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INFORMAZZJONI MINN ISTITUZZJONIJIET, KORPI, UFFIĊĊJI U AĠENZIJI TAL-UNJONI EWROPEA

Parlament Ewropew

MISTOQSIJIET BIL-MIKTUB U TWEĠIBIET

2014/C 55 E/01 Mistoqsijiet bil-miktub magħmula mill-Membri tal-Parlament Ewropew u t-tweġibiet mogħtija minn istituzzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea 1

(Ara l-avviż lill-qarrej)

MT

Avviż lill-qarrej

Din il-pubblikazzjoni tinkludi mistoqsijiet bil-miktub magħmula mill-Membri tal-Parlament Ewropew u t-tweġibiet mogħtija minn istituzzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea.

Għal kull mistoqsija u tweġiba, il-verżjoni tal-lingwa oriġinali hija ppreżentata qabel traduzzjoni possibbli.

F'xi każijiet, jista' jkun li r-risposta tingħata b'lingwa differenti minn dik tal-mistoqsija. Dan jiddependi mil-lingwa li jaħdem biha l-kumitat li jkun intalab jagħti tweġiba.

Dawn il-mistoqsijiet u tweġibiet huma ppubblikati skont l-Artikoli 117 u 118 tar-Regoli tal-Proċedura tal-Parlament Ewropew.

Il-mistoqsijiet u t-tweġibiet kollha jistgħu jinqraw fis-sit elettroniku tal-Parlament Ewropew (Europarl) taħt l-intestatura "Mistoqsijiet Parlamentari":

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

ABBREVJAZZJONIJIET UŻATI GĦALL-GRUPPI POLITIĊI

PPE	Grupp tal-Partit Popolari Ewropew (Demokristjani)
S&D	Grupp tal-Alleanza Progressiva tas-Socjalisti u d-Demokratici fil-Parlament Ewropew
ALDE	Grupp tal-Alleanza tal-Liberali u d-Demokratiċi għall-Ewropa
ECR	Grupp tal-Konservattivi u Riformisti Ewropej
Verts/ALE	Grupp tal-Ħodor/Alleanza Ħielsa Ewropea
GUE/NGL	Grupp Konfederali tax-Xellug Magħqud Ewropew - Xellug Aħdar Nordiku
EFD	Grupp għall-Ewropa Ħielsa u Demokratika
NI	Membri mhux Affiljati

MT

IV

(Informazzjoni)

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PARLAMENT EWROPEW

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Mistoqsijiet bil-miktub magħmula mill-Membri tal-Parlament Ewropew u t-tweġibiet mogħtija minn istituzzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea

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Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007348/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Cumplimiento de los mecanismos de apoyo del Reino de España a las energías renovables

En referencia a la respuesta a la pregunta número P-001202/2013, el Sr. Oettinger, en nombre de la Comisión, contestó: «Sobre la base de la información de la que disponemos en la actualidad, la Comisión no observa ninguna vulneración de la Directiva sobre la energía renovable (Directiva 2009/28/CE). Con todo, la Comisión está examinando las medidas aprobadas recientemente en España y, en caso necesario, estudiará si deben tomarse medidas desde la UE o a escala de ella.»

¿Ha examinado la Comisión las medidas aprobadas recientemente en España?

En caso afirmativo ¿está satisfecha la Comisión con el resultado?

En caso negativo ¿cuándo tiene previsto la Comisión tener acabado este estudio?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión está actualmente estudiando la compatibilidad de la normativa española de medidas fiscales para la sostenibilidad de la energía aprobada oficialmente por el Congreso español el 20 de diciembre de 2012. Además, la Comisión está evaluando varias otras nuevas medidas adoptadas en 2013 que modifican los planes de apoyo a las energías renovables con vistas a concluir su análisis sobre la conveniencia o no de intervenir, llegado el caso, al nivel de la UE a finales de 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007348/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Compliance with Spain's support mechanisms for renewable energies

In his answer to Written Question P-001202/2013, Mr Oettinger stated, on behalf of the Commission: 'On the basis of the information available to us at the present time, the Commission does not see an indication of a violation of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC). However, the Commission is currently assessing the recent policy measures adopted in Spain and it will consider further action from or at EU level, if necessary.'

Has the Commission completed its assessment of the recent policy measures adopted in Spain?

If so, is the Commission satisfied with the result?

If not, by when does the Commission expect to have completed this assessment?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission's assessment of the compatibility of the Spanish Law on tax measures for energy sustainability, officially adopted by the Spanish Congress on 20 December 2012 is currently ongoing. In addition, the Commission is assessing several new measures changing renewable energy support schemes adopted in 2013, with the view to conclude its analysis on whether or not to take action at EU level, if appropriate, by the end of 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007349/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Normativa europea de ferrocarriles en el Reino de España

En referencia a la respuesta a la pregunta número E-002948/2013, el Sr. Kallas, en nombre de la Comisión, contestó: «Tras la sentencia del Tribunal en el Asunto C-483/10, de 28 de febrero de 2013, la Comisión pidió a España, el 25 de marzo, que le comunicase esas medidas a más tardar el 25 de mayo. Si España sigue sin cumplir su obligación, la Comisión puede volver a someter el asunto al Tribunal, conforme al artículo 260, apartado 2, del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea y solo entonces podrá pedir la imposición de sumas a tanto alzado o multas coercitivas.»

¿Ha recibido la Comisión estas medidas por parte del Reino de España?

En caso afirmativo ¿está satisfecha la Comisión con estas medidas?

En caso negativo ¿qué medidas tiene previsto tomar la Comisión para que el Reino de España cumpla con la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión puede confirmar que el Gobierno español está redactando un nuevo proyecto de normativa nacional para cumplir la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la UE en el Asunto C-483/10. Los servicios de la Comisión mantienen contactos con el Gobierno español en relación con la formulación de dicha nueva normativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007349/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: EU rules on railways in Spain

In answer to Question E-002948/2013, Mr Kallas, on behalf of the Commission, replied: 'Following the Court's ruling in Case C-483/10 dated 28 February 2013, the Commission asked Spain on 25 March to inform it of such measures by 25 May. Should Spain still not comply, the Commission may bring Spain back to the Court in accordance with Article 260(2) TFEU and only at this stage, lump sums or penalty payments may be requested.'

Has the Commission received these measures from Spain?

If so, is the Commission satisfied with these measures?

If not, what steps does the Commission plan to take to ensure that Spain complies with the ruling of the Court of Justice of the EU?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Commission can confirm that the Spanish Government is preparing new draft rules of national legislation in order to comply with the judgment of the European Court of Justice in Case C-483/10. The Commission services are in contact with the Spanish Government concerning the formulation of such new rules.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007350/13
a la Comisión
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(21 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Actividades de la cadena de supermercados DIA (España)

Recientemente se ha constituido en España la «Asociación Afectados Franquicias Supermercados». Esta Asociación trata de defender los intereses de las personas involucradas en diversas franquicias, entre ellas las de la cadena de supermercados DIA (Distribución Internacional de Alimentación S.A.), grupo de distribución de origen español, expandido en otros países como Francia, Portugal etc.

Según miembros de esta Asociación, la cadena DIA habría incurrido en comportamientos presuntamente ilegales y en engaños en defensa de sus intereses y perjudicando gravemente a las personas con franquicia. También esta misma cadena habría incumplido en ritmos de trabajo y formas de pago de sus empleados, no acordes con la normativa laboral vigente. Estas personas con franquicia habrían sido sometidas a presiones y coacciones por defender sus intereses frente a prácticas como la transferencia de costes hacia las franquicias o la reducción de márgenes.

1. ¿Tiene constancia la Comisión de alguna práctica comercial por parte de la Cadena DIA que haya vulnerado las normativas del mercado interior europeo?

2. ¿Tiene abierta la Comisión alguna investigación en relación con la cadena de supermercados DIA?

3. ¿Ha adoptado la Comisión alguna iniciativa en defensa del mercado interior europeo y de los consumidores en el que esté involucrada la cadena DIA?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión no dispone de información que sugiera que las actividades comerciales de la empresa Distribución Internacional de Alimentación S.A. infringen las normas que regulan el mercado único. Como, sin duda, sabe Su Señoría, las normas sobre libre circulación del TFUE se dirigen a los Estados miembros y no a las empresas.

La Comisión no está llevando a cabo una investigación con arreglo a las normas de competencia (artículos 101 y 102 del TFUE) sobre la cadena de supermercados DIA.

Pese a que no existe una legislación específica sobre franquicias, algunos comportamientos, como el de restringir la libertad de los franquiciados para fijar el precio de sus productos, podrían constituir una violación de las normas de competencia. No obstante, es probable que resulte preferible que sean las autoridades españolas las que, a nivel nacional, se ocupen del caso. De hecho, en la EU, las autoridades nacionales de competencia (ANC) han llevado a cabo algunas investigaciones en relación con prácticas contrarias a la competencia ejercidas por las cadenas de supermercados. En concreto, las ANC de Grecia, Suecia, Finlandia y Rumanía han investigado casos de comportamientos anticompetitivos consistentes en la imposición por las grandes cadenas de supermercados del precio de reventa en sus redes de franquicia. En el caso de Grecia, el asunto investigado afecta a la cadena DIA. La ANC francesa ha mostrado asimismo su preocupación por la existencia de posibles obstáculos contractuales para abandonar las redes de franquicia como, por ejemplo, la larga duración de las franquicias, las cláusulas de inhibición de la competencia una vez extinguido el contrato, etcétera ([1]).

([1]) Si desea obtener información más detallada sobre estos casos, consulte el informe «Activities in the Food Sector», publicado el año pasado por la Red Europea de Competencia (REC). http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/food_report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007350/13
to the Commission
Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Activities of the Spanish supermarket chain DIA

The 'Asociación Afectados Franquicias Supermercados' (Association of Affected Supermarket Franchises) was recently established in Spain with a view to defending the interests of individuals holding franchise agreements with a number of companies. One of these companies is DIA (Distribución Internacional de Alimentación S.A.), a Spanish supermarket chain with international presence in a number of countries, including France and Portugal.

Members of the association claim that DIA has engaged in illegal and deceitful activities to serve its own interests, at the direct expense of its franchise holders. The chain is also said to have breached the labour regulations in force regarding employee working times and payment methods. It is also alleged to have subjected its franchise holders to force and coercion for defending their interests against practices such as transferring costs to franchise holders and reducing margins.

1. Does the Commission have evidence of any commercial activities pursued by DIA which breach the rules governing the single market?

2. Is the Commission conducting any investigation involving the supermarket chain?

3. Has the Commission taken any steps, in which DIA is involved, to defend the single market and consumers?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 September 2013)

The Commission has no information suggesting that the commercial activities pursued by Distribución Internacional de Alimentación S.A. would breach the rules governing the single market. As the Honourable Member will be aware, the free movement rules in the TFEU are addressed to Member States and not to undertakings.

The Commission is not conducting an investigation under the competition rules (Articles 101 and 102 TFEU) involving the supermarket chain DIA.

Despite the fact that there is no specific competition legislation concerning franchises, certain behaviour such as limiting franchises' freedom to price their products could constitute a violation of competition law. However, it is likely that this might best be addressed at national level by the Spanish competition authorities. Indeed, in the EU, a number of investigations have been carried out by National Competition Authorities (NCAs) regarding anticompetitive practices of supermarket operators in their franchising networks. In particular, the Greek, Swedish, Finnish and Romanian NCAs have been investigating antitrust cases dealing with resale price maintenance imposed by large supermarket chains in their franchise networks. The Greek case refers to the supermarket chain DIA. The French competition authority also indicated its concerns about several potential barriers to exit related to franchise contracts, such as the long duration, post-contractual non-competition clauses, etc ([1]).

([1]) For more details about these cases, please see the report 'Activities in the Food Sector', published last year by the European Competition Network (ECN). http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/food_report_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007351/13
an die Kommission
Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Schaffung eines Europäischen Zentralregisters

In der nationalen Rechtsprechung kann es für die zuständigen Gerichte von großer Bedeutung sein, ob der Angeklagte bereits vorgestraft ist, warum er bestraft wurde und welche Strafen verhängt wurden. In Deutschland können diese Informationen in einem Zentralregister angefragt werden (Bundeszentralregister).

Länderübergreifend erscheint diese Zusammenarbeit weitaus schwieriger. So ist in der Praxis leichter, mit manchen EU-Staaten Daten auszutauschen, als mit anderen. Wie bereits geschildert, sind diese Daten jedoch äußerst wichtig.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

Wäre ein Art Zentralregister auf europäischer Ebene denkbar?

Wäre eine Einrichtung durchführbar, und wenn ja, in welchem Zeitraum?

Gibt es bereits Bestrebungen innerhalb der Kommission, ein solches Zentralregister oder ein vergleichbares System einzurichten?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(7. August 2013)

In der EU gibt es drei Instrumente, die den Austausch von Strafregisterinformationen betreffen: den Rahmenbeschluss über den Austausch von Strafregisterinformationen ([1]), den ECRIS-Beschluss ([2]) und den Rahmenbeschluss über die Berücksichtigung von Verurteilungen ([3]).

Da sich die Mitgliedstaaten nicht auf die Errichtung eines zentralen Systems einigen konnten, wurde ein Europäisches Strafregisterinformationssystem geschaffen, das im Falle von Strafverfahren und für andere Zwecke (z. B. Überprüfungen vor einer Einstellung) einen dezentralisierten computergestützten Austausch von Strafregisterdaten zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten ermöglicht. Dieses System besteht seit April 2012. Es ermöglicht die Übertragung von über 65 000 Mitteilungen pro Monat zwischen mittlerweile 23 Mitgliedstaaten und stellt Gerichten einschlägige Informationen über bisherige Verurteilungen zur Verfügung. Die Kommission leistet technische Hilfe.

([1]) Rahmenbeschlusses des Rates über die Durchführung und den Inhalt des Austauschs von Informationen aus dem Strafregister zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten (2009/315/JHA).

([2]) Beschluss des Rates zur Einrichtung des Europäischen Strafregisterinformationssystems (ECRIS) gemäß Artikel 11 des Rahmenbeschlusses 2009/315/JHA (2009/316/JHA).

([3]) Rahmenbeschluss 2008/675/JI des Rates vom 24. Juli 2008 zur Berücksichtigung der in anderen Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union ergangenen Verurteilungen in einem neuen Strafverfahren (2008/675/JHA).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007351/13
to the Commission
Thomas Ulmer (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Creating a central criminal register for Europe

When administering justice, the national courts may consider it significant whether the accused already has a criminal record — and if so, what offence was committed and what the sentence was. In Germany, this information is contained in a central criminal register (Bundeszentralregister).

Coordinating this across borders seems to be far more difficult. In practice, exchanging data is easier with some countries than with others. Yet, as mentioned, these data are extremely important.

Can the Commission answer the following:

Can it envisage a central criminal register at European level?

Is it possible to set one up, and if so, within what time frame?

Is the Commission already trying to set up a central criminal register or similar system?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

In the EU three existing legal instruments concern the exchange of information of criminal records: the framework Decision on exchange of information on criminal records ([1]), the ECRIS Decision ([2]) and the framework Decision on taking account of previous convictions ([3]).

As Member States could not agree on a central system, the European Criminal Records Information System allows for decentralized, computerised exchanges of information extracted from criminal records for criminal proceedings and other purposes between Member States, for example screening procedures for employment. The system has been operational since April 2012. It enables the transmission of over 65 000 messages per month, currently between 23 Member States, and provides Courts with highly relevant information about previous convictions. The Commission gives technical support to the system.

([1]) Framework Decision on the organisation and content of exchange of information extracted from criminal records between the Member States (2009/315/JHA).

([2]) Council Decision on the establishment of the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) in application of Article 11 of Framework Decision 2009/315/JHA (2009/316/JHA).

([3]) Council Framework Decision 2008/675/JHA of 24 July 2008 on taking account of convictions in the Member States of the European Union in the course of new criminal proceedings (2008/675/JHA).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007352/13
an die Kommission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Verfütterung von Insekten als tierische Proteine

Seit dem 1. Juni 2013 ist die Verfütterung von verarbeiteten Proteinen von Nichtwiederkäuern an Fische und andere Tiere in Aquakulturen wieder erlaubt. Ebenso wird eine zukünftige Verwendung verarbeiteter tierischer Proteine von Geflügel in Futtermitteln für Schweine und von verarbeiteten tierischen Proteinen von Schweinen in Futtermitteln für Geflügel in Erwägung gezogen, sobald validierte Diagnosemethoden zur Kontrolle des Verbots der Rückführung in die Futtermittelkette derselben Tierart vorhanden sind.

Zur Deckung des Proteindefizits in der Versorgung landwirtschaftlicher Nutztiere können aber auch kontrolliert aufgezogene, getrocknete und vermahlene Insekten einen wertvollen Beitrag leisten.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die Verwendung von Insekten als tierische Proteine in der landwirtschaftlichen Nutztierhaltung?

2. Plant die Kommission eine Lockerung des Verfütterungsverbots für verarbeitete tierische Proteine aus getrockneten und vermahlenen Wirbellosen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(26. Juli 2013)

Nach Dafürhalten der Kommission können Insektenproteine eine nützliche Proteinquelle in Futtermitteln darstellen.

Die Kommission wird in dieser Angelegenheit weiter sondieren und ist bereit, gegebenenfalls eine Änderung der geltenden Vorschriften vorzuschlagen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007352/13
to the Commission
Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Use of insects as animal protein in feed

As from 1 June 2013 the feeding of non-ruminant processed proteins to fish and other organisms in aquaculture has been permitted once again. Consideration is also being given to the use in the future of processed animal protein from poultry in pig feed and of processed animal protein from pigs in poultry feed, as soon as validated diagnostic methods are available to monitor the ban on animals re-entering their own foodchain.

However insects reared under controlled conditions before being dried and ground into meal can also make a valuable contribution to rebalancing the protein deficit in the rearing of farm animals.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the use of insects as animal protein in livestock farming?

2. Is the Commission planning to relax the feed ban on processed animal protein from dried and ground invertebrates?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

The Commission considers that protein of insect origin has the potential of being a useful form of protein for animal feed.

The Commission is keeping this issue under review and will be prepared to propose modifications to the current rules where appropriate.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007353/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απορρόφηση κονδυλίων για ολοκληρωμένη αστική ανάπλαση και ανακαίνιση κατοικιών

Από το 2009 το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ERDF) μπορεί να χρηματοδοτήσει προγράμματα για την ανακαίνιση κατοικιών και την αναγέννηση αστικών κέντρων σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη, ιδιαίτερα έργα ενεργειακής αποτελεσματικότητας και ολοκληρωμένης αστικής ανάπλασης για να υποστηριχτούν ευάλωτες κοινότητες.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τι ποσά έχουν αξιοποιήσει μέχρι τώρα τα κράτη μέλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ελλάδας, για ανακαίνιση κατοικιών και αναγέννηση αστικών κέντρων, ιδιαίτερα στους τομείς α) ενεργειακής αποδοτικότητας, β) ολοκληρωμένης αστικής ανάπλασης σε περιοχές απόρων/χαμηλού εισοδήματος, γ) κοινωνικής επανένταξης (Ρομά, κοινωνικά ευάλωτων πληθυσμών);

2. Ποιο είναι το συνολικά διαθέσιμο ποσό για την περίοδο 2007-2013;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Αυγούστου 2013)

Στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης (ΕΤΠΑ), η επιλεξιμότητα για τις στεγαστικές παρεμβάσεις εισήχθη το 2007 και αρχικά αφορούσε τα κράτη μέλη που προσχώρησαν στην ΕΕ μετά το 2003. Οι κανονισμοί τροποποιήθηκαν δύο φορές σε μεταγενέστερο στάδιο της περιόδου προγραμματισμού, μετά την οποία οι επενδύσεις στις κατοικίες κατέστησαν δυνατές, σε περιορισμένο βαθμό, σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη.

Η διαχείριση της πολιτικής συνοχής είναι επιμερισμένη μεταξύ της ΕΕ και των κρατών μελών και οι πληροφορίες στο επίπεδο που ζητά ο κ. βουλευτής είναι δύσκολο να εκτιμηθούν. Ωστόσο, στον τομέα της ενεργειακής απόδοσης, περίπου 9,5 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ έχουν διατεθεί για βιώσιμες επενδύσεις στον τομέα της ενέργειας γενικά, αλλά είναι δύσκολο να υπολογιστεί το ποσό που τελικά θα χορηγηθεί συγκεκριμένα για την ενεργειακή απόδοση και τη χρήση ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας σε κτίρια, ή μόνο σε κατοικίες.

Για την Ελλάδα, η κοινοτική συνεισφορά που διατίθεται για έργα ενεργειακής απόδοσης ανέρχεται σε 71 εκατ. ευρώ. Για ολοκληρωμένα έργα αστικής και αγροτικής ανάπλασης, η συνεισφορά της ΕΕ είναι 479 εκατ. ευρώ και για την κοινωνική υποδομή το ποσό ανέρχεται σε 135 εκατ. ευρώ. Ωστόσο, οι διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες δεν επιτρέπουν τον προσδιορισμό των ποσών που χορηγούνται ειδικά για τις ευάλωτες κοινότητες σε κάθε τομέα παρέμβασης. Η Επιτροπή προτείνει στον κ. βουλευτή να επικοινωνήσει απευθείας με τη διαχειριστική αρχή των προγραμμάτων στο Υπουργείο Ανάπτυξης.

Ειδική Υπηρεσία Συντονισμού
για την εφαρμογή των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων
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101 80 Athens
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(English version)

Question for written answer E-007353/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Take-up of funds for integrated urban regeneration and housing renovation

Since 2009, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has been able to finance programmes for housing renovation and the regeneration of urban centres in all Member States, in particular energy efficiency and integrated urban regeneration projects aimed at supporting vulnerable communities.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What amounts have Member States, including Greece, used so far for residential renovation and the regeneration of urban centres, in particular in the sectors a) energy efficiency, b) integrated urban regeneration in disadvantaged/low income areas, and c) social reintegration (the Roma, social vulnerable population groups)?

2. What is the total amount available for the period 2007-2013

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) eligibility for housing interventions was introduced in 2007 and first concerned only those Member States which joined the EU after 2003. The regulations were modified twice later in the programming period, after which housing investments became possible, to a limited extent, in all Member States.

Cohesion policy management is shared between the EU and the Member States and information at the level requested by the Honourable Member is difficult to estimate. However, in the field of energy efficiency, some EUR 9.5 billion has been allocated for sustainable energy investments in general, but it is difficult to estimate an amount that will finally be specifically allocated to energy efficiency and renewable energy use in buildings, or in residential buildings only.

For Greece, the Community contribution allocated to energy efficiency projects amounts to EUR 71 million. For integrated urban and rural regeneration projects, the EU contribution is EUR 479 million and for social infrastructure the amount is EUR 135 million. However, the available information does not permit the identification of amounts specifically allocated in favour of vulnerable communities in each area of intervention. The Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the programmes, in the Ministry of Development.

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101 80 Athens
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(English version)

Question for written answer E-007354/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Erasmus programme

Can the Commission state how many students from third-level institutions in Ireland participated in the Erasmus programme during the years 2010, 2011 and 2012?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

The participation of students from Irish higher education institutions in Erasmus student mobility has evolved over the last three years as follows.

2009/10: 2128

2010/11: 2511

2011/12: 2754

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007355/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Canada-EU Free Trade Agreement

Can the Commission estimate the economic benefits for the European Union of a successful Canada-EU Free Trade Agreement, and can the Commission provide an update on the status of the negotiations that are currently ongoing between both parties?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

Any comprehensive trade and economic agreement (CETA) between EU and Canada would cover key issues of relevance to creating a modern trade and investment environment, from ambitious new market access opportunities to clear rules for European and Canadian businesses and investors. The EU-Canada Joint Study (2008) ([1]) estimates annual income gains of approximately EUR 11.6 billion for the EU and EUR 8.2 billion for Canada thanks to an agreement. The study shows that half of the total expected GDP gains for the EU are related to trade in services, a quarter to the removal of tariffs and the remaining quarter from dismantling non-tariff barriers. It is also expected that once implemented, an agreement would increase two-way bilateral trade in goods and services by 22.9% or EUR 25.7 billion. As regards the status of the CETA negotiations, these are now in their final phase. The Commission has had very intense discussions with Canada during May and the first half of June. While important progress has been made, a number of key outstanding issues remain with respect to some aspects of investment protection and public procurement as well as agricultural market access and the protection of geographical indications. The Commission remains committed to finalise the CETA negotiations as swiftly as possible but in respect of the EU's negotiating mandate. Although very close to conclusion, the final agreement on CETA will require further constructive efforts from both sides and the Commission remains in close contact with Canadian counterparts to this end.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/october/tradoc_141032.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007356/13
to the Commission
Pat the Cope Gallagher (ALDE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: EU-US Free Trade Agreement

Can the Commission estimate the broad economic benefits for the European Union of a successful US-EU Free Trade Agreement, and can the Commission provide an update on the status of the negotiations that are currently ongoing between both parties, following the mandate achieved by the Irish Presidency?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Before taking the decision to request a negotiating mandate from the Council, the Commission carried out an impact assessment to estimate the economic benefits of a potential agreement with the US. This analysis is publicly available ([1]). Following the Council's approval of the Commission's negotiating mandate, on 14 June 2013, a first round of negotiations was held in the week of 8 July 2013 in Washington DC. The Commission has published information about it on its website ([2]) and will regularly update the members of the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament in line with the framework Agreement between the Commission and the Parliament.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/united-states/#sia.
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151595.pdf and http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=941.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007357/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(21 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Guatemala: anulada la condena por genocidio al ex dictador

El 20 de mayo de 2013, el Tribunal Constitucional de Guatemala revocaba, alegando errores de procedimiento, la largamente esperada sentencia que declaraba a Efraín Ríos Montt culpable del delito de genocidio y de crímenes contra la humanidad. Ello significa que en el juicio, suspendido hasta abril de 2014, no se tendrán en cuenta los relatos ni las razones de quienes testificaron con posterioridad al 19 de abril: ninguno de los valerosos testimonios que describían el horror de las sistemáticas violaciones, torturas, asesinatos, muertes por inanición y desplazamientos forzosos, como tampoco la sentencia definitiva que había dictado el tribunal anterior.

La Alta Comisionada para los Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas ha expresado su preocupación por los derechos jurídicos de los guatemaltecos, y ha subrayado la obligación que tienen las autoridades de perseguir a los responsables de genocidios, crímenes de guerra y crímenes contra la humanidad.

Habida cuenta del interés que la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante ha expresado en otras ocasiones por este asunto (Declaración del 18 de abril de 2013) y el compromiso con el respeto de los derechos humanos que establece el artículo 1 del Acuerdo de Asociación entre Centroamérica y la Unión Europea, ¿no considera la VP/AR que la UE debería pedir información a las autoridades guatemaltecas sobre la excesiva demora de este proceso judicial?

Además, las pruebas facilitadas por los Archivos de la Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos que incriminan a Otto Pérez Molina, presidente de Guatemala, en las campañas militares de «tierra quemada» dirigidas por Efraín Ríos Montt en los años ochenta ([1]) arrojan dudas sobre la independencia de este juicio frente a la clase política. ¿Podría profundizar la VP/AR en esta cuestión y pedir explicaciones a Guatemala por la poca prioridad que parece otorgar a este importantísimo juicio en el que se están juzgando crímenes contra la humanidad y conculcaciones de los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de agosto de 2013)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta destacó en su declaración del 18 de abril que unos juicios independientes, imparciales y justos constituyen la piedra angular de cualquier sistema judicial ([2]). Además, consideramos que es fundamental que el sistema judicial nacional haya asumido el caso en lugar de un tribunal extranjero. Esto sigue siendo aplicable en el estado actual del proceso.

([1]) http://nsarchive.wordpress.com/2011/11/14/otto-perez-molina-guatemalan-president-elect-with-%E2%80%9Cblood-on-his-hands%E2%80%9D/

([2]) http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/foraff/136844.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007357/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) und Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Guatemala: Aufhebung des Urteils wegen Völkermords gegen den ehemaligen Diktator

Am 20. Mai 2013 wurde das seit langem erwartete Urteil gegen Efraín Ríos Montt wegen Völkermords und Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit durch das guatemaltekische Verfassungsgericht aufgehoben, da es während des Prozesses mutmaßlich zu Verfahrensfehlern gekommen ist. In der Folge werden in dem Prozess, der bis April 2014 ausgesetzt wurde, die nach dem 19. April gemachten Zeugenaussagen und die Beweisführung nach diesem Datum nicht berücksichtigt, d. h. weder die Aussagen mutiger Zeugen, die den Horror systematischer Vergewaltigungen sowie von Folter, Mord, Hungertod und Zwangsumsiedlung beschrieben haben, noch das vom zuvor befassten Gericht gesprochene Urteil.

Die Hohe Kommissarin der Vereinten Nationen für Menschenrechte hat ihren Bedenken hinsichtlich der gesetzlich verankerten Rechte der Guatemalteken Ausdruck verliehen und betont, dass „der Staat verpflichtet ist, die Verantwortlichen des Völkermords, der Kriegsverbrechen und der Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit strafrechtlich zu verfolgen".

Ist die VP/HR angesichts ihres in der Vergangenheit bekundeten Interesses an diesem Fall (Erklärung vom 18. April 2013) und der Verpflichtung zur Einhaltung der Menschenrechte, die in Artikel 1 des Assoziierungsabkommens zwischen Zentralamerika und der Europäischen Union niedergelegt ist, nicht der Auffassung, dass die EU die guatemaltekischen Behörden in Bezug auf die unangemessenen Verzögerungen in diesem Verfahren um Auskunft ersuchen sollte?

Darüber hinaus lassen die Nachweise, die die National Security Agency der Vereinigten Staaten dahin gehend vorgelegt hat, dass der derzeitige Präsident von Guatemala, Otto Pérez Molina, an den von Efraín Ríos Montt in den 1980-er Jahren ([1]) gemäß der Taktik der verbrannten Erde geführten Militärkampagnen beteiligt war, daran zweifeln, dass dieser Prozess politisch neutral geführt wird. Kann sich die VP/HR näher mit dieser Thematik befassen und angesichts der Tatsache, dass es in diesem Prozess um Menschenrechte und Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit geht, Guatemala um Auskunft über die Gründe dafür ersuchen, dass diesem wichtigen Prozess offensichtlich keine Priorität eingeräumt wird?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(19. August 2013)

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin hat in ihrer Erklärung vom 18. April hervorgehoben, dass unabhängige, unparteiische und faire Gerichtsverfahren zu den Eckpfeilern jedweden Justizsystems gehören ([2]). Außerdem ist es ihrer Auffassung nach von grundlegender Bedeutung, dass dieser Fall innerhalb des nationalen Justizsystems und nicht vor einem ausländischen Gerichtshof verhandelt wird. Dies gilt auch für die gegenwärtige Phase des Verfahrens.

