946/13
to the Commission
Geoffrey Van Orden (ECR)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: EU rules to counter abuse of free movement principle

Further to my written question of 13 March 2013 on EU funding available to alleviate the costs of immigration from other Member States (P-002888-13) and to my written question of 3 June 2013 on the issue of the transfer of sentenced persons between Member States (E-006200-13), and in the light of Commissioner Reding's widely quoted remarks in the media made on 5 and 6 December 2013, can the Commission state:

1. what easily applied EU rules are available to 'counter abuse, fraud and error by EU migrants';

2. how easily EU migrants who resort to begging, crime, or abuse of public spaces can be expelled;

3. what simple 're-entry bans' are available?

It would be helpful if the Commission's reply could be of practical value.

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

As the Commission confirmed in its recent Communication ([1]), EC law contains a range of robust safeguards to help Member States to fight abuse and fraud. The Commission emphasised that it is the responsibility of Member States to make full use of these safeguards and that the Commission supports their efforts.

Article 35 of the Free Movement Directive ([2]) explicitly authorises Member States to 'adopt the necessary measures to refuse, terminate or withdraw any right conferred by this directive in the case of abuse of rights or fraud, such as marriages of convenience'.

Regarding fraud and error in the field of social security coordination, the Commission supports Member States in their efforts to combat fraud and error in this field. A well-established system to improve cooperation between Member States is operating as a network of contact points in the Administrative Commission on the coordination of social security systems.

As stipulated by Chapter VI of the Free Movement Directive, Member States may restrict the freedom of movement of EU citizens on grounds of public policy. Such measures must comply with the principle of proportionality and must be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual concerned which must represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat affecting one of the fundamental interests of society.

The Free Movement Directive also authorises Member States to impose re-entry bans together with an expulsion order only in grave cases where it is shown that the offender is likely to continue to be a serious threat to public order in the future.

([1]) COM(2013) 837 final — Free movement of EU citizens and their families: Five actions to make a difference.
([2]) Directive 2004/38/EC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-013947/13
an die Kommission
Thomas Mann (PPE)
(9. Dezember 2013)

Betrifft: Rechtsstaatlichkeit in Rumänien

Wie in den letzten Monaten von zahlreichen unabhängigen Medien gemeldet wurde, kam es in Rumänien bei der Korruptionsbekämpfung zu einer Reihe nicht hinnehmbarer politischer Entwicklungen: So steht Ministerpräsident Ponta im Verdacht, die Abberufung von Liviu Papici und Mariana Alexandrescu von der Nationalen Agentur für Korruptionsbekämpfung (DNA) durch den Generalstaatsanwalt angeordnet zu haben. Beide haben in den vergangenen Jahren mehrere Verfahren gegen korrupte Politiker vorbereitet. So legte die DNA Anklageschriften u. a. gegen den ehemaligen Wirtschaftsminister Vosganian und Vizeministerpräsident Dragnea vor. Dragnea wird vorgeworfen, die Höhe der Wahlbeteiligung, und damit das Ergebnis eines Referendums zur Absetzung des Staatspräsidenten Basescu, manipuliert zu haben.

Trotz dieser Vorwürfe hält Ministerpräsident Ponta weiterhin an Dragnea fest und ist sogar bereit, sich in die Angelegenheiten der Justiz einzumischen, um seinen Stellvertreter zu schützen.

Darüber hinaus scheint es derzeit in Rumänien Gesetzesvorhaben zu geben, die einen Straferlass für Haftstrafen unter sechs Jahren, und damit für alle wegen Korruption Verurteilte, zum Ziel haben.

Ist die Kommission ebenfalls der Ansicht, dass diese Verwässerung der rumänischen Anti-Korruptionsgesetze der europäischen Rechtsstaatlichkeit sowie den Kopenhagener Kriterien widerspricht und somit den Grundprinzipien der Europäischen Union?

Wie sorgt die Kommission — auch im Hinblick auf den Bericht im Rahmen des Kooperations- und Verifikationsmechanismus Anfang 2014 — für Aufklärung? Welche Maßnahmen ergreift die EU-Kommission, um Rechtsstaatlichkeit in Rumänien zu gewährleisten?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(19. Februar 2014)

Die von dem Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Probleme fallen in den Anwendungsbereich des Kooperations- und Überprüfungsmechanismus (Cooperation and Verification Mechanism, CVM). Diese Entwicklungen waren Teil der Überlegungen, die zu dem CVM-Bericht geführt haben, den die Kommission am 22. Januar 2014 angenommen hat. Der Bericht und die ihm beiliegende Arbeitsunterlage der Kommissionsdienststellen enthalten eine Reihe spezifischer Angaben, Schlussfolgerungen und Empfehlungen im Zusammenhang mit den angesprochenen Punkten.

Der Bericht ist unter http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm abrufbar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013947/13
to the Commission
Thomas Mann (PPE)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Rule of law in Romania

As reported in recent months by numerous independent media outlets, there have been a series of unacceptable political developments in connection with the combating of corruption in Romania: Thus, the Prime Minister, Victor Ponta, is suspected of having arranged for the dismissal of Liviu Papici and Mariana Alexandrescu from the National Anti-Corruption Agency (DNA) by the Prosecutor General. Both have prepared several cases against corrupt politicians in recent years. The DNA has served indictments against the former Minister for Economic Affairs, Varujan Vosganian, and Deputy Prime Minister, Liviu Dragnea, among others. Mr Dragnea is accused of having manipulated the level of turnout for, and thus the result of, a referendum on the impeachment of President Basescu.

Despite these allegations, Prime Minister Ponta remains committed to Mr Dragnea, and is even prepared to interfere in the affairs of the judiciary in order to protect his deputy.

There also currently appear to be legislative proposals in Romania that are seeking the remission of prison sentences under six years, and thus for all of those convicted of corruption.

Does the Commission agree that this watering down of Romanian anti-corruption laws is contrary to the European rule of law and the Copenhagen criteria and thus to the fundamental principles of the European Union?

How will it ensure that this matter is cleared up — including with regard to the report within the framework of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism at the beginning of 2014? What steps will it take in order to ensure the rule of law in Romania?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The issues raised by the Honourable Member are relevant questions within the scope of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM). These developments were part of the reflections leading to CVM report adopted on 22 January 2014 by the Commission. The report and the accompanying staff working document contain a number of specific references, conclusions and recommendations linked to the points raised.

The report is available at http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013948/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: EU development and external assistance policies

In the 'Annual Report 2013 on the European Union's development and external assistance policies and their implementation in 2012' it was some small comfort to note that the rate of projects not performing or performing with problems has fallen from 27% to 25%.

Given that a quarter of monitored projects are underperforming, and that this is unacceptable:

1. Can the Commission confirm how many projects it cancelled in 2012 due to underperformance?

2. Will the Commission provide a breakdown by country of the projects falling under category III or IV ('Performing with Problems' or 'Not performing or major difficulties')?

3. Will it provide a list of projects — with at least a description, the location and the value of each project — which received the category IV assessment ('Not performing or major difficulties') for two or more ROM appraisals? Please indicate whether the project was cancelled and the reasons why/why not.

4. Will it provide a list of projects — with at least a description, the location and the value of each project — which received the category III or IV assessment ('Performing with Problems' or 'Not performing or major difficulties') for two or more ROM appraisals? Please indicate whether the project was cancelled and the reasons why/why not.

5. Among projects assessed as 'Not performing or major difficulties', the highest rate (11.6%) is for projects in the economic infrastructure and services sector. The value of the projects assessed in this sector was EUR 1.3 billion, which may well indicate waste of over EUR 100 million. Will the Commission please provide details of the projects — including at least a description, the location and the value of each project — which received the category IV assessment in this sector and indicate what it is doing to address the shortcomings of aid projects in the economic infrastructure and services sector?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

The detailed answer to the Honourable Member's question requires the collection of information in relation to projects and programmes in several different countries. The Commission services are gathering the information and will transmit the information as soon as is reasonably possible to the Honourable Member.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013949/13
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: RoHS and the electronic toy market

On 21 July 2011 the Restriction of Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (RoHS) Directive 2011/65/EU (RoHS 2) entered into force, requiring Member States to transpose its provisions into their respective national laws by 2 January 2013. The United Kingdom has taken measures to ensure that businesses comply with this new legislation, such as having a dedicated team responsible for enforcement.

One of the requirements of RoHS 2 is that lead be removed or reduced to below a certain threshold in electrical and electronic equipment, with certain exceptions. In order for the directive to be effective and not distort the market, all EU Member States must comply with it. However, it has been brought to my attention that in some product categories, such as electronic toys, the RoHS lead content requirements are not being complied with for imports of components from outside the EU. As enforcement is primarily conducted at Member State level, this disparity could lead to a distorted internal market and unfair competition between businesses.

1. Is the Commission monitoring the implementation and application of RoHS 2 in the Member States?

2. What is the level of compliance with RoHS 2 in the EU?

3. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure compliance with the new Directive?

4. Is the Commission aware of any compliance problems in Member States with imports of components for electronic toys?

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

The Commission is monitoring the implementation and application of RoHS 2 in the Member States. Implementation activities and the state of play regarding national transposition were discussed with Member States in October 2013. Most Member States had transposed RoHS 2 by that date.

Apart from legal transposition, uniform interpretation is necessary to guarantee a level playing field. The Commission has cooperated closely with Member States in the elaboration of the new RoHS guidance. ([1]) The views of national enforcement authorities have been fully taken into account in the drafting process. Enforcement falls within the remit of Member States' competent authorities, and indeed depending on the availability of trained staff and budgetary resources, control efforts tend to vary among Member States. The Commission participates in the annual meetings of the Member States and encourages them to share their experience.

Although the overall level of compliance with RoHS in the EU is high, some product categories are problematic. According to all enforcement reports, the biggest problem is the lead content in imported electric toys. To the Commission's knowledge, Member States' control activities currently focus on sold equipment and not on components, as the RoHS restrictions apply to the finished product.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/rohs_eee/pdf/faq.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013950/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κίνδυνοι σχετικοί με το ηλεκτρονικό και το παραδοσιακό κάπνισμα

Το τελευταίο διάστημα λαμβάνω πολλά παράπονα από Ευρωπαίους πολίτες, οι οποίοι επιρρίπτουν στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ευθύνες για τον τρόπο που αντιμετωπίζει το θέμα των ηλεκτρονικών τσιγάρων. Τονίζουν κυρίως τα πλεονεκτήματα του ηλεκτρονικού έναντι του συμβατικού τσιγάρου για την υγεία των καπνιστών, επικαλούμενοι επιστημονικές μελέτες που αποδεικνύουν την ανωτερότητα και χρησιμότητα του ηλεκτρονικού τσιγάρου.

Παρακαλείται η Επιτροπή να με πληροφορήσει τα ακόλουθα:

1. Έχει στη διάθεσή της οποιαδήποτε στοιχεία από επιστημονικές μελέτες αναφορικά με τους κινδύνους που συνεπάγεται το ηλεκτρονικό κάπνισμα σε σύγκριση με το παραδοσιακό, και τι φανερώνουν τα στοιχεία αυτά;

2. Υπάρχει βάση στο επιχείρημα πολλών επιστημόνων και άλλων ότι «τα ηλεκτρονικά τσιγάρα σώζουν ζωές»;

3. Αν ναι, δεν θα ήταν λογικό να υποβοηθηθεί ή ακόμα και να ενθαρρυνθεί το ηλεκτρονικό κάπνισμα σε βάρος του παραδοσιακού καπνίσματος, με την απλοποίηση των σχετικών διαδικασιών και κανονισμών ασφαλείας, αφού έτσι θα σώζονται πολλές ζωές στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Borg εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η εκτίμηση των επιπτώσεων στην οποία προέβη η Επιτροπή και η οποία συνοδεύει την πρόταση για αναθεώρηση της οδηγίας για τα προϊόντα καπνού ([1]), αναφέρεται στα υπάρχοντα επιστημονικά στοιχεία σχετικά με την υγεία και τις κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις από τα ηλεκτρονικά τσιγάρα. Όπως φαίνεται από την εκτίμηση, τα ηλεκτρονικά τσιγάρα που διατίθενται σήμερα στην αγορά συνδέονται με διάφορες ανησυχίες για θέματα υγείας και ασφάλειας. Σε πιο πρόσφατες μελέτες και δημοσιεύσεις εκφράζεται προβληματισμός για πιθανούς κινδύνους σχετικούς με την υγεία και την ασφάλεια αλλά και για την ποιότητα των προϊόντων.

Ενώ ορισμένες μελέτες επισημαίνουν τις δυνατότητες του ηλεκτρονικού τσιγάρου ως εναλλακτική λύση για τη μείωση των επιβλαβών συνεπειών του καπνίσματος, σε αυτό το στάδιο δεν φαίνεται να υπάρχουν σαφή αποδεικτικά στοιχεία για την αποτελεσματικότητά τους στη διακοπή του καπνίσματος.

Κατά τα τελευταία έτη, η χρήση των ηλεκτρονικών τσιγάρων αυξάνεται γρήγορα. Οι διαφορετικές νομοθετικές προσεγγίσεις και πρακτικές των κρατών μελών ως προς το ηλεκτρονικό τσιγάρο, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του ζητήματος των απαιτήσεων ασφάλειας, έχουν προκαλέσει κατακερματισμό της αγοράς, γεγονός που απαιτεί δράση σε επίπεδο ΕΕ.

Με βάση την πρόταση της Επιτροπής για αναθεώρηση της οδηγίας για τα προϊόντα καπνού, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο, τον Δεκέμβριο του 2013 κατέληξαν σε προκαταρκτική συμφωνία σχετικά με μια εναρμονισμένη ρύθμιση για τα ηλεκτρονικά τσιγάρα. Το ρυθμιστικό πλαίσιο για τα ηλεκτρονικά τσιγάρα προβλέπει ειδικές απαιτήσεις ασφάλειας και ποιότητας, καθώς και υποχρεώσεις παρακολούθησης και υποβολής εκθέσεων σχετικά με τις εξελίξεις στην αγορά. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο αναμένεται να εγκρίνουν την αναθεωρημένη οδηγία για τα προϊόντα καπνού την άνοιξη του 2014.

([1]) SWD(2012)452 τελικό, σ. 15-17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013950/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Risks associated with electronic and normal smoking

Numerous complaints have been received from European citizens recently about the way in which the European Commission has handled the question of electronic cigarettes. They mainly concern the benefits of electronic over normal cigarettes to smokers' health and cite scientific studies illustrating the superiority and convenience of electronic cigarettes.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it have any data from scientific studies on the risks associated with electronic compared to normal smoking and what do that data reveal?

2. Is there any basis for the argument by numerous scientists and lay people that 'electronic cigarettes save lives'?

3. If so, would it not make sense to support or even to encourage electronic smoking rather than normal smoking by simplifying the relevant procedures and safety regulations, if that will save lives in the Member States of the EU?

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

The Commission's Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive ([1]) refers to the existing scientific evidence on the health and societal effects of electronic cigarettes. As illustrated by the assessment, electronic cigarettes which are currently on the market are associated with a number of health and safety concerns. More recent studies and publications have also raised concerns about possible health risks and on the safety and quality of the products.

While some studies highlight electronic cigarettes potential as a harm reduction alternative to smoking, conclusive evidence on their effectiveness in smoking cessation does not seem to exist at this stage.

In recent years, the use of electronic cigarettes has been growing quickly. Member States' diverging legislation and practices on electronic cigarettes, including on the issue of safety requirements, has led to fragmentation of the market requiring action at the EU level.

On the basis of the Commission's proposal to revise the Tobacco Products Directive, the European Parliament and Council found a preliminary agreement on a harmonised regulation of electronic cigarettes in December 2013. The regulatory framework for electronic cigarettes foresees specific safety and quality requirements as well as monitoring and reporting obligations on market developments. The European Parliament and the Council are due to adopt the revised Tobacco Products Directive in spring 2014.

([1]) SWD(2012) 452 final, pp. 15-17.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013951/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: «Προκαταβολική» λήψη μέτρων λιτότητας και ο κίνδυνος αποπληθωρισμού στην Ευρώπη

Η Ανεξάρτητη Ετήσια Επισκόπηση της Ανάπτυξης (ΑΕΕΑ) για το έτος 2014 προειδοποιεί ότι υφίσταται υπαρκτός κίνδυνος να εκδηλωθεί σοβαρός αποπληθωρισμός στην Ευρώπη, με όλες τις αρνητικές συνέπειες που συνδέονται με ένα τέτοιο ενδεχόμενο. Ένα από τα συμπεράσματα της επισκόπησης έχει ως εξής:

«Το υψηλό ποσοστό ανεργίας ως αποτέλεσμα της κρίσης και τα μέτρα που εφαρμόζονται για την αντιμετώπισή του ασκούν μεγάλες πιέσεις στους μισθούς εν γένει και επί του παρόντος πιέζουν προς τα κάτω τους μισθούς στις χώρες όπου υπάρχει οικονομική κρίση. Αυτός ο τρόπος αποκατάστασης των πραγματικών συναλλαγματικών ισοτιμιών και εξισορρόπησης της ευρωζώνης είναι δαπανηρός και επικίνδυνος. Ελλοχεύει πραγματικός και υπαρκτός κίνδυνος να σηματοδοτήσει την έναρξη ενός ασυγκράτητου αποπληθωρισμού. (…) Ο μισθολογικός αποπληθωρισμός έχει παγιωθεί στη νότια Ευρώπη: οι ονομαστικοί πραγματικοί μισθοί μειώνονται τα δύο τελευταία χρόνια στην Ισπανία, την Πορτογαλία και την Ελλάδα. (…) Η προκαταβολική λήψη μέτρων για τη μείωση του ελλείμματος τροφοδότησε αυτή τη διαδικασία. Η συνέχιση της δημοσιονομικής συμπίεσης σίγουρα δεν θα την ανακόψει».