([1]) http://nsarchive.wordpress.com/2011/11/14/otto-perez-molina-guatemalan-president-elect-with-%E2%80%9Cblood-on-his-hands%E2%80%9D/

([2]) http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136844.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007357/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Guatemala: former dictator's genocide conviction overturned

On 20 May 2013, the Constitutional Court of Guatemala overturned the long-awaited verdict that convicted Efraín Ríos Montt of genocide and crimes against humanity, claiming that there were errors in the judicial procedure. As a result, the trial, which has been postponed until April 2014, will not retain any of the witness accounts and arguments made after 19 April, that is to say, none of the courageous testimonies describing the horror of systematic rape, torture, murder, starvation and forced displacement, nor the final sentence that the previous court had ordered.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has expressed his concern for the legal rights of Guatemalans and has underlined the 'state's obligation to prosecute those responsible for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity'.

Considering the interest the VP/HR has previously expressed in this case (statement of 18 April 2013) and the commitment to respect for human rights underlined in Article 1 of the Association Agreement signed between Central America and the European Union, does the VP/HR not think that the EU should question the Guatemalan authorities on the unreasonable delay in this judicial procedure?

Moreover, the evidence provided by the United States' National Security Archives implicating Otto Pérez Molina, Guatemala's president, in the military scorched-earth campaigns directed by Efraín Ríos Montt in the 1980s ([1]) casts doubt on the independence of this trial from politics. Can the VP/HR look further into this and question Guatemala on the lack of priority apparently given to this major trial, given that human rights and crimes against humanity are concerned?

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

The HR/VP emphasised in her statement of 18 April that independent, impartial and fair trials constitute the corner stone of any justice system ([2]). Moreover, I consider it fundamental that the national judiciary system has taken on the case instead of a foreign tribunal. This holds true at the current state of the process.

([1]) http://nsarchive.wordpress.com/2011/11/14/otto-perez-molina-guatemalan-president-elect-with-%E2%80%9Cblood-on-his-hands%E2%80%9D/.

([2]) http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136844.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007358/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διμερείς συμφωνίες επανεισδοχής μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ

Οι συμφωνίες επανεισδοχής αποτελούν σημείο αναφοράς της κοινής ευρωπαϊκής πολιτικής για τη μετανάστευση. Ωστόσο, ενώ διεξάγονται πολλές έρευνες και σημειώνεται πρόοδος στο πλαίσιο συμφωνιών επανεισδοχής μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ και των τρίτων χωρών, υπάρχει πληθώρα διμερών συμφωνιών αποκλειστικά μεταξύ των χωρών της ΕΕ, όπως οι συμφωνίες μεταξύ της Ιταλίας και της Αυστρίας (1.4.1998), της Ιταλίας και της Ελλάδας (18.4.2001) ή η συμφωνία μεταξύ της Ιταλίας και της Μάλτας (29.11.2002).

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Τέτοιου είδους διμερείς συμφωνίες μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ είναι συμβατές με την ισχύουσα ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία, όπως ο Κώδικας συνόρων και η Σύμβαση του Σένγκεν ή το κεκτημένο στον τομέα του ασύλου σχετικά με την κατανομή αρμοδιοτήτων μεταξύ των κρατών μελών;

2. Δεδομένου ότι αυτές οι συμφωνίες υπεγράφησαν πριν από την ισχύουσα ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία, εξακολουθούν να ισχύουν μέχρι σήμερα; Εάν συμβαίνει αυτό, η Επιτροπή διαθέτει κατάλογο απογραφής που επικαιροποιείται τακτικά και ελέγχει όλες τις διμερείς συμφωνίες που συνδέονται με τις συμφωνίες για την επανεισδοχή που έχουν συναφθεί μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ;

3. Εάν όχι, μπορεί η Επιτροπή να αναφέρει, εάν προτίθεται να συλλέξει τέτοια στοιχεία;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Αυγούστου 2013)

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 6 παράγραφος 1 της οδηγίας 2008/115/ΕΚ για την επιστροφή, οι υπήκοοι τρίτων χωρών που διαμένουν παράνομα θα πρέπει — καταρχήν — να επιστρέφουν απευθείας σε τρίτη χώρα και όχι σε άλλο κράτος μέλος. Ωστόσο, υπάρχουν δύο εξαιρέσεις στον κανόνα αυτό:

— Το άρθρο 6 παράγραφος 2 ορίζει ότι οι υπήκοοι τρίτων χωρών οι οποίοι διαμένουν παρανόμως στο έδαφος κράτους μέλους και διαθέτουν έγκυρο τίτλο διαμονής από άλλο κράτος μέλος, υποχρεούνται να μεταβαίνουν αμέσως στο έδαφος αυτού του άλλου κράτους μέλους.

— Το άρθρο 6 παράγραφος 3 ορίζει ότι τα κράτη μέλη μπορούν να μην εκδίδουν απόφαση επιστροφής για υπήκοο τρίτης χώρας που διαμένει παρανόμως στο έδαφός τους, εφόσον άλλο κράτος μέλος αναλαμβάνει τον εν λόγω υπήκοο τρίτης χώρας δυνάμει διμερούς συμφωνίας επανεισδοχής που ισχύει κατά την ημερομηνία έναρξης ισχύος της εν λόγω οδηγίας (13.1.2011).

Από τα ανωτέρω προκύπτει ότι η εφαρμογή διμερών συμφωνιών επανεισδοχής που τέθηκαν σε ισχύ πριν από την καταληκτική ημερομηνία της 13.1.2011 συμβιβάζεται με την οδηγία για την επιστροφή, ενώ η εφαρμογή συμφωνιών που συνάφθηκαν στη συνέχεια είναι ασυμβίβαστη.

Η πλήρης και επικαιροποιημένη επισκόπηση όλων των συμφωνιών επανεισδοχής μεταξύ των κρατών μελών διατίθεται στην Πλατφόρμα Επιστροφής Μεταναστών και Ανάπτυξης του Ευρωπαϊκού Πανεπιστημιακού Ινστιτούτου:
http://rsc.eui.eu/RDP/research/analyses/ra/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007358/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Bilateral readmission agreements between Member States

Readmission agreements have been a focal point of a common European policy on migration. Nevertheless, while a lot of research and development has been conducted on readmission agreements between Member States and third countries, there is a plethora of bilateral agreements solely between EU countries, such as the agreements between Italy and Austria (1 April 1998), Italy and Greece (18 April 2001) or the agreement between Italy and Malta (29 November 2002).

In view of the above, will the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Are such bilateral agreements between Member States compatible with existing European legislation, such as the Schengen Code and Convention or the asylum *acquis* concerning the allocation of responsibility between Member States?

2. Given that these agreements were signed before the legislation referred to above, are they still valid today? If so, does the Commission have a regularly updated inventory of, and is it monitoring, all bilateral agreements linked to readmission concluded between Member States?

3. If not, can the Commission say whether it intends to compile such data?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

According to Article 6(1) of the Return Directive 2008/115/EC, irregularly staying third-country nationals should — as a matter of principle — be returned directly to a third country and not to another Member State. There are, however, two exceptions to this rule:

— Article 6(2) provides that third-country nationals staying illegally on the territory of a Member State and holding a valid permit of another Member State shall be required to go to the territory of that other Member State immediately.

— Article 6(3) provides that Member States may refrain from issuing a return decision to a third-country national staying illegally on their territory if the third-country national concerned is taken back by another Member State under a bilateral readmission agreement existing on the date of entry into force of this directive (13.1.2011).

It results that the application of bilateral readmission agreements which entered into force before the cut-off date of 13.1.2011 are compatible with the Return Directive, whilst the application of subsequently concluded agreements would be incompatible

An exhaustive and updated overview of all readmission agreements between Member States is publicly available at the Return Migration and Development Platform of the European University Institute:
http://rsc.eui.eu/RDP/research/analyses/ra/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007359/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(21 juin 2013)

Objet: Entreprises du tourisme balnéaire

Les entreprises du tourisme balnéaire ont connu un essor important ces dernières années en Europe avec le changement des habitudes du tourisme (période de vacances plus étalées) mais également de la population locale (effets de mode, climat plus doux). Ces entreprises jouent un rôle important dans la gestion des côtes européennes et particulièrement en Méditerranée. Par leur localisation, elles sont soumises à des contraintes naturelles importantes (marées, salinisation, désensablement, etc.) et également urbanistiques (pour la préservation du littoral).

Les entreprises du tourisme balnéaire jouent un rôle social important puisqu'elles emploient un nombre considérable de personnes dans les microrégions et qu'elles tentent également depuis quelques années de lutter contre la saisonnalité de leur activité. Les retombées indirectes sur les économies locales ne sont pas négligeables et se doivent d'être évaluées. De plus, la présence des établissements balnéaires permet également, en collaboration avec les mairies, une gestion des mers et des océans et aussi d'assurer la sécurité de ces lieux (par la surveillance et par la limitation du nombre de personnes sur la plage).

L'Europe doit venir aider ses entreprises dans plusieurs domaines.

La Commission envisage-t-elle:

1. d'appuyer les autorités locales pour la sauvegarde des côtes afin d'éviter le désensablement grâce à la création de digues (en surface ou sous-marines), afin de préserver le littoral et les activités économiques des entreprises qui y sont établies?

2. de soutenir, à travers les différents fonds communautaires, les activités des entreprises du tourisme balnéaire pour favoriser les emplois à durée indéterminée, l'embauche des personnes moins qualifiées mais également pour promouvoir des formations de qualité dans ce domaine?

3. de favoriser un service de qualité au niveau européen à travers une certification ou un label?

4. enfin, de répertorier l'ensemble des acteurs du secteur (les entreprises et les associations) afin de promouvoir les bonnes pratiques?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(9 août 2013)

La Commission a déjà reconnu l'importance du tourisme côtier et maritime; selon elle, cette forme de tourisme recèle l'un des plus importants potentiels d'emploi et de croissance (voir le programme en faveur de la croissance bleue ([1])).

1. Différents programmes de l'Union offrent des possibilités de financement à l'appui des investissements destinés à assurer la durabilité et la protection des zones côtières; c'est le cas, notamment, du Fonds européen pour la pêche ([2]), de LIFE+ ([3]) ou des Fonds structurels ([4]).

([1]) Communication de la Commission intitulée «La croissance bleue: des possibilités de croissance durable dans les secteurs marin et maritime», COM(2012) 494 final du 13.9.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/reform/emff/index_fr.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm
([4]) Le tourisme n'est pas directement cité parmi les investissements prioritaires qui contribuent à la stratégie de l'Union pour une croissance intelligente, durable et inclusive (ces investissements constituent, en effet, des moyens plutôt que des objectifs). Toutefois, les investissements dans le tourisme peuvent avoir une incidence positive sur l'économie pour autant qu'ils reposent sur des stratégies de développement économiquement justifiées. Les investissements dans le domaine du tourisme peuvent, par conséquent, être financés au titre d'un certain nombre de priorités, telles qu'elles sont énoncées à l'article 5 du projet de règlement FEDER. Parmi ces priorités, figurent les investissements dans le tourisme qui contribuent à la recherche et à l'innovation, au renforcement de la croissance et de la compétitivité des PME, à la valorisation du patrimoine culturel et naturel et à la protection de l'emploi grâce au développement du potentiel endogène.

2. L'aide en faveur des investissements dans le tourisme restera un domaine d'activité des futurs programmes opérationnels relevant des Fonds structurels et d'investissement européens, si lesdits investissements ont un lien avec les objectifs et les priorités thématiques des fonds ([5]) et avec les enjeux mentionnés dans les recommandations spécifiques à chaque pays. La future politique de cohésion ([6]) et des modes de financement innovants ([7]) revêtiront, à ce titre, une importance capitale. Ces possibilités de financement, ainsi que les financements prévus au titre des programmes d'action en matière d'emploi et d'éducation, peuvent donc être utilisés, s'il y a lieu, pour soutenir les initiatives contribuant à mettre en place des formations de qualité, y compris dans le domaine du tourisme balnéaire.

3. La Commission a l'intention de créer un label européen général à caractère volontaire pour les systèmes de qualité dans le secteur du tourisme (label ETQ) afin d'aider les entreprises à gagner la confiance des consommateurs séjournant dans l'Union. Elle encourage ainsi les entreprises à continuer d'investir en vue d'offrir des services de qualité.

4. La Commission encourage déjà les échanges de bonnes pratiques dans le domaine du tourisme côtier et maritime. En outre, elle envisage de publier un document sur les enjeux et les perspectives de cette forme de tourisme dans l'Union afin d'en pérenniser la croissance économique et d'en accroître la compétitivité globale.

([5]) Il est particulièrement important que ces investissements soient inclus dans des stratégies de développement locales et intégrées et qu'ils soient économiquement justifiés (incidence sur la croissance et l'emploi et viabilité à long terme).

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=232&langId=fr

([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007359/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Seaside tourism companies

Seaside tourism companies in Europe have seen significant growth over the past few years due to changes in demand by tourists (longer holiday period) and also the local population (current fashions and a warmer climate). These companies play a key role in managing European coasts, particularly in the Mediterranean. Their location means that they are subject to significant natural constraints (tides, salinisation, sand erosion etc.), as well as planning constraints (preservation of the shoreline).

Seaside tourism companies play a key social role since they employ a large number of people in micro-regions and have also attempted over the past few years to move away from seasonal employment. The indirect implications for local economies are significant and should be evaluated. Furthermore, seaside resorts are in a position to work together with municipal councils to ensure that the resorts are safe by putting in place surveillance measures and limiting the number of people on the beach.

Europe should provide assistance for these companies in various areas.

Is the Commission planning:

1. to support local authorities in their efforts to protect coasts by building embankments (surface or underwater) to prevent sand erosion, in order to preserve the shoreline and the economic activities of the companies based there?

2. to use the various EU funds to support the activities of seaside tourism companies in order to promote permanent employment and the recruitment of less-qualified people, and also to promote high-quality training in this area?

3. to introduce certification or a label at European level to encourage the provision of a high-quality service?

4. finally, to draw up a list of all stakeholders in the sector (companies and associations) in order to promote best practices?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The Commission has already acknowledged the importance of coastal and maritime tourism and identified it as one of the key areas for future jobs and development for the Blue Growth agenda ([1]).

1. Funding opportunities for investments geared to ensure the sustainability and protection of coastal areas are available under different EU programmes, including the European Fund for Fisheries ([2]), LIFE+ ([3]) or the Structural Funds ([4]).

([1]) Commission Communication 'Blue Growth: opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth' COM(2012)494 final of 13.09.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/reform/emff/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm
([4]) Tourism is not directly mentioned among the investment priorities contributing to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as they constitute means rather than objectives. However, tourism investments can have a positive impact on the economy provided they are grounded in development strategies with a sound economic rationale. Investments in the field of tourism can, thus, be supported under a number of investment priorities, as set out in Article 5 of the draft ERDF regulation. These priorities include investments in tourism which contribute to research and innovation, enhancing the growth and competitiveness of SMEs, development of culture and natural heritage and promoting employment through development of endogenous potential.

2. Support for tourism investments continues to be a potential activity area of the future Operational Programmes under the European Structural and Investment Funds, if they are connected to the thematic priorities and objectives of the funds ([5]) and challenges identified in the country-specific recommendations. The future Cohesion Policy ([6]) as well as innovative financing ([7]) will be central in this sense. These funding opportunities, as well as funding under the employment and education policy areas, can therefore be used, where appropriate, to support initiatives promoting high-quality training including in the field of seaside tourism.

3. The Commission intends to establish a voluntary umbrella European Label for Tourism Quality Schemes (ETQ Label) to help businesses gain the trust of consumers visiting the EU, thus enhancing their benefits to further invest in service quality.

4. The Commission already encourages the exchange of best practice in the field of coastal and maritime tourism. Furthermore, with a view to promoting the sustainable economic growth of the maritime and coastal tourism sector and enhancing its overall competitiveness, the Commission envisages publishing a document on the challenges and opportunities for maritime and coastal tourism in the EU.

([5]) It is of particular importance that these investments are embedded in integrated, place-based development strategies and that they have a sound economic rationale in terms of their growth and jobs impact and long-term sustainability.

([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=232&langId=en.

([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/biodiversity/pdf/BD_Finance_summary-300312.pdf

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-007360/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(21 Meitheamh 2013)

Ábhar: Cearta daoine faoi mhíchumas in AE

Tá duine amháin as gach seachtar atá in aois fostaíochta faoi mhíchumas, agus níl ach 40 % díobh siúd fostaithe. Níl sé de chumas ag 43.7 % díobh siúd nach bhfuil fostaithe obair a dhéanamh gan cúnamh éigin a bheith ar fáil dóibh, ach dá mbeadh cúnamh cuí ar fáil bheidís níos mó ná sásta obair a ghlacadh.

Céard atá á dhéanamh ag an gCoimisiún faoi Straitéis Fostaíochta na hEorpa chun dul i ngleic le saincheist na dífhostaíochta i measc daoine faoi mhíchumas?

Cén dul chun cinn atá déanta ag an gCoimisiún maidir le creat i dtaca le cruthú fostaíochta a chur i bhfeidhm san earnáil Sláinte agus Chúraim Shóisialta?

Ó thaobh an liúntais cúnaimh de, an bhfuil sé i gceist ag an gCoimisiún straitéis a chur i bhfeidhm chun infheistíocht a dhéanamh i seirbhísí míchumais ar mhaithe le fostaíocht a spreagadh, mar atá leagtha amach i bPacáiste Fostaíochta 2012?

An bhfuil straitéis ag an gCoimisiún i dtaca le sainmhíniú comónta amháin ar 'mhíchumas' a shocrú idir na Ballstáit, mar atá sa Straitéis Eorpach um Míchumas, chun cloí lena bhfuil i gCoinbhinsiún NA ar Chearta Daoine faoi Mhíchumas, a síníodh sa bhliain 2007?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Andor thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(12 Lúnasa 2013)

Sna Treoirlínte Fostaíochta tugtar aghaidh ar dhaoine atá faoi mhíchumas a imeascadh sa mhargadh fostaíochta. Sa Seimeastar Eorpach, déanann an Coimisiún faireachán ar fheidhmíocht na mBallstát i dtaca le cuspóirí na Straitéise Eoraip 2020 a bhaint amach. Chun an ráta fostaíochta a ardú go dtí 75 % tá sé tábhachtach an rannpháirtíocht iomlán sa mhargadh fostaíochta a mhéadú, lena n-áirítear rannpháirtíocht na ndaoine sin is faide ón margadh fostaíochta.

Sa Phlean Gníomhaíochta ón gCoimisiún maidir le Lucht Saothair Sláinte an AE beartaítear bearta praiticiúla chun cabhrú leis na Ballstáit dul i ngleic leis na dúshláin atá roimh an earnáil chúraim sláinte agus borradh a chur faoin bhfostaíocht. Tá tús curtha le Gníomhaíocht Chomhpháirteach chun riachtanais i ndáil le lucht saothair sláinte a thuar agus chun pleanáil ina leith. Ina theannta sin, déanann an Coimisiún staidéir ar straitéisí earcaíochta agus coinneála agus ar fhorbairt ghairmiúil leanúnach.

Sa Phacáiste Fostaíochta sainaithnítear réimsí ina bhféadfaí athchóirithe a dhéanamh ar an margadh fostaíochta ionas go mbeidh margadh fostaíochta an AE níos uilechuimsithí agus áitítear ar na Ballstáit beartais náisiúnta fostaíochta a threisiú trí dhálaí cruthaithe fostaíochta ina gcuimseofar gach duine a chruthú. Sa phacáiste infheistíochta sóisialta ón gCoimisiún cuirtear comhairle beartais ar fáil i dtaobh tacaíocht a chur in oiriúint do ghrúpaí a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta acu, e.g. daoine faoi mhíchumas, ionas go mbeidh rath ar straitéisí cuimsitheacha gníomhacha.

Sa Straitéis Eorpach maidir le Míchumas tá bearta chun fostú daoine atá faoi mhíchumas a éascú. Cothaíonn an Coimisiún Cistí Struchtúrtha an AE chun tacú le bearta mar sin. Is faoi inniúlacht na mBallstát atá sé na sainithe agus na critéir maidir le míchumas a chinneadh. Cé nach dtugtar sainiú faoi leith ar mhíchumas sa Choinbhinsiún ar Chearta Daoine faoi Mhíchumas (UNCRPD), déantar soiléiriú in Airteagal 1 ar choincheap an mhíchumais nach mór do na Ballstáit ar fad a bhfuil an UNCRPD daingnithe acu, chomh maith leis an AE, cloí leis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007360/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: The rights of persons with disabilities in the EU

One in seven of working-age people suffer from a disability, and only 40% of those are employed. Of those non-working persons, 43.7% need some form of assistance to work and if appropriate assistance were provided they would be more than happy to take up a job.

What action is being taken by the Commission under the European Employment Strategy to address the issue of unemployment among persons with disabilities?

What progress has been made by the Commission in implementing a framework for job creation in the Health and Social Care sector?

As regards the assistance allowance, does the Commission intend to implement an employment promotion strategy to allow for investment in services for disabled persons, as set out in the 2012 Employment Package?

Does the Commission have a strategy for establishing a single common definition for 'disability' in the Member States, as in the European Disability Strategy, in order to comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities signed in 2007?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

The Employment Guidelines address the integration of people with disabilities in the labour market. In the European Semester, the Commission monitors the Member States' performance in achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy. In order to raise the employment rate to 75% it is important to increase the overall labour market participation, including of those furthest from the labour market.

The Commission Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce proposes practical measures to help Member States tackle the challenges facing the healthcare sector and boost employment. A Joint Action on health workforce forecasting and planning has kicked off. In addition, the Commission carries out studies of recruitment and retention strategies and of continouous professional development.

The Employment Package identifies areas for labour market reforms in order for the EU labour market to become more inclusive and urges Member States to strengthen national employment policies by creating the conditions for job creation for all. The Commission's social investment package provides policy advice in terms of tailoring support with regard to groups with special needs, e.g. disabled persons, to help active inclusion strategies succeed.

The European Disability Strategy includes measures to facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities. The Commission encourages the use of EU Structural Funds to support such measures. The definitions and criteria for determining disability are a matter of Member State competence. While the UNCRPD does not provide a definition of disability as such, Article 1 of the UNCRPD clarifies the concept of disability which is to be respected by all Member States which have ratified the UNCRPD as well as by the EU.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007361/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(21 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Implicarea fermierilor

Există aproape un miliard de oameni care suferă de foame în lume și un alt un miliard de oameni subnutriți, majoritatea femei, copii și mici agricultori. Așa cum a fost relatat de curând pe larg de către Organizația Națiunilor Unite pentru Alimentație și Agricultură (FAO), producția agricolă mondială trebuie să crească cu 70% până în 2050 pentru a satisface cererea a peste 9 miliarde de oameni.

Agricultura, datorită naturii sale specifice, este unul dintre sectoarele cele mai afectate de schimbările climatice și, în consecință, securitatea alimentară este și ea afectată.

Politica agricolă reprezintă un mecanism-cheie în asigurarea siguranței alimentare, dezvoltarea durabilă a zonelor rurale și, totodată, în combaterea sărăciei. Un rol esențial în securitatea alimentară poate și trebuie să fie jucat de agricultura practicată la scară mică și medie, o resursă care nu este prețuită suficient și care ar trebui să fie un furnizor alimentar important de pe piață.

Prin urmare, agricultura practicată la scară mare trebuie să coexiste cu agricultura mică și mijlocie, având în vedere că acestea din urmă implică un număr mare de fermieri, în special în țările care nu au suficientă mâncare.

Obiectivul comun este acela de a îmbunătăți accesul la cunoștințe și piețe, pentru a realiza o dezvoltare durabilă a acestor zone, care ar putea reduce foametea în întreaga lume.

Noua PAC are ca scop punerea în aplicare a practicilor agricole durabile, precum și a unor politici de dezvoltare rurală adaptate la diversitatea provocărilor locale.

Ținând cont de această situație, are în vedere Comisia crearea unor instrumente reactive de gestionare a pieței, adaptate la o varietate de sectoare și teritorii, cu o implicare mai bună și mai responsabilă a fermierilor și a organizațiilor lor, astfel încât pe viitor să se evite situațiile menționate?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(5 august 2013)

Mecanismele de gestionare a pieței în cadrul PAC au evoluat în mod considerabil de la începuturile acesteia și sunt în prezent considerate un mijloc de a le oferi fermierilor o „plasă de siguranță” în perioadele de distorsiuni grave ale pieței. Necesitatea ca agricultura UE să fie mai orientată către piață a determinat mutarea accentului PAC de la sprijinirea prețurilor prin intermediul intervenției pe piață către sprijinirea producătorilor prin intermediul plăților directe, precum și acordarea unei importanțe mai mari sustenabilității mediului și a teritoriilor prin intermediul măsurilor de dezvoltare rurală.

Modificările prezente ale PAC, convenite la nivel politic pentru perioada 2014-2020, vor permite îmbunătățirea în continuare a competitivității agriculturii UE, în special prin încetarea măsurilor care limitează producția și prin eliminarea anumitor scheme de ajutor care influențează în mod artificial deciziile producătorilor. Va crește, de asemenea, finanțarea pentru cercetare și inovare, pentru a sprijini creșterea productivității agriculturii UE în mod durabil. Sunt introduse, de asemenea, măsuri privind facilitarea cooperării producătorilor și de-a lungul lanțului de aprovizionare. În ansamblu, noua PAC ar trebui să fie mai axată către sustenabilitatea economică și ecologică a agriculturii UE, printr-o mai bună direcționare a plăților directe (de exemplu, plata de bază și plata pentru ecologizare). Aceste modificări ar trebui să asigure contribuția agriculturii UE la securitatea alimentară în mod durabil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007361/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Involvement of farmers

Around one billion people in the world are suffering from hunger and another billion are undernourished. Most of those affected are women, children and small farmers. According to a recent detailed study by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), a 70% increase in global agricultural production must be achieved by 2050 in order to feed a population of over 9 billion.

Given its specific nature, agriculture is one of the sectors most affected by climate change. This has major implications for the security of food supply.

Agricultural policy is a key factor in safeguarding food supplies, ensuring sustainable growth in rural areas and combating poverty. Small- and medium-scale agriculture, the importance of which is currently underestimated, has an essential role to play in this regard and should accordingly be helped to develop into major market supplier.

Effectively this means that large-scale agriculture must exist alongside small and medium-scale agriculture, which accounts for a large number of farmers, particularly in countries afflicted by food shortages, the common objective being to improve access to know-how and secure additional market openings with a view to achieving sustainable growth in these areas and thus reducing hunger in the world.

Given that the aim of the new CAP is the implementation of sustainable farming practices and rural development policies adapted to the challenges arising at local level, does the Commission intend to introduce a market management mechanism adapted to a variety of sectors and geographical areas so as to ensure the more effective and responsible involvement of farmers and their organisations and thus prevent the situation described above occurring in future?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

Market management mechanisms under the CAP have evolved considerably since its beginnings and are at present considered as a means to provide farmers a safety net in times of severe market distortions. The shift in focus of the CAP from price support through market intervention to producer support through direct payments, while placing greater emphasis on environmental and territorial sustainability through rural development measures, was driven by the need to make EU agriculture more market oriented.

The present changes to the CAP agreed at political level for the 2014-2020 period will enable further improvements in the competitiveness of EU agriculture, notably by ending remaining production limitations, abolishing certain aid schemes that artificially influence producers' decisions., It will also increase financing for research and innovation to support productivity growth of EU agriculture in a sustainable manner. Measures to facilitate cooperation amongst producers and along the supply chain are also introduced. Overall, the new CAP should be more focused towards longer term economic and environmental sustainability of EU agriculture through better targeting direct payments (e.g. basic and greening payments). These changes should ensure the contribution of EU agriculture to food security in a sustainable way.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007362/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Degradação do ambiente político em Moçambique II

— O Deputado signatário apresentou à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante uma pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004151/2013.

— Na resposta dada pela Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão, foi dito que se «espera que as eleições locais previstas para novembro deste ano e as eleições legislativas e presidenciais em outubro de 2014 se realizem de forma pacífica» e que será enviada «uma missão de acompanhamento para analisar a aplicação das recomendações da Missão de Observação Eleitoral da UE de 2009 e os preparativos para as eleições em Moçambique».

— Na sua resposta, a Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante referiu ainda que «espera que os debates sirvam para encontrar uma forma de ultrapassar o boicote anunciado pela Renamo», e que «as ameaças à realização das eleições não são aceitáveis».

— As notícias mais recentes dão conta de uma tensão constante entre o Governo da Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) e a Renamo, que se tem agravado à medida que se aproximam as eleições.

— A Renamo pretende a renegociação dos acordos de paz de 1992 e contesta as leis eleitorais aprovadas pela maioria da Frelimo, nomeadamente a composição da Comissão Nacional de Eleições, e ameaça boicotar a consulta.

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Como avalia a evolução do quadro de tensão política em Moçambique?

É da opinião que a realização das eleições legislativas e presidenciais no próximo mês de outubro, e locais no próximo mês de novembro poderá estar comprometida?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(19 de agosto de 2013)

Nos últimos três meses assistiu-se a uma escalada da tensão política em Moçambique. Esta tensão ocorre no contexto das eleições locais de 2013 e das eleições gerais de 2014 em Moçambique e pode ser ligada ao declínio político do principal partido da oposição, a Renamo, e ao posicionamento para a sucessão do Presidente Guebuza dentro do partido no poder, a Frelimo. A tensão também é alimentada por um sentimento de exclusão por parte daqueles que não beneficiam com a transição para uma economia baseada nos recursos naturais e consequentes taxas de crescimento rápidas.

Estão a ser envidados esforços nacionais e internacionais, por meio de múltiplos canais de comunicação, no intuito de aliviar a tensão, em particular para evitar a violência, e de encontrar uma solução para o atual impasse político. A UE apoia os esforços para ajudar o Governo e a Renamo a ultrapassarem os diferendos através do diálogo.

A Missão de Observação Eleitoral da UE visitou o país de 22 de maio a 16 de junho de 2013 e reuniu-se com vários intervenientes no processo eleitoral: partidos políticos, serviços de organização das eleições, deputados e membros do Governo, meios de comunicação social, organizações da sociedade civil e instituições e agentes governamentais e não governamentais. A missão da UE apresentou uma avaliação do processo eleitoral e propostas pragmáticas para a preparação das eleições que se aproximam.

A UE continuará a envidar todos os esforços para apoiar o exercício do direito de voto num ambiente calmo e pacífico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007362/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Deteriorating political situation in Mozambique II

I have previously submitted a question for written answer to the Vice-President/High Representative (E-004151/2013) on this issue.

In the answer given by the Vice-President/High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the Commission, she said that she 'hopes that local elections due in November this year and parliamentary and presidential elections due in October 2014 will take place peacefully' and that she would be 'sending a follow-up mission to review the implementation of the recommendations of the 2009 EU Election Observation Mission and the preparations for elections in Mozambique.'

In her answer, the Vice-President/High Representative also stated that she 'hopes that discussions can find a way to overcome Renamo's announced boycott' and that 'threats to the holding of the elections are not acceptable.'

According to the latest reports, there is constant tension between the Frelimo (Mozambique Liberation Front) Government and Renamo (Mozambican National Resistance), which is mounting as the elections approach.

Renamo is seeking to renegotiate the 1992 peace agreements and disputes the electoral laws adopted by the Frelimo majority, and in particular the composition of the National Electoral Committee, and is threatening to boycott the elections.

What does the Vice-President/High Representative's think of the mounting political tension in Mozambique?

Does she think that the parliamentary and presidential elections to be held in October 2014, and the local elections due in November this year, could be compromised?

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

The last three months have witnessed mounting political tension in Mozambique. This tension takes place in the context of the 2013 local and 2014 general elections in Mozambique, and could be linked to the political decline of the main opposition party Renamo and the positioning for the succession of President Guebuza within the ruling Frelimo party. Tension is fed as well by a sense of exclusion from those not benefiting from the transition to a natural resource based economy and the ensuing rapid growth rates.

National and international efforts are being made and multiple channels of communication used, to defuse tension, in particular to avoid violence, and to resolve the current political stalemate. The EU is supporting efforts to help the Government and the Renamo should settle their differences through dialogue.

The EU elections follow-up mission (EFM) visited the country from 22 May to 16 June 2013 and met with various stakeholders in the electoral process: political parties, election management bodies, members of parliament and government, the media, civil society organisations and governmental and non-governmental institutions and actors. The EU EFM provided an assessment of the electoral process and pragmatic proposals on preparations for the up-coming elections.

The EU will continue to make every effort to support the holding of right of elections in a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007363/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau — situação grave de fome

O representante especial do secretário-geral da ONU, Ramos Horta, declarou recentemente que a situação política na Guiné-Bissau está estável, mas alertou que se a ajuda alimentar não voltar a chegar, vai haver situações de fome nas próximas semanas, quando as chuvas tornam muitas regiões intransitáveis.

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Tem acompanhado esta situação?

Como pode a UE contribuir para prevenir esta situação?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(12 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente da deterioração da segurança alimentar na Guiné-Bissau e acompanha de perto a situação, enquanto aguarda pelos resultados de uma avaliação global da segurança alimentar e da vulnerabilidade (CFSVA). Esta avaliação vai ser efetuada pelo Programa Alimentar Mundial das Nações Unidas e pela FAO ao nível nacional e o seu objeto é fazer o retrato de conjunto da insegurança alimentar, identificar as populações vulneráveis e as regiões em que se encontram e definir o tipo adequado de assistência a prestar. A Comissão está pronta a fornecer assistência à luz dos resultados da CFSVA.

A Comissão está também a preparar dois novos programas cujo objetivo é atacar as causas profundas da desnutrição e da vulnerabilidade às crises alimentares na Guiné-Bissau, aumentando a produção alimentar, apoiando cadeias de valor agrícolas selecionadas e acrescentando valor à pequena produção agrícola. Está igualmente previsto o apoio à criação de um sistema aperfeiçoado de alerta rápido nas áreas da segurança alimentar e da nutrição, no intuito de se obterem dados mais rigorosos sobre a evolução da situação em termos de segurança alimentar, que contará com a participação de agências das Nações Unidas e de organismos nacionais de estatística especializados e estará acessível a todos os interessados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007363/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Serious famine in Guinea-Bissau

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, José Ramos-Horta, recently stated that the political situation in Guinea-Bissau was stable, but warned that if food aid did not arrive people would starve in the coming weeks, when rain would make many regions impassable.

Has the Vice-President/High Representative been monitoring this situation?

How can the EU help prevent this situation?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the deteriorating food security status in Guinea Bissau and is closely monitoring the situation. The Commission is currently awaiting the outcome of a Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA). The CFSVA is planned to be undertaken by the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) at national level in order to have a broader picture of food insecurity, to identify the number and the locations of vulnerable populations and define the appropriate type of assistance which should be provided. The Commission is ready to assist on the basis of the findings of the CFSVA.

At the same time, the Commission is currently preparing two new programmes aiming at addressing the root causes of malnutrition and vulnerability to food crisis in Guinea Bissau by increasing food production, supporting selected agricultural value chains and adding value to smallholder agricultural production. It is also foreseen to support the set-up of an improved early warning system for food security and nutrition, involving UN agencies and national specialized statistic bodies, in order to have more accurate information about the evolution of the food security situation, which will be accessible to all the stakeholders.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007364/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Refugiados e deslocados no Mundo

Considerando que:

— Foi divulgado recentemente o relatório do Alto Comissariado das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados — «ACNUR, Tendências Globais 2012»;

— De acordo com este documento, no final de 2012, o número total de exilados dentro ou fora dos seus países alcançou os 45,2 milhões — que inclui 15,4 milhões de refugiados, 937 000 requerentes de asilo e 28,8 milhões de deslocados internos, o que representa um crescimento em relação aos 42,5 milhões registados no ano anterior;

— As crianças deverão representar cerca de 46 % do total de refugiados.

Pergunto à Vice-Presidente/Alta-Representante:

Qual a política que tem vindo a ser seguida pela UE relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por Kristalina Georgieva em nome da Comissão
(22 de agosto de 2013)

As crianças estão no cerne do trabalho humanitário da UE. 12 % do orçamento humanitário da UE destinam-se a organizações humanitárias que desenvolvem atividades de proteção de crianças, apoio psicossocial, sensibilização para o risco da existência de minas, ações contra o recrutamento de crianças-soldados, bem como programas alimentares destinados a crianças em campos de refugiados. Em 2012, só a projetos do Fundo das Nações Unidas para a Infância (Unicef) e da Save the Children a UE deu mais de 128 milhões de euros.

A ação da Comissão baseia-se no documento de trabalho de 2008 sobre as crianças em situações de emergência ([1]) e nas Diretrizes sobre as Crianças e os Conflitos Armados. A Comissão está também a desenvolver novos instrumentos para promover e acompanhar projetos humanitários que têm em conta a idade dos destinatários, dando especial atenção às necessidades específicas das raparigas e dos rapazes.

A UE destinou o Prémio Nobel da Paz que recebeu em 2012 à ajuda de crianças que crescem em conflitos armados ou são por eles deslocadas. Através da iniciativa Crianças da Paz, a UE apoia neste momento crianças sírias refugiadas no Iraque, crianças deslocadas na Etiópia e na República Democrática do Congo, bem como crianças deslocadas por conflitos no Paquistão e na Colômbia.

Em 2012, cerca de 30 % de todos os requerentes de asilo e pessoas que receberam proteção internacional na UE eram crianças. O Sistema Europeu Comum de Asilo estabelece condições de acolhimento que têm em conta a situação das crianças, incluindo disposições especiais aplicáveis a menores não acompanhados. Além disso, o Gabinete Europeu de Apoio em matéria de Asilo pode promover boas práticas harmonizadas no domínio do apoio às crianças e o Fundo Europeu para os Refugiados prevê assistência especial para a reinstalação de crianças em risco e menores não acompanhados.

([1]) SEC(2008) 136.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007364/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Refugees and displaced persons around the world

The report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 'UNHCR, Global Trends 2012' was recently published.

According to the report, by the end of 2012 there was a total of 45.2 million refugees within or outside their own countries — which included 15.4 million refugees, 937 000 asylum-seekers and 28.8 million internally displaced persons, up from the 42.5 million recorded the previous year.

Children account for around 46% of all refugees.

What policy has the EU been pursuing on this issue?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

Children are at the heart of the EU's humanitarian work. 12% of the EU humanitarian budget goes to child-focused relief organisations for child protection activities, psycho-social support, mine risk education, actions against the recruitment of child soldiers as well as children-supported nutrition programmes in refugee camps. In 2012 the EU gave over EUR 128 million to projects implemented by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) and Save the Children alone.

The Commission action is based on the 2008 Staff Working Document on Children in Emergency and Crisis Situations ([1]) and the Guidelines on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts. The Commission is also developing new tools to foster and track age-sensitive humanitarian projects, bringing attention to the specific needs of girls and boys.

The EU has dedicated its 2012 Nobel Peace Prize award to help children who are growing up in, or are displaced by, conflicts. Through the EU Children of Peace initiative, the EU currently support Syrian refugee children in Iraq, displaced children in Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as children displaced by conflict in Pakistan and Colombia.

In 2012 about 30% of all asylum-seekers and persons granted international protection in the EU were children. The Common European Asylum System provides for child-sensitive reception conditions including special provisions for unaccompanied minors. In addition to this, the European Asylum Support Office can promote best and harmonised practices on child related issues and the European Refugee Fund foresees special assistance for the resettlement of children at risk and unaccompanied minors.

([1]) SEC(2008) 136.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007365/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Saúde mental e carência económica

Considerando que:

— Vários estudos internacionais relacionam períodos de crise e desemprego com aumento da incidência de problemas do foro mental;

— Em Portugal, de acordo com o relatório do Observatório Português dos Sistemas de Saúde, e com base em dados de um estudo realizado na Unidade Local de Saúde do Alto Minho, entre 2011 e 2012, os casos de depressão nesta unidade aumentaram 30 % (de 8735 casos para 11 432), as tentativas de suicídio dispararam 35 % nos homens e 47 % nas mulheres, e a nível nacional, a aquisição de antidepressivos e estabilizadores de humor aumentou 7,6 % em 2012;

— Segundo o coordenador nacional para a saúde mental, «sobretudo as pessoas com problemas crónicos e tendencialmente incapacitantes de saúde mental estão a faltar mais do que era comum às consultas», e «em alguns casos, esses doentes abandonaram ou diminuíram significativamente as medicações».

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que avaliação faz da situação descrita?

Quais os dados de que dispõe, a nível europeu, sobre o aumento dos casos de depressão e problemas do foro mental?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(13 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento das provas científicas que sugerem que existem relações fortes entre problemas de saúde mental, crise económica e desemprego. A Comissão está igualmente ciente do impacto adverso que as doenças mentais podem ter na adesão ao tratamento.

Melhorar a adesão ao tratamento e aos planos médicos é o objetivo de um dos seis grupos de ação temáticos estabelecidos no âmbito da parceria de inovação europeia para um envelhecimento ativo e saudável, uma parceria assente na colaboração entre as partes interessadas, no âmbito da qual foram apresentados mais de 500 compromissos voluntários no domínio da realização de ações tendentes a fazer aumentar de dois anos, até 2020, a duração média de vida saudável dos cidadãos da UE.

No que se refere à evolução do número de casos de depressão e dos problemas de saúde mental, a Comissão não tem dados sistemáticos disponíveis a nível da UE. Apenas estão disponíveis dados não atualizados que continuam a ser particularmente limitados no domínio da saúde mental. Uma primeira vaga de dados sobre saúde mental do Inquérito Europeu por Entrevista relativo à Saúde, abrangendo dezassete países, foi recolhida entre 2006 e 2009. Uma segunda vaga está prevista para 2014, embora com questões um pouco diferentes.

Os dados sobre o número de suicídios, frequentemente associados a problemas de saúde mental, estão disponíveis relativamente a 27 Estados-Membros, até 2010. Estes revelam aumentos, de 9,9 para 10,4 casos, por 100 000 cidadãos na UE-27 entre 2007 e 2009. No ano seguinte a 2010, verificou-se uma ligeira diminuição para 10,2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007365/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Mental health and financial hardship

According to several international studies, the incidence of mental illness increases in times of crisis and unemployment.

In Portugal, according to a report by the Portuguese Health Systems Observatory, and based on data from a study carried out in the Alto Minho Local Health Authority area, between 2011 and 2012, cases of depression in that area went up by 30% (from 8 735 cases to 11 432), there were 35% more suicide attempts in men and 47% more in women, and nationally, prescriptions for antidepressants and mood stabilisers went up by 7.6% in 2012.

According to the national mental health coordinator, people with chronic mental health problems that tend to be incapacitating are most likely to miss check-ups more than usual and, in some cases, these patients have stopped taking their medication or have significantly cut down how much they take.

What is the Commission's assessment of this situation?

What figures does it have on the rise in the number of cases of depression and mental health problems in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the scientific evidence suggesting that strong links exist between mental health problems, economic crisis and unemployment. The Commission is also aware of the adverse impact which mental disorders may have on adherence to treatment.

Improving adherence to treatment and medical plans is the objective of one of the 6 thematic Action Groups established under the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, a collaborative stakeholder-driven partnership under which more than 500 voluntary commitments for action to increase the average healthy lifespan of EU citizens by two years by 2020 have been submitted.

As regards developments in the number of cases of depression and mental health problems, the Commission has no systematic data available at EU-level. Data are only available with a delay and are still particularly limited for the field of mental health. A first wave of data on mental health from the European Health Interview Survey, covering seventeen countries, was collected between 2006 and 2009. A second wave is planned for 2014, however with slightly different questions.

Data on suicides, which are often linked to mental health problems, are available until 2010 for 27 Member States. These show increases from 9.9 to 10.4 cases per 100,000 citizens in the EU-27 between 2007 and 2009. In the following year to 2010, there was a slight decrease of the rate to 10.2.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007366/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Anomalias meteorológicas na Europa

Um grupo de cientistas britânicos reuniu recentemente na sede da agência meteorológica do Reino Unido — o *Met Office* — para discutir as possíveis razões das condições anormais do tempo na Europa nos últimos anos.

Recentemente, milhares de pessoas na Áustria, República Checa, Alemanha e Suíça receberam ordem para abandonar as suas casas, por causa das inundações e de outros riscos associados às cheias históricas que assolaram vastas áreas do centro da Europa, em resultado do efeito acumulado de dias consecutivos de chuvas torrenciais.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

De que forma tem a Comissão acompanhado a evolução das oscilações climáticas no continente europeu?

Tem conhecimento das conclusões alcançadas na referida reunião?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

Eventos hidrológicos extremos em toda a Europa implicam riscos elevados para a sociedade uma vez que são frequentemente causa de graves danos ambientais e económicos e da perda de vidas humanas.

As previsões e alertas rápidos contam-se entre as prioridades do Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Atividades de Investigação, Desenvolvimento Tecnológico e Demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013), nomeadamente do seu Tema «Ambiente». Esta questão foi abordada especificamente num recente convite à apresentação de propostas relativo a previsões de sazonais a decenais, com vista a melhorar as capacidades de previsão dos sistemas de previsão operacionais a escalas temporais de meses a anos. Os projetos selecionados (Naclim, SPECS e Euporias) têm uma componente de monitorização específica e estão a analisar a variabilidade climática e as tendências à escala regional. O Serviço de Meteorologia do Reino Unido é uma das instituições líderes nestes consórcios, estando pois assegurado o intercâmbio regular de informações sobre alterações climáticas e seus impactos entre a Comissão e a comunidade científica europeia em geral.

Embora os fenómenos meteorológicos que provocam inundações extremas em grandes regiões da Europa Central sejam bem conhecidos, ainda não estão esclarecidas as causas da invulgar situação meteorológica de bloqueio que a Europa enfrentou na primavera. É por essa razão que a compreensão, o desenvolvimento e a previsão de sistemas meteorológicos de bloqueio constituem uma das prioridades dos projetos de investigação em curso que incidem em previsões sazonais.

Na monitorização das tendências climáticas, o relatório sobre alterações climáticas, impactos e vulnerabilidade na Europa em 2012 («*Climate change, impacts and vulnerability 2012*») da Agência Europeia do Ambiente apresenta uma panorâmica das variações climáticas na Europa e dos fatores que as influenciam e respetivos impactos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007366/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Unusual weather in Europe

A group of British scientists recently met at the headquarters of the UK weather agency, the Met Office, to discuss the possible reasons for the unusual weather conditions in Europe in recent years.

Thousands of people in Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany and Switzerland were recently ordered to abandon their homes because of flooding and other risks resulting from historic floods that devastated vast swathes of central Europe, caused by the cumulative effect of days of uninterrupted torrential rain.

How has the Commission been monitoring trends in climatic variations in Europe?

Is it aware of the conclusions reached at the abovementioned meeting?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

Extreme hydrological events across Europe imply high risks for society as they often cause severe economic and environmental damage and loss of human lives.

Forecasts and early warnings are among the priorities of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), in particular its Theme Environment. This issue has been addressed specifically in a recent call for proposals on seasonal to decadal forecasting, designed to improve prediction skills of operational forecasting systems at time scales from months to years ahead. The selected projects (NACLIM, SPECS, and EUPORIAS) have a dedicated monitoring component and are analysing climate variability and trends at a regional scale. The UK Met Office is one of the leading institutions within these consortia and the regular exchange of information on climate change and its impacts between the Commission and the European scientific community at large is ensured.

Whereas the meteorological phenomena causing extreme flooding across large parts of central Europe are well known, the basic understanding of the causes of the unusual meteorological blocking situation that Europe was facing in spring is still lacking. This is why the understanding, development and prediction of meteorological blocking systems is one of the priorities of ongoing research projects focusing on seasonal predictions.

On monitoring climate trends, the 'Climate change, impacts and vulnerability 2012' report of the European Environmental Agency presents a state-of-play on climatic variations in Europe and on the factors influencing them and their impacts.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007367/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Bolachas com adoçante ilegal

Em Portugal, de acordo com o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1333/2008 relativo aos aditivos alimentares e, nomeadamente, aos edulcorantes para utilização nos géneros alimentícios, bem como o Regulamento (UE) n.° 1129/2011, e no contexto da lista comunitária de aditivos e edulcorantes, o acesulfame K pode ser utilizado em determinados produtos, mas não em bolachas.

Vários produtos com acesulfame de potássio, um adoçante 200 vezes superior à sacarose cujos efeitos para a saúde têm sido alvo de estudos contraditórios, com alguns a falarem de substância potencialmente cancerígena, estão à venda nas prateleiras de produtos dietéticos e são distribuídos por, pelo menos, uma conhecida marca espanhola e outra portuguesa.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento desta situação?

Como a avalia?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(31 de julho de 2013)

O acessulfame K (E 950) é autorizado como aditivo alimentar, na classe funcional dos edulcorantes, em conformidade com o anexo II do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1333/2008 ([1]) relativo aos aditivos alimentares. O artigo 7.° do regulamento estabelece as condições específicas de utilização dos edulcorantes, incluindo a substituição de açúcares na produção de géneros alimentícios com reduzido valor energético, de géneros alimentícios não-cariogénicos, ou de géneros alimentícios sem adição de açúcares ou ainda para produzir géneros alimentícios destinados a uma alimentação especial. Só os aditivos alimentares incluídos na lista da União constante do anexo II podem ser colocados no mercado enquanto tais e utilizados nos géneros alimentícios nas condições de utilização nele especificadas.

O acessulfame K (E 950) pode ser adicionado a várias categorias de géneros alimentícios, por exemplo:

07.2 Padaria fina (unicamente cornetos e bolachas sem açúcar adicionado, para gelados; unicamente hóstias e obreias — e unicamente produtos de padaria fina para alimentação especial) e 13.3 Alimentos dietéticos para dietas de controlo do peso destinados a substituir a ingestão diária total de alimentos ou uma refeição (a totalidade do regime alimentar diário ou parte dele).

A segurança do acessulfame K está bem documentada pelos estudos examinados pelo Comité Científico da Alimentação Humana (CCAH), pelo Comité Misto FAO-OMS de Peritos em Aditivos Alimentares (JECFA) e pelas autoridades nacionais e foi novamente avaliada pelo CCAH em 2000.

([1]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 1333/2008 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 16 de dezembro de 2008, relativo aos aditivos alimentares, JO L 354 de 31.12.2008, p. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007367/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Biscuits containing illegal sweetener

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 on food additives and, in particular, sweeteners for use in foodstuffs, as well as Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011, and in the context of the Community list of additives and sweeteners, acesulfame K can be used in certain products in Portugal, but not in biscuits.

Several products containing acesulfame potassium, a sweetener 200 times sweeter than sucrose and whose effects on health have been the subject of contradictory studies, with some considering it potentially carcinogenic, are on sale alongside dietetic products and are distributed by at least one well-known Spanish brand and another Portuguese one.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

What is its assessment of it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

Acesulfame K (E 950) is an authorised food additive, within the functional class of sweeteners, in accordance with Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 ([1]) on food additives. Article 7 of that regulation establishes the specific conditions of use for sweeteners, including replacing sugars for the production of energy-reduced food, non-cariogenic food or food with no added sugars or for producing food intended for particular nutritional uses. Only food additives included in the Union list in Annex II may be placed on the market as such and used in foods under the conditions of use specified therein.

Acesulfame K (E 950) may be added to several food categories, for instance:

07.2 Fine bakery wares (only cornets and wafers, for ice-cream, with no added sugar; only *essoblaten* — wafer paper and only fine bakery products for special nutritional uses) and 13.3 Dietary foods for weight control diets intended to replace total daily food intake or an individual meal (the whole or part of the total daily diet).

The safety of acesulfame K is well documented by the studies reviewed by the Scientific Committee on Food (SCF), the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) and national authorities. It was re-evaluated by the SCF in 2000.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives, OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 16.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007368/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Buraco coronal na superfície do sol — perturbações nas comunicações europeias

Foi captado pelo *Solar Observatory Dynamics* (SDO), da Agência Espacial dos EUA (NASA), um gigantesco buraco coronal na superfície do sol com localização alinhada para a terra.

As previsões indicam que haverá alterações nos campos magnéticos em algumas regiões terrestres, em particular na Europa Ocidental, e que os fluxos de partículas solares poderão alterar a atividade geomagnética a um nível capaz de perturbar o funcionamento dos sistemas de telecomunicações, como os GPS (dispositivos de navegação) e redes móveis (sobretudo os aparelhos de última geração). De acordo com os técnicos da NASA, as perturbações nas comunicações poderão ocorrer dentro de dois meses, em particular na Europa Ocidental.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

A Comissão dispõe de informações sobre esta situação?

Pondera tomar alguma medida de caráter preventivo ou informativo relativamente às possíveis perturbações nas telecomunicações europeias?

Resposta dada por Antonio Tajani em nome da Comissão
(14 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente das potenciais ameaças para as infraestruturas espaciais e terrestres decorrentes de eventos meteorológicos espaciais, incluindo grandes tempestades solares.

A investigação em matéria de meteorologia espacial, financiada pela UE através do 7.° PQ, desenvolve conhecimentos científicos, bem como novas técnicas e modelos de previsão de eventos meteorológicos espaciais, tais como tempestades solares. Avaliar o impacto sobre os satélites em órbita terrestre, a receção GNSS, a rede elétrica e outros sistemas constitui um aspeto importante. A Comissão, em coordenação com as autoridades nacionais, os operadores de infraestruturas e a NOAA ([1]), nos EUA, está a estudar os possíveis efeitos de fenómenos meteorológicos espaciais extremos em várias infraestruturas industriais, com vista a ajudar os operadores a melhorar a capacidade de resiliência das infraestruturas em causa e evitar, assim, potenciais perturbações de funções societais importantes caso se verifique a ocorrência de um tal fenómeno. Por exemplo, a Comissão organizou um diálogo de alto nível com as principais partes interessadas, em outubro de 2011, no intuito de sensibilizar para a meteorologia espacial. Os riscos emergentes, tais como os devidos à meteorologia espacial, serão abordados num documento sobre a panorâmica do risco que a Comissão foi convidada a elaborar, com base nas avaliações de risco nacionais que os Estados-Membros estão a preparar. No caso específico do GNSS Europeu, a Comissão está a explorar o sistema «EGNOS», que melhora o desempenho do sistema americano GPS em toda a Europa. Foram aplicadas várias medidas, incluindo procedimentos de contingência e informação dos utilizadores em caso de risco de interrupções de serviço. Isto garante que o serviço EGNOS continua a ser seguro para os utilizadores em todas as condições. As atividades complementares, que visam a constituição de serviços europeus de meteorologia espacial, estão a ser conduzidas através de programas da AEE.

([1]) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007368/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Coronal hole on the surface of the sun — disruption of European communications

The Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) of the US space agency (NASA) has imaged a gigantic coronal hole on the surface of the sun in alignment with Earth.

It is predicted that there will be changes in the magnetic fields in some parts of the world, particularly in western Europe, and that flows of solar particles could alter geomagnetic activity to a degree that could disrupt the functioning of telecommunication systems, such as GPS (navigation devices) and mobile networks (particularly the latest generation of devices). According to NASA technicians, disruptions in communications could happen within two months, particularly in western Europe.

Does the Commission have any information on this situation?

Is it planning to take any preventive or informative measures relating to possible disruptions in European telecommunications?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the potential threats to space-based and ground-based infrastructure posed by space weather events including major solar storms.

Space weather research, funded by the EU through FP7, develops scientific knowledge as well as new techniques and models for forecasting space weather events such as solar storms. Assessing the impact on Earth orbiting satellites, GNSS reception, the electric grid and other systems is an important aspect. The Commission, in coordination with national authorities, infrastructure operators, and NOAA ([1]) in the US, is studying the possible effects of extreme space weather events on various industrial infrastructures, with a view to helping operators to improve the resilience of the infrastructures concerned thus preventing potential disruptions of important societal functions should such an event occur. As one example, the Commission organised a high-level 'Space-Weather Awareness Dialogue' with major stakeholders in October 2011. Emerging risks such as those due to space weather will be addressed in the risk overview that the Commission has been asked to compile based on national risk assessments that Member States are preparing. In the specific case of European GNSS, the Commission operates the 'EGNOS' system, which improves the American GPS performances over Europe. A series of measures have been implemented, including the setting up of contingency procedures and notification to users to address the risk of service outages. This ensures that the EGNOS service remains safe for users in all conditions. Complementary activities aiming at building up European space weather services are being conducted through ESA programmes.

([1]) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007369/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Estudo — poluição e autismo

Considerando que:

— Partículas de diesel, chumbo, mercúrio, cloreto de metileno e outros poluentes são conhecidos por afetarem a função cerebral e o desenvolvimento da criança;

— Foi publicado recentemente um estudo realizado por investigadores da Faculdade de Saúde Pública da Universidade de Harvard «que examina a relação entre o autismo e a poluição atmosférica no território norte-americano»;

— De acordo com a investigação, as mulheres expostas durante a gravidez a níveis de poluição do ar elevados poderão ter o dobro do risco de dar à luz bebés autistas do que as grávidas que vivem em ambientes melhor protegidos.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento deste estudo? Como avalia as conclusões apresentadas?

A Comissão dispõe de dados atualizados sobre a relação entre o autismo e a poluição atmosférica no território europeu?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(29 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão tem conhecimento do estudo americano publicado em «*Environmental Health Perspetives*». Embora esse estudo seja significativo e pareça apresentar elementos factuais sobre a necessidade de ação preventiva, o consenso entre a comunidade científica é que as doenças de perturbação global do desenvolvimento são multifatoriais e que nem todas as causas são conhecidas. Haveria assim a necessidade de repetir o estudo, também na Europa onde as condições ambientais e socioeconómicas são diferentes.

O Sétimo Programa-Quadro de Investigação, Desenvolvimento Tecnológico e Demonstração (7.° PQ, 2007-2013) financiou dois projetos sobre a relação entre os poluentes atmosféricos e as perturbações do desenvolvimento neurológico. O projeto Denamic está a recolher informações especificamente sobre as relações entre um grande número de poluentes ambientais (incluindo pesticidas transportados pelo ar) e as doenças de perturbação global do desenvolvimento ([1]). O projeto ESCAPE concluído recentemente investigou seis coortes de nascimento e verificou que a exposição à poluição atmosférica relacionada com o tráfego durante a gravidez estava associada a perturbações no desenvolvimento motor em crianças. A associação tendia a ser mais forte em crianças de mães com baixos níveis educacionais ([2]).

A Comissão não compila estatísticas sobre a prevalência de doentes com perturbações globais do desenvolvimento decorrentes da exposição à poluição atmosférica.

([1]) Developmental neurotoxicity assessment of mixtures in children
www.denamic-project.eu

([2]) European study of cohorts for air pollution effects
www.escapeproject.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007369/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Study on pollution and autism

Diesel particulates, lead, mercury, methylene chloride and other pollutants are known to affect brain function and child development.

A study by researchers from Harvard University's School of Public Health was recently published, which examined 'links between autism and air pollution across the US'.

According to the study, women exposed to high levels of air pollution while pregnant were up to twice as likely to have a child with autism as women living in areas with low pollution.

Is the Commission aware of this study? What does it think of its conclusions?

Does the Commission have any up-to-date figures on the link between autism and air pollution in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

The Commission is aware of the American study published in 'Environmental Health Perspectives'. While this study is significant and would appear to provide evidence on the need for preventive action, the scientific consensus is that autism-spectrum disorders are multifactorial and that not all causes are known. Thus there would be a need to repeat the study, also in Europe where environmental and socioeconomic conditions are different.

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) has funded two projects on the link between air pollutants and neurodevelopmental disorders. The DENAMIC project is gathering information specifically on the links between a large number of environmental pollutants (including air-borne pesticides) and autism-spectrum disorders ([1]). The recently finished ESCAPE project investigated six birth cohorts and found that traffic-related air pollution exposure during pregnancy was associated with motor development impairment in children. The association tended to be stronger among children of mothers with low levels of educational attainment ([2]).

The Commission does not compile statistics on the prevalence of autism-spectrum disease subjects causally linked to air pollution.

([1]) Developmental neurotoxicity assessment of mixtures in children — www.denamic-project.eu
([2]) European study of cohorts for air pollution effects — www.escapeproject.eu

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007370/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Destruição da floresta na Guiné-Bissau

Considerando que:

— De acordo com a imprensa, o corte de madeira sem controlo na Guiné-Bissau começou no início do ano por todo o território da Guiné-Bissau;

— Existem registos de desmatação descontrolada na região de Farim e Bafatá, no leste, na região de Cacheu, a norte, e também a sul, nas matas de Colbuia;

— Em declarações à imprensa, um jovem ambientalista guineense afirma terem já sido levados 32 contentores de madeira de pau-sangue, cada um com 16 toneladas.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Como avalia a situação descrita?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(23 de agosto de 2013)

A UE tem vindo a prestar apoio à proteção ambiental na Guiné-Bissau desde 2005, com a participação das comunidades locais. As reações às denúncias de atividades de abate de árvores e a adoção pela Assembleia Nacional de uma resolução que insta o Governo a adotar uma moratória para a exportação de madeiras parecem ter conduzido a uma redução da escala das operações de abates de árvores.

A Delegação da UE em Bissau apoiou uma conferência nacional sobre o abate ilegal de árvores, em 11 de julho de 2013, em parceria com o Instituto da Biodiversidade e Áreas Protegidas e a União Internacional para a Conservação da Natureza. Foi a primeira reunião nacional sobre o tema do abate ilegal de árvores, em que participaram representantes do Governo, parceiros internacionais e organizações da sociedade civil. Foram apresentadas algumas propostas para pôr termo ao abate ilegal de árvores e reforçar a proteção das florestas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007370/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Destruction of woodland in Guinea-Bissau

According to press reports, widespread logging began early this year throughout Guinea-Bissau.