1. Συμμερίζεται η Επιτροπή τους φόβους της ΑΕΕΑ σχετικά με τον κίνδυνο επικείμενου αποπληθωρισμού στην Ευρώπη;

2. Αν το προαναφερθέν συμπέρασμα αληθεύει, σημαίνει αυτό ότι οι οικονομικές πολιτικές που ακολουθεί η ΕΕ, ιδίως η προκαταβολική λήψη μέτρων λιτότητας και μείωσης του ελλείμματος, απέτυχαν και, συνεπώς, χρειάζεται να αλλάξουν;

3. Προτίθεται η Επιτροπή να λάβει τυχόν συγκεκριμένα μέτρα σύμφωνα με όσα υποδεικνύει η ΑΕΕΑ ή είναι αποφασισμένη να συνεχίσει τις σημερινές πολιτικές σκληρής λιτότητας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Το ποσοστό του πληθωρισμού στη ζώνη του ευρώ αναμένεται να παραμείνει σε χαμηλά επίπεδα, τουλάχιστον βραχυπρόθεσμα. Οι δείκτες που προκύπτουν από τις έρευνες και οι δείκτες της αγοράς δείχνουν ότι οι μακροπρόθεσμες προσδοκίες για τη διαμόρφωση των τιμών παραμένουν σταθερές. Η Επιτροπή θα παρουσιάσει τις προβλέψεις της όσον αφορά τον πληθωρισμό στις χειμερινές ευρωπαϊκές οικονομικές προβλέψεις 2014 που έχουν προγραμματιστεί για τα τέλη Φεβρουαρίου.

Η Επιτροπή αναμένει ότι η σταδιακή ανάκαμψη, η οποία βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη αυτή τη στιγμή στην Ευρώπη, θα συνεχιστεί με μέτρια επιτάχυνση κατά την επόμενη διετία. Επιπλέον, υπάρχουν ορατές ενδείξεις ότι προχωρά η αποκατάσταση της οικονομικής ισορροπίας στην Ευρώπη. Η οικονομική στρατηγική που ακολουθείται αποδίδει όσον αφορά τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και των δημοσιονομικών και εξωτερικών λογαριασμών. Σύμφωνα με την ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης που δημοσιεύτηκε τον περασμένο Νοέμβριο, η Επιτροπή εκτιμά ότι η μεγαλύτερη πρόκληση πλέον είναι η διατήρηση του ρυθμού των μεταρρυθμίσεων ώστε να βελτιωθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα και να εξασφαλισθεί μακροχρόνια ανάκαμψη, με βάση την ίδια ισορροπημένη στρατηγική για την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση που ακολουθήθηκε το 2013, μετατοπίζοντας το κέντρο βάρους ώστε οι προτεραιότητες να προσαρμοστούν στην οικονομική και κοινωνική κατάσταση που υφίσταται κατά την τρέχουσα φάση της ανάκαμψης.

Ο Αντιπρόεδρος για τις οικονομικές και νομισματικές υποθέσεις και το ευρώ συζήτησε τα αποτελέσματα της προαναφερθείσας μελέτης με τα μέλη του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου στις 4 Δεκεμβρίου 2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-1021_el.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013951/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: 'Frontloading' of austerity and the danger of deflation in Europe

The independent Annual Growth Survey (iAGS) for 2014 warns that there is a real danger of serious deflation occurring in Europe, with all the negative consequences associated with such an eventuality. One of the survey's conclusions is as follows:

'The high level of unemployment resulting from the crisis and the remedies applied to solve it are exerting downward pressure on wages generally and actually pushing down wages in the crisis countries. This is a costly and dangerous way to adjust real exchange rates and rebalance the euro area. There is a real and present danger of it marking the beginning of an unstoppable deflation. (…) Wage deflation has set in southern Europe: nominal real wages have been decreasing for the last two years in Spain, Portugal and Greece. (…) Frontloading the deficit reduction has fuelled this process. Continuing the fiscal squeeze will certainly not stop it.'

1. Does the Commission share the iAGS's fears regarding the danger of imminent deflation in Europe?

2. If the conclusion cited above is true, does that mean that the economic policies followed by the EU, especially the frontloading of austerity and deficit reduction, have been unsuccessful and therefore need to be changed?

3. Does the Commission intend to take any concrete action along the lines suggested by the iAGS, or is it determined to continue its present harsh austerity policies?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The inflation rate in the euro area is expected to remain low, at least in the short term. Survey-derived and market indicators suggest that price expectations remain anchored over a longer-term horizon. The Commission will present its inflation outlook in the winter 2014 European Economic Forecast scheduled for end February.

The Commission expects the gradual recovery that is currently underway in Europe to continue with a moderate acceleration over the next two years. Furthermore, there are visible signs that the economic rebalancing in Europe is proceeding. The economic strategy pursued is paying off in terms of improvement in competitiveness as well as fiscal and external accounts. As set out in the Annual Growth Survey published November last year, the Commission considers that the biggest challenge now is to keep up the pace of reform to improve competitiveness and secure a lasting recovery, building on the same balanced strategy for growth and jobs as in 2013 while shifting emphasis to adapt the priorities to the economic and social situation faced in the current recovery phase.

The Vice-President for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the euro has dismissed the results of the mentioned study with the Honourable Members of the European Parliament on 4 December 2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-1021_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013964/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(9 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Akzo Nobel: chiusura dello stabilimento di Romano d'Ezzelino (Vicenza)

La multinazionale olandese Akzo Nobel ha deciso di chiudere lo stabilimento di Romano d'Ezzelino dove sono impiegati ben 112 lavoratori. Dopo aver già imposto nel 2011 una riduzione del personale per riorganizzare lo stabilimento di Romano d'Ezzelino, la multinazionale olandese ha deciso ora, a causa della crisi, di concentrare la propria produzione nel solo stabilimento di Como, in Lombardia.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è al corrente dei fatti?

2. Intende attivare il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) a sostegno di questi lavoratori?

3. È a conoscenza di finanziamenti comunitari, diretti o indiretti, erogati a favore di questa multinazionale?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(6 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione è preoccupata per le conseguenze socioeconomiche che possono comportare gli esuberi presso AkzoNobel.

A condizione che gli esuberi dei lavoratori possano essere fatti risalire alla globalizzazione degli scambi o alla crisi economica e finanziaria mondiale, l'Italia può chiedere un sostegno al Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG). La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputata al regolamento del FEG (2014-2020) ([1]) per ulteriori dettagli sulle nuove regole che disciplinano tale Fondo a decorrere dal 2014.

L'onorevole deputata può rivolgersi alla persona di contatto del FEG in Italia per informarsi se è prevista una domanda di aiuto a sostegno dei lavoratori messi in esubero da AkzoNobel. I riferimenti del caso sono reperibili sul sito web del FEG ([2]).

Informazioni sui finanziamenti unionali diretti o indiretti concessi a questa multinazionale sono disponibili sul sito web della Commissione ([3]).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1309/2013, GU L 347 del 20.12.2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013964/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: AkzoNobel: closure of the factory in Romano d'Ezzelino (Vicenza)

The Dutch multinational, AkzoNobel, has decided to close its factory in Romano d'Ezzelino which employs as many as 112 workers. Having already cut staff numbers in 2011 as part of a reorganisation of the factory in Romano d'Ezzelino, the multinational has now decided, because of the crisis, to concentrate production solely at its factory in Como in Lombardy.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above?

2. Will it mobilise the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) to support these workers?

3. Is the Commission aware of any direct or indirect EU funding which has been granted to this multinational?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

The Commission is concerned about the social and economic consequences that the redundancies in AkzoNobel may bring with them.

Provided that the workers' redundancies can be linked to trade related globalisation or to the global financial and economic crisis, Italy has the possibility to apply for support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the EGF Regulation (2014-2020) ([1]) for more details on the new rules of this Fund as from 2014.

The Honourable Member may wish to communicate with the EGF Contact Person in Italy, should she wish to know whether an application is being planned in support of workers made redundant by AkzoNobel. The relevant contact details can be found on the EGF website ([2]).

Information about direct or indirect EU funding which has been granted to this multinational, is available at the Commission's website ([3]).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1309/2013, OJ L 347 of 20.12.2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013965/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(9 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Massacro di cani randagi in Bosnia

In seguito ad alcuni casi di cronaca, il parlamento della Bosnia-Erzegovina sta discutendo un emendamento alla legge sulla protezione e il benessere degli animali a dir poco disumano. Punto focale della nuova normativa sarebbe l'eutanasia per gli animali randagi e in salute che sono stati catturati, se questi non vengono adottati entro 14 giorni. Un provvedimento simile è stato in discussione anche in Romania. Stando all'opinione delle associazioni animaliste che hanno studiato il provvedimento legislativo, la legge sulla protezione e il benessere degli animali necessita di numerosi miglioramenti, ma questi dovrebbero andare nella direzione opposta agli emendamenti presentati sull'eutanasia. Inoltre, è stato ampiamente dimostrato che uccidere i cani randagi non risolve il problema, oltre ad essere un'ovvia bestialità, ed è più costoso di provvedimenti lungimiranti e rispettosi del benessere animale come la sterilizzazione e l'adozione dei cani abbandonati, nonché la sensibilizzazione e i provvedimenti giudiziari verso chi si macchia del reato stesso di abbandono.

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

1. non ritiene di dover consigliare alla Bosnia-Erzegovina strumenti di sterilizzazione e adozione alternativi all'eutanasia in considerazione del suo status di «candidato potenziale» all'ingresso nell'Unione europea, il che richiederebbe l'adozione di normative sul benessere animale in controtendenza rispetto a quelle proposte dall'attuale parlamento?

2. Stanti gli oltre 100 milioni di euro di aiuti alla Bosnia-Erzegovina stanziati dalla Commissione nel 2012 al fine di compiere riforme che avvicinino tale paese all'adesione all'Unione europea, e posta l'importanza della tutela della salute e del benessere animale nel quadro normativo europeo, non ritiene la Commissione di dover eventualmente rivedere questi finanziamenti nel caso in cui passassero gli emendamenti proposti alla legge sulla protezione e il benessere degli animali?

3. Quali misure normative utilizza la Commissione per tutelare il benessere animale e per combattere il randagismo?

4. Non ritiene la Commissione di dover invitare gli Stati candidati e potenziali candidati ad adottare le stesse misure?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2014)

La legislazione UE sul benessere animale è di vasta portata: va dal benessere degli animali negli allevamenti e negli zoo alla sperimentazione sugli animali nei laboratori, alla circolazione e al trasporto di animali da compagnia. Il benessere dei cani e dei gatti non è tuttavia materia di competenza dell'UE ma delle amministrazioni nazionali. La Commissione non può pertanto proporre alla Bosnia-Erzegovina strumenti specifici riguardo ai cani randagi (ad esempio, la sterilizzazione al posto dell'eutanasia), né può subordinare l'erogazione dei fondi dello strumento di assistenza preadesione (IPA) ad emendamenti della legislazione nazionale in materia di benessere degli animali.

L'allineamento della legislazione nazionale sul benessere degli animali al diritto unionale è uno dei passi necessari che un paese candidato deve compiere per prepararsi all'adesione all'UE, puntando alla piena applicazione della legislazione unionale al momento dell'ingresso nell'UE a pieno titolo. Nel caso della Bosnia-Erzegovina, la legislazione sul benessere degli animali esiste, ma non è attuata integralmente.

La Commissione controlla con regolarità la corretta applicazione della legislazione UE in questo campo, mediante servizi ispettivi, verifiche in loco e formazione tecnica. Viene poi offerta assistenza tecnica ai paesi candidati e candidati potenziali per quanto concerne sia il recepimento che l'attuazione della legislazione UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013965/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Massacre of stray dogs in Bosnia

Following reports in the press, the Parliament of Bosnia-Herzegovina is debating an amendment to the law on the protection and welfare of animals which is inhumane, to say the least. The new legislation apparently focuses on euthanising captured stray healthy animals if they are not adopted within 14 days. A similar measure has also been discussed in Romania. According to the animal welfare organisations which have studied the legislative measure, countless improvements to the law on animal protection and welfare are needed, but they should be the complete opposite of the amendments tabled on euthanasia. Furthermore, in addition to being obviously barbaric, it has been clearly proven that killing stray dogs does not solve the problem. It is also more expensive than far-sighted measures which respect animal welfare such as sterilising and adopting abandoned dogs, as well as raising awareness and instituting criminal proceedings against those who commit the offence of abandoning a dog.

1. Does the Commission not believe that it should advise Bosnia-Herzegovina to use sterilisation and adoption as alternative instruments to euthanasia given its status as a 'potential candidate country' for EU accession, which would require it to adopt animal welfare legislation that goes against that proposed by the current parliament?

2. Given that the Commission allocated over EUR 100 million in 2012 to Bosnia-Herzegovina to allow this country to make reforms to move closer to EU accession, and in view of the importance that the EU legal framework places on the protection of animal health and welfare, does the Commission not believe that it should review this funding in the event that the amendments tabled to the law on animal protection and welfare are passed?

3. What legislative measures does the Commission use to protect the welfare of animals and to combat the problem of stray animals?

4. Does the Commission not believe that it should call on candidate countries and potential candidate countries to adopt the same measures?

Question for written answer E-014305/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(18 December 2013)

Subject: Animal Welfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about animal cruelty and believes that all countries who seek membership of the EU should be required to demonstrate certain standards of animal care.

My constituent tells me that Bosnia and Herzegovina, who are seeking admission into the EU, are about to vote on changes to their existing Animal Protection and Welfare Act. She tells me that the proposed changes to the law are to make euthanasia legal in all animal shelters and that it can be performed within 15 days of a dog's arrival in a shelter.

My constituent says that the current law is a good and enforceable one that does not allow euthanasia to be carried out unless the animal has reached such an old age that its vital bodily functions are starting to fail, is suffering from an incurable or infectious disease, is a danger to those around it or if keeping it alive is causing it unnecessary pain and suffering. She is also concerned that when the current law is disregarded, which she believes is widespread, the methods of euthanasia which are used include clubbing, injections of bleach, starvation, burning and being buried alive.

My constituent also tells me that the current law states that every town and city is required to build shelters for stray animals and that they should provide adequate care, including veterinary care for the animals. However, she claims that in most shelters, the animals are left for days without water, food or any treatment.

As my constituent is concerned that the current law is not being enforced enough and that any changes to the law may reduce the welfare of animals in shelters, could the Commission confirm:

1. If it is currently in talks with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Government to ensure that the welfare of animals in shelters is protected and enforced?

2. If it plans to take this issue into account during any discussions with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding their membership of the EU?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

The EU legislation on animal welfare covers a large field, from animal welfare in farms and zoos, animal testing in laboratories, to the movement and transport of pets. However, the welfare of dogs and cats does not fall under the EU's competence but within the remit of Member States' administrations. Therefore, the Commission is not in a position either to propose to Bosnia and Herzegovina specific instruments regarding the welfare of stray dogs (e.g. sterilisation instead of euthanasia) nor to make any direct link between the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) funds and amendments to the national law on animal welfare.

The alignment of national animal welfare legislation with EC law is a prerequisite for EU membership, with the objective of full application of EU legislation upon the country's accession to the EU. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is legislation in place (Law on Animal Welfare), but this is not fully implemented.

The Commission monitors regularly the enforcement of EU legislation on animal welfare through inspection services, spot audits and technical trainings. Technical assistance is available and offered to candidate and potential candidate countries both for the transposition and the implementation of EU legislation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013966/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(9 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Agrofarmaci e integrazione europea

Numerosi coltivatori all'interno dell'Unione europea fanno ricorso all'uso di agrofarmaci per le proprie coltivazioni. Tuttavia la legislazione comunitaria sul tema non è molto chiara e gli Stati membri applicano in maniera indipendente e molto diversificata le proprie norme. In Francia l'impiego di sostanze attive e di agrofarmaci per sostenere le coltivazioni è consentito ed è facile ricevere permessi, ad esempio. In Italia, invece, è molto complesso ottenere dagli enti incaricati l'autorizzazione all'uso di agrofarmaci: i tempi sono lunghi e a volte l'autorizzazione è addirittura negata. Le norme sull'uso dei prodotti fitosanitari sono determinate da direttive europee che però, come appare nei due casi appena confrontati, sono applicate in maniera profondamente differente, se non contrastante.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. come ha deciso di regolamentare l'utilizzo dei prodotti fitosanitari all'interno della Comunità europea?

2. Quali strumenti utilizza per favorire la ricerca e lo sviluppo di agrofarmaci che abbiano il minore impatto possibile sull'ambiente?