There are reports of rampant deforestation in the region of Farim and Bafatá, in the east, in the Cacheu region, in the north, as well as in the south, in the forests of Colbuia.

In statements to the press, a young environmentalist from Guinea-Bissau said that 32 16-tonne containers of padauk wood had already been taken away.

What is the Commission's assessment of this situation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2013)

The EU has provided support for environmental protection in Guinea Bissau since 2005, with the involvment of the local communities. Reaction to the reports of logging activities and the adoption by the National Assembly of a resolution urging the government to adopt a moratorium on wood exports appear to have had an impact in reducing the scale of the logging operations.

The EU Delegation in Bissau provided support for a national conference on illegal logging on 11th of July 2013, in partnership with the Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. This was the first national meeting held on the subject of illegal logging, attended by government authorities, international partners and civil society organisations. A number of proposals were made to stop illegal logging and to strengthen protection of forests.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007371/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Trabalho infantil

A Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT) denunciou hoje a existência de 10,5 milhões de crianças utilizadas em trabalho doméstico, em condições de insegurança. Cerca de três quartos destas crianças são raparigas e 6,5 milhões destes trabalhadores domésticos têm entre cinco e 14 anos. De acordo com o diretor do programa da OIT para eliminar o trabalho infantil, «a situação de muitas crianças trabalhadoras domésticas constitui não apenas uma violação séria dos direitos das crianças, mas também um obstáculo a muitos dos objetivos de desenvolvimento nacionais e internacionais».

Quais as medidas previstas na agenda da Comissão relativamente a esta matéria?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão está preocupada com as estimativas da OIT referidas pelo Senhor Deputado.

A UE está empenhada no objetivo estabelecido para 2016 que é a eliminação das piores formas de trabalho infantil. A Comissão continua empenhada numa incansável campanha contra todas as formas de trabalho infantil, como indicado nos relatórios anuais da UE sobre os direitos humanos e a democracia ([1]), e na análise da cooperação com a OIT ([2]).

A Comissão considera que são necessárias novas medidas para reduzir o trabalho doméstico das crianças e, por conseguinte, a aplicação da Convenção da OIT n.° 189 sobre os trabalhadores domésticos e da Recomendação n.° 201 que a acompanha é muito importante. A Comissão tomou medidas para promover a convenção e a recomendação, mediante a apresentação de uma proposta de decisão do Conselho que autoriza os Estados-Membros a ratificar a Convenção da OIT n.° 189 e exortando os Estados-Membros à sua ratificação, no âmbito da estratégia da União Europeia para a erradicação do tráfico de seres humanos. A Convenção, que entrou em vigor em 5 de setembro de 2013, alargará as principais condições de proteção do trabalho a milhões de trabalhadores domésticos, na sua maioria mulheres e crianças.

([1]) Relatórios disponíveis em:
http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/

([2]) Análise da cooperação com a OIT em:
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---ilo-brussels/documents/publication/wcms_195135.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007371/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Child labour

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) today reported that there are 10.5 million children working as domestic servants, in unsafe conditions. Around three quarters of these children are girls and 6.5 million of these domestic servants are between five and 14 years old. According to the director of the ILO's programme to eradicate child labour, 'the situation of many child domestic workers not only constitutes a serious violation of child rights, but remains an obstacle to the achievement of many national and international development objectives.'

What steps is the Commission planning to take on this issue?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission is concerned by ILO estimates referred to by the Honourable Member.

The EU is committed to the 2016 target of the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. The Commission continues to campaign tirelessly against all forms of child labour as shown in the EU annual Reports on Human Rights and Democracy ([1]) and in the review of the cooperation with the ILO ([2]).

The Commission considers that further action is needed to reduce child domestic work and therefore the implementation of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention No 189 and accompanying Recommendation No 201 is very important. The Commission has taken steps to promote them by presenting a proposal for a Council Decision authorising Member States to ratify the ILO Convention No 189 and by urging Member States to ratify it in the context of the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings. The convention, entering into force on 5 September 2013, will extend key labour protection to millions of domestic workers, mostly women and children.

([1]) Reports available at http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/
([2]) Review of cooperation 2002-2012 with ILO at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---ilo-brussels/documents/publication/wcms_195135.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007372/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novas regras sobre alimentos para bebés

Foi recentemente aprovado um pacote legislativo europeu sobre a rotulagem e a composição dos alimentos para lactentes e crianças pequenas. De acordo com o novo regulamento, a rotulagem, apresentação e publicidade das fórmulas para lactentes (crianças até aos 12 meses) e a rotulagem das fórmulas de transição «não devem incluir imagens de lactentes nem outras imagens ou textos suscetíveis de criar uma impressão falsamente positiva da utilização destas fórmulas», para que «não desincentivem o aleitamento materno».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Quais as razões que estiveram na origem deste novo pacote legislativo?

Que resultados espera atingir com o mesmo?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

O Regulamento (UE) n.° 609/2013 ([1]) foi adotado pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho, a fim de rever o quadro aplicável aos «géneros alimentícios destinados a uma alimentação especial». Com base nos princípios de melhor regulamentação e simplificação, segue, em termos gerais, a abordagem descrita pela Comissão na sua proposta inicial. Aboliu o antigo conceito de «géneros alimentícios destinados a uma alimentação especial», que se revelou inadequado para atender aos desenvolvimentos do mercado alimentar e da legislação pertinente correspondente, tendo gerado problemas em termos de interpretação, execução e concorrência leal. Revogou regras desnecessárias e contraditórias, substituindo-as por um quadro, ao abrigo do qual as regras se mantêm apenas quando são necessárias para proteger grupos demográficos específicos, como os lactentes e as crianças jovens. Os géneros alimentícios destinados a outros grupos demográficos serão cobertos por outras medidas mais atuais e adequadas, como a legislação relativa às alegações dos alimentos. O regulamento estabelece princípios e requisitos gerais, e, nos próximos anos, irão ser adotadas regras específicas para os diferentes alimentos, através de atos delegados.

A disposição referida pelo Senhor Deputado torna extensivas à rotulagem das fórmulas de transição ([2]) as atuais restrições aplicáveis a fórmulas para lactentes ([3]). Esta disposição não estava incluída na proposta inicial da Comissão, mas era um aspeto importante para o Parlamento Europeu, tendo sido acrescentada pelos colegisladores durante as negociações. A sua fundamentação consta do considerando 26 do regulamento ([4]).

([1]) JO L 181 de 29.6.2013, p. 35.

([2]) Alimentos destinados a lactentes quando é introduzida uma alimentação complementar adequada, que constituem o componente líquido principal de um regime alimentar progressivamente diversificado desses lactentes.

([3]) Alimentos destinados a lactentes durante os primeiros meses de vida e que satisfazem os requisitos nutricionais desses lactentes até à introdução de alimentação complementar adequada.

([4]) «No intuito de proteger os consumidores vulneráveis, os requisitos em matéria de rotulagem deverão assegurar a identificação exata do produto pelos consumidores. No caso das fórmulas para lactentes e das fórmulas de transição, toda a informação escrita e veiculada por imagens deverá permitir estabelecer uma clara distinção entre as diferentes fórmulas. A dificuldade de determinar a idade exata de um lactente retratado na rotulagem poderá confundir os consumidores e obstar à identificação do produto. Esse risco poderá ser evitado mediante restrições adequadas em matéria de rotulagem. Além disso, tendo em conta que as fórmulas para lactentes são alimentos que satisfazem os requisitos nutricionais desses lactentes desde a nascença até à introdução de alimentação complementar adequada, a identificação inequívoca do produto é crucial para a proteção dos consumidores. Por conseguinte, deverão ser introduzidas restrições adequadas relativas à apresentação e publicidade das fórmulas para lactentes.».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007372/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: New rules on baby food

An EU legislative package on the labelling and content of food intended for infants and young children was recently adopted. According to the new regulation, the labelling, presentation and advertising of infant formula (for children up to 12 months of age) and the labelling of follow-on formula 'shall not include pictures of infants or other pictures or text which might idealise the use of such formula' in order 'not to discourage breastfeeding.'

What were the reasons for this new legislative package?

What results does the Commission hope to achieve with it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 ([1]) was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council to revise the framework applicable to 'foods for particular nutritional uses'. Based on the principles of Better Regulation and simplification, it broadly follows the approach described by the Commission in its original proposal. It abolishes the old concept of 'food for particular nutritional uses' which has proven to be unfit to manage developments in the food market and in the corresponding relevant legislation and has led to problems of interpretation, enforcement and fair competition. It repeals unnecessary and contradictory rules and replaces them with a Framework under which rules remain only where necessary to protect specific groups of the population such as infants and young children. Food for other population groups will be covered by other more recent and appropriate measures, such as the legislation on claims. The regulation sets general principles and requirements, while specific rules for the different foods will be adopted in the coming years by delegated acts.

The provision referred to by the Honourable Member extends to the labelling of follow-on formulae ([2]) existing restrictions applicable to infant formulae ([3]). This provision was not in the Commission's original proposal but was an important point for the European Parliament and was added by the co-legislators during the negotiations. Its rationale is provided in Recital 26 of the regulation ([4]).

([1]) OJ L 181, 29.6.2013, p.35.

([2]) Food intended for use by infants when appropriate complementary feeding is introduced and which constitutes the principal liquid element in a progressively diversified diet of such infants.

([3]) Food intended for use by infants during the first months of life and satisfying by itself the nutritional requirements of such infants until the introduction of appropriate complementary feeding.

([4]) 'In the interest of protecting vulnerable consumers, labelling requirements should ensure accurate product identification for consumers. In the case of infant formula and follow-on formula, all written and pictorial information should enable a clear distinction to be made between different formulae. Difficulty in identifying the precise age of an infant pictured on labelling could confuse consumers and impede product identification. That risk should be avoided by appropriate restrictions on labelling. Furthermore, taking into account that infant formula constitutes food that satisfies by itself the nutritional requirements of infants from birth until introduction of appropriate complementary feeding, proper product identification is crucial for the protection of consumers. Appropriate restrictions should, therefore, be introduced concerning the presentation and advertising of infant formula.'.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007373/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Novo sistema de emergência nos carros europeus

A Comissão Europeia adotou recentemente propostas legislativas com vista a assegurar que, até outubro de 2015, todos os novos modelos de automóveis de passageiros e veículos comerciais estejam equipados com o sistema «eCall 122», de chamada automática para os serviços de emergência em caso de choque violento.

Até 2015 deverão também estar criadas as infraestruturas necessárias para a receção e o tratamento adequados das chamadas nos centros de resposta a chamadas de emergência, «assegurando a compatibilidade, a interoperabilidade e a continuidade do serviço eCall à escala da UE».

O serviço «eCall» liga automaticamente para o 112 — o número de emergência único europeu — em caso de acidente grave e envia pormenores sobre o acidente, nomeadamente a hora da ocorrência e a posição exata do veículo acidentado.

1. Considera a Comissão que esta medida poderá salvar até 2 500 vidas por ano, já que o «eCall» poderá acelerar o tempo de resposta dos serviços de emergência em 40 % nas zonas urbanas e em 50 % nas zonas rurais?

2. Qual o custo adicional que este sistema acarretará para as referidas viaturas?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

Com o sistema «eCall», o tempo de resposta dos serviços de emergência pode ser reduzido até 50 % nas zonas rurais e 40 % nas zonas urbanas ([1]), o que por sua vez permitirá reduzir o número de vítimas mortais de 1 % a 10 % e de feridos graves ([2]) de 2 % a 15 %, dependendo do país. Depois de totalmente implantado, o sistema «eCall» poderá salvar até 2 500 vidas por ano e diminuir a gravidade dos ferimentos para as vítimas não mortais.

O serviço eCall básico pan-europeu, baseado no 112, é um serviço público que deve ser disponibilizado gratuitamente. Tendo em conta as economias de escala, estima-se que o custo da instalação do sistema eCall nos veículos novos seja muito inferior a 100 EUR por veículo ([3]).

([1]) Avaliação de Impacto do eCall:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0316:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) «Impact assessment on the introduction of the eCall service in all new type-approved vehicles in Europe, including liability/ legal issues», SMART 2008/55:
http://www.esafetysupport.info/download/ecall_final_report.pdf

([3]) MEMO/13/547:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-547_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007373/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: New emergency system in European cars

The Commission recently adopted legislative proposals to ensure that, by October 2015, all new models of passenger cars and commercial vehicles are fitted with the '112 eCall' system, which will automatically call the emergency services in the event of a serious crash.

By 2015 the necessary infrastructure should also be in place for duly receiving and handling these calls in emergency call response centres, 'ensuring the compatibility, interoperability and continuity of the EU-wide eCall service.'

The 'eCall' system automatically dials 112 — Europe's single emergency number — in the event of a serious accident and sends details of the accident, including the time of the incident and the exact position of the crashed vehicle.

1. Does the Commission think that this system could save up to 2 500 lives per year, given that 'eCall' could speed up the emergency services' response time by 40% in urban areas and by 50% in rural areas?

2. What additional cost will this system involve for the abovementioned vehicles?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

With eCall, the response time of emergency services may be reduced up to 50% in rural areas and 40% in urban areas ([1]), leading to a reduction of fatalities estimated to be between 1% and 10%, and reduction of severity of injuries ([2]) between 2% and 15%, depending on the country considered. When fully deployed, eCall could save up to 2500 lives a year and alleviate the severity of road injuries.

The basic pan-European eCall service, based on 112, is a public service that must be offered for free. Taking into account economies of scale, installation of the eCall in-vehicle system is estimated to cost much less than EUR 100 per new car ([3]).

([1]) eCall Impact assessment, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0316:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) 'Impact assessment on the introduction of the eCall service in all new type-approved vehicles in Europe, including liability/ legal issues', SMART 2008/55, http://www.esafetysupport.info/download/ecall_final_report.pdf

([3]) MEMO/13/547, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-547_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007374/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Partos prematuros

Segundo um recente estudo do instituto sueco Karolinska, em Estocolmo, publicado na revista *Journal of the American Medical Association*, o nascimento prematuro aumenta a mortalidade infantil, a morbilidade neonatal, a incapacidade a longo prazo e, quanto mais precoces os partos, maiores são os riscos para a criança.

De acordo com uma investigação que analisou 1,6 milhões de partos na Suécia entre 1992 e 2010, o excesso de peso ou obesidade da grávida aumentam as possibilidades de nascimentos prematuros e, quanto mais o peso, maior pode ser a prematuridade. A investigação mostrou que, à medida que aumenta o índice de massa corporal (IMC), também aumenta a probabilidade de um parto prematuro, em comparação com os nascimentos em mulheres de peso normal, e entre as mulheres com um IMC de 35 a 40 ou mais de 40 as probabilidades de partos extremamente prematuros aumentam para o dobro. De acordo com um dos investigadores envolvidos, «a obesidade materna substituiu o tabagismo como uma das principais causas de uma gravidez com resultados deficientes».

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento do referido estudo?

2. Possui a Comissão algum estudo equivalente, que permita avaliar esta situação ao nível dos restantes Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão está ciente e tomou nota do recente estudo referido.

A Comissão financiou o relatório sobre a saúde perinatal na Europa, recentemente publicado, que avalia a saúde e os cuidados prestados às mulheres grávidas e aos bebés na Europa em 2010 ([1]). De acordo com o relatório, a taxa de nascimentos prematuros permaneceu estável entre 2004 e 2010 em muitos países, tendo a taxa de natalidade dos prematuros nados-vivos variado em 2010 entre cerca de 5 % e 10 % na Europa.

As taxas de nascimentos prematuros mais baixas observaram-se na Islândia, Lituânia, Finlândia, Estónia, Irlanda, Letónia, Suécia, Noruega e Dinamarca, e as mais elevadas no Chipre (10,4 %) e na Hungria (8,9 %). O relatório refere também que o peso maternal antes e durante a gravidez pode afetar o desenvolvimento da gravidez, o seu desfecho e a saúde do bebé. Tanto as mulheres com peso a menos, como aquelas com excesso de peso são vítimas de taxas mais elevadas de resultados negativos. Na Europa, 2,5 % a 8,7 % das mães puérperas apresentavam peso a menos, com a percentagem mais baixa na Suécia (2,5 %). Na maioria dos países, mais de 10 % (variando entre 7,1 % e 20,7 %) das mulheres grávidas são obesas. Além disso, o relatório assinala que mais de uma em cada 10 mulheres fuma durante a gravidez em muitos países, não obstante uma diminuição entre 2004 e 2010. O tabagismo durante a gravidez variou de menos de 5 % a 19 % na Europa.

A necessidade de colocar a tónica nas mulheres grávidas é uma prioridade das questões relacionadas com a saúde no âmbito da estratégia para a Europa em matéria de nutrição, excesso de peso e obesidade. Além disso, a Comissão lançou projetos-piloto destinados a promover regimes alimentares saudáveis junto das mulheres grávidas e a aumentar o seu consumo de frutas e produtos hortícolas frescos.

([1]) Projeto EURO-Peristat com o SCPE e o Eurocat. Relatório sobre a saúde perinatal na Europa. Saúde e cuidados prestados às mulheres grávidas e aos bebés na Europa em 2010, maio de 2013.
http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/publications/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007374/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Premature births

According to a recent study by the Karolinska institute, based in Stockholm, Sweden, and published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, premature birth increases infant mortality, neonatal morbidity, long-term disability and the more premature the birth, the greater the risks to the child.

According to a study that analysed 1.6 million births in Sweden between 1992 and 2010, being overweight or obese during pregnancy increased the chances of a premature birth and the more overweight the mother, the more premature the birth could be. The study showed that the chances of premature birth increase in line with increased body mass index (BMI), compared with births in women of normal weight, and the chances of extremely premature births double in women with a BMI of between 35 and 40 or greater than 40. According to the researchers involved, maternal obesity has replaced smoking as one of the main causes of adverse pregnancy outcomes.

1. Is the Commission aware of this study?

2. Does the Commission have any similar studies making it possible to assess the situation in the other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission is aware and has taken note of the recent study mentioned.

The Commission has funded the recently published European Perinatal Health Report which assesses the health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010 ([1]). According to the report, the rate of preterm births remained stable from 2004 to 2010 in many countries; the preterm birth rate for live births varied in 2010 from about 5 to 10% in Europe.

Lower preterm birth rates were observed in Iceland, Lithuania, Finland, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, and the highest rates in Cyprus (10.4%) and Hungary (8.9%). The report also states that maternal weight before and during pregnancy can affect the course of pregnancy, its outcome, and the offspring's health; both underweight and overweight women experience higher rates of adverse outcomes. In Europe, 2.5 to 8.7% of delivering mothers were underweight with the lowest percentage in Sweden (2.5%). In most countries, over 10% (ranging from 7.1% to 20.7%) of childbearing women were obese. In addition, the report noted that more than 1 woman in 10 smoked during pregnancy in many countries despite a decline between 2004 and 2010. Smoking during pregnancy varied from under 5% to 19% in Europe.

The need to focus on pregnant women is a priority in the strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues. In addition, the Commission has launched pilot projects aimed at promoting healthy diets and increasing consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables amongst pregnant women.

([1]) EURO-PERISTAT Project with SCPE and EUROCAT. European Perinatal Health Report. The health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010.May 2013. http://ec.europa.eu/health/reports/publications/index_en.htm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007375/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Guiné Bissau — deficiências em crianças

— De acordo com as estimativas da Unicef, cerca de 93 milhões de crianças (uma em cada 20 com menos de 14 anos) vivem com algum tipo de deficiência;

— A Guiné-Bissau é um dos 27 países do mundo que ainda não assinou a Convenção sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência;

— Apesar de não existirem dados estatísticos, os números apontam para cerca de 13 mil crianças com alguma deficiência, num universo de 1,5 milhões de pessoas;

— De acordo com um representante da Unicef no país, a maior parte das deficiências detetadas em crianças na Guiné-Bissau podiam ser evitadas através de vacinas e boas práticas de higiene, mas é frequente as famílias esconderem as crianças com deficiências, pelo que se torna prioritário «transpor a barreira da discriminação».

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Tem conhecimento da situação descrita?

Como a avalia?

Resposta dada por Andris Piebalgs em nome da Comissão
(9 de agosto de 2013)

A União Europeia não reconhece as autoridades que ocupam o poder desde o golpe de Estado de abril de 2012. Por esta razão, não é possível encetar hoje um diálogo para as encorajar a aderir à CDPD ([1]).

Em conformidade com a Estratégia Europeia 2010-2020 a favor das pessoas com deficiência ([2]), a Comissão promove os direitos dessas pessoas no quadro da ajuda ao desenvolvimento e acompanha de muito perto a situação das crianças com deficiência neste país com base nas diretrizes para a inclusão das pessoas com deficiência na cooperação para o desenvolvimento ([3]). A Delegação da UE em Bissau dispõe assim de uma pessoa de referência para os direitos das pessoas com deficiência.

A Comissão subvenciona desde o final de 2012 a Organização Não Governamental (ONG) local «New Bantaba Orphans and Disabled», recenseada como a única organização estatutariamente consagrada às crianças órfãs e com deficiência na região de Bafata, no leste do país. A Delegação da UE em Bissau trabalha em estreita colaboração com esta ONG e facilitou o seu relacionamento e criação de parcerias com outras ONG ativas neste setor. O trabalho desta ONG, que enquadra a escolarização das 173 crianças com deficiência, consiste igualmente em sensibilizar as autoridades e as entidades financiadoras internacionais presentes na Guiné-Bissau para esta questão.

Paralelamente, a Comissão financia desde julho de 2013 o Programa Integrado de Saúde Materna e Infantil no montante de 5,5 milhões de EUR. Este programa tem como principal objetivo reduzir a mortalidade materna e infantil através da promoção das boas práticas a nível comunitário e da melhoria da cobertura sanitária, incluindo a vacinação das crianças.

([1]) CDPD: Convenção sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência.
([2]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/disability_guidance_note_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007375/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Guinea-Bissau — disabled children

According to Unicef estimates, around 93 million children (1 in 20 under the age of 14) live with some kind of disability.

Guinea-Bissau is one of 27 countries that have still not signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Although there are no statistics, figures suggest that there are around 13 000 disabled children in Guinea-Bissau, out of a total population of 1.5 million.

According to a Unicef representative in the country, most of the disabilities found in children in Guinea-Bissau could be prevented by vaccination and by following good hygiene practice, but families often hide disabled children, which means the priority is to overcome the barrier of discrimination.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

What is its assessment of it?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(9 août 2013)

L'Union européenne ne reconnaît pas les autorités en place depuis le coup d'État d'avril 2012. Il n'est donc pas possible aujourd'hui d'entamer un dialogue pour les encourager à adhérer à la CDPH ([1]).

Conformément à la Stratégie européenne 2010-2020 en faveur des personnes handicapées ([2]), la Commission promeut les droits des personnes handicapées dans le cadre de l'aide au développement et suit de très près la situation des enfants handicapés dans ce pays sur la base des lignes directrices sur l'inclusion des personnes handicapées dans la coopération au développement ([3]). La Délégation de l'UE à Bissau dispose ainsi d'une personne de référence pour les droits des personnes handicapées.

La Commission subventionne depuis fin 2012 l'Organisation non gouvernementale (ONG) locale «New Bantaba Orphans and Disabled», recensée comme la seule organisation statutairement consacrée aux enfants orphelins et handicapés dans la région de Bafata, à l'est du pays. La Délégation de l'UE à Bissau travaille en étroite collaboration avec cette ONG et a facilité sa mise en relation et création de partenariats avec d'autres ONG actives dans ce secteur. Le travail de cette ONG, qui encadre la scolarisation des 173 enfants handicapés, consiste également à sensibiliser les autorités et les bailleurs internationaux présents en Guinée-Bissau sur cette question.

Parallèlement, la Commission finance dès juillet 2013 le Programme Intégré de santé Maternelle et Infantile à hauteur de 5,5 millions d'euros. Ce programme pose comme objectif principal la réduction de la mortalité infantile et maternelle à travers la promotion des bonnes pratiques au niveau communautaire et l'amélioration de la couverture sanitaire, y compris la vaccination des enfants.

([1]) CDPH: Convention relative aux droits des personnes handicapées.
([2]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/disability_guidance_note_en.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007376/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Células estaminais — Nova descoberta

Um estudo divulgado na publicação *Cell Stem Cell* identificou as proteínas responsáveis pela obtenção de sangue estaminal, a partir de células de tecido indiferenciado. Esta descoberta pode permitir obter produtos sanguíneos específicos para cada paciente, evitando rejeição em caso de transfusão.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento desta recente descoberta?

2. Como a avalia a Comissão?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento da literatura publicada sobre a utilização de genes, ARN ([1]) e proteínas para reprogramação e alteração do destino de células diferenciadas. A descoberta de que as células adultas podem ser reprogramadas para se tornarem pluripotentes levou à atribuição em 2012 do Prémio Nobel da Medicina ao Professor Sir John Gurdon e ao Prof. S. Yamanaka. Desde esta descoberta em 2006, há várias equipas a testar diferentes combinações de genes e fatores de transcrição a fim de reprogramar células adultas em linhagens de células estaminais.

2. Nos trabalhos mencionados pelo Senhor Deputado, foram utilizados quatro novos fatores de genes para gerar precursores de células estaminais sanguíneas, *in vitro*, em ratinhos. A descoberta comunicada é inovadora, mas está ainda a dar os seus primeiros passos, pelo que será necessário proceder à sua confirmação e desenvolvimento antes de poderem ser consideradas potenciais aplicações clínicas. A Comissão está a apoiar vários projetos de investigação (subvenções do Conselho Europeu de Investigação, Ações Marie Skłodowska-Curie, projetos em colaboração) que têm como objetivo a reprogramação de célula adultas para fins de regeneração de tecidos, células e órgãos em vários tipos de doenças (cardiovasculares, diabetes, deficiências ósseas ou transplantação de órgãos, por exemplo).

([1]) Ácido ribonucleico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007376/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Stem cells — new discovery

A study published in the journal *Cell Stem Cell* has identified the proteins responsible for producing blood stem cells, from undifferentiated tissue cells. This discovery may make it possible to produce blood products that are tailored to each patient, preventing rejection after transfusion.

1. Is the Commission aware of this recent discovery?

2. What does the Commission think of it?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the literature that reports the use of genes, RNA ([1]) and proteins in order to re-programme and modify the fate of differentiated cells. The discovery that mature cells can be reprogrammed to become pluripotent led to the award of the Nobel Prize for Medicine to Prof Sir John Gurdon and Prof S. Yamanaka in 2012. Since this discovery in 2006, several teams are testing various combinations of genes and transcription factors in order to re-programme mature cells into stem cell lineages.

2. In the work mentioned by the Honourable Member, four new gene factors have been used for generating blood stem cell precursors, *in vitro*, in mice. The discovery reported is innovative but still in its infancy and confirmation and development will be required before any potential clinical applications could be considered. The Commission is supporting several research projects (ERC grants, Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, collaborative projects) aiming at mature cell reprogramming for regeneration of tissue, cells and organs in various types of disorders (cardiovascular, diabetes, bone defects or organ transplantation, for instance).

([1]) Ribonucleic acid.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007377/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: População mundial

Atualmente, a população do mundo é de 7 200 milhões de indivíduos. Segundo um relatório publicado pela Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU), a população mundial deverá crescer até aos 8 100 milhões em 2025, daí para os 9 600 milhões em 2050 e atingir quase 11 mil milhões de pessoas em 2100.

Daqui até 2100, a parcela de pessoas com mais de 60 anos deverá triplicar, dos atuais 841 milhões para 2 000 milhões em 2050 e quase 3 000 milhões em 2100. O grupo de indivíduos com 80 anos e mais será sete vezes maior no fim do século — 830 milhões contra 120 milhões atualmente — e dois terços estarão em países em desenvolvimento.

A Europa verá a sua população diminuir em cerca de 14 %, e a quase totalidade dos países europeus não chegará sequer a renovar a sua população, passando da média de 1,5 filhos por cada mulher para 1,9 em 2100.

Como avalia a Comissão as alterações demográficas previstas nas conclusões deste estudo?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(25 de julho de 2013)

A Comissão elabora as suas próprias previsões demográficas para os Estados-Membros da UE até 2060 e essas previsões correspondem amplamente às da ONU, tendo em conta a incerteza que acompanha projeções a 50 anos de distância. As alterações demográficas são um dos principais elementos de mudança na sociedade, devendo ser tidas em conta no impacto a longo prazo das nossas políticas.

Por conseguinte, já na sua Comunicação de 2006 «O futuro demográfico da Europa — transformar um desafio em oportunidade ([1])», a Comissão destacou cinco domínios de intervenção para travar o declínio demográfico e desenvolver os recursos humanos.

O Livro Branco de 2012 sobre as pensões apresenta outras iniciativas para ajudar a criar as condições adequadas para que as pessoas com capacidade possam continuar a trabalhar, conduzindo a um melhor equilíbrio entre o tempo passado a trabalhar e o tempo na reforma. O Ano Europeu do Envelhecimento Ativo de 2012 e a solidariedade entre gerações deu o impulso político necessário às iniciativas políticas neste domínio. O Pacote de Investimento Social (PIS) ([2]) identificou as alterações demográficas como um importante motor da mudança no sentido de tornar as despesas sociais mais eficazes, de modo a que o sistema social e económico da Europa possa continuar a contar com recursos humanos adequados. No âmbito dos Semestres Europeus, a Comissão tem vindo a propor recomendações específicas por país, incluindo algumas em matéria de sustentabilidade e adequação dos regimes de pensões, bem como a melhoria do acesso à educação e à formação e a promoção da conciliação entre trabalho e vida privada.

([1]) Ver: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=pt
([2]) Ver: COM(2013) 83.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007377/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: World population

The world's population currently stands at 7.2 billion people. According to a report published by the United Nations (UN), the global population will grow to 8.1 billion by 2025, then to 9.6 billion by 2050, reaching almost 11 billion people in 2100.

By 2100, the number of people over 60 will triple, from 841 million at present to 2 billion in 2050, and almost 3 billion in 2100. There will be seven times more people over 80 and older by the end of the century — 830 million compared with 120 million at present — and two thirds will live in developing countries.

The population of Europe will shrink by around 14% and almost all European countries will not even manage to replace their population, with 1.9 children born per woman on average in 2100 compared with 1.5 now.

What is the Commission's assessment of the demographic changes predicted in the conclusions of this study?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission produces its own demographic projections for the EU Member States to 2060 and these largely match the UN's, in consideration of the uncertainty that accompanies 50-year-ahead projections. Demographic change is a major driver of change in society and must be taken into consideration in the long-term impact of our policies.

Therefore, already in its 2006 Communication 'The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity ([1])', the Commission highlighted five policy areas to stem demographic decline and develop human resources.