3. Non ritiene necessario armonizzare le normative europee sul tema, utilizzando strumenti legislativi che possano garantire l'uniformità di trattamento in tutti gli Stati membri?

4. Posto che i prodotti fitosanitari, se sono in linea con le politiche ambientali dell'UE, costituiscono uno strumento positivo per l'agricoltura per tutelarsi da catastrofi e malattie e offrire ai consumatori europei un prodotto migliore, non ritiene di dover incoraggiare l'utilizzo di agrofarmaci quando questi sono in linea con la tutela del prodotto e la salute del consumatore?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(4 febbraio 2014)

La valutazione e la commercializzazione dei prodotti fitosanitari sono disciplinate dal regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 ([1]) del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativo all'immissione sul mercato dei prodotti fitosanitari e che abroga le direttive del Consiglio 79/117/CEE e 91/414/CEE.

Esso prevede principi uniformi da applicarsi a cura degli Stati membri all'atto di valutare le domande di autorizzazione di prodotti fitosanitari e stabilisce scadenze rigorose e vincolanti in tale processo.

Detto regolamento, unitamente alla direttiva 2009/128/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria ai fini dell'utilizzo sostenibile dei pesticidi, offre uno strumentario armonizzato al fine di assicurare la produzione di un quantitativo sufficiente di alimenti di qualità elevata a un prezzo abbordabile e nel rispetto di standard di sicurezza elevati in materia di salute umana e animale e di ambiente, ad esempio:

— l'obbligo di applicare le regole generali di difesa fitosanitaria integrata (Integrated Pest Management — IPM) dall'inizio di quest'anno, il che garantisce che le misure fitosanitarie vengano applicate tenendo conto dell'effetto auspicato ed abbiano un impatto minimo;

— un sistema di riconoscimento reciproco delle autorizzazioni che crea condizioni di maggiore equità per gli operatori commerciali attivi nella filiera alimentare e

— l'inserimento nel settimo programma d'azione sull'ambiente (PAA) di attività di ricerca finalizzate ad individuare metodi più moderni di protezione delle piante.

([1]) GU L 309 del 24.11.2009, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013966/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Agrochemicals and European integration

Many farmers in the European Union use agrochemicals on their crops. However, EU legislation on the issue is not very clear and Member States apply their own rules independently of each other and in a highly inconsistent manner. For example, in France, the use of active substances and agrochemicals to care for crops is permitted and receiving authorisation is a straightforward process. In Italy, however, obtaining authorisation from the competent bodies to use agrochemicals is a very complicated process: it takes a long time and occasionally authorisation is even denied. Rules on the use of plant protection products are governed by EU directives that, as shown in the two cases compared above, are applied in very different, if not conflicting, ways.

1. How has the Commission decided to regulate the use of plant protection products within the EU?

2. What instruments does it use to promote research and development of agrochemicals that are as environmentally friendly as possible?

3. Does the Commission not think that European legislation on the issue should be harmonised, using instruments that can guarantee standardised treatment in all Member States?

4. Given that plant protection products, if they are in line with EU environmental policy, are a useful tool for agriculture in order to protect against ruin and disease, and they guarantee that European consumers receive a better product, does the Commission not think that it should encourage the use of agrochemicals when they are in keeping with protecting the product and consumers' health?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 February 2014)

The assessment and the placing on the market of plant protection products is regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]) of the European Parliament and the Council concerning the placing on the market of plant protection products and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC.

It provides for uniform principles to be applied by Member States when assessing applications for the authorisation of plant protection products and for strict and binding deadlines in this process.

This regulation, together with Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides, provide a harmonised toolbox in order to assure the production of a sufficient amount of food of high quality at an affordable price in a way respecting a high safety standards for human and animal health and the environment, for example:

— the obligation to apply the general rules of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as from beginning of this year, which will make sure that plant protection measures will be undertaken to the necessary effect with a minimum impact;

— a system of mutual recognition of authorisations, creating a more level playing field for business operators in the food chain; and

— embedding research activities towards more modern plant protection methods in the 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP).

([1]) OJ L L 309/1, 24.11.2009.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013968/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(9 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Voluntariatul în cadrul serviciilor de pompieri

Europa dorește să îmbunătățească mecanismul de intervenție în caz de urgență, cu accent pe creșterea calității serviciilor pentru siguranța publică și asistență medicală în situații de urgență, indiferent de localizarea așezămintelor umane.

În unele state membre însă serviciul de pompieri, una dintre componentele de bază din sistemul de intervenție este asigurat, pe lângă salariații cu normă întreagă, de mulți voluntari.

Ca atare, diverse localități, cu precădere cele de dimensiuni mai mici, se confruntă cu dificultăți pentru a asigura necesarul de personal în unitățile de pompieri și există chiar riscul ca o parte dintre aceste unități să fie închise definitiv.

Cum intenționează Comisia să sprijine autoritățile locale și regionale din statele membre pentru ca serviciile pentru siguranța publică și asistență medicală în situații de urgență să nu fie afectate de situații de acest gen și să poată fi asigurată calitatea corespunzătoare a acestor servicii în caz de nevoie, inclusiv în cazul unor evenimente transfrontaliere, care necesită intervenția unor echipe mixte din țări vecine?

Răspuns dat de dna Georgieva în numele Comisiei
(30 ianuarie 2014)

Responsabilitatea principală de a asigura securitatea cetățenilor și asistența medicală în situații de urgență revine statelor membre, în conformitate cu principiul subsidiarității. Nivelurile locale, regionale și naționale sunt în general cele mai bine plasate pentru pregătirea și răspunsul în caz de dezastre, inclusiv incendii. Prin urmare, statele membre au responsabilitatea de a asigura calitatea și personalul adecvate (cu ajutorul voluntarilor sau în alt mod) serviciilor lor de stingere a incendiilor.

UE dispune de competență de sprijin în domeniul protecției civile. Aceasta facilitează cooperarea între statele membre, prin mecanismul de protecție civilă al Uniunii, care a fost recent consolidat prin Decizia 1313/2013/UE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului, adoptată la 17 decembrie 2013. Mecanismul de protecție civilă al Uniunii realizează o serie de activități de sprijinire a voluntariatului în domeniul protecției civile, inclusiv cofinanțarea proiectelor în materie de prevenire și pregătire și a activităților de formare, cum ar fi, atelierul organizat de președinția cipriotă în noiembrie 2012.

În cadrul priorităților stabilite în programele operaționale relevante, statele membre ar putea, de asemenea, beneficia de sprijinul politicii de coeziune pentru investiții în domeniul prevenirii și gestionării riscurilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013968/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Volunteering as part of firefighting services

Europe is keen to improve the emergency intervention system, focusing on enhancing the quality of public safety and medical assistance services provided in emergency situations, no matter where people live.

However, in some Member States the firefighting service, one of the basic components of the intervention system, is operated by numerous volunteers, in addition to full-time staff.

Consequently, various locations, especially those which are smaller, are encountering problems in providing the required number of staff in fire stations, and some of these stations are even at risk of being permanently closed.

How does the Commission intend to support local and regional authorities in Member States so that public safety and medical assistance services provided in emergencies are not affected by situations like this, as well as to ensure that the appropriate quality can be provided for these services, when needed, including in the case of cross-border incidents, which require intervention by mixed teams in neighbouring countries?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The primary responsibility to ensure public safety and medical assistance in emergency situations lies with the Member States, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The local, regional, and national levels are generally best placed to prepare for and respond to disasters, including fires. Member States therefore have the responsibility of ensuring an adequate quality and staffing (through volunteers or otherwise) of their firefighting services.

The EU has a supporting competence in the field of civil protection. It facilitates cooperation between Member States through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism which was recently strengthened through Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, adopted on 17 December 2013. The Union Civil Protection Mechanism carries out a number of activities in support of civil protection volunteerism in Member States, including the co-financing of prevention and preparedness projects and training activities e.g. the workshop organised by the Cyprus Presidency in November 2012.

In the framework of the priorities set in the relevant Operational Programmes, Member States could also draw on the support of Cohesion policy for investments in risk prevention and management.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-013969/13
a la Comisión
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(9 de diciembre de 2013)

Asunto: Oferta de suelo gratuito en Cantabria para instalación de empresas

La comunidad autónoma de Cantabria ha emprendido en los últimos meses una campaña de captación de empresas mediante un sistema de arrendamiento financiero de suelo que podría provocar problemas de libre competencia. El programa denominado sI5 ([1]) pretende «buscar empresarios» y ofrece hasta el 31 de enero de 2014 «cinco años de suelo gratis»; 50 años de derecho de superficie y opción de compra del suelo durante los primeros 15 años.

Las empresas que se acojan a este programa podrán establecerse sin pagar nada por el suelo que utilicen los primeros cinco años. A partir del sexto pagarán una anualidad equivalente al 6 % del coste del terreno que ocupen. Las industrias dispondrán desde entonces de once años de plazo para comprar efectivamente la parcela. La oferta incluye financiación de hasta el 70 % de la inversión para gastos de instalación y puesta en marcha del proceso industrial ya acordada con una única entidad financiera. La página institucional que anuncia el programa destaca que las condiciones crediticias se encuentran entre «las más ventajosas del mercado» para este tipo de producto. El programa añade que esta oferta solo está disponible para empresas que cumplan unas determinadas condiciones de inversión y generación de empleo que no se detallan en las ofertas publicadas. Los anuncios tampoco aluden al decreto, orden u normativa autonómica que regula el plan.

A la vista de lo explicitado:

1. ¿Ha comunicado el Gobierno de Cantabria a la Comisión la puesta en marcha de este plan de ayudas que por sus características podría ser considerado «ayudas de estado»?

2. En caso contrario, ¿dispone la Comisión de información exacta de las condiciones del programa, el tipo de empresas e inversiones que propicia y las condiciones crediticias arbitradas para ponerlo en marcha y la normativa que las regula?

3. ¿Va a abrir una investigación sobre las condiciones de esta oferta?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión confirma que España no ha notificado a la Comisión la medida descrita.

Los servicios de la Comisión han recibido recientemente una denuncia sobre esta medida y están investigando el asunto. El 10 de enero de 2014, se solicitó a España que diera respuesta a los argumentos presentados en la denuncia. De ser necesario, se recabarán nuevas explicaciones de España a fin de evaluar si la medida es constitutiva o no de ayuda estatal a tenor del artículo 107, apartado 1, del TFEU.

La Comisión solo podrá incoar un procedimiento de investigación formal con arreglo al artículo 108, apartado 2, del TFUE si llega a la conclusión preliminar de que la medida es constitutiva de ayuda estatal y si abriga dudas serias en cuanto a su compatibilidad con el mercado interior.

([1]) http://suelo.gruposodercan.es/inicio/cantabria

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013969/13
to the Commission
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(9 December 2013)

Subject: Offer of free land in Cantabria for setting up companies

In recent months, the Autonomous Community of Cantabria has undertaken a campaign to attract companies by leasing land, which could be problematic with regard to free competition. The 'sI5' programme ([1]) is intended to bring in employers and, until 31 January 2014, offers five years of free land, 50 years of buildings rights and the option to buy the land in the first 15 years.

Companies that take part in this programme will be able to set up without paying anything for the land they use for the first five years. As of the sixth year, they will pay an annual charge equal to 6% of the cost of the land they occupy. Companies will then have 11 years from that time to buy the plot. The offer includes funding to cover up to 70% of investment in business set-up and start-up costs, pre-agreed with a single financial institution. According to the web page advertising the programme, the lending conditions are among the most advantageous on the market for this kind of product. The programme adds that the offer is only available to companies that meet certain investment and job creation conditions, which are not stipulated in the published offers. The advertisements also make no mention of the decree, order or regional legislation regulating the plan.

1. Has the Government of Cantabria notified the Commission of the implementation of this aid plan, the features of which could result in it being considered 'State aid'?

2. If not, does the Commission have any information specifically on the programme's conditions, the kind of companies and investments it favours, as well as the lending conditions devised for its implementation and the legislation regulating them?

3. Will it open an investigation into the conditions of this offer?

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

The Commission confirms that Spain has not notified to the Commission the measure described.

The Commission services recently received a complaint about this measure and are currently investigating the issue. On 10 January 2014, they asked Spain to react to the arguments put forward in the complaint. If necessary, further clarification will be requested from Spain to assess whether the measure involves — or not — state aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU.

The Commission will only open a formal investigation procedure pursuant to Article 108(2) TFEU if it reaches the preliminary conclusion that the measure constitutes state aid and if it has serious doubts about its compatibility with the internal market.

([1]) http://suelo.gruposodercan.es/inicio/cantabria

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-013970/13
do Komisji
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(10 grudnia 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Finansowanie budowy dróg w kontekście rozporządzenia ustanawiającego instrument finansowy Connecting Europe Facility

19 listopada Parlament przyjął rozporządzenie dotyczące nowego instrumentu finansowego CEF (Connecting Europe Facility). W kontekście tego dokumentu mam pytanie dotyczące współfinansowania budowy dróg.

Połączenie drogowe, którego dotyczy pytanie, znajduje się w aneksie do rozporządzenia w części „Other Sections on the Core Network/Cross-Border/Road/works".

Czy państwo członkowskie może wystąpić o dofinansowanie tylko fragmentu takiej drogi, przy założeniu, że będzie to fragment, który nie będzie przecinał granicy pomiędzy dwoma państwami członkowskimi?

Jeżeli odpowiedź na powyższe pytanie jest twierdząca, czy jeżeli w przyszłości państwo/państwa członkowskie nie wybudują całości drogi zdefiniowanej w aneksie do rozporządzenia CEF, to czy będą musiały zwrócić przyznane uprzednio środki na budowę fragmentu tej drogi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(21 stycznia 2014 r.)

Komisja zwraca uwagę na fakt, że jedynie odcinki transgraniczne są zaliczane do odcinków dróg kwalifikujących się do finansowania w ramach instrumentu „Łącząc Europę", a zatem budowane oddzielnie krajowe fragmenty dróg nie kwalifikują się, ponieważ nie są odcinkami transgranicznymi.

Zgodnie z definicją odcinka transgranicznego podaną w rozporządzeniu (UE) nr 1315/2013 w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej ([1]) (rozporządzenie w sprawie TEN-T), taki odcinek musi zapewniać ciągłość projektu będącego przedmiotem wspólnego zainteresowania między najbliższymi węzłami miejskimi po obu stronach granicy między dwoma państwami członkowskimi lub między państwem członkowskim a państwem sąsiadującym. Zgodnie z definicją w rozporządzeniu w sprawie TEN-T najbliższy węzeł miejski po obu stronach granicy oznacza obszar miejski o znaczeniu ekonomicznym obejmujący lub znajdujący się blisko przynajmniej jednego z poniższych obiektów infrastruktury: portów, w tym terminali pasażerskich, portów lotniczych, stacji kolejowych, platform logistycznych oraz terminali towarowych. Ponadto, zgodnie z ostatnim akapitem art. 7 ust. 2 wspomnianego rozporządzenia, działania związane z transportem obejmujące odcinek transgraniczny lub część takiego odcinka kwalifikują się do wsparcia finansowego Unii, jeśli istnieje pisemne porozumienie między zainteresowanymi państwami członkowskimi lub państwami członkowskimi i państwami trzecimi dotyczące ukończenia odcinka transgranicznego.

Każdy projekt niespełniający celów określonych w decyzji finansowej podlega redukcji współfinansowania UE odnoszącego się do celów nieosiągniętych zgodnie z przepisami art. 12 rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1316/2013 ustanawiającego instrument „Łącząc Europę" ([2]).

([1]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1315/2013 z dnia 11 grudnia 2013 r. w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej i uchylające decyzję nr 661/2010/UE, Dz.U. L 348 z 20.12.2013.

([2]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1316/2013 z dnia 11 grudnia 2013 r. ustanawiające instrument „Łącząc Europę", zmieniające rozporządzenie (UE) nr 913/2010 oraz uchylające rozporządzenia (WE) nr 680/2007 i (WE) nr 67/2010, Dz.U. L 348 z 20.12.13.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-013970/13
to the Commission
Artur Zasada (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Funding for road construction under the regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility

On 19 November 2013 Parliament adopted the regulation establishing a new financing instrument, the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), in connection with which I should like to enquire about the arrangements for co-financing the construction of roads.

With respect to a road link listed in the annex to the regulation, under 'Other Sections on the Core Network/Cross-Border/Road/works', would it be possible for a Member State to obtain funding for a single section of the road if that section does not run across the border between two Member States?

If the answer to that question is yes, can the Commission say whether, if the Member State or Member States building the road failed to finish it, the funding provided in respect of that section would need to be returned?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 January 2014)

The Commission points out that only cross-border sections are included among the road sections eligible for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) — therefore, a national stretch developed isolatedly is not eligible since it does not constitute cross-border section.

Indeed, according to the definition of the cross border section given by the regulation 1315/2013 on Union Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T Regulation) ([1]), such a section must ensure the continuity of a project of common interest between the nearest urban nodes, on both sides of the border of two Member States or between a Member State and a neighbouring country. In line with the definition in the TEN-T Regulation, the nearest urban node on both sides of the border must be understood as first urban area of economic importance, which includes or is close to at least one of the following infrastructures: ports including passenger terminals, airports, railway stations, logistic platforms and freight terminals. In addition, according to the last subparagraph of Article 7(2) of the same Regulation, transport-related actions involving a cross-border section or a part of such a section are eligible to receive Union financial assistance if there is a written agreement between the Member States concerned or between the Member States and third countries relating to the completion of the cross-border section.

Any project failing to meet the objectives set in the financing decision is subject to a reduction of the EU co-financing related to the objectives not achieved according to the provision set in Article 12 of Regulation 1316/2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility ([2]).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

([2]) Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, OJ L 348, 20.12.13.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-013971/13
до Комисията
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)
(10 декември 2013 г.)

Относно: Подкрепа за инвестиции в жилищния сектор през новия програмен период 2014—2020 г.

Регламентът за Кохезионния фонд през новия програмен период 2014—2020 г. предвижда инвестициите в жилищния сектор, с изключение на насърчаването на енергийната ефективност и използването на възобновяеми енергийни източници, да не бъдат допустими за подкрепа. България е страна, в която голяма част от населението живее в панелни жилища, построени преди около 40—50 години. Те се нуждаят от обследване и специална експертиза за надеждността им, както и от укрепване. На кой европейски или национален фонд и/или програма може да разчита населението в страната за извършване на горепосочените дейности през новия програмен период?

Отговор, даден от г-н Hahn от името на Комисията
(19 февруари 2014 г.)

Новата законодателна рамка за политиката на сближаване за периода 2014—2020 г. дава възможност за насърчаване на енергийната ефективност и инвестициите във възобновяеми източници на енергия в жилищния сектор с подкрепата на Европейския фонд за регионално развитие (ЕФРР) и Кохезионния фонд.

В контекста на насърчаването на социалното приобщаване и борбата с бедността ЕФРР може да окаже подкрепа за материалното и икономическото възраждане на нуждаещите се общности в градските и селските райони, включително по отношение на социалните жилища, ако те са част от интегрирани планове, придружени по-специално от мерки в областта на образованието, здравеопазването и трудовата заетост.

Българските власти информираха Комисията за намерението си да включат горепосочените възможности в разработваната от тях в момента нова оперативна програма „Региони в растеж“ по линия на ЕФРР.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013971/13
to the Commission
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Support for investment in the housing sector in the new programming period 2014-2020.

The regulation for the Cohesion Fund in the new programming period 2014-2020 envisages investments in the housing sector which will not be eligible for support, with the exception of the promotion of energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources. Bulgaria is a country where a large part of the population lives in prefabricated housing built around 40-50 years ago. The houses are in need of investigation and special expertise to ensure they are safe, and need to be strengthened. Which European or national fund and/or programme can the Bulgarian population look to for carrying out the abovementioned activities during the new programming period?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The new legislative framework for cohesion policy for the 2014-2020 period allows the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in the housing sector through the support of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund.

In the context of promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, the ERDF may provide support for the physical and economic regeneration of deprived communities in urban and rural areas, including social housing, if it is part of integrated plans accompanied notably by interventions in education, health and employment.

The Bulgarian authorities have informed the Commission about their intention to implement the above possibilities under in their new 'Regions in Growth' ERDF programme which they are currently drafting.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013972/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κοινωνικά επικίνδυνη διόγκωση του φαινομένου των απλήρωτων εργαζομένων στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα τόσο με εμπειρικές μελέτες ερευνητικών ινστιτούτων στην Ελλάδα, όσο και με τα στοιχεία του Σώματος Επιθεώρησης Εργασίας (ΣΕΠΕ), προκύπτει μια τεράστια διόγκωση του αριθμού των απλήρωτων εργαζομένων στον ιδιωτικό τομέα, που υπολογίζεται περίπου σε 60% ενώ ταυτόχρονα καταγράφεται αδυναμία για σχεδόν 1 στις 2 επιχειρήσεις να καταβάλλουν εγκαίρως — κάθε μήνα — το μισθό στους εργαζόμενους τους οποίους απασχολούν με σχέση εξαρτημένης εργασίας. Με δεδομένο ότι για έναν μεγάλο αριθμό εργαζομένων ο μισθός αποτελεί το βασικότερο ή το μοναδικό μέσο βιοπορισμού δημιουργούνται σοβαρά ερωτήματα, αφενός, για την εξασφάλιση της επιβίωσης των ίδιων και των οικογενειών τους και, αφετέρου, για δυσμενείς προεκτάσεις από ενδεχόμενη σώρευση ανεξόφλητων οικιακών τιμολογίων, αλλά κυρίως δανειακών υποχρεώσεων, για τις οποίες προβλέπεται, μεταξύ άλλων, σημαντική έντοκη επιβάρυνση.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει λάβει γνώση της εν λόγω δραματικής κατάστασης και πώς τη σχολιάζει;

2. Διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία για τα ποσοστά των απλήρωτων εργαζομένων στα κράτη μέλη;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(11 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

1. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τις αναφορές ενός σημαντικού αριθμού εργαζομένων στον ιδιωτικό τομέα που λαμβάνουν καθυστερημένα τις αποδοχές τους ή που δεν πληρώνονται καθόλου. Παρ' όλο που η κατάσταση αυτή προκαλεί μεγάλη ανησυχία, δεν είναι στις αρμοδιότητες της Επιτροπής να παρεμβαίνει σε θέματα ιδιωτικού δικαίου. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί να στηρίξει την Ελλάδα στην προσπάθειά της να δημιουργήσει συνθήκες βιώσιμης οικονομικής ανάπτυξης. Αυτό, μαζί με ένα εκσυγχρονισμένο σύστημα συλλογικών διαπραγματεύσεων, θα δημιουργήσει για τους εργοδότες τις κατάλληλες συνθήκες, έτσι ώστε να μπορούν αλλά και να επιθυμούν να καταβάλλουν μισθούς και αποδοχές σύμφωνα με τους όρους των συμβάσεων εργασίας που προκύπτουν από τις διαπραγματεύσεις. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει τα κοινωνικά δεινά που αντιμετωπίζει ένας αυξανόμενος αριθμός ελληνικών οικογενειών, καθώς και την έλλειψη ενός αποτελεσματικού δικτύου κοινωνικής προστασίας για την καταπολέμηση αυτών. Υποστηρίζει την Ελλάδα στα σχέδιά της να καταρτίσει ένα νέο σύστημα ελάχιστου εισοδήματος με τη βοήθεια της Παγκόσμιας Τράπεζας. Επίσης, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο (ESF) παρέχει υποστήριξη στις πιο ευάλωτες ομάδες του πληθυσμού με τη συγχρηματοδότηση μίας σειράς παρεμβάσεων, ιδιαίτερα μέσω του «επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος για την ανάπτυξη των ανθρώπινων πόρων».

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στοιχεία αναφορικά με το ποσοστό εργαζομένων που λαμβάνουν καθυστερημένα ή δεν λαμβάνουν καθόλου αποδοχές στα κράτη μέλη.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013972/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Socially dangerous increase in the number of unpaid workers in Greece

According both to empirical studies by polling institutes in Greece and information from the Labour Inspectorate, there has been a huge increase in the number of unpaid workers in the private sector, which is estimated at around 60%. At the same time, it would appear that nearly one in two companies is unable to pay its employees on time every month. Given that, for a large number of workers, their pay is their basic or only means of survival, this raises serious questions as to how they and their families are supposed to survive, on the one hand, and about the impact of large numbers of unpaid domestic bills, especially loans at high interest rates, on the other.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is it aware of this drastic situation and what are its comments?

2. Does it have data on the percentage of unpaid workers in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of reports of a significant number of workers in the private sector receiving either late or even no wages. While this is a major concern, the Commission has no competence to interfere in private law matters. The Commission however endeavours to support Greece in creating conditions for sustainable economic growth. This, together with a modernized collective bargaining system, will create conditions for employers to be able and willing to pay wages and salaries according to the conditions set out in the negotiated labour contracts. The Commission is aware of the social hardship endured by an increasing number of Greek families and of the absence of an effective and efficient social safety net to stem this. It supports Greece in putting in place a new minimum income scheme with the assistance of the World Bank. Moreover, the European Social Fund (ESF) provides assistance to the most vulnerable groups of the population with the co-financing of a series of interventions, in particular through the 'Human Resources Development Operational Programme'.

2. The Commission has no data on the percentage of workers receiving late or no pay in the Member States.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-013973/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εργασία και φτώχεια στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με τα επίσημα στοιχεία του Υπουργείου Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων (ετήσιο δελτίο πληροφοριακού συστήματος «ΕΡΓΑΝΗ»), το 20,4% των Ελλήνων εργαζόμενων αμείβεται με μεικτές αποδοχές που δεν ξεπερνούν τα 500 ευρώ, ενώ περίπου το 35% λαμβάνει μισθό μέχρι 700 ευρώ μεικτά. Αυτά τα στοιχεία διαμορφώνουν συνθήκες, αφενός, «εκτόξευσης» του αριθμού των φτωχών εργαζομένων στην Ελλάδα και, αφετέρου, γενίκευσης της φτώχειας στα ελληνικά νοικοκυριά που — σε συνδυασμό και με τα υψηλότατα ποσοστά ανεργίας — έχουν κατά κανόνα μόνο έναν εργαζόμενο. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση και με γνώμονα τους διακηρυγμένους στόχους της ΕΕ για αύξηση της απασχόλησης και μείωση της φτώχειας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί την παρούσα κατάσταση στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας, καθώς και τον αντίκτυπό της τόσο στην κοινωνική συνοχή, όσο και στην πραγματική οικονομία;

2. Διαθέτει σχετικά στατιστικά στοιχεία για το ύψος των αμοιβών των εργαζομένων στα κράτη μέλη, καθώς και αντίστοιχες συγκρίσεις αναφορικά με τα εθνικά όρια φτώχειας;

3. Η ραγδαία πτώση των μισθών στην Ελλάδα παράλληλα με τη διατήρηση σε υψηλά επίπεδα των τιμών για ιδιωτικές δομές εναρμόνισης της επαγγελματικής με την οικογενειακή ζωή (π.χ. βρεφονηπιακοί σταθμοί) δημιουργούν — με δεδομένη και την αριθμητική ανεπάρκεια των αντίστοιχων κρατικών δομών — σοβαρά αντικίνητρα για την επίμονη αναζήτηση εργασίας και, κατά συνέπεια, την άνοδο της απασχολησιμότητας. Πώς κρίνει αυτό το γεγονός υπό το πρίσμα του θεμελιώδους στόχου της Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής «ΕΕ 2020» για αύξηση της απασχολησιμότητας στο 75%;

4. Πόσο, κατά την άποψή της, συνδέεται η πλήρης ελαστικοποίηση της αγοράς εργασίας στην Ελλάδα με τη μαζική συρρίκνωση των αμοιβών;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Οι εξελίξεις στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας οφείλονται στην αποκλιμάκωση σημαντικών ανισορροπιών της ελληνικής οικονομίας. Το πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα περιλαμβάνει σημαντικά διαρθρωτικά μέτρα για την αντιμετώπιση των αδυναμιών της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας, τη βελτίωση του επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος και την τόνωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας, με στόχο τη δημιουργία ευνοϊκών συνθηκών για βιώσιμη οικονομική ανάπτυξη και δημιουργία θέσεων απασχόλησης. Ο κοινωνικός αντίκτυπος των πολιτικών υπήρξε ανέκαθεν βασική μέριμνα στη χάραξη πολιτικής για τις χώρες του προγράμματος, όπως διατυπώνεται στα μνημόνια συμφωνίας.

Η στατιστική υπηρεσία της Επιτροπής Eurostat συλλέγει και δημοσιεύει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με το επίπεδο των μισθών και τους δείκτες για τη φτώχεια, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της φτώχειας στην εργασία ([1]).

Οι εκθέσεις που καταρτίζουν οι υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής για τις εξελίξεις στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας περιλαμβάνονται στα ειδικά τμήματα των εκθέσεων που δημοσιεύονται μετά από κάθε αξιολόγηση της εφαρμογής του προγράμματος ([2]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013973/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Work and Poverty in Greece

According to official data of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (the annual 'ERGANI' IT system report), 20.4% of Greek workers receive gross wages of no more than EUR 500, while about 35% receive up to EUR 700. This has led to an explosion in the number of the working poor in Greece and reduced to poverty many Greek households which typically have only member who is in employment, due, inter alia, to the soaring unemployment rate. In this connection, and given the EU's declared objective of boosting employment and reducing poverty, will the Commission say:

1. How does it evaluate the current situation on the Greek labour market, and its impact both on social cohesion and on the real economy?

2. Does it have any statistics on wage levels in Member States and relevant comparisons regarding the national poverty thresholds?

3. The rapid decline in wages in Greece, coupled with the continuing high prices for private facilities for reconciling work and family life (e.g. crèches) and the paucity of corresponding state facilities, is creating powerful disincentives for people seriously to seek for work which in turn militates against a rise in employment. How does it view this fact in light of the fundamental objective of the Europe 2020 strategy of increasing the employment rate to 75%?

4. How can the full flexibilisation of the labour market in Greece be squared with a massive contraction in wages?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The evolution in the Greek labour market follows the unwinding of large imbalances in the Greek economy. The macroeconomic adjustment programme for Greece includes important structural measures to address the weaknesses of the Greek labour market, improve business environment and foster competitiveness in order to create conditions conducive to sustainable economic growth and job creation. The social impact of policies has always been a key concern when designing policies in programme countries, as reflected in the Memorandums of Understanding.

Eurostat, the Commission's statistical service, compiles and publishes statistics on wage levels and poverty indicators, including in-work poverty. ([1])

The Commission services' reports on the labour market developments in Greece are included in the dedicated sections of the reports published following each review of the programme implementation ([2]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/greek_loan_facility/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013975/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Bacillus safety

The European Federation of Food Safety Consultants (EFFSACO) has made its contribution to the public debate initiated by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on how to assess the safety of Bacillus strains used in the EU food chain. EFFSACO made the following recommendations for improving the EU's approach:

— accept Bacillus strains already used in the EU food chain, provided they have a safe history of use along with any existing *in vitro* and *in vivo* safety data;

— for new Bacillus strains proposed for use in animal nutrition, use validated *in vitro* tests as an initial strain-selection filter, along with tolerance testing in target animals if necessary; and

— for new Bacillus strains proposed for use in food supplements, use *in vitro* tests and, if necessary, suitable laboratory animal studies.

Given that public health must be the first priority when introducing new Bacillus strains as fermentation aids in food production, can the Commission provide a response to each of EFFSACO's recommendations? Furthermore, does the Commission have any strategies to encourage more collaboration across relevant EU bodies to ensure there are common criteria for food-feed safety challenges?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2014)

The specificity of each sector is linked to legislative criteria for authorisation adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. There is only one European Union (EU) relevant body for the risk assessment in this field, which is the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and collaboration with the EU body competent for risk management measures, namely the Commission, is regulated by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) and relevant sectorial legislation.

The safety assessment by EFSA of Bacillus species used in the food chain takes place in the context of the evaluation of applications for authorisation under the relevant sectorial legislation: Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 ([2]) concerning feed additives, Regulation (EC) No 1332/2008 ([3])concerning food enzymes and Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 ([4]) concerning food additives.

The legal requirements concerning scientific data and studies to be submitted with an application dossier aim at permitting verification of the compliance of those products with the fundamental principles of protection of animal and human health and of the environment. Detailed guidance adopted by EFSA aim at assisting the applicant in the preparation of the application dossier in order to meet those requirements.

With regard to the recommendation on the concept of 'safe history of use' referred to, such a criterion would prevent an applicant from demonstrating the safety of its product. Any assessment must take account of the scientific and technical progress and be based on the current state of knowledge, notably concerning antimicrobial resistance and toxigenic potential.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:031:0001:0024:EN:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:268:0029:0043:EN:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:354:0007:0015:en:PDF
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:354:0016:0033:en:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013978/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Aquarium funding and support

The European fisheries industry is one of the cornerstones of the European Union. Aquariums are a vital tool for educating our young people, emphasising the diversity and sustainability of this sector. The only aquarium in my own constituency (Northern Ireland), Exploris, located at Portaferry on Strangford Lough, is currently facing an uncertain future due to financial difficulties. Beyond its clear educational value, this aquarium has regional significance for Northern Ireland, in terms of tourism, culture, science, education and environmental protection.

Given the regional significance of aquariums across Europe, can the Commission outline what potential funding is available to aquariums? Furthermore, what plans does the Commission have in place to support the development of aquarium facilities across Europe?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

The European Regional Development Fund allows for investments in 'educational infrastructure' as well as in the 'development of endogenous potential through fixed investment in equipment and small-scale infrastructure, including small-scale cultural and sustainable tourism infrastructure'. However, these have to be in line with the development and smart specialisation strategies for the regions and to be reflected in the 2014-2020 operations programmes currently in preparation by the Member States in line with shared management principle used for the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds.

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development also allows the financing of educational and tourism projects, in particular in rural areas. This type of projects could be implemented under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) including the Leader local development approach, if these are respectively programmed in the RDP or forming part of the local development strategies.

The European Maritime and Fisheries Funds will also support Community-Led Local Development and could support this same type of project in the framework of an integrated local development strategy implemented by a Fisheries Local Action Group.