The 2012 White paper on pensions furthermore put forward initiatives to help create the right conditions so that those who are able can continue working — leading to a better balance between time in work and time in retirement. The 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and solidarity between generations gave political momentum to policy initiatives in this area. The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([2]) identified demographic change as a major engine of change towards making social spending more effective so that Europe's economy and social system can continue counting on adequate human resources. Within the European Semesters the Commission has been proposing country-specific recommendations, including some concerning pension sustainability and adequacy, as well as improving access to education and training and fostering the reconciliation between work and private life.

([1]) See http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en.
([2]) See COM(2013) 83.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007378/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Fluoretação da água

A fluoretação da água consiste num ajuste da concentração de fluoreto natural, de acordo com os níveis recomendados para a saúde dentária ideal.

Nos EUA, a organização *Fluoride Action Network* (FAN) entregou recentemente um documento ao Congresso assinado por mais de 600 profissionais de saúde, incluindo laureados com o prémios Nobel, funcionários de agências de proteção ambiental e membros do Conselho Nacional de Investigação no painel da toxicologia do fluoreto, no qual se solicita a eliminação do flúor na água. No documento entregue, é pedido que se reconheça que a «fluoretação da água está obsoleta e constitui um risco sério para a saúde pública que ultrapassa qualquer benefício mínimo», e ainda que seja apoiada uma auditoria à fluoretação requerendo provas científicas de que a fluoretação é necessária ou pelo menos útil.

Na UE, alguns países, incluindo Portugal, consomem água fluoretada há mais de 50 anos, enquanto outros, como a Bélgica ou a França, renunciaram a esta metodologia.

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

Quais os Estados-Membros da UE que consomem água fluoretada?

A Comissão tem dados atuais sobre as vantagens e os riscos da fluoretação da água?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(8 de agosto de 2013)

Segundo as informações a que a Comissão tem acesso, a prática da fluoretação da água ainda se verifica no Reino Unido, Irlanda e partes da Espanha (País Basco).

Para mais pormenores, o Senhor Deputado é convidado a consultar a última comunicação da Comissão (*Petition 0210/2007 by Robert Pocock (Irish), on behalf of Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment, on concerns regarding the addition of the hydrofluosilicic acid (H2SiF6) into drinking water in Ireland*) à Comissão das Petições do PE sobre esta matéria em: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/peti/documents-search.html?linkedDocument=true&ufolderComCode=PETI&ufolderLegId=7&ufolderId=06263&urefProcYear=&urefProcNum=&urefProcCode

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007378/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Water fluoridation

Water fluoridation involves adjusting the concentration of natural fluoride in water to the recommended levels for optimal dental health.

In the United States, the Fluoride Action Network (FAN) recently sent Congress a document calling for fluoride to be removed from water. The document was signed by over 600 health professionals, including Nobel prize-winners, officials from environmental protection agencies and members of the National Research Council's fluoride toxicology panel. The document urges Congress to recognise that water 'fluoridation is outdated [and] has serious risks that far outweigh any minor benefits', and to sponsor a hearing on fluoridation that requires scientific proof that fluoridation is necessary or at least useful.

Some EU countries, including Portugal, have been fluoridating their water for over 50 years while others, such as Belgium and France, have abandoned this practice.

Which EU Member States fluoridate their water?

Does the Commission have any up-to-date figures on the benefits and risks of water fluoridation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

According to the information available to the Commission, the practice of water fluoridation is still applied in the UK, Ireland and parts of Spain (Basque Country).

For more details, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the Commission's latest communication (*Petition 0210/2007 by Robert Pocock (Irish), on behalf of Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment, on concerns regarding the addition of the hydrofluosilicic acid (H2SiF6) into drinking water in Ireland*) to the EP Committee on Petitions on this subject at:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/peti/documents-search.html?linkedDocument=true&ufolderComCode=PETI&ufolderLegId=7&ufolderId=06263&urefProcYear=&urefProcNum=&urefProcCode=

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007379/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Gripe — Nova forma de diagnóstico

Um grupo de investigadores de universidades japonesas criou um «chip» capaz de detetar o vírus da gripe com uma precisão até 10 mil vezes superior aos métodos convencionais, em apenas 10 minutos. O aparelho é capaz de identificar até 15 variantes da gripe, bastando uma amostra de 0,025 mililitros de líquido nasal, o equivalente a uma gota, e a rapidez do diagnóstico poderá contribuir muito para reduzir as hipóteses de propagação da doença.

1. Tem a Comissão conhecimento desta importante descoberta?

2. Como a avalia a Comissão?

Resposta dada por Máire Geoghegan-Quinn em nome da Comissão
(26 de julho de 2013)

1. A Comissão tem conhecimento de uma série de progressos importantes no domínio do diagnóstico médico, incluindo a investigação japonesa sobre a deteção rápida de diferentes estirpes de gripe e a respetiva diferenciação.

2. A Comissão concorda plenamente que o desenvolvimento de meios de diagnóstico novos, rápidos e eficazes poderia contribuir substancialmente para reduzir as possibilidades de propagação das doenças. Por conseguinte, a Comissão está a financiar investigação neste setor, que não só é de importância crucial para a saúde pública, como também proporciona excelentes oportunidades comerciais para as empresas europeias de base científica. Desde 2002, a Comissão lançou, no âmbito do Sexto e do Sétimo Programas-Quadro de Atividades de Investigação, Desenvolvimento Tecnológico e Demonstração (6.° PQ, 2002-2006 — 7.° PQ, 2007-2013), mais de 80 projetos de investigação sobre a gripe ([1]) com a participação de mais de 300 instituições em cerca de 60 países e concedeu financiamento da UE no valor de cerca de 160 milhões de EUR.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/infectious-diseases/emerging-epidemics/projects_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007379/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Influenza — new diagnostic tool

A group of Japanese university researchers have created a 'chip' that can detect the influenza virus with an accuracy up to 10 000 times greater than conventional methods, in just 10 minutes. The device can identify up to 15 strains of influenza and all it requires is 0.025 millilitres of nasal liquid, the equivalent to a droplet. The speed of diagnosis could greatly help to reduce the potential for the disease to spread.

1. Is the Commission aware of this important discovery?

2. What does the Commission think of it?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of a number of important developments in the field of medical diagnostics including Japanese research on the rapid detection of, and differentiation between, different strains of Influenza.

2. The Commission fully agrees that the development of new, rapid and effective diagnostic tools could greatly help reduce the potential for the disease to spread. Therefore, the Commission is funding research in this sector, which is not only of paramount importance for public health but also presents excellent business opportunities for science-driven European enterprises. Since 2002, under the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP6, 2002-2006 — FP7, 2007-2013), the Commission has launched more than 80 influenza research projects ([1]) involving more than 300 institutions in around 60 countries and supported by EU funding worth some EUR 160 million.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/infectious-diseases/emerging-epidemics/projects_en.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007380/13
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(21 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Propuesta de una nueva reforma laboral en España por parte del FMI

El pasado 19 de junio, el Fondo Monetario Internacional exigió al Gobierno de España que emprendiera una reforma más profunda del mercado laboral para poder hacer frente a la extrema situación de desempleo que está viviendo el país.

El jefe de la misión en España del FMI, James Daniel, ha hecho gala del apodo dado a sus participantes, los «hombres de negro», por su intención de enterrar definitivamente la economía española y las posibilidades de generar crecimiento económico. Daniel exige que se realice una reforma laboral más en profundidad para generar empleo, ya que considera un éxito la última reforma laboral desarrollada por el gobierno bajo sus órdenes. Pero lo cierto es que esta reforma laboral que él alaba ha provocado 1 000 000 de parados más, conduciendo al país a la extrema situación en la que se encuentra con 6 millones de parados en la actualidad.

Las recomendaciones de la misión del FMI dejan atrás sus objetivos de generar crecimiento en el país y suponen un ataque directo a los trabajadores españoles con el objetivo de mejorar las rentas del capital. El jefe de la misión ha llegado a afirmar que los salarios en España son los mismos que en 2007, cuando las propias estadísticas del INE confirman que las rentas salariales han caído por debajo de las rentas empresariales en el reparto del PIB.

En un momento en el que se disparan los índices de pobreza y en el que se está hundiendo la calidad de vida de los trabajadores españoles, que son los que sufren los recortes del estado del bienestar, se plantea un nuevo golpe contra éstos. Los trabajadores, por su mayor propensión marginal al consumo, son los únicos que actualmente pueden consumir y estimular la demanda interna del país para permitir la generación de actividad económica para las PYME. Tratar de producir más desempleo y reducir sus rentas aún más supondrá la dilapidación de toda esperanza de generar trabajo en el país.

¿Comparte la Comisión las conclusiones del informe presentado por la misión del FMI? Tras la última reforma laboral que ha generado casi 1 000 000 de desempleados más en el país, ¿no considera la Comisión que aplicar la nueva reforma que propone el FMI en España producirá más desempleados? ¿Piensa la Comisión, a la luz de las diferentes estadísticas disponibles, que el FMI tiene razón al afirmar que el salario de los españoles se ha mantenido igual que en 2007? ¿Qué efectos considera que tendría aplicar estas recomendaciones sobre la demanda interna del país?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión está supervisando de cerca la evolución y las reformas del mercado laboral español. Su evaluación global se encuentra resumida en las recomendaciones específicas por países de 2013 y en el documento de trabajo de los servicios de la Comisión que las acompaña, publicados el 29 de mayo de 2013. Para hacer frente al nivel inaceptablemente elevado de desempleo, España debe terminar antes del fin de julio de 2013 la evaluación de la reforma del mercado de trabajo de 2012, ocupándose de todo el conjunto de sus objetivos y medidas, y presentar las modificaciones que fueran necesarias para septiembre de 2013. Además, la cooperación entre los servicios públicos de empleo nacionales y autonómicos, así como entre los servicios de empleo públicos y las agencias de colocación privadas, debe hacerse plenamente operativa. Debe llevarse a cabo una reforma integral de las políticas activas del mercado de trabajo y deben tomarse medidas adicionales para modernizar y reforzar el servicio público de empleo. Además, se debe prestar atención específica a los jóvenes que no tienen empleo y tampoco están siguiendo una educación o formación, a los trabajadores menos cualificados, a los de más edad y a los desempleados de larga duración.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007380/13
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: IMF proposal for a new labour reform in Spain

On 19 June 2013, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) called on the Spanish Government to undertake a deeper reform of the labour market in order to tackle the very severe unemployment problem the country is facing.

Those involved have been dubbed the 'men in black', and the IMF mission chief for Spain, James Daniel, has lived up to this moniker with his plans to bury the Spanish economy and any chances of creating economic growth once and for all. Daniel is calling for another deep labour reform to be carried out in order to create jobs, as he believes the last labour reform undertaken by the government under his orders was a success. However, the truth is that this labour reform that he is lauding has resulted in 1 million more unemployed people, leading the country to the very serious situation in which it finds itself, with 6 million people currently unemployed.

The IMF mission's recommendations have little regard for its objectives of generating growth in the country and represent a direct attack on Spanish workers with the aim of improving capital gains. The mission chief has stated that salaries in Spain are the same as in 2007, when statistics from the Spanish National Statistical Institute (INE) itself show that wage income has fallen below business income in the distribution of GDP.

At a time when poverty rates are skyrocketing and the quality of life is in freefall for Spanish workers, who are the ones suffering as a result of welfare cuts, this comes as another blow for them. Workers, because of their greater marginal propensity to consume, are now the only ones who can consume and stimulate domestic demand in the country in order to generate economic activity for small and medium-sized enterprises. Trying to create more unemployment and reducing their income even further will destroy any hope of creating work in the country.

Does the Commission agree with the conclusions of the report presented by the IMF mission? After the last labour reform, which led to almost another 1 million unemployed people in the country, does the Commission not think that applying the new reform proposed by the IMF in Spain will lead to more unemployment? Does the Commission believe, in the light of the different statistics available, that the IMF is right in stating that Spanish wages are the same as in 2007? What effects does it believe applying these recommendations would have on the country's domestic demand?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(23 July 2013)

The Commission is monitoring closely Spanish labour market developments and reforms. Its overall assessment has been summarised in the 2013 country-specific recommendations and the accompanying Staff Working Document published on 29 May 2013. To address the unacceptably high level of unemployment, Spain should finalise the evaluation of the 2012 labour market reform covering the full range of its objectives and measures by July 2013, and present amendments, if necessary, by September 2013. Moreover, the cooperation between national and regional public employment services and between public employment services and private placement agencies should be made fully operational. A comprehensive reform of active labour market policies (ALMPs) needs to be implemented and additional action taken to modernise and reinforce the Public Employment Service itself. Specific attention should be also paid to young people not in employment, education or training, the low-skilled, older workers and the long-term unemployed.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007381/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Hilfszahlungen aus dem Europäischen Solidaritätsfonds bei Überschwemmungen

In der Pressemitteilung MEMO/13/492 vom 3. Juni 2013 ([1]) schreibt die Kommission, dass im Zusammenhang mit den im Mai und Juni 2013 aufgetretenen Überschwemmungen von Flutkatastrophen betroffene EU-Mitgliedstaaten Anspruch auf finanzielle Hilfe aus dem Europäischen Solidaritätsfonds (EUSF) haben. In der Pressemitteilung heißt es konkret, dass die normale Hürde zur Aktivierung des EUSF für Österreich bei einem direkten Schaden von über 1,79 Milliarden EUR, für Tschechien bei über 872 Millionen EUR und für Deutschland bei über 3,67 Milliarden EUR liegt.

1. Wie wurden diese Hürden berechnet?

2. Was bedeutet „normale" Hürde? Gibt es auch Ausnahmen von dieser Regel? Wenn, ja welche?

3. Wie schnell und in welcher Höhe können die betroffenen Staaten mit finanzieller Unterstützung rechnen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(22. August 2013)

Der Schwellenwert für Katastrophen größeren Ausmaßes (damit ist „normale Hürde" gemeint) ist der in der Verordnung über den EU-Solidaritätsfonds (EUSF) festgelegte Schadenswert, ab dem der Fonds in Anspruch genommen werden kann, d. h. 0,6 % des BNE oder 3 Mrd. EUR zu Preisen von 2002, je nachdem, welcher Wert niedriger ist. Die Schwellenwerte für Katastrophen größeren Ausmaßes basieren auf den aktuellen BNE-Zahlen von Eurostat. Ausnahmsweise kann auch bei regionalen Katastrophen, die die vorstehend genannten „normalen" Schwellenwerte nicht erreichen, Finanzhilfe geleistet werden.

Bei den Anträgen auf EUSF-Unterstützung wird sorgfältig geprüft, welche direkten Schäden die Katastrophe verursacht hat und inwieweit die nationalen Behörden zuständig sind. Grundlage für die Festlegung des Unterstützungsbetrags ist der direkte Gesamtschaden. Die Berechnungsmethode der Kommission basiert auf einem progressiven System mit zwei Komponenten: Der Zuschusssatz für ein von einer Katastrophe betroffenes Land beläuft sich für den unter dem Schwellenwert liegenden Teil des direkten Gesamtschadens auf 2,5 %, für den darüberliegenden Teil des Schadens auf 6 %. Die beiden Beträge werden addiert.

Für außergewöhnliche regionale Katastrophen wird dieselbe Methode angewendet. Von derartigen Katastrophen betroffene Länder (mit einem Gesamtschaden unterhalb des Schwellenwerts) erhalten eine Finanzhilfe in Höhe von 2,5 % des direkten Gesamtschadens.

Nachdem die Kommission die Anträge geprüft und den Finanzhilfebetrag berechnet hat, leitet sie den entsprechenden Finanzhilfevorschlag zur Genehmigung an das Europäische Parlament und den Rat weiter (im Wege eines Berichtigungshaushalts). Dieses Verfahren kann einige Monate in Anspruch nehmen. Wenn die Haushaltsmittel bereitgestellt wurden und die Durchführungsvereinbarung zwischen der Kommission und dem Empfängerland geschlossen wurde, wird die Finanzhilfe in Form eines einmaligen Betrags ausgezahlt.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-492_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007381/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Flood relief from the European Solidarity Fund

In its press release MEMO/13/492 of 3 June 2013 ([1]) the Commission states that Member States affected by the disastrous flooding in May and June 2013 are eligible for assistance from the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF). Specifically, the press release states that the normal threshold for activating the EUSF is direct damage of more than EUR 1.79 billion for Austria, EUR 872 million for the Czech Republic and EUR 3.67 billion for Germany.

1. How were these thresholds calculated?

2. What does 'normal' mean here? Are there exceptions to this rule? If so, what are they?

3. How much can the countries concerned expect to receive, and how quickly will they get it?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

The threshold for major disasters (the reference to 'normal' applies to this) is the level of damage defined by the EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) Regulation to trigger the intervention of the Fund, i.e. 0.6% of GNI or EUR 3 billion in 2002 prices, whichever is lower. Major disaster thresholds are based on recent Eurostat figures for GNI. Under exceptional circumstances, regional disasters can also be supported, which do not meet the before mentioned 'normal' thresholds.

Applications for EUSF support are based on a solid assessment of the direct damage caused by the disaster and the responsibility of the national authorities. Total direct damage is the basis of determination of the aid amount. The calculation method applied by the Commission is based on a progressive system in two brackets whereby a country affected by a disaster receives a rate of aid of 2.5% for the part of total direct damage below the 'major disaster' threshold and a higher share of aid of 6% for the part of the damage exceeding the threshold. The two amounts are cumulative.

For extraordinary regional disasters, the same method is applied. Countries affected by those disasters, meaning they remain below the threshold, receive 2.5% of total direct damage in aid.

Once the Commission has assessed the application(s) and calculated the aid amount, it seeks the approval of the proposed aid by the European Parliament and the Council (via an amending budgetary procedure). This procedure can take a few months. Once the budget appropriations are made available, and following the conclusion of the implementation agreement between the Commission and the beneficiary country, the aid is paid out in a single instalment.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-492_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007382/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Evakuierungsmaßnahmen bei Naturkatastrophen

Anfang Juni 2013 führten starke Regenfälle in einigen Staaten Mitteleuropas zu schweren Überschwemmungen. Besonders Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien, Österreich und die Schweiz waren von den Unwettern betroffen. In mehreren Ländern mussten Ortschaften wegen großflächiger Überflutungen evakuiert werden.

1. Verfügt die Europäische Union über ein europaweit gültiges Konzept für Evakuierungsmaßnahmen im Falle von Naturkatastrophen wie dem Ausbruch eines Vulkans oder großflächigen Überflutungen?

2. Gibt es EU-weit einheitliche Vorgaben, wann Evakuierungen durchgeführt werden müssen oder sollten, wenn Naturkatastrophen auftreten?

3. Unterstützt die Kommission den Austausch von Erfahrungen bei Evakuierungsmaßnahmen zwischen den europäischen Regionen? Wenn ja, wer koordiniert den Austausch zwischen den Regionen, und wie werden etwaige Koordinierungsprogramme finanziert?

Antwort von Frau Georgieva im Namen der Kommission
(20. August 2013)

Das Katastrophenschutzverfahren der EU unterstützt die Mitgliedstaaten durch die Erleichterung der Zusammenarbeit im Fall größerer Katastrophen, für die die nationalen Kapazitäten nicht ausreichen (Ratsentscheidungen 2001/792/EG, Euratom ([1]) und 2007/779/EG, Euratom (Neufassung) ([2]) sowie neuer Vorschlag für einen Beschluss des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über ein Katastrophenschutzverfahren der Union — KOM(2011)934 endg., über den derzeit verhandelt wird). Das Verfahren erleichtert außerdem den Austausch von Erfahrungen und bewährten Verfahren bei der Katastrophenbewältigung. Im Rahmen der künftigen Rechtsvorschriften sollen auch Risikoszenarien und mögliche Reaktionen geprüft werden, um Koordinierungspläne für gegenseitige Hilfe auf EU-Ebene zu erstellen.

Derzeit existieren auf EU-Ebene keine Vorschriften über Evakuierungen zum Schutz der Bürger im Fall von Naturkatastrophen; dies liegt in der Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten.

Über das Finanzierungsinstrument für den Katastrophenschutz unterstützt die Kommission finanziell einen von der litauischen EU-Ratspräsidentschaft veranstalteten Workshop zu Massenevakuierungen im Fall von Katastrophen („Workshop: on Mass evacuation in case of disasters“).

([1]) 2001/792/EG, Euratom: Entscheidung des Rates vom 23. Oktober 2001 über ein Gemeinschaftsverfahren zur Förderung einer verstärkten Zusammenarbeit bei Katastrophenschutzeinsätzen, ABl. L 297 vom 15.11.2001.

([2]) 2007/779/EG, Euratom: Entscheidung des Rates über ein Gemeinschaftsverfahren für den Katastrophenschutz (Neufassung), Text von Bedeutung für den EWR, ABl. L 314 vom 1.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007382/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Evacuation of areas in cases of natural disaster

In early June 2013 heavy rainfall in several central European countries caused severe flooding. Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria and Switzerland were particularly badly affected by the storms. Some countries were forced to evacuate areas because of large-scale flooding.

1. Does the European Union have an evacuation plan at European level for use in natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions or major floods?

2. Has the EU set out when areas must or should be evacuated in cases of natural disaster?

3. Does the Commission support the exchange of evacuation experiences between European regions? If so, who coordinates such exchange and how are any coordination programmes funded?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism supports Member States by facilitating cooperation in the event of major disasters overwhelming national capacities (Council Decisions 2001/792/EC, Euratom ([1]); 2007/779/EC, Euratom (recast) ([2]), and the new proposal for a decision of Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism COM(2011) 934 final currently under negotiation). The Mechanism furthermore facilitates the exchange of experience and good practice in disaster management. Under the future legislation it will assess significant risk scenarios and possible response situations with the objective of preparing coordination plans for mutual assistance at EU level.

There is currently no legislation at EU level on evacuation in case of natural disasters to protect citizens, which is a Member State's responsibility.

Through the Civil Protection Financial Instrument, the Commission is financially supporting the organisation of a 'Workshop: on Mass evacuation in case of disasters' by the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

([1]) 2001/792/EC,Euratom: Council Decision of 23 October 2001 establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions, OJ L 297, 15.11.2001.

([2]) 2007/779/EC,Euratom: Council Decision of 8 November 2007 establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism (recast) Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 314, 1.12.2007.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007383/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Probleme der europäischen Hersteller von Solarzellen und Solarmodulen

Seit Anfang 2012 ist die Anzahl der Hersteller von Solarzellen und Solarmodulen in Deutschland um mehr als 35 % geschrumpft. Im Februar 2013 gab es in Deutschland nur noch 21 deutsche Solarunternehmen. Experten führen die Probleme der deutschen Solarindustrie vor allem auf die Einfuhr günstigerer Solarzellen und -module aus China sowie die Streichung staatlicher Zuschüsse für den Bau von Photovoltaikanlagen zurück. Anfang Juni 2013 verhängte die EU-Kommission Strafzölle auf den Import von chinesischen Solarzellen und Solarmodulen.

1. Verfügt die Kommission über Zahlen zur Anzahl von Herstellern von Solarzellen und Solarmodulen in anderen europäischen Staaten?

2. Ist die Solarbranche hinsichtlich der Anzahl der Unternehmen in den anderen Mitgliedsländern ebenso stark geschrumpft, wie dies im Mitgliedstaat Deutschland der Fall ist?

3. Sieht die Kommission noch weitere Gründe für das Schrumpfen der Solarbranche in Deutschland? Wenn ja, welche?

4. Welche weiteren Maßnahmen wird die Kommission zusätzlich zu den verhängten Strafzöllen ergreifen, um die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit der europäischen Solarbranche zu stärken?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(27. August 2013)

1. Detaillierte Daten über die Produktion von Fotovoltaikbauteilen gehen nicht ohne Weiteres aus öffentlichen Quellen hervor. Angaben dazu können bei den nationalen Verbänden der Fotovoltaik-Branche und der Gemeinsame Forschungsstelle beschafft werden. Der spanische Industrieverband (ASIF) listet für diesen Bereich 38 Unternehmen auf. Verschiedene Quellen geben an, dass in Italien mehr als 80 Unternehmen auf diesem Gebiet tätig sind ([1]).

2. Die Konsolidierungsphase der Fotovoltaik-Industrie ist weltweit spürbar: Im vergangenen Jahr meldeten mehr als 24 US-Unternehmen und einer Schätzung zufolge rund zehn europäische und 50 chinesische Unternehmen Konkurs an. Je nach Bereich verläuft die Entwicklung unterschiedlich. So sind Betriebe in Europa, die Polysilizium sowie Dünnschichtzellen und -module herstellen, nach wie vor wettbewerbsfähig. In Bezug auf die drei wichtigsten herstellenden Länder in der EU werden die verfügbaren Schätzwerte und die Daten für die Fotovoltaik-Produktion für den Zeitraum 2010-2012 in Megawatt (MW) angegeben (siehe Anhang) ([2]).

3. Die jüngsten Entwicklungen in Deutschland und weltweit werden im jährlichen „Photovoltaic Status Report“ ([3]) analysiert. Neben dem stärkeren Wettbewerb und geringeren Zuschüssen können sich auch andere Faktoren auswirken. Die Hersteller leiden weltweit unter einer raschen Steigerung der Produktionskapazität in den letzten Jahren, weshalb das Angebot nach wie vor größer ist als die Nachfrage. Gleichzeitig werden wichtige europäische Märkte durch bisweilen abrupte Änderungen der Förderregelungen und Rechtsbestimmungen verunsichert. Die Kommission plant, diesem Problem unter anderem mit der Veröffentlichung eines Leitfadens zur Gestaltung von Förderregelungen für erneuerbare Energien zu begegnen.

4. Außerdem fasst die Kommission eine Studie über den EU-Wirtschaftszweig für erneuerbare Energien ins Auge. Sie soll einen Überblick über die Möglichkeiten und Herausforderungen für diese Branche geben. Daraus werden sich Informationen ergeben, mit deren Hilfe bewertet werden kann, ob zur Ergänzung der bestehenden Maßnahmen zusätzliche Maßnahmen erforderlich sind.

([1]) Im Bereich der Herstellung von Fotovoltaik-Modulen mit einer jährlichen Produktion von mehr als 5 MW gab es 2011 sechs Hersteller in Italien und fünf in Spanien.
([2]) Für alle Länder der EU-27 — ausgenommen Deutschland — und die Ukraine siehe Abbildung im Anhang.
([3]) http://iet.jrc.ec.europa.eu/remea/publications/status-reports

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007383/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Problems faced by European manufacturers of solar cells and solar modules

In the past 18 months the number of German manufacturers of solar cells and solar modules has shrunk by over 35%. By February this year, only 21 German companies remained in this sector. Experts believe the German solar industry has been hard hit by imports of cheaper solar cells and modules from China and by the removal of subsidies for photovoltaics. At the beginning of June 2013 the Commission introduced punitive tariffs on imports of Chinese solar cells and modules.

1. Does the Commission know how many manufacturers of solar cells and modules there are in other Member States?

2. Has the sector shrunk as much in these Member States as it has in Germany?

3. Does the Commission know of any other reasons for the sector's decline in Germany? If so, what are they?

4. Apart from the punitive tariffs, what other action is the Commission taking to keep the European solar industry competitive?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

1. Detailed data on Photovoltaic (PV) item production is not readily available from public sources. Indications can be obtained from the national PV industry associations and the JRC. The Spanish Association (ASIF) lists 38 companies in the area. Different sources suggest that more than 80 companies are active in Italy ([1]).

2. The consolidation phase of the PV manufacturing industry is being felt globally: more than 24 US companies and, according to one estimate, last year about 10 European and 50 Chinese companies went bankrupt. Developments vary per subsector. In particular polysilicon and thin-film production in Europe remain competitive. Available estimates and data provide PV module production figures in Megawatt (MW) (see Annex), with respect to the three major producing countries in the EU for 2010-2012 ([2]).

3. Recent developments in Germany and globally are analysed in the annual Photovoltaic Status Report ([3]). Besides increased competition and reduced subsidies, other factors might be at play. Manufacturers globally are suffering from fast growth of production capacity in the last years, which continues to outstrip market demand. Simultaneously, important European markets are experiencing uncertainty due to sometimes disruptive changes in support and regulatory frameworks. The Commission plans to address this *inter alia* by publishing guidance on the design of renewable energy support schemes after the summer.

4. The Commission plans to launch a study on the EU Renewable Energy Industry (REI) to provide an overview of REI opportunities and challenges. It will provide information to assess whether additional policy measures would be required to complement the existing ones.

([1]) Regarding manufacturing of PV modules with yearly production of more than 5 MW, there were six in Italy and five in Spain in 2011.
([2]) For all EU-27 countries except Germany, plus Ukraine, see figure in Annex.
([3]) http://iet.jrc.ec.europa.eu/remea/publications/status-reports.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007384/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Unabhängige Evaluierung der Entscheidungspraxis der Patentämter

Der Deutsche Bundestag verabschiedete am 7.6.2013 mit großer Mehrheit einen interfraktionellen Antrag mit dem Titel „Wettbewerb und Innovationsdynamik im Softwarebereich sichern — Patentierung von Computerprogrammen effektiv begrenzen". Der Antrag fordert eine Reihe von Änderungen des Patentsystems beziehungsweise der Patentvergabepraxis für Softwarepatente und fordert spezifisch „eine unabhängige wissenschaftliche Evaluierung der Entscheidungspraxis der Patentämter, insbesondere des [Europäischen Patentamts]."

1. Hält die Kommission eine solche Evaluierung (a) der nationalen Patentämter und (b) des Europäischen Patentamts für nötig?

2. Leitet die Kommission derzeit Initiativen ein, um eine solche Evaluierung durchzuführen oder einen Rechtsrahmen für eine solche Evaluierung festzulegen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(9. August 2013)

Die Kommission unterstützt das Ziel der Innovationsdynamik im Softwarebereich voll und ganz und verfolgt die Diskussionen auf diesem Gebiet aufmerksam.

Anders als in den USA sind Computerprogramme als solche auf der Grundlage des Europäischen Patentübereinkommens (EPÜ) in Europa nicht patentierbar. Europäische Patente können nur für eine Erfindung erteilt werden, vorausgesetzt sie ist neu, beruht auf einer erfinderischen Tätigkeit und ist gewerblich anwendbar ist. Computerprogramme als solche weisen generell nicht das erforderliche technische Merkmal auf und können daher nicht patentiert werden. Dies ist in Artikel 52 Absatz 2 EPÜ geregelt, in dem es heißt, dass Computerprogramme keine patentierbare Erfindung sind.

Computerprogramme sind von der Patentierbarkeit ausgeschlossen, sofern sie das allgemeine Patentierbarkeitskriterium nicht erfüllen. Erfindungen hingegen, die diese Anforderungen erfüllen, sind nicht allein aufgrund der Tatsache, dass sie über einen Computer umgesetzt werden, von der Patentierbarkeit ausgeschlossen. Davon ausgehend lassen sich „computerimplementierte Erfindungen", d. h. Erfindungen, für die die Benutzung eines Computers erforderlich ist, in vielen Bereichen finden, z. B. in Smartphones und Sicherheitsvorrichtungen für Autos.

Vor diesem Hintergrund liegen der Kommission derzeit keine Belege für fragwürdige Vorgehensweisen europäischer Patentämter vor und sie sieht keine zwingenden Gründe für eine Evaluierung des europäischen Patentrechts im Bezug auf Software. Sie wird diese wichtige Thematik jedoch aufmerksam verfolgen und ist dankbar für jede Analyse, die die Interessenträger der Kommission möglicherweise zur Verfügung stellen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007384/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Independent assessment of patent office decision practice

On 7 June 2013 the German *Bundestag* approved by a large majority a cross-party bill on 'Securing competition and dynamic innovation in the software sector — effective limits on software patents'. The bill calls for changes to the patent system and the practice of awarding patents for software, specifically calling for 'an independent scientific assessment of patent office decision practice, particularly at the [European Patent Office]'.

1. Does the Commission see such assessment of (a) the national patent offices and (b) the European Patent Office as necessary?

2. Is the Commission introducing initiatives to carry out such assessment or to establish a legal framework for this?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The Commission fully supports the objective of dynamic innovation in the software sector and carefully follows discussions in this area.

Unlike in the US, on the basis of the European Patent Convention (EPC), computer programs as such cannot be patented in Europe. European patents can only be granted for an invention, provided that it is new, involves an inventive step and is susceptible of industrial application. Computer programs as such generally do not have the required technical character and thus cannot be patented. This is confirmed by Art. 52(2) EPC, which provides that programs for computers do not constitute a patentable invention.

Computer programs are excluded from patentability as far as they do not fulfil the general patentability criteria. By contrast, inventions, which do fulfil these requirements, are not excluded from patentability merely because they are implemented by a computer. On this basis, so called 'computer-implemented inventions', i.e. inventions which involve the use of a computer, can occur in many areas, e.g. in smart phones, safety devices in cars, etc.

Against this background, at this stage, the Commission does not dispose of any evidence which would point to questionable practices of European patent authorities, and does not see any compelling need for reviewing European patent law in relation to software. However, it will follow this important topic attentively and is grateful for any analysis which stakeholders would be ready to share with the Commission.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007385/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Vergabe von softwarebezogenen Patenten durch das Europäische Patentamt

Der Deutsche Bundestag verabschiedete am 7.6.2013 mit großer Mehrheit einen interfraktionellen Antrag mit dem Titel „Wettbewerb und Innovationsdynamik im Softwarebereich sichern — Patentierung von Computerprogrammen effektiv begrenzen". Die Antragsautoren schreiben, dass „die Anzahl der allein vom [Europäischen Patentamt] erteilten softwarebezogenen Patente […] nach Schätzungen im hohen fünfstelligen Bereich" liegt.

1. Wie hoch schätzt die Kommission die Anzahl der softwarebezogenen Patente, die durch das Europäische Patentamt seit Inkrafttreten des Europäischen Patentübereinkommens vergeben wurden?

2. Wie oft wurden softwarebezogene Patente, die durch das Europäische Patentamt vergeben wurden, im Nachhinein zurückgezogen?

3. Wie oft wurden softwarebezogene Patente, die durch das Europäische Patentamt vergeben wurden, gerichtlich annulliert?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(27. August 2013)

Im Unterschied zu den USA können auf der Grundlage des Europäischen Patentübereinkommens (EPÜ) Computerprogramme in Europa nicht patentiert werden. Europäische Patente können nur für Erfindungen gewährt werden, vorausgesetzt, dass diese neu sind, auf einer erfinderischen Tätigkeit beruhen und industriell anwendbar sind. Computerprogramme verfügen im Allgemeinen nicht über den erforderlichen technischen Charakter und sind somit nicht patentierbar. Dies wird in Artikel 52 Absatz 2 EPÜ bestätigt, wonach Programme für Computer keine patentierbare Erfindung darstellen.

Computerprogramme sind jedoch nur von der Patentierbarkeit ausgeschlossen, soweit sie nicht die allgemeinen Patentierbarkeitskriterien erfüllen. Dagegen sind Erfindungen, die diese Anforderungen erfüllen, nicht automatisch von der Patentierbarkeit ausgeschlossen, nur weil sie von einem Computer implementiert werden. Auf dieser Grundlage können sogenannte „computerimplementierte Erfindungen", d. h. Erfindungen, die die Verwendung eines Computers umfassen, viele Bereiche betreffen, z. B. Smartphones, Sicherheitsvorrichtungen in Autos usw.

Der Kommission liegen keine statistischen Angaben über die Erteilung europäischer Patente für derartige computerimplementierte Erfindungen vor. Informationen über erteilte Patente je Technologiebereich sind abrufbar unter: http://www.epo.org/about-us/annual-reports-statistics/statistics/granted-patents.html

Berücksichtigt man, dass computerimplementierte Erfindungen in mehreren dieser Bereiche auftreten können und nicht alle Patenterteilungen in bestimmten Bereichen unbedingt mit computerimplementierten Erfindungen zusammenhängen, lassen diese Statistiken keine Schlussfolgerung über die Zahl der erteilten Patente für computerimplementierte Erfindungen zu.

Ebenso hat die Kommission weder Kenntnis von spezifischen Statistiken über Entscheidungen der Beschwerdekammern des Europäischen Patentamts über computerimplementierte Erfindungen noch von vergleichbaren Statistiken über nationale Gerichtsurteile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007385/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Software patents awarded by the European Patent Office

On 7 June 2013 the German *Bundestag* approved by a large majority a cross-party bill on 'Securing competition and dynamic innovation in the software sector — effective limits on software patents'. The authors of the bill state that it is estimated that the [European Patent Office] alone has awarded tens of thousands of software patents.

1. How many software patents does the Commission estimate that the European Patent Office has awarded since the European Patent Convention entered into force?

2. How often are software patents awarded by the European Patent Office subsequently revoked?

3. How often are software patents awarded by the European Patent Office thrown out by the courts?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

Unlike in the US, on the basis of the European Patent Convention (EPC) computer programmes as such cannot be patented in Europe. European patents can only be granted for an invention, provided that it is new, involves an inventive step and is susceptible of industrial application. Computer programmes as such generally do not have the required technical character and can thus not be patented. This is confirmed by Art. 52(2) EPC which provides that programmes for computers do not constitute a patentable invention.

Yet computer programmes are only excluded from patentability as far as they do not fulfil the general patentability criteria. By contrast, inventions which do fulfil these requirements are not excluded from patentability merely because they are implemented by a computer. On this basis, so called 'computer-implemented inventions', i.e. inventions which involve the use of a computer, can occur in many areas, e.g. in smart phones, safety devices in cars etc.

The Commission does not have any statistics on the grant of European patents for such computer-implemented inventions. Information on patents granted per field of technology can be found at:
http://www.epo.org/about-us/annual-reports-statistics/statistics/granted-patents.html

Yet given that computer-implemented inventions may occur in several of these fields and not all patents granted in specific fields are necessarily computer-implemented inventions, these statistics do not allow any conclusion on the number of patents granted for computer-implemented inventions.

Similarly, the Commission is also not aware of specific statistics on decisions of the EPO's Boards of Appeal concerning computer-implemented inventions, nor of similar statistics on national court decisions.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007386/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Γενόσημα φάρμακα και υγιής ανταγωνισμός στην ευρωπαϊκή φαρμακοβιομηχανία

Πρόσφατη απόφαση του Ανώτατου Δικαστηρίου των ΗΠΑ προχωράει στην απαγόρευση της λεγομένης «pay-to-delay» πρακτικής των μεγάλων φαρμακοβιομηχανιών. Σύμφωνα με την πρακτική αυτή, οι μεγάλες φαρμακοβιομηχανίες πληρώνουν — εξαγοράζουν ουσιαστικά — τις μικρότερες με σκοπό να εξασφαλίσουν την καθυστέρηση της παραγωγής γενόσημων, και κατ' επέκταση φθηνότερων, φαρμάκων. Το αποτέλεσμα είναι όλες οι φαρμακοβιομηχανίες να έχουν όφελος (οι μεγάλες γιατί εξακολουθούν να πουλούν τα ακριβά φάρμακά τους και οι μικρές γιατί λαμβάνουν χρήματα από τις μεγαλύτερες για να καθυστερήσουν την παραγωγή γενοσήμων) ενώ οι καταναλωτές (κράτη, ασφαλιστικά ταμεία, ασθενείς) να ζημιώνονται. Την τελευταία δεκαετία, η χρήση γενόσημων φαρμάκων έχει συμβάλει στην εξοικονόμηση ενός τρισεκατομμυρίου δολαρίων μόνο στις ΗΠΑ, ενώ υπολογίζεται ότι ο αριθμός αυτός θα ήταν μεγαλύτερος αν η πρακτική «pay-to-delay» είχε απαγορευθεί.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι ενήμερη για αυτήν την πρακτική; Έχει διαπιστώσει ανάλογες πρακτικές μεταξύ ευρωπαϊκών φαρμακοβιομηχανιών; Έχουν αναφερθεί ανάλογες υποθέσεις στο Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο;

2. Έχει διεξαγάγει έρευνα σχετικά με το αν τηρούνται οι κανόνες υγιούς ανταγωνισμού και διαφανούς λειτουργίας της εσωτερικής αγοράς στον τομέα των φάρμακων προς όφελος των ευρωπαίων καταναλωτών; Αν ναι, ποια είναι τα σχετικά συμπεράσματα; Αν όχι, έχει σκοπό να το πράξει στο προσεχές μέλλον;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των συμφωνιών «pay-for-delay», και έθεσε ως προτεραιότητα της επιβολής του νόμου την αμφισβήτηση των εν λόγω ειδών συμφωνιών όταν αυτές συνιστούν παράβαση του άρθρου 101 ή 102 της ΣΛΕΕ.

Στην πράξη, στις 19 Ιουνίου 2013, η Επιτροπή επέβαλε πρόστιμο ύψους 93,8 εκατ. ευρώ στη δανική φαρμακευτική εταιρεία Lundbeck και πρόστιμα συνολικού ύψους 52,2 εκατ. ευρώ στους παραγωγούς γενόσημων φαρμάκων Alpharma (τώρα τμήμα της Zoetis), Merck KGaA/Generics UK (η Generics UK είναι τώρα τμήμα της Mylan), Arrow (τώρα τμήμα της Actavis) και Ranbaxy. Τα μέρη διαπιστώθηκε ότι παρέβησαν το άρθρο 101 της ΣΛΕΕ καθυστερώντας την είσοδο στην αγορά γενόσημης κιταλοπράμης μέσω συμφωνιών «pay-for-delay».

Τρεις επιπλέον οι έρευνες ([1]) είναι υπό εξέλιξη: Υπόθεση 39.612 Servier, υπόθεση 39.685 Fentanyl και υπόθεση 39.686 Cephalon.

Τα ευρωπαϊκά δικαστήρια δεν έχουν ακόμη επιληφθεί των συμφωνιών «pay-for-delay» στον φαρμακευτικό τομέα.

Όπως δείχνει η δράση της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά την επιβολή του νόμου, αυτά τα είδη συμφωνιών, όπως στις ΗΠΑ, ενδέχεται να παραβιάζουν την αντιμονοπωλιακή νομοθεσία. Ήδη στην τελική έκθεση της έρευνας για τον φαρμακευτικό κλάδο του 2009, η Επιτροπή τόνισε ότι οι συμφωνίες διακανονισμού όσον αφορά τα διπλώματα ευρεσιτεχνίας μπορεί, μερικές φορές, να περιλαμβάνουν περιορισμό του ανταγωνισμού που παραβιάζει τους κανόνες ανταγωνισμού της ΕΕ, εφόσον η γενόσημη εταιρεία δέχθηκε να παραμείνει εκτός αγοράς, με αντάλλαγμα κάποιο όφελος εκ μέρους της εταιρείας παραγωγής αρχέτυπων φαρμάκων (συμφωνίες αναφερόμενες ως «pay-for-delay» συμφωνίες).

Μετά την τομεακή έρευνα, η Επιτροπή έχει πραγματοποιήσει τρεις ελέγχους στο πλαίσιο της παρακολούθησης των διπλωμάτων ευρεσιτεχνίας ([2]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-835_en.htm?locale=en
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-81_en.htm
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-11-511_en.htm?locale=fr

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/pharmaceuticals/inquiry/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007386/13
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Generic drugs and healthy competition in the European pharmaceutical industry

A recent decision by the US Supreme Court moves to ban the practice of so-called 'pay-to-delay' by large pharmaceutical companies. This practice means that large pharmaceutical companies pay — in effect, buy out — smaller ones in order to ensure that the production of generic, and hence cheaper, drugs is delayed. As a result, all pharmaceutical companies benefit (the larger ones because they continue to sell their expensive drugs and the smaller ones because they are paid by the larger ones to delay the production of generic drugs); it is consumers (States, insurance funds, patients) who lose out in this arrangement. Over the last decade, the use of generic drugs has helped to save one trillion US dollars in the US alone, though it is estimated that this figure would be higher if the practice of 'pay-to-delay' had been banned.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. It is aware of this practice? Has it found that similar practices exist among European pharmaceutical companies? Have similar cases have been referred to the European Court?

2. Has it investigated whether the rules of fair competition and the transparent functioning of the internal market are being observed in the pharmaceuticals sector for the benefit of European consumers? If so, what are the conclusions? If not, does it intend to do so in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The European Commission is aware of 'pay-for-delay' agreements, and has made it an enforcement priority to challenge these types of agreements when they are found to infringe Article 101 or 102 TFEU.

In fact, on 19 June 2013 the Commission imposed a fine of EUR 93.8 million on the Danish pharmaceutical company Lundbeck and fines totalling EUR 52.2 million on generic producers Alpharma (now part of Zoetis), Merck KGaA/Generics UK (Generics UK is now part of Mylan), Arrow (now part of Actavis), and Ranbaxy. The parties were found to have infringed Article 101 TFEU by delaying the entry into the market of generic citalopram entry through 'pay-for-delay' agreements.

Three additional investigations ([1]) are under way: Case 39.612 Servier, Case 39.685 Fentanyl, and Case 39.686 Cephalon.

The European courts have not yet dealt with 'pay-for-delay' agreements in the pharmaceutical sector.

As the Commission's enforcement action shows, these types of agreements, like in the U.S., may infringe antitrust law. Already in the 2009 Final Report of the Pharmaceutical Sector Inquiry, the Commission highlighted that patent settlement agreements may sometimes embody a restriction of competition which infringes EU competition rules, if the generic company accepted to stay out of the market in exchange for benefits transferred from the originator (referred to as 'pay-for-delay' agreements).

Since the sector inquiry the Commission has carried out three patent settlement monitoring exercises ([2]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-835_en.htm?locale=en; http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-81_en.htm; http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-11-511_en.htm?locale=fr

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/pharmaceuticals/inquiry/index.html

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007387/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(21 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Επιλογής Προσωπικού (EPSO)

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι:

— η Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Επιλογής Προσωπικού (EPSO) δημιουργήθηκε για να εξασφαλίζεται η επιλογή των υπαλλήλων με τα πιο υψηλά προσόντα ικανότητας, αποδόσεως και ακεραιότητας αλλά και για να διασφαλίζεται η επιλογή με την ευρύτερη δυνατή γεωγραφική βάση μεταξύ των υπηκόων των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ, χωρίς διακρίσεις

— σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 1, παρ 2, της απόφασης της 25ης Ιουλίου 2002, καθήκον της υπηρεσίας είναι η τελειοποίηση των μεθόδων και τεχνικών επιλογής των υποψηφίων με βάση τις βέλτιστες πρακτικές αλλά και η υποβολή ετήσιων εκθέσεων στα όργανα σχετικά με τις δραστηριότητές της.

Με βάση όλα τα παραπάνω:

1. Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να περιγράψει με ποια διαδικασία καταρτίζονται οι ομάδες των ερωτήσεων που χρησιμοποιούνται στα computer based test (CBT); Ποια είναι η αρχική γλώσσα των ερωτήσεων και, στη συνέχεια, με ποιον τρόπο μεταφράζονται αυτές οι ερωτήσεις και πώς κοινοποιούνται στα εξεταστικά κέντρα πανευρωπαϊκά;

2. Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να εξηγήσει πώς εξασφαλίζεται η ποιότητα των μεταφράσεων των κειμένων των ερωτήσεων; Συγκεκριμένα, ποια μέσα ελέγχου ποιότητας και αρτιότητας χρησιμοποιούνται ώστε να είναι βέβαιο ότι το νόημα και το επίπεδο του κειμένου δεν αλλοιώνεται από τη μετάφραση και ότι το κείμενο είναι ισοδύναμο σε όλες τις γλώσσες;

3. Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να παράσχει επιστημονικά τεκμηριωμένες αποδείξεις ότι οι επιδόσεις των υποψηφίων στις εξετάσεις λεκτικού συλλογισμού (verbal reasoning) δεν επηρεάζονται από τη γλώσσα εξέτασης;

4. Θα μπορούσε η Επιτροπή να παράσχει στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με τους πρόσφατους διαγωνισμούς EPSO/AD/230/12 και EPSO/AD/231/12 (AD7) που να περιλαμβάνουν ανώνυμα τις ακόλουθες πληροφορίες: Α γλώσσα εξέτασης, Β γλώσσα εξέτασης και τη βαθμολογία κάθε υποψήφιου στις διάφορες δοκιμασίες;

Απάντηση του κ. Šefčovič εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Αυγούστου 2013)

Όλες οι ερωτήσεις που περιέχει επί του παρόντος η βάση δεδομένων της EPSO παρέχονται από εξωτερικούς παρόχους υπηρεσιών που ειδικεύονται στον σχεδιασμό και την ανάπτυξη δοκιμασιών. Οι πάροχοι αυτοί προσδιορίστηκαν στο πλαίσιο σύναψης συμβάσεων με ανοικτές διαδικασίες, βάσει των οποίων η EPSO έχει συνάψει συμβάσεις-πλαίσια σχετικά με την κατάρτιση θεμάτων για δοκιμασίες. Ανάλογα με το είδος των δοκιμασιών, η γλώσσα-πηγή είναι είτε αποκλειστικά η αγγλική, είτε η αγγλική, η γαλλική και η γερμανική. Όλες οι ερωτήσεις μεταφράστηκαν εσωτερικά από τη Γενική Διεύθυνση Μετάφρασης της Επιτροπής, με αποτέλεσμα να εξασφαλίζονται υψηλά επίπεδα ποιότητας και ασφάλειας του περιεχομένου της δοκιμασίας. Οι ερωτήσεις παραδίδονται μέσω της ασφαλούς πλατφόρμας δοκιμασιών του αναδόχου για τα CBT στο δίκτυο των κέντρων δοκιμασιών.

Για τη μετάφραση των ερωτήσεων σε όλες τις επίσημες γλώσσες της ΕΕ εφαρμόστηκαν αυστηρά ποιοτικά κριτήρια αναφοράς. Ειδικότερα, η διαδικασία μετάφρασης πρέπει να μην μεταβάλλει το μήκος των επιμέρους ερωτήσεων, την έννοια και το σκεπτικό της ερώτησης, την ορθή απάντηση και το επίπεδο δυσκολίας. Η Γενική Διεύθυνση Μετάφρασης και η EPSO διοργάνωσαν συναντήσεις για τη διόρθωση των κειμένων. Τέλος, οι ερωτήσεις δοκιμάστηκαν πριν παραδοθούν και η «απόδοσή» τους (δηλαδή κάθε δυνητικά σημαντική απόκλιση όσον αφορά την απάντηση των υποψηφίων) παρακολουθείται διαρκώς σε όλες τις γλώσσες. Ερωτήσεις για τις οποίες ήταν αδύνατο να τηρηθούν τα προαναφερθέντα κριτήρια αναφοράς είτε δεν μεταφράστηκαν σε όλες τις γλώσσες, είτε το επίπεδο δυσκολίας τους αξιολογήθηκε εκ νέου σε ορισμένες γλώσσες, ώστε να ληφθεί υπόψη ο αντίκτυπος της μεταφραστικής διαδικασίας.

Η EPSO κάνει χρήση εσωτερικής ψυχομετρικής εμπειρογνωμοσύνης για την παρακολούθηση των επιδόσεων στις επιμέρους ερωτήσεις, μέσω ανάλυσης βασιζόμενης στη θεωρία για την απάντηση στο θέμα (Item Response Theory). Αυτό επιτρέπει τη βέλτιστη διαμόρφωση των δοκιμασιών καθώς και την αμεροληψία και τη συνοχή σε όλες τις γλώσσες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007387/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO)

Given that:

— the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) was created to ensure the selection of officials with the highest standards of ability, efficiency and integrity and to ensure that candidates are selected with the broadest possible geographical basis between nationals of EU Member States, without discrimination;

— pursuant to Article 1(2) of the decision of 25 July 2002, EPSO's task is to perfect the methods and techniques for selecting candidates based on best practices and to submit annual reports to the institutions on its activities;

Will the Commission say:

1. Could it describe what procedure is used to draw up the sets of questions used in the computer-based test (CBT)? What is the original language of the questions and how are they then translated and communicated to the examination centres throughout Europe?

2. Can it explain how it ensures the quality of the translations of the texts of the questions? More specifically, what means of quality control are used to ensure that the meaning and style of the text are not altered by the translation and that the text is the same in all languages?

3. Can it provide scientific evidence that the performance of candidates in the verbal reasoning tests is not affected by the language of the tests?

4. Could it provide statistical data on the recent competitions EPSO/AD/230/12 and EPSO/AD/231/12 (AD7) including the following information (anonymously): (a) the language of the examination; (b) the language of the examination and score of each candidate in the various tests?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

All questions currently in EPSO's database were provided by external providers who specialise in test design and development. These providers were identified by open procurement processes, allowing EPSO to conclude framework contracts for the creation of test items. Depending on the type of tests, the source language is either English exclusively, or English, French and German. All questions were translated internally by the Translation Directorate General of the Commission, thereby guaranteeing high levels of quality and security of test content. The questions are delivered via the secured test platform of the CBT contractor to their network of test centres.

Strict quality benchmarks were followed for the translation of questions into all official EU languages. In particular, the translation process must not alter the length of individual questions, the meaning and reasoning of the question, the correct reply and the difficulty level. Proofreading sessions were organised by the Translation Directorate General and by EPSO. Finally, questions were trialed before delivery and their 'performance' (i.e. any potentially significant variation in candidates' response to them) is constantly monitored across all languages. Questions for which it was impossible to respect the abovementioned benchmarks were either not translated into all languages, or their difficulty level was reassessed in some languages to take into account of the impact of the translation process.

EPSO uses internal psychometric expertise to monitor the performance of individual questions, via an analysis based on Item Response Theory. This allows optimal calibration of the tests as well as fairness and consistency across all languages.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007388/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(21 juin 2013)

Objet: OCDE et paradis fiscaux

Un nouveau rapport de l'OCDE intitulé «Un tournant pour la transparence fiscale» et préparé à la demande du G8 pour le sommet de Lough Erne, présente des mesures concrètes afin d'instaurer un système multilatéral, sécurisé et efficace en termes de coûts d'échange automatique de renseignements fiscaux.

Dans un rapport publié en 2000, l'OCDE a recensé un certain nombre de juridictions comme étant des paradis fiscaux. Entre l'année 2000 et avril 2002, 31 juridictions se sont engagées pour mettre en œuvre les principes de l'OCDE en matière de transparence et d'échange effectif de renseignements en matière fiscale.

Des 50 «juridictions offshore» établies par l'Accountability Office du gouvernement américain, 21 sont des pays liés à l'Union européenne. Les 21 paradis fiscaux situés dans l'Union européenne ou relevant de la juridiction de ses États membres facilitent la perte de plus de 80 milliards d'euros de recettes fiscales à travers le monde, sans compter la fraude fiscale des entreprises et des multinationales.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission concernant la transparence fiscale et les paradis fiscaux?

2. Que pense-t-elle du recensement de 21 paradis fiscaux situés dans l'Union européenne ou relevant de la juridiction de ses États membres?

3. Va-t-elle établir une liste des juridictions offshore liées à l'Union européenne?

4. Sachant qu'il y a au moins 21 paradis fiscaux liés à l'Union européenne, quelles mesures compte-t-elle prendre concernant:

— les établissements financiers de l'Union établis dans les juridictions offshores?

— l'instauration d'une taxe ou d'un impôt sur toutes les opérations bancaires en provenance de ces pays?

— la révision des aides fournies par l'Union aux entreprises qui effectuent des opérations dans lesdits paradis fiscaux?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(1er août 2013)

La Commission mène de longue date une politique visant à encourager la bonne gouvernance dans le domaine fiscal à l'égard des pays tiers, qui repose sur la transparence, l'échange d'informations et la concurrence fiscale loyale. Ces normes servent de base aux critères permettant de déterminer les «paradis fiscaux» définis dans la recommandation de la Commission C(2012)8805 final du 6 décembre 2012 relative à des mesures visant à encourager les pays tiers à appliquer des normes minimales de bonne gouvernance dans le domaine fiscal.

La liste des 50 juridictions mentionnées par l'honorable parlementaire provient d'un rapport de 2008 élaboré par le Government Accountability Office (USA), établi sur la base de données de l'OCDE de 2007, d'un article de 1994 provenant du «*Quarterly Journal of Economics*» et d'une ordonnance d'un tribunal américain. Cette liste ne tient pas compte des progrès considérables réalisés depuis 2009 en matière de transparence et d'échange d'informations dans le cadre du forum global, et elle revêt plutôt une valeur historique en ce qui concerne les éléments énumérés au point 4 de la question de l'honorable parlementaire. La politique de la Commission concernant l'introduction d'une liste noire des paradis fiscaux a été examinée dans la réponse à la question écrite E-005767/2013, posée par M. Marc Tarabella, à laquelle l'honorable parlementaire est invité à se référer.

Par ailleurs, la Commission s'emploie activement à encourager l'échange automatique d'informations en tant que norme mondiale, comme le souligne sa récente proposition législative visant à étendre le champ d'application de l'échange automatique d'information au titre de la directive 2011/16/UE du Conseil relative à la coopération administrative dans le domaine fiscal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007388/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: OECD and tax havens

A new OECD report, 'A Step Change in Tax Transparency', prepared at the request of the G8 for the Lough Erne Summit, outlines the concrete steps needed to put in place a multilateral, secure and cost-effective model for the automatic exchange of fiscal information.

In a report issued in 2000 the OECD identified a number of jurisdictions as tax havens. Between 2000 and April 2002, 31 jurisdictions undertook to implement the OECD's standards relating to transparency and the effective exchange of fiscal information.

Twenty-one of the fifty 'off-shore jurisdictions' identified by the Accountability Office of the US Government are countries linked to the European Union. These 21 tax havens located within the European Union or subject to the jurisdiction of its Member States facilitate the loss of over EUR 80 billion worldwide, not including the tax dodged by companies and multinationals.

1. What is the Commission's position on tax transparency and tax havens?

2. What is its opinion on the list of 21 tax havens located within the European Union or subject to the jurisdiction of its Member States?

3. Does it intend to draw up a list of off-shore jurisdictions linked to the European Union?

4. Given that there are at least 21 tax havens linked to the European Union, what measures does it intend to take in respect of:

— EU financial institutions located in off-shore jurisdictions?

— the establishment of a tax or levy on all banking operations originating from these countries?

— a review of the aid granted by the EU to companies which carry out operations in the abovementioned tax havens?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Commission has a long established policy on promoting good governance in tax matters vis-à-vis third countries, which is based on transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition. These standards form the basis for the criteria for identifying so-called tax havens as laid down in Commission Recommendation C(2012) 8805 (final) of 6 December 2012 regarding measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters.

The list of 50 jurisdictions referred to by the Honourable Member originates from a 2008 Report by the US Government Accountability Office, based in turn on 2007 OECD data, a 1994 article from '*The Quarterly Journal of Economics*' and a US Court Order. The list disregards important developments on transparency and exchange of information through the Global Forum since 2009 and therefore is rather of historical value in relation to the elements listed in point 4 of the Honourable Member's question. The Commission's policy regarding the introduction of a black list of tax havens has been addressed in the answer given to Written Question E-005767/2013 by Mr Marc Tarabella, to which the Honourable Member is kindly referred.

In addition, the Commission is actively engaged in promoting automatic exchange of information as the global standard, underlined by its recent legislative proposal to extend the scope of automatic exchange of information under Council Directive 2011/16/EU on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007389/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(21 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Abilitazione all'insegnamento in Italia: meccanismo dei tirocini formativi attivi (TFA)

Il futuro successo economico dell'UE dipende certamente dall'istruzione che, richiamata dal trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea negli articoli 165 e 166, consente, tra le altre cose, ai giovani europei di competere in modo efficace in un'economia globalizzata basata sulla conoscenza. Fino al 2008, in Italia, l'abilitazione all'insegnamento era conseguita tramite la frequenza delle SSIS (Scuole di specializzazione per l'insegnamento), mentre, successivamente, con il decreto ministeriale 249/2010 è stato introdotto il meccanismo del tirocinio formativo attivo (TFA).

Entrambe le procedure hanno dimostrato parecchi limiti applicativi che, insieme a pericolose lacune di diritto, hanno generato una situazione d'inefficienza che lede i diritti d'insegnanti e alunni.

La mancata indizione di nuovi concorsi e il mancato avvio, contestualmente alla chiusura delle SSIS, di nuovi percorsi abilitanti hanno spinto le singole istituzioni scolastiche a impiegare docenti non abilitati per garantire l'insegnamento delle classi di concorso esaurite. Per questa speciale categoria di insegnanti che, pur non abilitati, hanno però lavorato per anni nelle scuole, è stato istituto un TFA cosiddetto «speciale», previa modifica del Decreto Ministeriale (n. 249/2010).

Oggi l'accesso ai TFA è a pagamento: le quote di iscrizione alla frequenza hanno infatti un costo medio compreso tra i 2.000 e i 3.000 euro annui che lo trasformano in una tassa sulla formazione obbligatoria imposta dallo Stato. L'accesso al TFA speciale è previsto solo per docenti non abilitati escludendo gli insegnanti di ruolo con servizio specifico. Pur di lavorare, non di rado sono costretti ad accettare qualunque supplenza, in base alle esigenze delle scuole, per cui capita spesso che il servizio venga svolto in più classi di concorso, il che non può essere interpretato come un demerito, in quanto la mansione svolta è sempre quella di docente e l'esperienza maturata è pari se non addirittura maggiore.

Può la Commissione dire se è a conoscenza di questa situazione?

Con riferimento all'Allegato I delle conclusioni del Consiglio del 12 maggio 2009 su un quadro strategico per la cooperazione europea nel settore dell'istruzione e della formazione (ET 2020), come valuta la posizione dell'Italia rispetto ai «Criteri di riferimento europei» nell'ambito del monitoraggio periodico dei progressi compiuti nel periodo 2010-2020?