The Commission has no specific plans to support the development of aquarium facilities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013979/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Human rights in the EU

A recent article by Nils Muižnieks, the Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights, accused the Commission of being weak in addressing human rights issues in the Member States. The EU has adopted several instruments to improve human rights standards: in 2000 it adopted the European Charter of Fundamental Rights; in 2007 it created the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights; and the Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force in 2009, clearly spelled out the EU's obligation to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Despite these instruments, Mr Muižnieks states that the Commission has been too willing to 'export' human rights issues to countries outside the EU, rather than taking an introspective approach to human rights in the areas of migration, public participation and disability.

Given Mr Muižnieks' arguments, what plans does the Commission have in place to ensure that the existing legislation is properly enforced, and that the aforementioned standards and mechanisms are better utilised to make the current human rights system more effective?

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

Within the limits of the powers conferred on it by the treaties, the Commission is committed to ensure respect for fundamental rights. The protection of fundamental rights is at the heart of Commission's policies especially since the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights became legally binding under the Lisbon Treaty. The Commission has developed the strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union ([1]), which is based on a systematic assessment of the impacts on fundamental rights of new legal instruments. The protection of fundamental rights will be further enhanced with the future accession of the EU to the European Convention on Human Rights.

([1]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/doc/com_2010_573_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013980/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Harmonisation of GM food labels

The President of the European Natural Soyfood Manufacturers Association (ENSA) has called on the Commission to harmonise rules on the use of GMO-free labels on foodstuffs. There is currently variation in how Member States indicate whether foods are 'GMO-free'. In Finland, for instance, a product must be 100% GMO-free to qualify for the label, whereas Germany permits under 0.1%.

Given that the Commission has already attempted to break the deadlock in EU GM crop approvals by proposing to allow national cultivation bans for GMOs in July 2010, can the Commission provide a detailed update on progress with regard to GM crop approvals since that proposal was made? Furthermore, does the Commission have any plans to harmonise GM food labelling?

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

1- Since the proposal for a regulation allowing Member States to restrict or ban cultivation of GMOs on their territory was tabled by the Commission in July 2010 (the so-called 'Cultivation proposal'), the European Parliament adopted a first reading agreement in July 2011, but a blocking minority of Member States have not allowed the Council to reach yet a first reading agreement. On 12 November 2013, a proposal for a Council decision on the authorisation for cultivation on the 1507 maize was sent to Council following a ruling of the European General Court, which should examine it within 3 months, i.e. by 12 February 2014. Otherwise, to date 61 GMOs have been authorised for food and feed use in the EU, including 10 ([1]) in 2010, 7 ([2]) in 2011, 6 ([3]) in 2012 and 4 in 2013.

2- The EU legislation does not forbid the use of 'GM-free' labels signalling that foodstuffs do not contain GM crops, or were produced not using GMOs, provided that they respect the general rules on food labelling ([4]). Such labels are being developed in several Member States and the Commission has commissioned a study to gain a better understanding of the scopes and specifications of these labels in the EU. The findings of this study will be made available on the related Commission's website in the coming months.

([1]) 9 new GMOs and 1 renewal.
([2]) 6 new GMOs and 1 renewal.
([3]) 5 new GMOs and 1 renewal.
([4]) Directive 2000/13/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs. OJ L 109, 6.5.2000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013982/13
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Pratiche commerciali sleali e illecite in Italia: dissesto di Seat Pagine Gialle

La società italiana Seat Pagine Gialle è stata oggetto nell'anno 2003 di una operazione di fusione a seguito di acquisizione con indebitamento (leveraged buy out) e nei mesi immediatamente successivi, prima ancora del completamento del primo esercizio sociale, di una consistente distrazione finanziaria a titolo di distribuzione di dividendi, in assenza di riserve, aggravando ulteriormente il debito.

Il primo e secondo debito (in totale 7 miliardi di euro) sono stati concessi da Royal Bank of Scotland — Rbs con la partecipazione, per il secondo debito, di una società anonima di diritto lussemburghese denominata Lighthouse (1,3 miliardi).

In seguito Rbs ha spalmato il credito (debito per Seat Pagine Gialle) su numerose banche italiane, danneggiandole. La società, afflitta dal debito, malgrado consistenti ricavi annui (ben oltre il miliardo di euro) e un margine operativo lordo di circa il 50 %, è entrata in crisi e il titolo azionario è crollato in borsa provocando perdite miliardarie in danno di circa 300.000 (trecentomila) azionisti di minoranza, piccoli e medi risparmiatori.

Nell'anno 2012, ha avuto luogo una pretesa ristrutturazione consigliata, dietro compenso di circa 100 (cento) milioni di euro, da società di consulenza e studi professionali, che ha espropriato gli azionisti di minoranza «diluendo» la loro partecipazione dal 50 al 6 per cento.

Attualmente Rbs è sotto inchiesta in Inghilterra per aver provocato volontariamente il fallimento di numerose attività di impresa.

Nonostante la tutela della direttiva 2005/29/CE, il caso di Seat Pagine Gialle e altri casi simili esposti in numerose petizioni presentate al Parlamento europeo, dimostrano che la legislazione attuale è soltanto parzialmente efficiente nella protezione del risparmio.

Quali iniziative intende la Commissione assumere per prevenire, contenere e reprimere le pratiche commerciali sleali e illecite, risarcire i cittadini italiani e europei danneggiati dal dissesto di Seat Pagine Gialle, armonizzare l'impegno di vigilanza del mercato e tutelare le legittime aspettative di credito delle imprese che non hanno la possibilità di difendersi da simili dissesti provocati volontariamente?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(25 febbraio 2014)

La direttiva 2005/29/CE sulle pratiche commerciali sleali ([1]) tutela i consumatori dalla pubblicità ingannevole e da altre pratiche sleali connesse alle operazioni commerciali tra imprese e consumatori, ma non contempla misure specifiche per combattere le frodi societarie e i fallimenti di società.

La direttiva 2012/30 («la direttiva») ([2]) prevede una serie di garanzie per gli azionisti e i creditori in caso di operazioni di *leveraged buyout* (LBO) e di ristrutturazione.

Per quanto riguarda le LBO, l'articolo 25 della direttiva limita la possibilità per una società per azioni di accordare assistenza finanziaria o fornire garanzie per l'acquisizione delle sue azioni da parte di un terzo, imponendo una serie di condizioni da rispettare. Tuttavia, la direttiva non contiene un divieto generale di assistenza finanziaria ad opera della società per l'acquisizione delle sue azioni da parte di un terzo, in quanto le LBO potrebbero anche contribuire alla creazione di valore per la società destinataria.

L'articolo 17 della direttiva vieta la distribuzione di dividendi a favore degli azionisti nel caso in cui l'attivo netto della società diventi inferiore all'importo del capitale sottoscritto aumentato delle riserve che non possono essere distribuite. Ogni distribuzione fatta in contrasto con queste disposizioni deve essere restituita.

Per quanto riguarda la diluizione della partecipazione degli azionisti di minoranza in caso di ristrutturazione mediante aumento di capitale, l'articolo 33 della direttiva dispone che le nuove azioni devono essere offerte in opzione agli azionisti in proporzione della quota di capitale rappresentata dalle loro azioni. Il diritto di opzione può essere limitato o escluso soltanto con decisione dell'assemblea generale degli azionisti adottata a maggioranza di due terzi dei voti.

([1]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2005, relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori nel mercato interno e che modifica la direttiva 84/450/CEE del Consiglio e le direttive 97/7/CE e 2002/65 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e il regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio (direttiva sulle pratiche commerciali sleali).

([2]) Direttiva 2012/30/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2012, sul coordinamento delle garanzie che sono richieste, negli Stati membri, alle società di cui all'articolo 54, secondo paragrafo, del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, per tutelare gli interessi dei soci e dei terzi per quanto riguarda la costituzione della società per azioni, nonché la salvaguardia e le modificazioni del capitale sociale della stessa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013982/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Unfair and illegal business practices in Italy: financial collapse of Seat Pagine Gialle

In 2003, the Italian company Seat Pagine Gialle was the subject of a merger as a result of a leveraged buy-out: in the months immediately following this, even before the end of the first financial year, significant financial resources were siphoned off through the payment of dividends which, in the absence of reserves, further increased the debt.

A first and second loan (totalling EUR 7 billion) were granted by Royal Bank of Scotland- RBS; a public limited company under Luxembourg law called Lighthouse (EUR 1.3 billion) was also involved in the second loan.

Afterwards RBS spread the credit (debt for Seat Pagine Gialle) between a number of Italian banks, thereby causing them to suffer losses. The company, plagued by debt, despite substantial annual revenue (well over a billion euros) and an operating margin of approximately 50%, was plunged into crisis and its share price collapsed, causing billions of euros of losses to some 300 000 (three hundred thousand) minority shareholders, small and medium-sized investors.

In 2012, a would-be restructuring operation took place which had been urged, for a fee of about EUR 100 (one hundred) million by a consultancy firm; this involved expropriating minority shareholders, 'diluting' their involvement from 50% to 6%.

RBS is currently under investigation in the UK for having deliberately caused many businesses to go bankrupt.

Despite the protection afforded by Directive 2005/29/EC, the case of Seat Pagine Gialle and other similar cases, set out in numerous petitions to the European Parliament, show that current legislation is only partly effective in protecting savings.

What steps will the Commission take to prevent, contain and suppress unfair and unlawful business practices, compensate Italian and European citizens who have suffered losses owing to the financial collapse of Seat Pagine Gialle, harmonise market surveillance operations and satisfy the legitimate credit expectations of enterprises which are unable to defend themselves from deliberate attempts to bring about their financial collapse?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([1]) protects consumers against misleading advertising and other unfair practices arising in connection with business-to-consumer transactions. However, it does not set out any specific measures to counter corporate fraud and insolvency.

Directive 2012/30 (Directive) ([2]) provides a number of safeguards for shareholders and creditors in case of leveraged buyout (LBO) and restructuring operations.

As regards LBO, Article 25 of the directive limits the possibility for a public company to provide financial assistance or to provide security for the acquisition of its shares by a third party, by imposing a number of requirements which must be respected. However, the directive does not contain a general prohibition of financial assistance by the company for the acquisition of its shares by a third party, as the LBO may also contribute to the creation of value for the target company.

Article 17 of the directive prohibits the distribution of dividends to shareholders in case where the net assets of the company would become lower than the amount of subscribed capital together with reserves which cannot be distributed. Any distribution made contrary to these rules must be returned.

As regards dilution of minority shareholders participation in case of restructuration through capital increase, Article 33 of the directive provides that newly increased shares must be offered on a pre-emptive basis to the shareholders in proportion to the capital represented by their shares. Only a decision of the general meeting of shareholders can limit or withdraw the right of pre-emption and this decision requires approval by a majority of two thirds of votes.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC and 2002/65 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Unfair Commercial Practices Directive).

([2]) Directive 2012/30 on Coordination of safeguards which, for the protection of the interests of members and others, are required by Member States of companies within the meaning of the second paragraph of Article 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in respect of the formation of public limited liability companies and the maintenance and alteration of their capital, with a view to making such safeguards equivalent.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013983/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento: delitti d'onore in aumento su scala mondiale

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-007709/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

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

L'UE riconosce che i delitti d'onore sono motivo di grande preoccupazione in molte parti del mondo e costituiscono una grave violazione dei diritti umani. Solo potenziando l'istruzione, lo sviluppo e la parità uomo-donna si potrà pervenire a soluzioni a lungo termine per contrastare la pratica del delitto d'onore. L'UE dialoga con i governi e le organizzazioni della società civile di tutto il mondo e fornisce loro assistenza tramite molteplici misure. Sono in corso attività volte a prevenire i delitti d'onore e proteggerne le vittime. Ad esempio, la questione dei delitti d'onore è stata sollevata lo scorso anno nell'ambito del dialogo sui diritti umani tra l'UE e il Pakistan, il cui governo viene regolarmente esortato ad adottare misure urgenti per garantire la tutela dei diritti delle donne e dei bambini. Anche nel caso dell'India, l'UE ha espresso preoccupazione alle autorità locali, cercando costantemente di portare alla ribalta i diritti delle donne e la parità tra i sessi nel corso di ogni riunione. In Afghanistan, l'UE promuove i diritti della donna soprattutto attraverso il potenziamento delle capacità, l'educazione al rispetto dei diritti umani, la fornitura di assistenza legale, accoglienza, consulenza e mediazione alle donne e alle ragazze vittime di violenza domestica. Nel 2013 il Consiglio ha adottato orientamenti sulla promozione e la tutela della libertà di religione o di credo, obbligando l'UE a condannare in modo coerente qualsiasi violenza contro donne e ragazze, compresi i delitti «d'onore». Esso ha inoltre adottato orientamenti per la promozione e la tutela dell'esercizio di tutti i diritti umani da parte di lesbiche, gay, bisessuali, transgender e intersessuali, anch'essi vittime di delitti d'onore.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013983/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update: honour crimes on the increase worldwide

With reference to my Written Question E-007709/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the issue?

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

The EU acknowledges that honour killings are a matter of great concern in many parts of the world and a serious violation of human rights. Long-term solutions to tackle the practice of honour killings can only be achieved through enhanced education, development and gender equality. Through a variety of measures, the EU engages with and provides support to governments and civil society organisations around over the world. Work to prevent honour killings and protect its victims is ongoing. For example, the issue of honour killings was raised during the EU human rights dialogue with Pakistan last year, while regularly encouraging the government to take urgent measures to ensure protection for the rights of women and children. The same applies for India, where the EU has raised its concerns with the local authorities, while constantly trying to bring women's rights and gender issues to the fore, in all meetings with the authorities. In Afghanistan, the EU promotes women's rights in particular through capacity building, human rights education, the provision of legal support, shelter, counselling and mediation for women and girls affected by family violence. In 2013, the Council adopted guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief, obliging the EU to 'consistently condemn any violence against women and girls, including "honour" killings'. Furthermore, the Council has adopted guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, groups that have also been victims of honour crimes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013984/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento: rete belga di supporto finanziario a Hamas

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-006136/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(11 febbraio 2014)

Come indicato all'onorevole deputata nella risposta alla sua precedente interrogazione scritta E-006136/2011, la questione sollevata non rientra nelle competenze della Commissione ma in quelle di uno Stato membro. La Commissione consiglia pertanto all'onorevole deputata di rivolgere la sua richiesta di informazioni alle autorità belghe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013984/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update: Belgian organisation providing financial support to Hamas

With reference to my Written Question E-006136/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the issue?

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

As set out in the answer to the Honourable Member's earlier Written Question E-006136/2011, the Commission has no jurisdiction to deal with this issue, which falls under the responsibility of a Member State. The Commission therefore advises the Honourable Member to direct her request for information to the Belgian authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013985/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento: Sicurezza della centrale nucleare di Krsko in Slovenia e attuazione della direttiva 2009/71/EURATOM

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-003086/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(29 gennaio 2014)

Gli «stress test» (test di resistenza) dell'UE sulle centrali nucleari, ai quali ha partecipato anche la Slovenia, sono stati organizzati in tre fasi: autovalutazione da parte di operatori di impianti nucleari, esame delle autovalutazioni da parte delle autorità nazionali di regolamentazione e revisioni inter pares delle relazioni nazionali. Sulla base di tali test le autorità nazionali di sicurezza sono giunte alla conclusione che nessuna centrale nucleare dovesse essere sottoposta a chiusura. Ulteriori informazioni sulle prove di stress sono disponibili nella relazione finale della Commissione del 4 ottobre 2012 ([1]).

In seguito, entro fine 2012, tutti i paesi partecipanti (inclusa la Slovenia) hanno pubblicato un piano di azione nazionale che tiene conto degli insegnamenti tratti dall'incidente di Fukushima e delle raccomandazioni *inter pares* basate sui test di resistenza ([2]). I piani nazionali sono stati oggetto di un esame *inter pares* in occasione di un seminario nell'aprile 2013. Lo stato di attuazione delle misure di miglioramento alla centrale nucleare di Krško è riportato nella relazione sul seminario ([3]).

Con riferimento allo stato di attuazione della direttiva 2009/71/Euratom, nonché alle iniziative recenti nel settore della sicurezza nucleare, la Commissione invita l'onorevole deputato a far riferimento alla risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-006855/13 ([4]).

([1]) Comunicazione sulle valutazioni complessive dei rischi e della sicurezza («prove di stress») delle centrali nucleari nell'Unione europea e attività collegate, COM(2012) 571 final.
([2]) Cfr: http://www.ensreg.eu/EU-Stress-Tests/Country-Specific-Reports/EU-Member-States
([3]) Cfr: http://www.ensreg.eu/sites/default/files/NAcP%20Workshop%20Summary%20Report.pdf
([4]) Cfr: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html A seguito del progetto di proposta della Commissione di modifica della direttiva sulla sicurezza nucleare in vigore (ossia la direttiva 2009/71/Euratom del Consiglio), cui fa riferimento la risposta della Commissione alla succitata interrogazione scritta E- 006855/13, è stata adottata una proposta definitiva dalla Commissione il 17 ottobre 2013 (COM(2013) 715 final;
Cfr.: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Result.do?T1=V5&T2=2013&T3=715&RechType=RECH_naturel&Submit=Search)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013985/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update: safety of Krško nuclear power station in Slovenia and implementation of Directive 2009/71/Euratom

With reference to my Written Question E-003086/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the issue?