Ritiene che attualmente il sistema italiano di formazione degli insegnanti sia in linea con la disposizione 3.6 «Priorità per gli Stati Membri» — Revisione e rafforzamento del profilo professionale di tutte le professioni dell'insegnamento contenuta nella comunicazione della Commissione al Parlamento europeo, al Consiglio, al Comitato economico e sociale europeo e al Comitato delle regioni (COM(2012)0669 def del 20 novembre 2012)?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

A norma dell'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE agli Stati membri compete la responsabilità esclusiva per quanto riguarda il contenuto dell'insegnamento e l'organizzazione del sistema di istruzione. Le questioni sollevate dall'onorevole deputata esulano quindi dalle competenze dell'UE in questi settori.

Nel contesto del metodo di coordinamento aperto gli Stati membri hanno scelto di collaborare nel quadro dell'UE per conseguire obiettivi comuni, come definito nella strategia UE 2020 e nella strategia per l'istruzione e la formazione (ET 2020). Migliorare la qualità dell'insegnamento e la formazione dei docenti è un obiettivo fondamentale del programma di riforme stabilito dal Consiglio «Istruzione». Nel 2010 è stato istituito un gruppo di lavoro tematico sullo sviluppo professionale dei docenti, che rappresenta quasi tutti gli Stati membri ed ha già messo a punto una serie di raccomandazioni.

Nel novembre del 2012 la Commissione ha pubblicato l'European and Training Monitor, che offre una visione d'insieme dei principali indicatori sui sistemi di istruzione e formazione in Europa, consentendo così ai responsabili politici di raffrontare i progressi compiuti nonché di individuare le sfide incombenti. Il documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione sul «sostegno alle professioni dell'insegnamento per migliori risultati dell'apprendimento» ha individuato le principali sfide che gli Stati membri affrontano per offrire sostegno alla professione di docente.

Nel quadro del processo del semestre europeo 2013 l'Italia ha ricevuto una raccomandazione specifica per paese (country-specific recommendation — CSR) in tema di istruzione, nella quale si sollecita la riforma dello sviluppo professionale e della carriera dei docenti. La Commissione verificherà se si terrà conto della CSR nella definizione delle priorità di investimento in fase di negoziazione con l'Italia del nuovo ciclo di fondi strutturali per il periodo 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007389/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Teacher training in Italy: Tirocini Formativi Attivi (Active Training Apprenticeships) (TFA)

The future economic success of the EU certainly depends on education, which, as highlighted by Articles 165 and 166 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, enables, among other things, young Europeans to compete effectively in a globalised, knowledge-based economy. In Italy, until 2008, it was necessary to attend SSIS (Scuole di specializzazione per l'insegnamento) (Teacher Specialisation Schools) to train to be a teacher, while, since then, Ministerial Decree No 249/2010 has introduced the Tirocini Formativi Attivi (Active Training Apprenticeships) (TFA) system.

Both these procedures have shown many limits in their application which, combined with dangerous legal shortcomings, have led to a situation of inefficiency which damages the rights of both teachers and pupils.

A lack of new competitions and, in parallel with the closure of the SSIS, a failure to launch new training courses has forced individual schools to employ unqualified teachers to teach subjects for which no qualified teachers are available. Specifically for this special category of teachers who, although not qualified, have worked for some years in schools, a so-called 'special' TFA has been launched, by amending the Ministerial Decree (No 249/2010).

Today, teachers must pay to gain access to the TFA: the average cost of the enrolment fees is between EUR 2 000 and EUR 3 000 per year, which has transformed these courses into a tax on mandatory training imposed by the State. Access to the special TFA is only available to unqualified teachers, thus excluding tenured teachers with specific teaching hours. Just to be able to work, they are regularly forced to take any supply teaching, based on the schools' requirements, and it thus often happens that they teach in various subject areas, which should not be seen as a weakness, since they are still perform the role of teacher and they gain equal if not greater experience.

Could the Commission state whether it is aware of this situation?

With reference to Annex I of the Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020'), how does it assess the position of Italy compared with the 'European benchmarks' in the context of the periodic monitoring of progress achieved during 2010-2020?

Does it believe that the Italian teacher training system is currently in line with Provision 3.6 'Priorities for Member States' — Revise and strengthen the professional profile of all teaching professions, contained in the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2012) 669 final of 20 November 2012)?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

According to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, Member States have the sole responsibility for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems. The issues raised by the Honourable Member fall therefore outside the scope of the EU competence in these matters.

Within the context of the Open Method of Coordination, Member States have chosen to cooperate within the EU framework in order to achieve common goals, as defined in the EU 2020 and the Education and Training (ET) 2020 strategy. Improving the teaching profession and teachers' education is a key objective of the reform agenda set by the Education Council. A Thematic Working Group on Teacher Professional Development, representing nearly all Member States, was set up in 2010 and has already developed a number of recommendations.

In November 2012, the Commission published the European and Training Monitor, providing a comprehensive overview of the main indicators on education and training systems in Europe, enabling policy-makers to compare progress as well as to identify the immediate challenges ahead. The Commission Staff Working document 'Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes' identified the main challenges Member States are facing to support the teaching profession.

In the context of the 2013 European Semester process, Italy has received a country-specific recommendation (CSR) on education issues, in which it is recommended to reform teachers' professional and career development. The Commission will verify if the CSR is taken into account in the definition of investment priorities when negotiating the new cycle of 2014-2020 Structural Funds with Italy.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007390/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(21 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Introducerea serviciului european de taxare rutieră electronică

De la primele demersuri, începute în 2004, și până astăzi, obiectivul general al unui serviciu de taxare rutieră electronică la nivel european este departe de a fi atins.

În prezent, 60% din drumurile cu taxă din UE sunt echipate cu sisteme de taxare electronică individuale, acest procent urmând să crească.

Intensificarea transportului rutier de marfă precum și preferința cetățenilor Uniunii pentru autovehicule în cazul deplasărilor domestice și transfrontaliere sunt dovezi ale necesității stabilirii unui sistem de taxare electronică interoperabil paneuropean.

Din păcate, în unele state membre costul taxei de drum pe perioade scurte, de exemplu pe o săptămână, este de patru ori mai mare decât costul proporțional al acestei taxe pe lună sau pe an.

Pe baza acestei situații, care sunt măsurile ce pot fi luate de către Comisie pentru a încerca să elimine astfel de discrepanțe care reprezintă un obstacol în calea deplasărilor transfrontaliere, având un impact negativ asupra acestora în interiorul Uniunii?

De asemenea, în Comunicarea sa din 30 august 2012, Comisia și-a rezervat dreptul de a prezenta o nouă inițiativă Parlamentului European și Consiliului dacă până la mijlocul anului 2013 nu vor fi fost realizate progrese substanțiale.

Dat fiind faptul că acest termen a fost atins, care sunt orientările viitoarei propuneri a Comisiei și, mai ales, cum consideră că poate fi asigurată atractivitatea sistemului, în special din punct de vedere financiar, pentru părțile implicate (atât autorități cât și furnizori), în contextul în care actualul eșec al SETRE se datorează lipsei de interes a acestora?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(31 iulie 2013)

Comisia încearcă să se asigure că sistemele de taxare rutieră bazate pe durata utilizării (de tip eurovinietă) nu penalizează utilizatorii nerezidenți ocazionali prin faptul că nu furnizează opțiuni pentru utilizarea pe termen scurt a infrastructurii rutiere. Legislația UE prevede că taxele de utilizare trebuie să fie proporționale cu durata utilizării infrastructurii, ținând totuși cont de unele costuri administrative suplimentare acceptabile. Pentru perioade scurte, ca o cerință minimă, utilizatorii trebuie să aibă posibilitatea de a achiziționa o vinietă săptămânală, la un preț care să nu depășească corespondentul ratei anuale cu mai mult de 5 %, *pro rata temporis*.

Comisia dorește să propună în cursul acestui an o inițiativă pentru a promova taxele rutiere bazate pe distanța parcursă și colectate prin sisteme de taxare electronică. Propunerea va urmări să faciliteze dezvoltarea unor sisteme de taxare rutieră mai echitabile și mai eficiente, pentru a garanta o coerență mai mare între sistemele de tarifare naționale. Aceasta va include, eventual, și dispoziții referitoare la autoturisme, acoperind aspecte legate de congestionarea traficului, cerințele de nediscriminare și drepturile utilizatorilor. Comisia va ține seama de gradul de acceptabilitate pentru utilizatori și de necesitatea de a întreține corespunzător infrastructura existentă.

În paralel, Comisia este dispusă să cofinanțeze un proiect de implementare inițială a SETRE în șapte state membre care înregistrează un trafic internațional important și dețin sisteme extinse de taxare rutieră, ceea ce va favoriza acoperirea europeană completă. Pe termen lung, numărul de vehicule pentru care se vor percepe taxe rutiere va crește, întrucât principiul „utilizatorul plătește” ar trebui aplicat la toate categoriile de vehicule. SETRE va fi mai atractiv pentru autoritățile publice, deoarece simplifică foarte mult introducerea sistemelor de taxare rutieră, dar și pentru furnizorii de servicii, întrucât baza de clienți va crește în mod semnificativ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007390/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Introduction of the European electronic road toll service

The overall objective of a Europe-wide electronic toll service (EETS) — a project which started in 2004 — is still a long way from being achieved.

60% of toll roads in the EU are currently fitted with individual electronic toll systems, and that percentage continues to rise.

The intensification of goods haulage traffic and the fact that EU citizens prefer to use cars when travelling at home and abroad point to the need to establish an interoperable pan-European electronic toll system.

Unfortunately, in some Member States, the cost of a short-term tax disc, for example for one week, is four times more, proportionately, than the cost of a monthly or yearly disc.

What steps can the Commission take to eliminate this discrepancy, which is obstructing and adversely affecting cross-border travel in the EU?

Similarly, in its communication of 30 August 2012, the Commission reserved the right to present a new initiative to the European Parliament and the Council if no substantial progress had been made on this matter by mid-2013.

Since that deadline has now been reached, can the Commission state what approach it will take in its proposal, and also how it feels the system could be made more appealing to those involved (both the authorities and service providers), especially from a financial standpoint, bearing in mind that the current failure of the EETS can be ascribed to their lack of interest?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The Commission seeks to ensure that time-based systems, like the Euro-vignette, do not penalise non-resident occasional users by failing to provide options for short-term usage of transit on the road infrastructure. The EU legislation provides that user charges shall be proportionate to the duration of the use made of the infrastructure, taking into account acceptable additional administrative costs. For short duration needs, as a minimum, a weekly vignette must be offered at a rate not exceeding the annual rate by more than 5%, prorata temporis.

The Commission is considering proposing an initiative later this year to promote distance-based road user charges collected through electronic tolling systems. The proposal would aim to facilitate the deployment of more fair and efficient road pricing schemes, to ensure greater consistency within the EU between national tariff schemes and to — possibly — include provisions for passenger cars addressing congestion, non-discrimination requirements and user rights. The Commission will take into account the users' acceptability and the necessity to properly maintain the existing infrastructure.

In parallel, the Commission is willing to co-finance a project of intial deployment of EETS in seven Member States with important international traffic and extensive tolling systems, which will foster the full European coverage. In the longer term, the number of vehicles liable to tolls will increase as the 'user pays' principle should be applied to all categories of vehicles. EETS will be more appealing to public authorities as it greatly simplifies the introduction of tolling and to service providers as the customer base will be significantly increased.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-007391/13
za Komisijo
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(21. junij 2013)

Zadeva: Sum zlorabe finančnih sredstev EU pri financiranju Evropskega potrošniškega centra (EPC) in kršitev Sklepa št. 1926/2006/ES

Zavod PIP nas je nedavno obvestil o primeru morebitne zlorabe finančnih interesov EU pri dodelitvi finančnih sredstev Evropskemu potrošniškemu centru (EPC). Na podlagi poročila Ministrstva za gospodarski razvoj in tehnologijo o izredni reviziji izvedbe javnih razpisov, objavljenih na podlagi Zakona o varstvu potrošnikov ter poročila Komisije za preprečevanje korupcije je moč sklepati, da je pri dodelitvi finančnih sredstev EU prišlo do zlorabe. Urad za varstvo potrošnikov je namreč v letih 2007, 2008 in 2009 z izjavo o sofinanciranju projekta EPC vnaprej, brez pravne podlage, omogočila Zvezi potrošnikov Slovenije (ZPS) podpis pogodbe z Evropsko komisijo za naslednje leto, za katero ZPS sploh še ni bila izbrana za izvajalca projekta, in tako kar trikrat zapovrstjo povzročila konfliktno pravno situacijo, ko ima izvajalec projekta s strani Evropske komisije že podpisano pogodbo o sofinanciranju, ministrstvo pa ga formalno še ni izbralo.

Program varstva potrošnikov 2007–2013, ki sta ga Svet in Evropski parlament sprejela 18. decembra 2006 št. 1926/2006/ES o uvedbi programa ukrepov Skupnosti na področju potrošniške politike (2007–2013), predstavlja finančni okvir potrošniške politike. Sklep št. 1926/2006/ES, Priloga I, akcija 10 (Ukrepi na področju obveščanja, svetovanja in pravnega varstva) člen 10.2. določajo, da finančni prispevki za skupne ukrepe z javnimi ali neprofitnimi telesi, ki tvorijo mrežo Skupnosti, zagotavljajo informacije in pomoč potrošnikom, da bi jim pomagali pri uveljavljanju njihovih pravic pri dostopu do primernega reševanja sporov (mreža evropskih potrošniških centrov). Finančni prispevki za ukrepe iz člena 4(1)(a) se lahko dodelijo javnemu telesu ali neprofitnemu telesu, ki ga na podlagi preglednega postopka imenuje država članica ali zadevni pristojni organ in ga potrdi Komisija (člen 1, Priloga II, Sklep št. 1926/2006/ES). Iz prijave Zavoda PIP o goljufiji in korupciji v škodo proračuna EU v zvezi Evropskim potrošniškim centrom Slovenija (št. OLAF – OF/2013/0013) in priloženih dokumentov je razvidno, da gostiteljska organizacija Evropskega potrošniškega centra iz Slovenije ni bila izbrana na pregleden način, kot zahteva Sklep št. 1926/2006/ES.

Ali je bila Komisija o teh domnevnih nepravilnostih obveščena ter ali jih ustrezno preverja?

Katere ukrepe bo sprejela Izvajalska agencija za zdravje in potrošnike, da prihodnje prepreči podobne nezakonitosti? Katere postopke bo sprožila zoper odgovorne zaradi nezakonitega delovanja?

Odgovor g. Mimice v imenu Komisije
(8. avgust 2013)

Zavod PIP je avgusta 2012 Komisijo in Izvajalsko agencijo za zdravje in potrošnike obvestil o domnevnih nepravilnostih. Komisija in Agencija to zadevo skrbno spremljata, da bi pri dodeljevanju sredstev EU zagotovili popolno skladnost s finančno uredbo.

Agencija, ki je odgovorna za upravljanje nepovratnih sredstev Mreže evropskih potrošniških centrov (ECC-Net), je po notranji analizi od slovenskih organov zahtevala pojasnila o izbiri gostiteljske strukture Evropskega potrošniškega centra Slovenije. Ker je bil odgovor nezadovoljiv, je Agencija zadevo predala Evropskemu uradu za boj proti goljufijam, ki pa je zadevo zavrnil, saj jo je preiskovala že slovenska Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije. Agencija se je odločila, da do sprejetja končne odločitve glede domnevnih nepravilnosti ni primerno ustaviti dejavnosti, ki naj bi se izvajale z nepovratnimi sredstvi.

Junija 2013 je Agencija prejela rezultate preiskav Ministrstva za gospodarski razvoj in tehnologijo ter priporočila Komisije za preprečevanje korupcije Republike Slovenije, ki se trenutno prevajajo in preučujejo. Na podlagi teh rezultatov se bosta Agencija in po potrebi Komisija odločili o ustreznih ukrepih.

V tem okviru velja poudariti, da je Agencija glede nepovratnih sredstev evropskih potrošniških centrov vzpostavila postopek za zagotavljanje popolne skladnosti s finančno uredbo EU. Odločitve o dodelitvi sredstev sprejema na podlagi dokazil vložnikov ter izvaja ocene in naknadne revizije. Glavna odgovornost vlad držav članic na področju evropskih potrošniških centrov je, da s preglednim postopkom izberejo gostiteljsko strukturo in zagotovijo ustrezen nadzor nad goljufijami.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007391/13
to the Commission
Tanja Fajon (S&D)
(21 June 2013)

Subject: Suspected misuse of EU funding intended to finance the Slovenian European Consumer Centre (EPC) and infringement of Decision No 1926/2006/EC

The Slovenian PIP Institute (PIP = Law, Information, Help) has recently reported that the EU's financial interests may have been damaged when funding was being allocated for Slovenia's European Consumer Centre (ECC). The report by the Ministry for Economic Development and Technology on the special implementation review of public tenders issued under the Consumer Protection Act and the report of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption both give cause to suppose that abuse occurred at the time when the EU funds were assigned. In 2007, 2008, and 2009 the Consumer Protection Office anticipated the proper procedure where the ECC co-financing statement was concerned and in that way enabled the Slovene Consumers' Association (ZPS), without any legal basis, to sign a contract with the European Commission for the following year, even though the ZPS had not yet been selected to carry out the project. For three years running, therefore, the ZPS brought about a legally incongruous situation in which it had a co-financing contract already signed by the Commission, as if it were the contractor, but had not been formally selected by the ministry.

The 2007-2013 consumer protection programme, as laid down in Decision No 1926/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a programme of Community action in the field of consumer policy (2007-2013), constitutes the financial framework for consumer policy. Included in Annex I to that decision is Action 10 ('Actions on information, advice and redress'), point 10.2 of which covers 'Financial contributions for joint actions with public or non-profit bodies constituting Community networks which provide information and assistance to consumers to help them exercise their rights and obtain access to appropriate dispute resolution (the European Consumer Centres Network)'. Annex II, point 1, stipulates that 'The financial contributions for actions referred to in Article 4(1)(a) may be awarded to a public body or a non-profit making body designated through a transparent procedure by the Member State or the competent authority concerned and agreed by the Commission'. It is clear from the PIP Institute's report on fraud and corruption at the expense of the EU budget in connection with the Slovenian European Consumer Centre (OLAF — OF/2013/0013) and the documents attached to it that the ECC host organisation in Slovenia was not selected in the transparent manner required by Decision No 1926/2006/EC.

Has the Commission been informed about these suspected irregularities and has it carried out the checks necessary to establish the facts?

What steps will be taken by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers to prevent similar breaches of the law in the future? What kind of proceedings will be instituted against those who have acted unlawfully?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission and the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers were informed by the Slovenian PIP Institute of the suspected irregularities in August 2012. The Commission and the Agency follow the case closely so as to ensure that EU funds are granted in full compliance with the financial rules.

After internal analysis, the Agency, which is responsible for the management of the ECC-Net grants, requested clarifications from the Slovenian authorities on the designation of the host structure of the ECC Slovenia. As the reply was unsatisfactory, the Agency referred the case to OLAF which however dismissed the case since the Slovenian anti-corruption Commission was already investigating it. Pending a final decision on the suspected irregularities, the Agency decided that it was not appropriate to stop the activities foreseen in the grant.

In June 2013, the Agency received the results of the investigations by the Ministry for Technology and Economic Development and the recommendations from the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption of the Republic of Slovenia which currently are being translated and analysed. On the basis of these results, the Agency and, if appropriate, the Commission will decide on the appropriate action.

In this context, it is worth highlighting that the Agency has put in place a procedure for the ECC grants in order to ensure full conformity with the EU Financial Regulation. It takes award decisions based on the evidence provided by applicants, and carries out evaluations and *ex post* audits. In the case of ECCs, it is the primary responsibility of Member States' Governments to designate the host structure through a transparent procedure and to ensure adequate control of frauds.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007392/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δασικές πυρκαγιές και ετοιμότητα ενόψει του θέρους

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση διαθέτει, και ενεργοποιεί όποτε αυτό κρίνεται απαραίτητο, το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης, προκειμένου να ανταποκριθεί σε περιπτώσεις φυσικών καταστροφών σε κράτη μέλη.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, το 2009 το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης ενεργοποιήθηκε, κατόπιν αιτήματος της χώρας, και για την αντιμετώπιση πυρκαγιών στην Ελλάδα.

Καθώς οι φυσικές καταστροφές παρατηρούνται στον νότο της ΕΕ με μεγαλύτερη συχνότητα τη διάρκεια του καλοκαιριού — εξαιτίας των υψηλών θερμοκρασιών — είναι σε θέση η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει για το ύψος των διαθέσιμων πόρων του ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης για το τρέχον έτος (2013);

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Αυγούστου 2013)

Το σύνολο της ετήσιας χρηματοδότησης του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ, από τη σύστασή του, το 2002, και μετά, ανέρχεται σε 1 δισεκατομμύριο ευρώ. Το 2013 σχεδόν το σύνολο αυτού του ποσού είναι, προς το παρόν, ακόμη διαθέσιμο. Εντός αυτού του ορίου, τα ποσά ενίσχυσης από το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης υπολογίζονται με βάση την προκληθείσα ζημία και όχι με βάση τη διαθεσιμότητα δημοσιονομικών πόρων.

Μετά την έγκριση του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου για το 2014-2020, το σύνολο της ετήσιας χρηματοδότησης του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης μειώθηκε σε 500 εκατομμύρια ευρώ. Επίσης, μη δαπανηθέντα ποσά από το έτος n μπορούν να μεταφερθούν στο έτος n+1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007392/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: State of preparedness for forest fires during the summer

The European Union Solidarity Fund is deployed where considered necessary in response to natural disasters in the Member States.

In 2009, following a request from Greece, resources from the fund were released for the containment of fire damage in that country.

Given that in southern Europe natural disasters occur more frequently during the summer season because of high temperatures, can the Commission say what Solidarity Fund resources are available for deployment this year (2013)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The total annual allocation of the EU Solidarity Fund since its creation in 2002 has been EUR 1 billion. In 2013, almost the entirety of this amount is currently still available. Within this ceiling, aid amounts from the Fund are calculated on the basis of damage caused, not on the basis of the availability of budgetary resources.

Following the adoption of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, the total annual allocation of the Fund has been reduced to EUR 500 million. In addition, unspent amounts from year n may be carried over to year n+1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007393/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κενό στη χρηματοδότηση προγραμμάτων του εθνικού σχεδίου για το άσυλο και την μετανάστευση στην Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με την τοποθέτηση του έλληνα Υπουργού Δημόσιας Τάξης και Προστασίας του Πολίτη, κ. Νίκου Δένδια, στην Επιτροπή Πολιτικών Ελευθεριών, Δικαιοσύνης και Εσωτερικών Υποθέσεων του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, οι ετήσιες ανάγκες για την υλοποίηση του εθνικού σχεδίου για το άσυλο και τη μετανάστευση στην χώρα προσεγγίζουν τα 500 εκατομμύρια ευρώ. Σημειώνεται ότι 247 εκατομμύρια ευρώ προέρχονται από τον εθνικό προϋπολογισμό και 170 περίπου εκατομμύρια ευρώ από το πρόγραμμα SOLID.

Καθώς προκύπτει σημαντικό χρηματοδοτικό κενό (της τάξης των 80 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ) και ενώ η Ελλάδα εν μέσω της πρωτοφανούς οικονομικής κρίσης, αλλά και λόγω γεωγραφικής θέσης, καλείται διαρκώς να ανταποκρίνεται σε αυξημένες οικονομικές απαιτήσεις στον τομέα της μετανάστευσης, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Προτίθεται να συμβάλει στην αντιμετώπιση του οικονομικού κενού που προκύπτει στην προσπάθεια αντιμετώπισης της παράνομης μετανάστευσης; Εξετάζει το ενδεχόμενο έκτακτης χρηματοδότησης;

— Καθώς είχε προταθεί η αξιοποίηση των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων για την κάλυψη του χρηματοδοτικού κενού, λαμβάνει υπόψη της, τις δυσκολίες για την κινητοποίησή τους στον τομέα της μετανάστευσης, δεδομένου ότι τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία απευθύνονται κυρίως σε πολύ στοχευμένες δράσεις (π.χ. προστασία ευάλωτων κοινωνικά ομάδων);

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Για την περίοδο 2008-2013, χορηγήθηκαν στην Ελλάδα κονδύλια συνολικού ύψους 360,7 ευρώ από τα τέσσερα Ταμεία του Γενικού Προγράμματος «Αλληλεγγύη και διαχείριση των μεταναστευτικών ροών», δηλ. από το Ταμείο Εξωτερικών Συνόρων (ΤΕΣ), το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Επιστροφής (ΤΕ), το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο για τους Πρόσφυγες (ΕΤΠ) και το Ταμείο ένταξης υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών (ΤΕ). Η Ελλάδα είναι η μεγαλύτερη δικαιούχος του ΤΕ και η τρίτη κατά σειρά δικαιούχος του ΤΕΣ.

Μεταξύ 2008 και 2011, χορηγήθηκαν συνολικά στην Ελλάδα 11,4 εκατ. ευρώ στο πλαίσιο των ειδικών δράσεων του ΤΕΣ για την αντιμετώπιση των αδυναμιών στα εξωτερικά της σύνορα.

Εξάλλου, από το 2008, η Ελλάδα έλαβε επιπλέον 28,4 εκατ. ευρώ ως έκτακτη στήριξη στο πλαίσιο των κονδυλίων του SOLID, κυρίως για την ενίσχυση της ικανότητας υποδοχής, τη διαχείριση της διαδικασίας ελέγχου και την αντιμετώπιση των αναγκών των ασυνόδευτων ανηλίκων. Για λόγους αλληλεγγύης, και λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την ιδιαίτερη πίεση που αντιμετώπισε η χώρα, η Επιτροπή είναι έτοιμη να ενεργοποιήσει και πάλι φέτος τους υφιστάμενους μηχανισμούς έκτακτης ανάγκης, μετά από αίτημα της Ελλάδας. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, ένα ακόμη ποσό, ύψους 2 εκατ. ευρώ, στο πλαίσιο του ΤΕΣ, καθώς και ένα άλλο, ύψους 4 εκατ. ευρώ, από το ΕΤΠ πρόκειται να καταστούν διαθέσιμα.

Όπως επεσήμανε το Αξιότιμο Μέλος, τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία — λόγω των συγκεκριμένων στόχων — δεν μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για να αντιμετωπιστούν όλες οι πτυχές της μετανάστευσης. Οι χορηγήσεις των ΕΤΠΑ και ΕΚΤ μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν στο πλαίσιο των πολιτικών κοινωνικής ένταξης και, πιο συγκεκριμένα, των πολιτικών που στοχεύουν στην κοινωνικοοικονομική ένταξη ευπαθών ομάδων του πληθυσμού, όπως οι μετανάστες.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007393/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Shortfall in programme funding for migrants and asylum-seekers in Greece

According to a statement to the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs delivered by Nikos Dendias, Greek Minister for Public Order and Citizen Protection, the Greek support programme for migrants and asylum-seekers requires almost EUR 500 million annually. Of this, EUR 247 million is drawn from the national budget and around EUR 170 million from the SOLID programme, leaving a substantial shortfall (of around EUR 80 million).

At the same time, Greece, which is currently in the throes of an unprecedented economic crisis, is, because of its geographical location, constantly called upon to shoulder an increasing share of the financial burden created by the influx of migrants.

In view of this:

— Will the Commission help cover the shortfall in funding for measures to combat illegal immigration? Is it considering the possibility of providing emergency funding?

— Having proposed the deployment of Structural Fund resources to cover the shortfall in respect of the migration programme, is it aware of the difficulties arising in this connection, given that these resources are generally earmarked for very specific purposes (e.g. the protection of vulnerable sections of society)?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(9 October 2013)

For the period 2008-2013, Greece has benefited from a total allocation of EUR 360.7 million under the four Funds of the General Programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' (SOLID Funds), namely the External Borders Fund (EBF), the European Return Fund(RF), the European Refugee Fund (ERF) and the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (IF). Greece is the biggest RF beneficiary and the 3rd biggest EBF beneficiary.

Between 2008 and 2011, a total of EUR 11.4 million was granted to Greece under the EBF Specific Actions to address weaknesses at its external borders.

In addition to this, since 2008 Greece has received a further EUR 28.4 million as emergency support under the SOLID Funds, mainly for strengthening its reception capacity, managing the screening process and addressing the needs of unaccompanied minors. On grounds of solidarity, with respect to the situation of particular pressure the country has faced, the Commission stands ready to activate again this year the existing emergency mechanisms, at the request of Greece. In this context, another EUR 2 million under EBF as well as another EUR 4 million under ERF are in the process of being made available.

As pointed out by the Honourable Member, Structural Funds — given their specific objectives — cannot be used to tackle all aspects of migration. ERDF and ESF allocations can be used in the context of social inclusion policies and more specifically policies which aim at the socioeconomic inclusion of vulnerable population groups such as immigrants.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007394/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: «Κακές τράπεζες» και τοξικά χρεόγραφα στο ευρωπαϊκό τραπεζικό σύστημα

Μία από τις σημαντικές προκλήσεις που καλείται να αντιμετωπίσει μεταξύ άλλων η επονομαζόμενη «τραπεζική ένωση» στην ΕΕ είναι ο κίνδυνος έκθεσης της ευρωπαϊκής οικονομίας σε σημαντικούς κινδύνους εξαιτίας των τοξικών χρεογράφων που διακρατούν ορισμένες τράπεζες στην Ευρώπη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιο είναι το ποσοστό των «τοξικών χρεογράφων» επί του συνόλου του χαρτοφυλακίου μιας τράπεζας άνω του οποίου η ΕΕ εκτιμά ότι η τράπεζα αυτή είναι ιδιαίτερα εκτεθειμένη σε κίνδυνο;

— Διαθέτει πρόσφατο υπολογισμό για το ύψος των επικίνδυνων ή τοξικών χρεογράφων που διακρατεί αυτή τη στιγμή συνολικά το ευρωπαϊκό τραπεζικό σύστημα;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Αυγούστου 2013)

1. Η χρηματοπιστωτική κρίση έχει εγείρει ανησυχίες όσον αφορά το επίπεδο των τοξικών χρεογράφων στους ισολογισμούς των τραπεζών. Πέντε και πλέον έτη μετά την έναρξη της κρίσης, το θέμα εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί πηγή προβληματισμού τόσο για τις αγορές όσο και για τους ρυθμιστικούς φορείς.