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

The EU stress tests of nuclear power plants, to which Slovenia also participated, were organised in three phases: self-assessments by nuclear operators, review of the self-assessments by national regulators and peer reviews of the national reports. Based on the stress tests, national safety authorities came to the conclusion that no closure of nuclear power plants was warranted. Further information on the stress tests can be found at the Commission's final report of 4 October 2012 ([1]).

Subsequently, all participating countries (including Slovenia) issued national action plan, to follow-up on post-Fukushima lessons learned and stress tests peer review recommendations, by the end of 2012 ([2]). The national plans were peer reviewed at a workshop, in April 2013. The status of implementation of the improvement measures at the Krško nuclear plant are mentioned in the workshop report ([3]).

With reference to the implementation status of Directive 2009/71/Euratom, as well as to recent initiatives in the area of nuclear safety, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-006855/13 ([4]).

([1]) Communication on the comprehensive risk and safety assessments ('Stress Tests') of nuclear power plants in the European Union and related activities, COM(2012) 571 final.
([2]) See at: http://www.ensreg.eu/EU-Stress-Tests/Country-Specific-Reports/EU-Member-States
([3]) See at: http://www.ensreg.eu/sites/default/files/NAcP%20Workshop%20Summary%20Report.pdf
([4]) See at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html Following the draft Commission proposal to amend the current Nuclear Safety Directive (i.e. Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom), referred to in the Commission's reply to the abovementioned Written Question E-006855/13, a final proposal has now been adopted by the Commission on 17 October 2013 (COM(2013) 715 final; see at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Result.do?T1=V5&T2=2013&T3=715&RechType=RECH_naturel&Submit=Search).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013986/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sulla crescita e radicalizzazione delle comunità musulmane dei Balcani

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-007250/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(20 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione continua ad attribuire particolare importanza alla lotta contro l'estremismo e il terrorismo e alla prevenzione della radicalizzazione violenta in Europa. Essa segue con la massima attenzione i relativi sviluppi nei paesi dei Balcani occidentali e in Turchia, comprese le minacce specifiche poste dai gruppi islamici radicali e dai combattenti islamici originari della regione che si recano in Siria e successivamente ritornano nel loro paese.

L'ultimo pacchetto della Commissione sull'allargamento dell'ottobre 2013 ([1]) evidenzia i progressi e le preoccupazioni constatati in relazione alle strategie, ai piani d'azione e alla legislazione sulla lotta contro il terrorismo nei paesi dell'allargamento. La Commissione solleva periodicamente tali questioni in occasione delle riunioni organizzate nell'ambito dell'ASA (accordo di stabilizzazione e di associazione) e durante i dialoghi politici.

Il problema dei combattenti stranieri è stato sollevato specificamente dalla commissaria responsabile degli Affari interni in occasione dell'ultimo forum ministeriale su giustizia e affari interni (19-20 dicembre 2013). La Commissione ha incoraggiato i suoi partner dei Balcani occidentali a sviluppare politiche più proattive al riguardo, intensificando la cooperazione regionale e il coordinamento con Europol e Eurojust.

La Commissione ha preso diverse iniziative per impedire e scoraggiare le partenze degli europei che vanno a combattere in Siria, alcune delle quali offrono assistenza agli Stati membri contro le possibili minacce poste da coloro che ritornano in patria. A tale riguardo, si invita l'onorevole deputata a consultare la risposta data alle interrogazioni scritte 4802/2013 e 4308/13 ([2]). Queste azioni completano altre iniziative atte a consentire un monitoraggio più efficace dei movimenti dei combattenti stranieri, come il Sistema d'Informazione Schengen di seconda generazione.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013986/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update on the growth and radicalisation of the Muslim community in the Balkans

With reference to my Written Question E-007250/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the issue?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2014)

The Commission continues to attach particular importance to the fight against extremism and terrorism and preventing violent radicalisation in Europe. It monitors closely any related developments in the Western Balkan countries and Turkey, including the specific threats posed by radical Islamist groups as well as Islamist fighters from the region leaving for and later returning from Syria.

The Commission's last enlargement package of October 2013 ([1]) refers to progress and concerns with regard to strategies, action plans and legislation on the fight against terrorism in the enlargement countries. The Commission raises these issues at regular meetings within the framework of the SAA (Stabilisation and Association Agreement) and in political dialogues.

The issue of foreign fighters was taken up specifically by the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs in the context of the last Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Forum (19-20 December 2013). The Commission encouraged its partners from the western Balkans to develop more pro-active policies in this regard, strengthening their regional cooperation, as well as coordination with both Europol and Eurojust.

Different initiatives have been introduced by the Commission to prevent and discourage people from leaving Europe for Syria to serve as foreign fighters, and certain initiatives offer assistance to Member States on the possible threat posed by returnees. These have been referred to in the Answer to Written Questions 4802/2013 and 4308/13 ([2]). These actions complement other intiatives, which may help to better monitor the movements of foreign fighters, such as the Second Generation Schengen Information System.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013987/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento: «Santa Rosa Geysers Recharge Project» produrre energia dalle acque reflue e opportunità per l'Unione europea

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-005248/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(7 febbraio 2014)

1. Non sono pervenute nuove informazioni in merito al Santa Rosa Geysers Recharge Project.

2. Dal 2011 la Commissione ha più volte ribadito di ritenere l'energia geotermica una fonte potenziale di energia rinnovabile, in particolare nella comunicazione «Tecnologie energetiche e innovazione», adottata il 2 maggio 2013, e attraverso le successive azioni di adozione, come lo sviluppo della tabella di marcia integrata attualmente valida.

3. La Commissione non dispone di ulteriori informazioni in merito a progetti che prevedano l'uso di acque reflue per generare energia elettrica.

4. Grazie al programma Orizzonte 2020 la Commissione sostiene soluzioni innovative dotate di un valore aggiunto e di impatto a livello europeo nel settore delle fonti di energia rinnovabile, compresa l'energia geotermica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013987/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update: Santa Rosa Geysers Recharge Project — producing energy from waste water and an opportunity for the EU

With reference to my Written Question E-005248/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the issue?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

1. No new information has been received on the Santa Rosa Geysers Recharge Project.

2. Since 2011, the Commission has consistently referred to geothermal energy as a potential source of renewable energy, in particular in the communication on Energy Technologies and Innovation adopted on 2 May 2013, and through the subsequent implementation actions such as the development of the Integrated Roadmap which is currently ongoing.

3. The Commission has no further information on projects using waste water to generate electricity.

4. The Commission through its programme Horizon 2020 supports innovative solutions which will have a European added value and impact in the area of renewable energy sources, including geothermal energy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013988/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento: coinvolgimento del governo del Montenegro nelle organizzazioni mafiose

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-008107/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione continua a seguire gli sviluppi relativi alla lotta contro la criminalità organizzata e al rispetto della libertà dei media nell'ambito dei negoziati di adesione con il Montenegro, avviati nel giugno 2012 su decisione unanime degli Stati membri.

Sin dall'avvio dei negoziati di adesione con il Montenegro si è riservata particolare attenzione al tema dello Stato di diritto, per consentire al paese candidato di conseguire una solida serie di risultati in termini di lotta contro la corruzione e la criminalità organizzata.

In risposta al processo di screening il Montenegro ha adottato due piani d'azione dettagliati per i capitoli «sistema giudiziario e diritti fondamentali» e «giustizia, libertà e sicurezza». Sulla base di questo programma globale di riforme, nel dicembre 2013 sono stati aperti entrambi i capitoli e sono stati fissati parametri di riferimento intermedi dettagliati. Il ritmo dei negoziati di adesione sarà determinato nell'insieme dall'attuazione dei piani d'azione e dai progressi compiuti in termini di conformità ai parametri di riferimento intermedi. La Commissione verificherà i progressi con la massima attenzione.

Per quanto riguarda la libertà dei media, la Commissione ha ribadito più volte con la massima fermezza che la violenza e le minacce di violenza contro i giornalisti sono inaccettabili. Nella relazione sui progressi compiuti dal Montenegro ([1]), la Commissione ha espresso preoccupazione per il recente aumento dei casi di violenza contro i giornalisti auspicando che siano oggetto di indagini e azioni giudiziarie.

Come ha ricordato il commissario responsabile dell'Allargamento in occasione della conferenza Speak Up! 2 del giugno 2013, la situazione in termini di libertà dei media è indicativa del livello di democrazia del paese interessato. La Commissione continuerà ad attribuire la massima priorità al tema della libertà dei media nell'ambito del dialogo con i singoli paesi.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013988/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update: involvement of the Montenegrin Government in mafia-type organisations

With reference to my Written Question E-008107/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the issue?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

The Commission continues to monitor the developments related to the fight against organised crime and the respect of media freedom in the framework of the accession negotiations with Montenegro, opened in June 2012 following a unanimous decision by Member States.

Since the opening of the accession negotiations with Montenegro a special focus is being placed on the area of rule of law, with a view to allow the candidate country to develop a solid track record in the fight against corruption and organised crime.

In response to the screening process, Montenegro has adopted two detailed action plans in the chapters on judiciary and fundamental rights, and on justice, freedom and security. Based on this comprehensive reform agenda, both chapters were opened in December 2013 and detailed interim benchmarks set. The implementation of the action plans and progress in meeting the interim benchmarks will determine the overall pace of accession negotiations. The Commission will monitor the progress closely.

Regarding media freedom, the Commission has, on many occasions, reiterated, in the strongest possible terms, that violence and threat of violence against journalists are unacceptable. We expressed our concerns for the recent rise in cases of violence against journalists, and expect that such cases will be investigated and prosecuted. The Commission stated this in its 2013 Progress Report on Montenegro ([1]).

As recalled by the Commissioner for Enlargement at the Speak Up! 2 Conference of June 2013, the state of media freedom is indicative of the state of democracy of the country itself. The Commission will continue to give high priority to media freedom issues in the dialogue with the countries.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013989/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento: diminuzione dei diritti delle donne egiziane

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-007698/2011 la Commissione può fornire aggiornamenti su questo fenomeno anche alla luce dei mutamenti socio-politici che stanno investendo il Paese?

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

Come affermato nella risposta all'interrogazione E-007698/2011, la promozione della parità tra uomini e donne rappresenta da tempo una priorità nelle attività dell'Unione europea in Egitto. L'UE ha costantemente esortato e appoggiato l'impegno delle autorità egiziane per promuovere i diritti delle donne, ha integrato la questione di genere nel dialogo politico con le autorità egiziane e ha sostenuto in modo proattivo le iniziative della società civile per la promozione dei diritti delle donne.

Alla luce della recente ratifica della nuova costituzione nella quale, ai sensi dell'articolo 11, lo Stato si impegna a conseguire la parità tra donne e uomini in tutti i diritti civili, politici, economici, sociali e culturali, l'UE si aspetta che tutta la legislazione vigente e futura, e la relativa attuazione, sarà conforme alla Costituzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013989/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update on the reduction of Egyptian women's rights

With reference to my Question E-007698/2011, can the Commission provide an update on this matter, especially in light of the social and political changes sweeping the country?

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

As stated in the reply to Question E-007698/2011, the promotion of gender equality is a longstanding priority of the EU's action in Egypt, The EU has all along pushed and supported Egyptian authorities' efforts to promote women's rights, mainstreamed gender equality in its political dialogue with the Egyptian authorities and proactively supported civil society initiatives that promote women's rights.

In light of the recent ratification of the new Constitution through which, according to its Article 11, the State commits to achieving equality between women and men in all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, the EU expects that all existing and future legislation as well as its implementation will comply with the Constitution.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013990/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sui programmi di riabilitazione per terroristi islamici

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-007486/2011 la Commissione può fornire aggiornamenti sui programmi oggetto della stessa e sui risultati delle azioni proposte dalla Commissione?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(17 febbraio 2014)

Il progetto «*Deradicalisation — Back on track*» ([1]) del ministero danese per i Rifugiati, l'immigrazione e l'integrazione, realizzato con il finanziamento della Commissione, è stato lanciato nel maggio 2011 e il suo completamento è previsto per maggio 2014.

Per Quanto alle iniziative destinate a sviluppare metodologie per valutare l'efficacia delle misure di lotta contro la radicalizzazione violenta, la Commissione ha sostenuto il progetto «IMPACT Europe» ([2]) nell'ambito del tema 10 del settimo programma quadro: sicurezza, programma di lavoro 2012. Questo progetto è tuttora in corso.

Sulla scorta delle attività della rete per la sensibilizzazione in materia di radicalizzazione (RAN), la Commissione ha pubblicato una comunicazione ([3]) che definisce 10 ambiti in cui gli Stati membri e l'UE possono rafforzare la rispettiva azione per prevenire ogni forma di estremismo che conduca alla violenza, indipendentemente dalla matrice o dagli istigatori. La comunicazione definisce un quadro per lo scambio di buone pratiche e la cooperazione approfondita tra tutte le parti interessate.

Per sostenere maggiormente le azioni proposte nella comunicazione, la Commissione ha inoltre pubblicato online un repertorio di azioni e di buone prassi volte a prevenire la radicalizzazione raccolte dalla RAN ([4]). Questa raccolta illustra l'approccio adottato da otto operatori in materia di prevenzione della radicalizzazione, corredato da un numero selezionato di progetti e pratiche specifici.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/projects-database/home_2010_isec_ag_rad-009_en.htm
([2]) Metodi e procedure innovativi per valutare le tecniche contro la radicalizzazione violenta — http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/111492_en.html
([3]) COM(2013) 941 final Comunicazione della Commissione: «Prevenire la radicalizzazione che porta al terrorismo e all'estremismo violento: rafforzare la risposta dell'UE».
([4]) RAN Collection — Approaches, lessons learned and practices (Raccolta RAN — Approcci, insegnamenti tratti e buone pratiche).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013990/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Update on the rehabilitation programmes for Islamic terrorists

With reference to my Question E-007486/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the programmes referred to therein and the results of the measures proposed by the Commission?

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

The project 'Deradicalisation — Back on track' ([1]), carried out by the Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs, with funding from the Commission, was launched in May 2011 and its completion is scheduled in May 2014.

As concerns initiatives to develop methodologies to assess the effectiveness of measures addressing violent radicalisation, the Commission has supported a project 'IMPACT Europe' ([2]), under the 7th Framework Programme, Theme 10: Security, Work Programme 2012. This project too is still being carried out.

Building on the activities of the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), the Commission has published a communication ([3]) identifying 10 areas where Member States and the EU could reinforce their action to prevent all types of extremism that lead to violence, regardless of who or what inspires it. It sets a framework for the exchange of good practice and increased cooperation between all relevant stakeholders.

In addition to the communication, the Commission has published a collection of practices developed by the RAN ([4]). The collection, in a form of an online repository of approaches and practices to prevent radicalisation, is intended to further support the action proposed in the communication. The collection presents a set of eight practitioners' approaches in the field of prevention of radicalisation, each of them illustrated by a number of selected, specific practices and projects.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/projects-database/home_2010_isec_ag_rad-009_en.htm
([2]) Innovative Method and Procedure to Assess Counter Violent-Radicalisation Techniques in Europe — http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/111492_en.html
([3]) COM(2013) 941 final Communication on preventing Radicalisation to terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response.
([4]) RAN Collection — Approaches, lessons learned and practices.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013992/13
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Procedura d'infrazione 2010/4227: ultimi sviluppi

Con l'interrogazione E-005565/2013 sulla procedura d'infrazione 2010/4227, aperta grazie alla denuncia del sig. Marco Bazzoni, la Commissione europea aveva risposto, in data 9 luglio 2013, che stava analizzando i nuovi elementi forniti dal denunciante.

Colgo l'occasione per ricordare alla Commissione europea che il denunciante Marco Bazzoni ha inviato nuova documentazione (sentenze della Corte di Cassazione sulla delega di funzioni per la sicurezza sul lavoro) sulla deresponsabilizzazione del datore di lavoro in caso di delega e subdelega, come richiesto nella lettera Ares (2013)1013528 del 6.5.2013.

Inoltre, con varie mail, il denunciante Marco Bazzoni ha inviato ulteriore documentazione alla Commissione europea (ulteriori spiegazioni e altre sentenze della Corte di Cassazione).

Ad oggi, 17 novembre 2013, la Commissione europea non ha fornito risposta al denunciante.

Inoltre, il 10 luglio 2013, è stata protocollata una nuova denuncia del sig. Bazzoni Chap (2013) 02072, sul DL Fare 69/2013, che viola la direttiva europea 89/391/CEE.

1. Può la Commissione dire se ha concluso l'esame della documentazione aggiuntiva inviata dal sig. Bazzoni sulla procedura d'infrazione 2010/4227 e a quali conclusioni è pervenuta?

2. Può dire se ci sono ulteriori sviluppi sulla denuncia Chap (2013) 02072?

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

1. La Commissione porta avanti i suoi lavori in relazione alla procedura di infrazione 2010/4227; sta valutando gli elementi di informazione disponibili e prosegue nel dialogo chiarificatore con le autorità italiane al fine di assicurare che gli Stati membri applichino la normativa dell'UE.

In tale processo rientra la valutazione della documentazione addizionale ponderosa inviata a più riprese dal denunciante, tra cui l'ultima comunicazione del 7 gennaio 2014.

2. La Commissione attira l'attenzione dell'Onorevole deputata sul fatto che la denuncia in questione è stata presentata il 30 giugno 2013 ed è stata estesa e integrata dal denunciante rispettivamente il 7 settembre e il 12 novembre 2013. Le nuove questioni sollevate e le informazioni addizionali fornite sono state debitamente prese in conto ai fini dell'esame della denuncia.

Di conseguenza, il denunciante è stato informato l'8 gennaio 2014 del seguito dato alla sua denuncia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013992/13
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Infringement procedure No 2010/4227: latest developments

In Question E-005565/2013 on infringement procedure No 2010/4227, initiated as a result of a complaint from Mr Marco Bazzoni, the Commission responded, on 9 July 2013, that it was analysing the new elements submitted by the complainant.

I wish to take this opportunity to remind the Commission that the complainant, Marco Bazzoni, has sent new documentation (judgments of the Corte di Cassazione on the delegation of functions for safety at work) concerning the lack of responsibility on the part of the employer in the event of delegation and subdelegation, as requested in the Ares letter No (2013)1013528 of 6 May 2013.

In addition, the complainant, Marco Bazzoni, sent further documentation in various emails to the Commission (further explanations and other judgments of the Corte di Cassazione).

To date, 17 November 2013, the Commission has failed to respond to the claimant.

Furthermore, on 10 July 2013, a new complaint was registered by Mr Bazzoni, Chap (2013) 02072, against the Italian 'Action' Decree Law No 69/2013, which violates Directive 89/391/EEC.

1. Can the Commission state whether it has finished its evaluation of the additional documentation sent by Mr Bazzoni on infringement procedure No 2010/4227 and what conclusions it has reached?

2. Can it state whether there have been any further developments in the complaint Chap (2013) 02072?

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

1. The Commission is continuing its work on infringement procedure 2010/4227, i.e. assessing the available elements of information and maintaining the problem-solving dialogue with the Italian authorities with a view of ensuring that the Member States give effect to EC law.

This includes the assessment of a numerous and voluminous additional documentation, sent regularly by the complainant, including his latest transmission, dated 7 January 2014.

2. The Commission would draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that the complaint at stake was submitted on 30 June 2013 and extended and supplemented by the complainant respectively on 7 September and 12 November 2013. The newly raised issues and the provided additional information have been duly taken into account in the examination of the complaint.

Accordingly, the complainant was informed about the follow up, given to his complaint, on 8 January 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-013993/13
aan de Commissie
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(10 december 2013)

Betreft: Toegestane hoeveelheid inname dioxine

Onlangs zijn in Harlingen eieren gevonden met een hoge hoeveelheid dioxine ([1]). Een aantal jaar geleden is in Duitsland een groot dioxineschandaal geweest, met risico's voor de volksgezondheid.

In het voorstel voor een verordening van de Raad tot wijziging van Verordening (EG) nr. 466/2001 van de Commissie tot vaststelling van maximumgehalten aan bepaalde verontreinigingen in levensmiddelen (COM(2001)0495) ([2]) heeft de EU vastgesteld dat een maximum inname van 2 picogram (pg) dioxine per dag toelaatbaar is. Dit is op advies van het Gemengd Comité van Deskundigen inzake Additieven in Levensmiddelen (JEFCA) van de Wereldgezondheidsorganisatie (WHO) en op advies van de Voedsel- en Landbouworganisatie (FAO) van de Verenigde Naties. Zij hebben de voorlopige toelaatbare maandelijkse inname (PTMI) van 70 pg/kg lichaamsgewicht voor dioxine vastgesteld. De „U. S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)/Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)" heeft een oraal minimaal risiconiveau (MRL) vastgesteld van 1,0 pg/kg lichaamsgewicht per dag voor 2,3,7,8-TCDD (tetrachloordibenzo-p-dioxine) ([3]).

De toegestane hoeveelheid ingenomen dioxine ligt in de VS beduidend lager dan in de EU. Uit het oogpunt van voedselveiligheid en volksgezondheid wil ik graag weten of deze maximum-inname van dioxine in de EU aan evaluatie en herziening toe is.

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat de maximale inname van dioxine zo laag mogelijk moet zijn en kan zij uitleggen waarom de limiet in de EU hoger is dan in de VS, als het blijkbaar mogelijk is een lagere limiet te hanteren voor deze schadelijke stof?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(6 februari 2014)

Het Wetenschappelijk Comité voor de menselijke voeding (SCF) heeft in mei 2001 een advies uitgebracht over dioxinen en dioxineachtige PCB's in voedsel ([4]), waarin een toelaatbare wekelijkse inname (TWI) werd vastgesteld van 14 picogram (pg) (WHO-TEQ) ([5])/kg lichaamsgewicht (LG) voor dioxinen en dioxineachtige PCB's.

In juni 2001 heeft het JECFA ([6]) een voorlopige toelaatbare maandelijkse inname vastgesteld van 70 pg/kg LG voor dioxinen en dioxineachtige PCB's ([7]).

Omgerekend in toelaatbare dagelijkse inname, is de gezondheidskundige richtwaarde van 2 pg/kg LG van het SCF in overeenstemming met de JECFA-waarde van 2,3 pg/kg LG.

In 2008 gebruikte de Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid (EFSA) de TWI die was vastgesteld door het SCF om de risico's in te schatten voor de volksgezondheid als gevolg van de aanwezigheid van dioxinen in varkensvlees uit Ierland ([8]).

In februari 2012 bevestigde het Agentschap voor de bescherming van het milieu van de VS (EPA) de orale referentiedosis (RfD) van 0,7 pg/kg LG per dag voor dioxinen. Bovendien heeft het Amerikaanse Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry/Center for Disease Control and Prevention (ATSDR) een chronisch oraal minimaal risiconiveau (MRL) vastgesteld van 1,0 pg/kg LG per dag voor dioxinen.

Telkens als Commissie een toelaatbare dosis onderzoekt of op de hoogte wordt gesteld van nieuwe wetenschappelijke gegevens, zal de Commissie EFSA om wetenschappelijk advies vragen om de uitleg te geven bij de verschillende resultaten van de risicoanalyses die worden uitgevoerd door verschillende organisaties wat dioxinen en dioxineachtige PCB's betreft.

([1]) http://www.toxicowatch.org/ToxicoWatch/Dioxinen_en_eieren_files/2013_Toxicowatch_VM29.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52001PC0495:NL:HTML.
([3]) http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/ChemicalContaminants/ucm077524.htm
([4]) Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the risk assessment of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in food. Dat is een update op basis van nieuwe wetenschappelijke informatie die over dit onderwerp bekend is sinds de goedkeuring van het SCF-advies op 22 november 2000 (uitgebracht op 30 mei 2001) http://ec.europa.eu/ food/fs/sc/scf/out90_en.pdf
([5]) WHO-TEQ = door de Wereldgezondheidsorganisatie vastgestelde toxiciteitsequivalentiefactor.
([6]) JECFA = Gezamenlijk Comité van deskundigen voor levensmiddelenadditieven van de WHO/FAO.
([7]) WHO Technical Report series, 909. Evaluation of certain food additives and contaminants, blz. 121-146. Beschikbaar op http://whqlibdoc.who.int/trs/ WHO_TRS_909.pdf
([8]) Beschikbaar op: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/911.pdf

De Commissie heeft strenge maximumgehalten vastgesteld voor dioxinen en dioxineachtige PCB's in levensmiddelen en diervoeders in Richtlijn 2002/32/EG ([9]) en Verordening (EG) 1881/2006 ([10]). Deze maximumgehalten zijn van toepassing op diervoeders en levensmiddelen die binnen de EU in de handel zijn gebracht. In de VS zijn geen maximumgehalten of richtsnoeren vastgesteld voor dioxinen en dioxineachtige PCB's in levensmiddelen en diervoeders.

([9]) Richtlijn 2002/32/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 7 mei 2002 inzake ongewenste stoffen in diervoeding (PB L 140 van 30.5.2002, blz. 10).

([10]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1881/2006 van de Commissie van 19 december 2006 tot vaststelling van maximumgehalten aan bepaalde verontreinigingen in levensmiddelen (PB L 364 van 20.12.2006, blz. 5).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013993/13
to the Commission
Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Permissible dioxin intake

Eggs have recently been discovered in Harlingen in the Netherlands, containing a large quantity of dioxin ([1]). There was a major dioxin scandal in Germany a number of years ago, which posed risks to public health.

In the proposal for a Council regulation amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (COM(2001)0495) ([2]), the EU established that a maximum daily dioxin intake of 2 picogram (pg) is tolerable. This is based on advice from the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JEFCA) of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). They have set the provisional tolerable monthly intake (PTMI) at 70 pg/kg body weight (b.w.) for dioxins. The U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has set an oral minimum risk level (MRL) of 1.0 pg/kg b.w. per day for 2,3,7,8-TCDD (tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin) ([3]).

The permissible dioxin intake level is significantly lower in the US than in the EU. From a food safety and public health perspective, I would like to know whether this maximum dioxin intake level in the EU needs to be assessed and revised.

Does the Commission agree that the maximum dioxin intake level must be as low as possible, and can it explain why the limit in the EU is higher than that in the US when it seems possible to handle a lower limit for this hazardous substance?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 February 2014)

The Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) adopted in May 2001 an opinion on dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in food ([4]), fixing a tolerable weekly intake (TWI) of 14 picogrammes (pg) WHO-TEQ ([5])/kg body weight (b.w.) for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs.

The JECFA ([6]) established in June 2001 a provisional tolerable monthly intake (PTMI) at 70 pg/kg b.w. for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs ([7]).

Converted to a tolerable daily intake, the SCF health based guidance value of 2 pg/kg b.w. is in line with the JECFA value of 2.3 pg/kg b.w.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) used in 2008 the TWI established by the SCF to estimate the risks for public health due to the presence of dioxins in pork from Ireland ([8]).

In February 2012, the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) confirmed the oral reference dose (RfD) of 0.7 pg/kg b.w.-day for dioxins. In addition, the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry/Center for Disease Control and Prevention (ATSDR) has established a chronic-duration oral Minimal Risk Level (MRL) of 1.0 pg/kg b.w.-day for dioxins.

Each time the Commission is reviewing a level or is informed about new scientific evidence it shall ask EFSA for a scientific opinion to explain the differences in outcome of the risk assessments performed by different organisations as regards dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs.

The Commission has established strict maximum levels for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in feed and food by Directive 2002/32/EC ([9]) and Regulation (EC) 1881/2006 ([10]). These maximum levels are applicable to feed and food placed on the market in the EU. In the US no maximum or guidance levels have been established for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in feed and food.

([1]) http://www.toxicowatch.org/ToxicoWatch/Dioxinen_en_eieren_files/2013_Toxicowatch_VM29.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52001PC0495:EN:HTML
([3]) http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/ChemicalContaminants/ucm077524.htm
([4]) Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the risk assessment of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in food. Update based on new scientific information available since the adoption of the SCF opinion of 22nd November 2000 (adopted on 30 May 2001) http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/sc/scf/out90_en.pdf
([5]) WHO-TEQ = World Health Organisation toxic equivalent.
([6]) JECFA = Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives of the WHO and from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).
([7]) WHO Technical Report series, 909. Evaluation of certain food additives and contaminants, p. 121-146. Available at: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/trs/WHO_TRS_909.pdf
([8]) Available at: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/911.pdf
([9]) Directive 2002/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 May 2002 on undesirable substances in feed (OJ L 140, 30.5.2002, p. 10).
([10]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs (OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p. 5).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013994/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Eficiența scăzută a antibioticelor de ultimă generație

Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor (ECDC) a anunțat recent că Uniunea Europeană se confruntă cu o amenințare tot mai mare din partea superbacteriilor care sunt rezistente la o clasă de antibiotice de ultimă generație, cunoscute sub numele de carbapeneme.

Procentul infecțiilor provocate de bacteria Klebsiella pneumoniae, o cauză obișnuită a îmbolnăvirii la pacienți spitalizați, care erau rezistenți la carbapeneme, era mai mare de 5% în 2012 în cinci țări membre ale Uniunii Europene: Grecia, Cipru, Italia, România și Slovacia. În 2009, doar Grecia și Cipru depășeau acest prag. Deoarece bacteriile au evoluat atât de mult, medicii sunt nevoiți acum să apeleze la tratamente vechi și extrem de toxice pentru a le combate. Un exemplu în acest sens este colistina, medicament ce afectează grav rinichii.

Având în vedere incidența ridicată și pericolul pentru viețile cetățenilor:

1. Ce măsuri intenționează să ia Comisia pe termen mediu și lung pentru ameliorarea acestei situații?

2. Ce buget va aloca Comisia cercetării în domeniul cercetării asupra antibioticelor în perioada 2014-2020?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(14 februarie 2014)

Recomandarea Consiliului privind siguranța pacienților, inclusiv prevenirea și controlul infecțiilor asociate asistenței medicale (2009/C 151/01) ([1]) și Recomandarea Consiliului privind utilizarea prudentă a agenților antimicrobieni în medicina umană (2002/77/CE) ([2]) vizează aspectele legate de creșterea riscului de rezistență la antimicrobiene, inclusiv la infecțiile cu *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. Viitorul program al UE în domeniul sănătății 2014-2020 prevede proiecte de îmbunătățire a utilizării prudente a agenților antimicrobieni, de reducere a practicilor care duc la creșterea rezistenței la antimicrobiene, în special în spitale, și de promovare a unor măsuri profilactice și de igienă eficiente pentru prevenirea și controlul infecțiilor, precum și pentru reducerea infecțiilor cu microorganisme rezistente și a infecțiilor asociate asistenței medicale.

În total, în cadrul PC 7 (2007-2013) s-au investit aproximativ 522 milioane EUR în proiecte de cercetare privind rezistența la antimicrobiene. Mai mult, inițiativa privind medicamentele inovatoare (IMI) ([3]) a pus la dispoziție 615 milioane EUR pentru cercetare în vederea combaterii rezistenței la antimicrobiene în cadrul programului *New Drugs for Bad Bugs* (Medicamente noi pentru microorganisme rezistente).

Orizont 2020 va continua să acorde prioritate cercetării în domeniul antibioticelor. Nu există un buget alocat inițial pentru cercetare în domeniul antibioticelor în cadrul Orizont 2020. Tematica cererilor de propuneri, care influențează distribuția bugetului, este în curs de pregătire pentru programele de lucru bienale. Colaborarea reușită în cadrul IMI va continua și se prevede acordarea de sprijin pentru o viitoare cerere de propuneri de cercetare pe tema RAM ([4]) a inițiativei de programare în comun.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/docs/council_2009_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:034:0013:0016:EN:PDF
([3]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/
([4]) http://www.jpiamr.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013994/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Lower effectiveness of latest-generation antibiotics

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) recently announced that the European Union is facing an ever-growing threat from 'superbugs', which are resistant to a class of the latest-generation antibiotics known as 'carbapenems'.

The percentage of infections caused by the bacteria *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, a common cause of the illness in inpatients, which used to be resistant to carbapenems, was 5% higher than in 2012 in five EU Member States: Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Romania and Slovakia. In 2009 only Greece and Cyprus were above this limit. Since bacteria have developed so much, doctors now need to resort to old and highly toxic treatments to combat them. One example of this is colistin, a drug which has a severe impact on the kidneys.

In view of the increased incidence and danger to people's lives:

1. What medium- and long-term measures does the Commission intend to take to improve this situation?

2. What budget will the Commission allocate to antibiotics research in the 2014-2020 period?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

The Council Recommendation on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections (2009/C 151/01) ([1]) and the Council Recommendation on prudent use of antimicrobial agents in human medicine (2002/77/EC) ([2]) address the issues of the rising threat of antimicrobial resistance, including Klebsiella pneumonia infections. The future EU Health Programme 2014-2020 foresees projects to 'improve the prudent use of antimicrobial agents and reduce the practices that increase antimicrobial resistance, particularly in hospitals, and promote effective prevention and hygiene measures to prevent and control infections and to reduce the burden of resistant infections and healthcare-associated infections'.

In total, about EUR 522 million has been invested in research projects on antimicrobial resistance during FP7 (2007-2013). In addition, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) ([3]) has made EUR 615 million available for research to combat antimicrobial resistance under the New Drugs for Bad Bugs (ND4BB) programme.

Horizon 2020 will continue to give antibiotics research a high priority. There is no upfront budget earmarked for antibiotic research under Horizon 2020. The call topics, which impact the budget distribution, are being prepared for bi-annual work programmes. The successful collaboration under the IMI will be continued and support for a future research call of the Joint Programming Initiative on AMR ([4]) is foreseen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/docs/council_2009_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:034:0013:0016:EN:PDF
([3]) http://www.imi.europa.eu/
([4]) http://www.jpiamr.eu/

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-013995/13
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 decembrie 2013)

Subiect: Noi focare de gripă aviară în Uniunea Europeană

Organizația Mondială pentru Sănătate Animală a raportat recent apariția unor focare noi de gripă aviară în Europa, mai exact în Olanda, Germania și Portugalia.

În Germania, virusul gripal H5N3 a fost depistat în regiunea Baden-Wuttemberg, unde au fost expuse infecției 130 de păsări. În Portugalia, virusul — despre care se știe deocamdată că este de serotipul H7, dar nu se cunoaște subtipul — a fost depistat în zona sudică a țării, la o fermă de subzistență, unde au fost expuse infecției un număr de 63 de păsări. Un alt focar s-a descoperit în regiunea Groningen din Olanda, unde au fost raportate 25 de îmbolnăviri dintr-un total de 9 301 păsări expuse infecției.

În acest context, Comisia este rugată să precizeze care sunt măsurile avute în vedere pentru prevenirea răspândirii virusului.

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(28 ianuarie 2014)

Directiva 2005/94/CE ([1]) a Consiliului stabilește măsurile pentru combaterea gripei aviare la păsările de curte și la păsările ținute în captivitate. Aceste măsuri vizează atât „gripa aviară înalt patogenă" (HPAI), boală gravă, care se răspândește rapid, cu un nivel ridicat de mortalitate, cât și „gripa aviară slab patogenă" (LPAI), care cauzează, în general, o îmbolnăvire ușoară, putând trece neobservată.

Măsurile de combatere a LPAI sunt similare celor aplicate în cazul focarelor de HPAI, dar sunt luate gradual și sunt proporționale cu riscurile pe care le prezintă LPAI pentru păsările de curte. Măsurile includ programe de supraveghere activă, notificarea eventualelor suspiciuni de boală, investigarea și confirmarea oficială, sacrificarea sau depopularea efectivelor de păsări infectate, eliminarea acestora în condiții de securitate, precum și curățarea și dezinfectarea.

Experiența ultimilor ani arată că Directiva 2005/94/CE a Consiliului a permis, în general, o combatere mai eficientă a gripei aviare în UE, în conformitate cu evaluarea impactului ([2]) care a însoțit propunerea Comisiei din 2005.

([1]) Directiva 2005/94/CE a Consiliului din 20 decembrie 2005 privind măsurile comunitare de combatere a influenței aviare și de abrogare a Directivei 92/40/CEE. JO L 10, 14.1.2006, p. 16.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2005/sec_2005_0549_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013995/13
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: New outbreaks of avian influenza in the European Union

The World Organisation for Animal Health has recently reported a number of new outbreaks of avian influenza in Europe, specifically in the Netherlands, Germany and Portugal.

In Germany influenza virus H5N3 has been detected in the Baden-Württemberg region where 130 birds have been exposed to the infection. In Portugal the virus, which is already known to be the H7 serotype, although the subtype is unknown, has been detected in the south of the country, on a subsistence farm where 63 birds have been exposed to the infection. Another outbreak has been discovered in the Groningen region of the Netherlands, where 25 cases of the disease have been reported out of a total of 9 301 birds exposed to the infection.

In light of this, can the Commission specify what measures are envisaged to prevent the virus from spreading?

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

Council Directive 2005/94/EC ([1]) lays down measures to control avian influenza in poultry and captive birds. These measures are directed towards both 'highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)', which spreads rapidly causing serious disease with high mortality, and 'low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI)' causing generally a mild disease which may easily go undetected.

Disease control measures for LPAI are similar to those applied in the event of HPAI outbreaks, but are graduated and proportionate to the risks LPAI poses to poultry. The measures include active surveillance programmes, notification of suspicion of disease, official investigation and confirmation, killing or depopulation of infected poultry flocks, their safe disposal and cleaning and disinfection.

The experience gained in the last years suggests that the Council Directive 2005/94/EC has in general allowed the achievement of a better control of avian influenza in the EU, in line with the impact assessment ([2]) that accompanied the Commission proposal in 2005.

([1]) Council Directive 2005/94/EC of 20 December 2005 on Community measures for the control of avian influenza and repealing Directive 92/40/EEC. OJ L 10, 14.1.2006, p. 16.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2005/sec_2005_0549_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013996/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Problematiche relative ai parametri di assegnazione ruoli nelle pubblicazioni scientifiche

Le reputazione e le carriere accademiche dipendono dai lavori e dal loro impatto all'interno della comunità scientifica. I diversi metodi di valutazione bibliometriche a livello nazionale hanno dato origine a controversie riguardanti i parametri di valutazione. Questi parametri vengono presi in esame anche per molti concorsi e bandi pubblici, quindi la loro valutazione assume una rilevanza elevata per il legislatore europeo. Purtroppo, è al momento impossibile anticipare alcuni comportamenti «perversi» che hanno portato il numero medio di autori presenti su una pubblicazione a crescere in modo significativo negli ultimi decenni. Pratiche diffuse come la «gift authorship» e la «honorary authorship» comportano l'inclusione di co-autori il cui contributo alla ricerca è stato marginale, ma ai quali gli altri membri sono legati da vincoli gerarchici o di riconoscenza (ad esempio, possono ricompensare un collega che abbia procurato finanziamenti o altri benefici). Per converso, la ghost authorship rimanda al caso in cui la lista degli autori non comprende alcuni scienziati che invece avrebbero avuto i requisiti per essere inclusi. Il concetto di «autore scientifico» si sta dimostrando quindi sempre più obsoleto, molti esperti propongono oggi di sostituire il concetto di «authorship» con quello di «contributorship», in grado di definire con maggior trasparenza e chiarezza ruoli e meriti delle ricerche.

Considerato che:

— uno studio del 2004, pubblicato sul Journal of American Medical Association, ha analizzato numerosi articoli scientifici pubblicati dall'AMA e dal BMJ, trovando che, rispettivamente, il 21,5 % e il 9,5 % degli autori non soddisfaceva i criteri stabiliti dall'International Committee of Medical Journal Editors in materia di contributo effettivo alla ricerca;

— la «contributorship» aumenterebbe la trasparenza riducendo il rischio di esclusione di giovani e donne dalla «inventorship» di pubblicazioni e brevetti;

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. ritiene che il concetto di autore sia ancora funzionale al buon funzionamento del mercato del lavoro degli scienziati e ad una equa allocazione di risorse?

2. intende lanciare misure e campagne di armonizzazione dei meccanismi di definizione del merito e della reputazione scientifica?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(10 febbraio 2014)

Le questioni sollevate dall'onorevole deputato rientrano in un contesto più ampio, ovvero nei significativi cambiamenti occorsi nel sistema scientifico dovuti, in particolare, all'incidenza di Internet.

1. Il concetto di «autore» è ancora valido nel sistema scientifico, ma è rafforzato sempre più spesso da nuove forme di collaborazione, che sono riconosciute nell'ambito della politica di ricerca e innovazione dell'UE, ad esempio nel programma di lavoro «Scienza con e per la società» del programma quadro Orizzonte 2020 ([1]). Anche il progetto ACUMEN ([2]), finanziato dall'UE, sta esaminando tale questione.

2. La regolamentazione del sistema scientifico, in particolare l'armonizzazione dei meccanismi per definire il merito e la reputazione scientifica, non compete alla Commissione, che continua tuttavia a promuovere una cultura di condivisione delle informazioni che assicuri una circolazione ottimale della conoscenza in Europa. Ciò avviene, ad esempio, tramite l'accesso aperto alle pubblicazioni scientifiche oggetto di valutazione «inter pares», che è uno degli elementi principali di Orizzonte 2020 ([3]) e che assicura un accesso più rapido, più trasparente e paritario a tutto vantaggio dei ricercatori, dell'industria e dei cittadini.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/science-and-society
([2]) http://research-acumen.eu/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/oa_pilot/h2020-hi-oa-pilot-guide_en.pdf

Inoltre, nel 2012 la Commissione ha emesso una raccomandazione indirizzata agli Stati membri «sull'accesso all'informazione scientifica e sulla sua conservazione» ([4]), che comprende una serie di azioni in materia di accesso aperto, valutazione delle carriere universitarie e conservazione dei risultati di ricerca. Tramite il programma «Capacità» (infrastrutture elettroniche) del Settimo programma quadro ([5]), la Commissione sostiene l'iniziativa ODIN ([6]) intesa a sviluppare un'infrastruttura elettronica che consenta ai ricercatori/autori e collaboratori di essere univocamente identificati, quale condizione preliminare per migliorare i sistemi di riconoscimento e di merito.

([4]) C(2012) 4890 del 17.7.2012.
([5]) Settimo programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013).
([6]) http://odin-project.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013996/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Problems relating to the criteria for attributing roles in scientific publications

Academic reputations and careers depend on work and its impact within the scientific community. The range of bibliometric assessment methods at national level has given rise to controversies concerning the assessment criteria. These criteria are examined for many competitions and public tenders; their assessment is thus particularly relevant for the European legislature. Unfortunately, it is currently impossible to forestall certain 'underhand' practices which have led to a huge increase in the average number of authors included in a publication over the last few decades. Common practices, such as 'gift authorship' and 'honorary authorship' involve the inclusion of co-authors, whose contribution to the research is marginal, but who are bound to the other authors by hierarchical links or a need to express gratitude (for example, rewarding a colleague who procured funding or other benefits). Conversely, ghost authorship refers to cases where the list of authors does not include certain scientists who have actually fulfilled the requirements for inclusion. Since the concept of 'scientific author' is thus becoming increasingly obsolete, many experts propose replacing the concept of 'authorship' with 'contributorship', in order to define roles within the research and allocate due credit with greater transparency and clarity.

Considering that

— a 2004 study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, analysed a range of scientific articles published in the AMA and BMJ and found that 21.5% and 9.5% respectively of the authors did not satisfy the criteria established by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors as regards actual contribution to research;

— 'contributorship' would increase transparency and reduce the risk of young men and women being excluded from the 'inventorship' of publications and patents;

we wish to ask the Commission:

1. whether it believes that the concept of 'author' is still useful for the scientific employment market to function properly and for the fair allocation of resources;

2. whether it intends to introduce measures and campaigns to standardise the mechanisms used to define due credit and scientific reputations?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 February 2014)

The issues raised by the Honourable Member are part of a wider context, namely the significant changes in the scientific system in particular as a consequence of the impact of Internet.

1. The 'author' is still a valid concept in the scientific system but it is more and more being enhanced by new ways of collaboration, which are taken into account in the EU's research and innovation policy, for instance in the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 'Science with and for Society' ([1]). The EU funded project ACUMEN ([2]) is also looking into this issue.

2. Regulating the scientific system, and in particular the standardisation of mechanisms to define due credit and scientific reputations, is not the role of the Commission. However, the Commission continues to promote a culture of sharing information and ensuring the optimal circulation of knowledge in Europe, for instance through open access to scientific peer reviewed publications, which is an underlying feature of Horizon 2020 ([3]). Open access provides faster, more transparent and equal access for the benefit of researchers, industry and citizens.

In 2012, the Commission also issued a recommendation to the Member States on 'access to and preservation of scientific information' ([4]), which includes a variety of recommended actions on open access, career assessment and preservation of research results. Through the FP7 ([5]) Capacities Programme (e-Infrastructures), the Commission is supporting the ODIN initiative ([6]) to develop an e-infrastructure to allow researchers/authors and contributors to be uniquely identified as a precondition for enhanced rewarding and merit systems.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/science-and-society
([2]) http://research-acumen.eu/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/oa_pilot/h2020-hi-oa-pilot-guide_en.pdf
([4]) C((2012)4890, 17/07/2012.
([5]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([6]) http://odin-project.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-013997/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 dicembre 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la digitalizzazione di un archivio storico

La principale compagnia aerea italiana ha promosso un importante studio e recupero del proprio archivio storico, dalla sua fondazione ad oggi. Questa azienda, come molte altre aziende italiane, nata nel 1947, ha contribuito all'economia e alla cultura del Paese e alla sua promozione nel mondo e rappresenta per l'Italia, così come per l'Europa, un importante pezzo di storia, dalla sua ricostruzione dal dopoguerra ai giorni nostri. Esso rappresenta inoltre la realizzazione del sogno di volare di molte persone, le distanze che si accorciano e la rinascita del paese.

Per tali motivi si vorrebbe raccogliere tutto il materiale a disposizione e poterlo digitalizzare in modo da metterlo a disposizione del pubblico.

Si tratta infatti di archivio vastissimo, composto da foto e video che ritraggono i cambiamenti tecnologici e di stile, dalla nascita della classe turistica all'ideazione delle divise da hostess da parte di stilisti italiani, documenti cartacei, le divise del personale di bordo, da quelle storiche a quelle attuali, le pubblicità, il materiale di bordo e tutta la sezione oggettistica, quindi premi e riconoscimenti, le cartoline, il materiale promozionale e tutto ciò che è stato prodotto negli anni.

Premesso ciò, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. esistono finanziamenti comunitari finalizzati alla digitalizzazione dell'archivio storico?

2. può fornire un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione valuta positivamente il progetto di studio e recupero dell'archivio storico della principale compagnia aerea italiana e il piano per la sua digitalizzazione, finalizzato a metterlo a disposizione del pubblico, annunciati dall'onorevole deputato.

La Commissione è convinta che queste iniziative diano nuova vita alle opere del passato e ha raccomandato agli Stati membri una serie di misure per la digitalizzazione e la messa in rete del patrimonio culturale [raccomandazione 2011/711/UE]. Esse comprendono la messa in comune delle attività di digitalizzazione e la collaborazione transfrontaliera, ad opera dei centri competenti per la digitalizzazione in Europa. La raccomandazione incoraggia inoltre l'uso dei fondi strutturali per cofinanziare le attività di digitalizzazione nell'ambito di progetti che incidono sull'economia regionale, soprattutto nelle regioni ad obiettivo convergenza (CONV).

L'UE non finanzia direttamente la digitalizzazione di archivi storici privati. Tuttavia, la ricerca sulle tecnologie pertinenti per la conservazione digitale è finanziata nell'ambito dei programmi di ricerca e di innovazione dell'UE (7° PQ e il nuovo Orizzonte 2020).

Vi sono inoltre svariati centri di competenza europei, sviluppati nell'ambito dei programmi di ricerca e innovazione dell'UE, che possono fornire assistenza tecnica e consulenza di esperti per le iniziative di digitalizzazione come quella in esame. In questo contesto, la Commissione cita PrestoCentre ([1]) e Impact ([2]), rispettivamente per i materiali testuali e audiovisivi.

Varie guide descrivono le diverse opportunità di finanziamento per le iniziative culturali e di digitalizzazione, ad esempio la Digital Agenda Toolbox ([3]) e il Manuale su come utilizzare in modo strategico i programmi di sostegno dell'UE ([4]).

([1]) https://www.prestocentre.org/
([2]) http://www.digitisation.eu/
([3]) http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/10157/299201/Herve_ICT%20peer%20review%20Sevilla%20-%203 %20December%202013.pdf
([4]) Policy Handbook on how to strategically use the EU support programmes: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/policy-handbook.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-013997/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 December 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the digitalisation of an historical archive

The largest Italian airline has commissioned a major study and recovery of its historical archive, from its foundation until now. This company, launched in 1947, has, like many others in Italy, contributed to the economy and culture of the country and its promotion around the world and represents, both for Italy and the whole of Europe, an important piece of history, from post-war reconstruction right up to the present day. It also represents the realisation of many people's dream to fly, ever-shortening distances and the rebirth of the country.

For these reasons, the company wishes to collect all the material in its possession and digitalise it in order to make it available to the public.

This is an enormous archive, comprising photos and videos which trace changes in both technology and style, from the birth of economy class to the design of air hostess uniforms by Italian designers; paper documents; air crew uniforms, both historical and contemporary; advertisements; on-board equipment and an entire section of objects comprising prizes and awards, postcards, promotional material and everything that the company has produced over the years.

In light of the above, we wish to ask the Commission:

1. is there any EU funding for the purposes of digitalising the historical archive;

2. can it provide an overview of the situation?

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

The Commission welcomes the study and recovery project of the largest Italian airline's historical archive, and its planned digitisation for making it available to the public, announced by the Honourable MEP.

The Commission is convinced that digitisation breathes new life into material from the past, and has recommended Member States a set of measures for digitising and bringing cultural heritage online [Recommendation 2011/711/EU]. These include pooling of digitisation efforts, cross-border collaboration and building on competence centres for digitisation in Europe. The recommendation also encourages the use of structural funds to co-fund digitisation activities as part of projects having an impact on the regional economy mostly in CONV Regions.

EU does not fund digitisation of private historical archives directly. Conversely, research on technologies relevant for digital preservation is funded under the EU research and innovation programmes (FP7 and the new Horizon 2020).

There are also number of European competence centres developed under the EU-research and innovation programmes, which may provide technical support and expert assistance to digitisation initiatives such as the present one. In this context the Commission would mention PrestoCentre ([1]) and Impact ([2]) for audiovisual and text materials, respectively.

A number of guides provide an overview of the different funding options for cultural and digitisation initiatives, such as the Digital Agenda Toolbox ([3]) and the Policy Handbook on how to strategically use EU support programmes ([4]).

([1]) https://www.prestocentre.org/
([2]) http://www.digitisation.eu/
([3]) http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/10157/299201/Herve_ICT%20peer%20review%20Sevilla%20-%203%20December%202013.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/policy-handbook.pdf