Δεν υπάρχει καθορισμένο επίπεδο «τοξικών χρεογράφων», ως ποσοστό του συνολικού χαρτοφυλακίου μιας τράπεζας, πάνω από το οποίο να θεωρείται ότι η τράπεζα εκτίθεται σε υψηλό κίνδυνο. Η ανάλυση αυτή θα πρέπει μάλλον να διενεργείται κατά περίπτωση, λαμβανομένου υπόψη του οικονομικού περιβάλλοντος στο οποίο δραστηριοποιούνται οι τράπεζες και των διαφορετικών επιπέδων κεφαλαίου, κάλυψης ζημιών από δανειοδοτήσεις και αποδοτικότητας. Όλοι αυτοί οι παράγοντες οδηγούν σε αποκλίνουσα δυνητική απώλεια ικανότητας απορρόφησης.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει αρμοδιότητες εποπτείας των τραπεζών της ΕΕ ούτε την εξουσία να διενεργεί επιτόπιες επιθεωρήσεις που θα μπορούσαν να οδηγήσουν στον εντοπισμό και την αξιολόγηση των εν λόγω «τοξικών στοιχείων ενεργητικού». Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει αριθμητικά στοιχεία για τη συνολική ποσότητα επικίνδυνων ή «τοξικών χρεογράφων» που διακρατούν σήμερα οι ευρωπαϊκές τράπεζες.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Τραπεζών (ΕΑΤ) πραγματοποίησε το 2009, το 2010 και το 2011 προσομοιώσεις ακραίων καταστάσεων ανά την ΕΕ προκειμένου να αξιολογήσει την αντοχή των χρηματοπιστωτικών ιδρυμάτων της ΕΕ σε αντίξοες εξελίξεις της αγοράς, και να συνεισφέρει στη συνολική εκτίμηση του συστημικού κινδύνου στο χρηματοπιστωτικό σύστημα της ΕΕ. Επιπλέον, στο πλαίσιο του ενιαίου εποπτικού μηχανισμού (ΕΕΜ), αναμένεται ότι η ΕΚΤ, πριν αναλάβει καθήκοντα ως μοναδική αρχή εποπτείας, θα προβεί σε εμπεριστατωμένη και αξιόπιστη επισκόπηση της ποιότητας των στοιχείων ενεργητικού των τραπεζών εκείνων που θα βρεθούν στο στόχαστρο του ΕΕΜ. Το εγχείρημα αυτό θα είναι καθοριστικό για την παροχή μιας πολύ σαφούς εικόνας των κινδύνων και των τρωτών σημείων του ευρωπαϊκού τραπεζικού κλάδου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007394/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: 'Bad banks' and toxic debt in the European banking system

One of the major challenges facing the so-called EU 'banking union' is the risk of exposure of the EU economy to significant risks from the toxic debts held by some banks in Europe.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— What is the level of 'toxic debt', as a percentage of the entire portfolio of a bank, above which the EU believes that a bank is particularly exposed to risk?

— Does it have any recent calculation of the total amount of hazardous or toxic debt currently in the European banking system?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

1. The financial crisis has raised concerns in terms of the level of toxic debt in banks' balance sheets. After more than five years from the beginning of the crisis, this issue still remains a matter of concern both for markets and regulators.

There is no defined level of 'toxic debt', as a percentage of the entire portfolio of a bank, above which a bank is considered to be exposed to a high risk. Rather this analysis should be carried out on a case by case basis, taking into account the economic environment where banks operate and their different levels of capital, loan loss coverage and profitability. All these factors lead to dissimilar potential loss absorption capability.

2. The Commission has no supervisory powers over EU banks and no power to perform onsite inspections that could lead to detection and assessment of such 'toxic assets'. Therefore, the Commission does not hold figures of the total amount of hazardous or 'toxic debt' currently held by the European banks.

The European Banking Authority (EBA) has performed in 2009, 2010 and 2011 EU-wide stress tests in order to assess the resilience of EU financial institutions to adverse market developments, as well as to contribute to the overall assessment of systemic risk in the EU financial system. Moreover, in the context of the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM), it is expected that the ECB, before taking over the task as the single supervisor, will conduct a thorough and credible asset quality review of those banks which will be in the scope of the SSM. This exercise will be key in providing a very clear picture of the risks and vulnerabilities in the European banking industry.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007395/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ποιότητα πόσιμου νερού στις πρωτεύουσες των κρατών μελών

Είναι σε θέση, με βάση τα στοιχεία που συλλέγει, η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει για τη γενική εικόνα όσον αφορά την ποιότητα του πόσιμου νερού στις πρωτεύουσες της Ευρώπης;

Σε σχέση με το παρελθόν παρατηρείται βελτίωση;

Ποια η περίπτωση της Αθήνας;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(23 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή επεξεργάζεται τα δεδομένα που έχουν ληφθεί στο πλαίσιο της τελευταίας διαδικασίας υποβολής εκθέσεων της οδηγίας για το πόσιμο νερό (δεδομένα από την περίοδο 2008-2010) και προτίθεται να δημοσιεύσει τα συμπεράσματά της σε έκθεση, αργότερα εντός του 2013 ή στις αρχές του 2014. Εκθέσεις όσον αφορά προηγούμενους τριετείς χρονικούς κύκλους υπάρχουν στη διεύθυνση https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007395/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Quality of drinking water in the capitals of Member States

On the basis of the data it is gathering, can the Commission give a general picture of the quality of drinking water in the capitals of the EU?

Has there been any improvement compared with the past?

How does Athens fare in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2013)

The Commission is currently processing the data received under the latest Drinking Water Directive reporting exercise (Data from 2008-2010) and intends to publish its findings in report, later in 2013 or early 2014. Reports concerning previous three-year cycles can be found at:
https://circabc.europa.eu/faces/jsp/extension/wai/navigation/container.jsp

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007396/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Οδηγία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΕΕ) για τα ύδατα κολύμβησης

Για την ποιότητα των υδάτων κολύμβησης στα κράτη μέλη έχει θεσπιστεί εκτενής νομοθεσία, σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, η οποία προβλέπει, μεταξύ άλλων, δεσμευτικά ποιοτικά πρότυπα και τακτική παρακολούθηση των υδάτων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σύμφωνα με τα τελευταία διαθέσιμα στοιχεία, ποια τα αποτελέσματα που προκύπτουν από την παρακολούθηση των παράκτιων υδάτων κολύμβησης στην Ελλάδα;

— Καθώς η δειγματοληψία πραγματοποιείται συνήθως στην αρχή της κάθε κολυμβητικής σεζόν, με ποιο τρόπο διασφαλίζεται η έγκαιρη ενημέρωση των πολιτών για τυχόν σημαντικές αλλαγές στην ποιότητα των υδάτων των παραλιών εντός της θερινής περιόδου;

— Ποια παράκτια κράτη μέλη παρουσιάζουν τις καλύτερες επιδόσεις όσον αφορά τη γενική εικόνα όσον αφορά την ποιότητα των υδάτων τους και ποια τη χειρότερη;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(8 Αυγούστου 2013)

1. Τα αποτελέσματα της αξιολόγησης της ποιότητας των υδάτων κολύμβησης παρατίθενται στον δικτυακό τόπο του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Περιβάλλοντος ([1]). Σύμφωνα με την αξιολόγηση των στοιχείων που δημοσιεύτηκαν το 2013, επί του συνόλου των περιοχών κολύμβησης στην Ελλάδα, 2008 (93,4%) είχαν εξαιρετική ποιότητα, 110 (5,1%) καλή και 25 (1,2%) ικανοποιητική. Μόνον έξι περιοχές είχαν ανεπαρκή ποιότητα και καμία δεν έκλεισε για το κοινό.

2. Σύμφωνα με την οδηγία 2006/7/ΕΚ ([2]) σχετικά με τη διαχείριση της ποιότητας των υδάτων κολύμβησης, η αξιολόγηση της ποιότητας των υδάτων κολύμβησης διενεργείται εν γένει αφού συνεκτιμηθούν τα στοιχεία που αντιστοιχούν στις τέσσερις προηγούμενες κολυμβητικές περιόδους. Τα κράτη μέλη υποχρεούνται να μεριμνούν ώστε η ταξινόμηση των αντίστοιχων περιοχών κολύμβησης, μαζί με άλλες σχετικές πληροφορίες που ορίζονται στο άρθρο 12, να διαδίδονται ενεργά και να είναι αμέσως διαθέσιμες μέσω της χρήσης πρόσφορων μέσων και τεχνολογιών.

3. Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση του 2013 για τα ύδατα κολύμβησης, τα επίπεδα συμμόρφωσης των περιοχών κολύμβησης σε εννέα κράτη μέλη ήταν, το 2012, υψηλότερα από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ (78,3%): στην Κύπρο (100%), στο Λουξεμβούργο (100%), στη Μάλτα (96,6%), στην Ελλάδα (93,3%), στη Γερμανία (88%), στην Πορτογαλία (86,7%), στην Ιταλία (85,1%), στη Φινλανδία (83,4%) και στην Ισπανία (82,8%), παρά το γεγονός ότι σε ορισμένες από τις χώρες αυτές υπήρξαν και τοποθεσίες με ανεπαρκή ποιότητα υδάτων κολύμβησης. Τα υψηλότερα ποσοστά μη συμμορφούμενων περιοχών κολύμβησης παρατηρήθηκαν στο Βέλγιο (13,0%), τις Κάτω Χώρες (6,5%), το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο (5,7%), την Ισπανία (3,8%) και τη Δανία (3,1%). Ας σημειωθεί ότι η Κροατία ανέφερε οικειοθελώς στοιχεία για το 2012 και εμφάνισε επίπεδα συμμόρφωσης υψηλότερα από τον μέσο όρο της ΕΕ (95,3%).

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/status-and-monitoring/state-of-bathing-water/bathing-water-data-viewer
([2]) ΕΕ L 64 της 4.3.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007396/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: EU directive on bathing water

Extensive legislation has been adopted at European level on the quality of bathing waters which makes provision, *inter alia*, for binding quality standards and regular monitoring of waters.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— According to the latest data available, what results have been obtained from monitoring coastal bathing waters in Greece?

— As sampling is usually carried out at the start of each season, what is done to ensure that citizens are given timely warning of any significant changes in the standard of coastal waters during the summer season?

— Which coastal Member States have the best performance in terms of the overall standard of their waters and which have the worst?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

1. The results of the assessment of bathing water quality are presented on the website of the European Environment Agency ([1]). According to the assessment of data published in 2013, in Greece 2008 bathing water sites (93.4%) had excellent quality, 110 sites (5.1%) had good quality and 25 sites (1.2%) had sufficient quality. Only six bathing water sites had poor quality and no bathing water sites were closed.

2. According to the directive 2006/7/EC ([2]) concerning the management of bathing water quality the assessment of bathing water quality is in general carried out by taking into account the data corresponding to the four preceding bathing seasons. Member States are obliged to ensure that classification of their respective bathing water sites, along with other relevant information specified in Article 12, is actively and promptly disseminated using appropriate media and technologies.

3. According to the 2013 Bathing Water Report, nine Member States reached levels of compliance for their bathing water sites in 2012 higher than the EU average of 78.3%: Cyprus (100%), Luxembourg (100%), Malta (96.6%), Greece (93.3%), Germany (88.1%), Portugal (86.7%), Italy (85.1%), Finland (83.4%) and Spain (82.8%), even though some of them also had a number of bathing water sites with poor quality. The highest rates of non-compliant bathing water sites were found in Belgium (13.0%), the Netherlands (6.5%), United Kingdom (5.7%), Spain (3.8%), and Denmark (3.1%). To note, Croatia reported voluntarily data for 2012 and had levels of compliance above the EU average (95.3%).

([1]) http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/status-and-monitoring/state-of-bathing-water/bathing-water-data-viewer.
([2]) OJ L 64, 4.3.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007555/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Aumento degli attacchi terroristici in Medio Oriente. Il caso dell'Iraq.

Nella giornata dello scorso 25 giugno si è registrata una nuova serie di attentati in svariate città irachene: soprattutto a Mosul, Tikrit e nella capitale Baghdad.

Considerando che, nel solo mese di aprile, circa duemila persone sono state uccise in circostanze simili — attacchi kamikaze, autobombe, esplosioni e sparatorie — e che questi avvenimenti illustrano lo stato di ingovernabilità in cui versa attualmente il paese;

rilevando inoltre che oggetto di devastazione sono soprattutto gli esercizi commerciali gestiti da cristiani e i loro luoghi di culto, registrando tra gli ultimi episodi di violenza fondamentalista anche la distruzione della chiesa di Santa Maria, all'est di Baghdad;

richiamando infine l'art. 22 della Dichiarazione Universale dei Diritti dell'uomo: «Ogni individuo, in quanto membro della società, ha diritto alla sicurezza sociale, nonché alla realizzazione (…) dei diritti economici, sociali e culturali indispensabili alla sua dignità e al libero sviluppo della sua personalità»;

potrebbe la Commissione chiarire quali azioni intenda intraprendere al fine di promuovere la ricostruzione anche civile, oltre che materiale, dell'Iraq nonché la tutela della libertà religiosa?

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

L'AR/VP segue attentamente la situazione in Iraq e ha condannato il persistere di elevati livelli di violenza nel paese, compresi gli attentati degli ultimi mesi, esprimendo preoccupazione per l'accentuarsi delle tensioni politiche, che mina la stabilità interna.

L'AR/VP ha sollevato il tema dell'Iraq in occasione dei Consigli Affari esteri di febbraio e di marzo, durante i quali i ministri degli Esteri dell'Unione europea hanno riconosciuto l'importanza di promuovere la stabilità politica in Iraq e di aumentare l'impegno dell'UE nei confronti di questo paese. Il Consiglio Affari esteri dell'aprile 2013 ha adottato conclusioni specifiche sull'Iraq.

In occasione della sua visita in Iraq del 17 giugno 2013, l'AR/VP ha esortato tutte le parti a collaborare per affrontare le questioni politiche e di governance in sede di dialogo e ha caldeggiato il consolidamento dei progressi democratici per mezzo di istituzioni forti ed efficienti.

L'UE esprime regolarmente, sia pubblicamente sia direttamente alle autorità irachene attraverso i canali diplomatici, le proprie preoccupazioni per la situazione dei diritti umani, in particolare per quanto concerne i diritti delle minoranze religiose in Iraq. I diritti umani sono un elemento centrale del partenariato e dell'accordo di cooperazione UE-Iraq. Si sta iniziando ad applicare l'accordo, che permetterà all'UE di intensificare il dialogo con le autorità irachene e di adoperarsi con il massimo impegno per esprimere la propria preoccupazione e ricordare a tali autorità i loro obblighi internazionali e gli ulteriori impegni assunti nel corso dell'esame periodico universale ([1]).

L'UE ha sempre sostenuto la ricostruzione dell'Iraq e la sua transizione verso la democrazia. L'UE fornisce assistenza tecnica per quanto riguarda lo Stato di diritto e i diritti umani ([2]), che sono elementi fondamentali per ovviare alle difficoltà delle minoranze religiose, e continua a sostenere il potenziamento istituzionale.

([1]) L'esame periodico universale è un meccanismo del Consiglio per i diritti umani dell'ONU che esamina periodicamente il rispetto di tali diritti da parte degli Stati membri delle Nazioni Unite.

([2]) Come l'Alta commissione indipendente per i diritti umani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007397/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Recent violence in Iraq

In recent months, Iraq has witnessed a renewed level of violence. This week alone, 70 people were killed as a result of bombings and other attacks in the north of the country, while May saw the most significant increase in deadly attacks since June of 2008.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

1. What action is being taken at EU level to promote and consolidate political stability in Iraq, including supporting workable democratic institutions of governance?

2. What steps have been taken by the Commission to tackle violence, underlying sectarianism, and associated family displacement in Iraq?

Question for written answer E-007555/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Increase in terrorist attacks in the Middle East: the Iraq case

On 25 June 2013 a number of Iraqi cities, in particular Mosul, Tikrit and the capital Baghdad, were hit by a fresh wave of attacks.

In April alone, around 2 000 people were killed in similar circumstances — in suicide attacks, car bombings, explosions and gun battles. These events show that the country is becoming ungovernable.

Furthermore, Christian shops and places of worship are the ones that bear the brunt of the devastating attacks; the latest episodes of fundamentalist violence included the destruction of St Mary's Church in east Baghdad.

Lastly, Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: 'Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation […] of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.'

Could the Commission clarify what action it intends to take in order to encourage the rebuilding of Iraqi civil society and physical infrastructure, as well as the protection of religious freedom?

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

The HR/VP follows the situation in Iraq closely. She has condemned the continuing high levels of violence in Iraq, including the attacks in recent months. She has expressed concern about the increased political tensions undermining Iraq's stability.

The HR/VP initiated a discussion on Iraq at the February and March Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) meetings where EU Foreign Ministers agreed on the importance of promoting political stability in Iraq and enhancing EU engagement with the country. The FAC adopted conclusions specifically on the situation in Iraq in April 2013.

The HR/VP visited Iraq on 17 June 2013 and urged all parties to work together to address political and governance issues through dialogue. She also encouraged the consolidation of democratic gains through strong and efficient institutions.

The EU regularly addresses, both publicly and through diplomatic channels with the Iraqi authorities, its concern with the human rights situation, in particular with regard to the rights of religious minorities in Iraq. Human rights are a prominent element of the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. With the implementation of this Agreement, now starting, the EU will be able to enhance its dialogue with the Iraqi authorities and will spare no efforts to raise its concerns, and to remind them of their international obligations and further commitments made during the Universal Periodic Review ([1]).

The EU has consistently supported Iraq's reconstruction and transition towards democracy. The EU provides technical assistance in the area of rule of law and human rights ([2]), which are key elements for addressing the challenges of religious minorities and continues to assist with institutional building.

([1]) The Universal Periodic Review is a mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council which periodically examines the human rights performance of the UN Member States.

([2]) Such as to the Independent High Commission for Human Rights.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007398/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Child labour in the EU

Some 10.5 million children are believed to be working as domestic labourers worldwide, according to a new report by the International Labour Organisation. 6.5 million of these children are aged between 5 and 14 years old and over 71% are girls.

In this context, can the Commission please respond to the following queries:

1. What is the Commission's assessment of the extent of child labour in the EU?

2. What measures are being taken at EU level to ensure that children living throughout the Member States are not being exploited in unsafe conditions?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

The Commission refers to the replies to questions E-007371/2013 and E-005644/2013 with respect to child labour in the European Union and worldwide.

The Commission is committed to eradicating child labour at a global level and, in particular, the worst forms of child labour.

As previously stated, there are no data available on child labour in the EU so far. However the Commission stresses once again that both the EU *acquis* and the Member States' legislation prohibits the employment of children. Council Directive 94/33/EC on the Protection of Young People at Work explicitly prohibits work by children, safeguarding at the same time their schooling obligations, and protects young people against economic exploitation and against any work likely to harm their safety, health and physical, mental, moral or social development or to jeopardise their education. All Member States have transposed the directive into their national legislation and the Commission has already published a report on its application ([1]).

([1]) Commission Staff Working Document — Application of Council Directive 94/33/EC on the protection of young people at work SEC(2010) 1339: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=706&langId=en&intPageId=209

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007399/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: National reserve provision

Which Member States currently use their national reserve provision for new entrants into agriculture and what makes a farmer eligible for the national reserve?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

In the context of the single payment scheme, Member States may use their national reserve ([1]) for allocating, in accordance with objective criteria and in such a way as to ensure equal treatment between farmers and to avoid market and competition distortions, payment entitlements to farmers commencing their agricultural activity. These are defined as a natural or legal person that did not have any agricultural activity in his own name and at his own risk in the five years preceding the start of the new agricultural activity ([2]).

According to Member States' notifications to the Commission the Member States using the national reserve for farmers commencing their agricultural activity are the following: Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Portugal, Spain, Austria, France, Finland, and Luxembourg.

([1]) Article 41(2) of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, OJ L30 of 31.1.2009.
([2]) Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 1120/2009, OJ L136 of 2.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007400/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Recovery of undue payments

With reference to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1122/2009, in particular Article 80, 'Recovery of undue payments', would the Commission kindly list the amount recovered under Article 80 for each Member State and provide a breakdown of the reasons why?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 2013)

The Commission is sending the requested information directly to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat of the Parliament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007401/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Compliance with Council Directive 2008/120/EC

Can the Commission please provide an up-to-date account of compliance rates for each Member State in relation to Council Directive 2008/120/EC on sow stalls?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

Currently 13 Member States have reached full compliance with the requirement for group housing of sows as laid down in Council Directive 2008/120/EC ([1]). A further Member State has declared compliance but still has to substantiate the claim. All but the abovementioned 13 Member States have recently been asked to provide summaries of action taken or envisaged to achieve compliance. On the basis of their replies the Commission will decide on how to proceed.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007403/13
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Conacre system

Can the Commission please outline the meaning and purpose of the conacre system in Northern Ireland and outline what steps have been taken within the reform of the CAP post-2013 to accommodate this traditional farming method?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

Conacre is a traditional system of letting land for relatively short periods from a landowner to a so-called conacre tenant. The current CAP arrangements allow the landowner to claim single farm payment but also the conacre tenant to claim possible support stemming from the Rural Development Programme such as the Less Favoured Areas Compensatory Allowances.

As far as the CAP reform is concerned, the political agreement provides support under the Basic Payment Scheme for eligible hectares at a farmer's disposal — whether being owned or leased in — on a date fixed by Member States. As to eligible farmers, the reform seeks to target support better by introducing the 'active farmer' requirement.

The Commission has been aware of potential risks of negative distortions in the land market. Hence it has proposed to limit the access to the allocation of payment entitlements to the beneficiaries of direct support in respect of the past claim year. The political agreement entails 2013 as a reference year for this purpose, but allows covering additional situations as well. For example, Member States may consider eligible also farmers who never held payment entitlements and who submit verifiable evidence that they, by the final date for lodging applications for the claim year 2013, produced, reared or grew agricultural products. Moreover, the number of payment entitlements to be allocated in 2015 may be equal to the number of all eligible hectares which the farmer declared for claim year 2013.

Whether or not eligibility conditions will be met by claimants letting in the land through a leasing agreement such as the conacre will need to be assessed by the Northern Ireland authorities in charge of management of the basic payment scheme and the Rural Development Programme.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007404/13
à la Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: Ennoyage d'une zone humide par une retenue d'eau dans le Tarn

Les démarches administratives devant précéder les éventuels arrêtés préfectoraux établissant la déclaration d'utilité publique et d'intérêt général concernant le projet de retenue Sivens se sont poursuivies. L'enquête publique s'est conclue par un avis favorable, sous réserve de l'avis favorable du CNPN (Conseil national de la protection de la nature). Le CSRPN (Conseil scientifique régional du patrimoine naturel) et le CNPN ont voté, à une large majorité, des avis défavorables. Malgré tout, le 17 mai 2013, les conseillers généraux du Tarn ont voté la déclaration de projet. Aujourd'hui, le dossier est entre les mains des services de l'État (ministère) pour arbitrage. C'est dans cette optique qu'il est important d'avoir le point de vue de la Commission européenne.

Le commissaire Potočnik a indiqué dans sa réponse à ma question E-008847/11: «Pour ce qui concerne l'application de la directive 2000/60/CE, son article 4 prévoit que toute nouvelle modification des caractéristiques physiques d'une masse d'eau susceptible de causer une détérioration, telle que la construction d'un barrage, n'est possible que si les conditions prévues à l'article 4, paragraphe 7 sont remplies».

Or, sur cette question, les avis de l'Onema (Office national de l'eau et des milieux aquatiques, avis qui ne figurait pas dans le dossier d'enquête publique!), du CSRPN et du CNPN, sont négatifs: «En conclusion les impacts sont sous-estimés, voir non évalués et donc des mesures […] de réduction, de compensation insuffisantes, irréalisables, inadéquates, très hypothétiques nous amènent à nous poser la question du but réel de la création de ce barrage […]. L'enjeu majeur de ce dossier est le renforcement de l'irrigation des terres agricoles […]» (extrait de l'avis du CNPN). Aucune mesure d'évitement n'a non plus été étudiée malgré ce qu'exige le SDAGE Adour Garonne (2010-2015).

Le coût de ce projet est aujourd'hui estimé à environ 7,8 millions d'euros. Il serait entièrement cofinancé par des fonds publics par l'Agence Adour Garonne (50 %) et l'Union européenne (30 %). Les 20 % restant seraient à la charge des Conseils généraux du Tarn et de Tarn-et-Garonne.

La Commission européenne approuve-t-elle le financement d'un projet qui conduirait à noyer une zone humide naturelle devant être protégée et qui serait contraire aux textes européens?

Réponse donnée par M Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(21 août 2013)

Le projet de barrage de soutien d'étiage de Sivens a fait l'objet d'une étude d'impact environnemental et d'une enquête publique. La décision d'autorisation n'a, à la connaissance de la Commission, pas été prise à ce jour.

La Commission ne dispose pas à ce jour d'éléments permettant d'identifier une violation du droit de l'Union, et ne voit pas de raison d'intervenir.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007404/13
to the Commission
Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Submersion of wetlands by a reservoir in the Tarn département of France

The requisite procedures prior to the issuing of official declarations of public benefit and general interest for the Sivens reservoir project in the Tarn *département* have been completed. A public inquiry found in favour of the project subject to its approval by the French National Nature Conservation Council (CNPN). Both the Regional Advisory Council for Natural Heritage (CSRPN) and the CNPN voted to reject the project, in each case by a large majority. Nonetheless, on 17 May 2013, the members of the Tarn departmental council voted to give it the go ahead. That decision has now been appealed to government (ministerial) level where the matter is currently under consideration. It is important, at this stage, to know the Commission's view.

Replying to my previous question on the matter, No E-008847/11, Commissioner Potočnik drew attention to the provision in Directive 2000/60/EC that any new modification to the physical characteristics of a surface water likely to result in a deterioration of its status, such as the construction of dam, is permissible only subject to compliance with the conditions set out in Article 4(7) of the directive.

However, the French National Office for Water and Aquatic Environments (ONEMA) — whose opinion was not considered at the public inquiry — found, like the CSRPN and the CNPN, that those conditions had not been met, that the impact of the project 'had been underestimated or not fully assessed' and thus that 'scant, unrealistic, inadequate and highly theoretical mitigation and compensation measures' raised questions as to the true purpose of the proposed dam. It would seem that 'the major consideration here is the improvement of farmland irrigation' (extract from CNPN opinion). It should also be noted that, despite the stipulations of the 2010-2015 Adour Garonne Water Resources Development and Management Plan (SDAGE), no avoidance measures were considered.

The cost of the project is currently estimated at approximately EUR 7.8 million. It would be entirely co-financed from public funds, with the Adour Garonne agency putting up 50% of the total and the EU 30%; the Tarn and Tarn-et-Garonne departmental councils would have to find the remaining 20%.

Does the Commission approve of funding a project which would lead to the submersion of natural wetlands that should be protected, and which would be in breach of EC law?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

An environmental impact study and a public inquiry have been carried out concerning the Sivens reservoir project. As far as the Commission is aware, no decision to approve it has yet been taken.

The Commission does not at present have information at its disposal that would enable a breach of EC law to be identified and sees no reason to intervene.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-007405/13
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(24 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dofinansowanie miejsc pracy dla osób niepełnosprawnych

1 stycznia 2014 r. wejdzie w życie rozporządzenie Komisji Europejskiej ws. wyłączeń blokowych (WE) 800/2008, które zastąpi wygasające z dniem 31 grudnia 2013 r. obecnie obowiązujące rozporządzenie Komisji Europejskiej (WE) 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r. uznające niektóre rodzaje pomocy za zgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem w zastosowaniu art. 87 i art. 88 TWE. Proponowane przez KE zmiany będą skutkować drastyczną redukcją dofinansowania miejsc pracy osób niepełnosprawnych i w efekcie mogą doprowadzić do likwidacji systemu wspierania zatrudnienia za pomocą dopłat do pensji osób niepełnosprawnych. Dziś w Polsce zatrudnionych jest jedynie 17,8 proc. osób niepełnosprawnych, czyli ok. 240 tys. osób. W wyniku decyzji Komisji Europejskiej od 70 do nawet 100 proc. z nich może utracić swoje miejsce pracy.

Jednocześnie pragnę przypomnieć, że art. 10 i art. 19 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej oraz art. 21 i art. 26 Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej jednoznacznie nakładają na Unię Europejską obowiązek podejmowania działań mających na celu ochronę praw osób niepełnosprawnych.

Dlatego zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Czy Komisja ma świadomość, że ww. rozporządzenie może pogłębić zapaść na rynku pracy?

2. Czy Komisja sprawdziła, ile miejsc pracy osób niepełnosprawnych jest zagrożonych w związku z wejściem w życie nowych przepisów?

3. Czy Komisja przewiduje wprowadzenie innych form dofinansowania, z których mogliby skorzystać pracodawcy zatrudniający osoby niepełnosprawne?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquína Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(1 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja jest zaangażowana w obronę praw pracowników niepełnosprawnych.

Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę, że wprowadzenie do ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych proponowanego progu powodującego obowiązek zgłoszenia bardzo dużych programów może spowodować konieczność notyfikacji niektórych polskich programów w zakresie pomocy na zatrudnienie osób niepełnosprawnych. Jednakże próg ten oznacza jedynie, że Komisja będzie analizować te programy *ex ante*, nie zaś *ex post*, nie oznacza natomiast, że w sposób domniemany będzie je uważać za niezgodne ze wspólnym rynkiem. W każdym jednak razie próg, o którym mowa, i – bardziej ogólnie – cały projekt ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych stanowi projekt dokumentu, w związku z którym Komisja gromadzi obecnie opinie w ramach konsultacji publicznych oraz w trakcie dyskusji z państwami członkowskimi.

Komisja otrzymała informacje zwrotne na temat projektu ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych od wielu obywateli oraz organizacji reprezentujących osoby niepełnosprawne, jak również od władz polskich. Komisja przeanalizuje zgłoszone uwagi i rozważy, jak najlepiej zająć się przedstawionymi obawami dla dobra osób niepełnosprawnych.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007405/13
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Funding jobs for disabled persons

On 1 January 2014, Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 (General block exemption Regulation) — replacing the current Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty, which expires on 31 December 2013 — will enter into force. The amendments proposed by the Commission will result in a drastic reduction in funding for jobs for disabled persons and could put an end to the system of supporting employment by supplementing the pay of disabled persons. Today in Poland only 17.8% of disabled persons — or some 240 000 people — are in employment. As a result of the Commission's decision, between 70% and 100% of them could lose their jobs.

At the same time, I should like to point out that Articles 10 and 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Articles 21 and 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union impose a clear duty on the EU to take action to protect the rights of disabled persons.

1. Is the Commission aware that the aforementioned regulation could aggravate the crisis on the labour market?

2. Has it investigated how many jobs held by disabled persons are under threat as a result of the entry into force of the new provisions?

3. Does it anticipate the introduction of other forms of funding which could be drawn upon by employers who employ disabled persons?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Commission is committed to defending the rights of disabled workers.

It is aware that the introduction into the new General block exemption Regulation (GBER) of a proposed threshold for notification of very large schemes might trigger the necessity to notify certain Polish schemes for employment aid for disabled persons. However, this threshold will only mean that the Commission will analyse these schemes *ex ante* rather than *ex post*, not that by default it will not consider them compatible. In any case this threshold, and more generally the whole draft GBER, is a draft document on which the Commission is currently collecting the views within a public consultation and in discussions with the Member States.

The Commission has received feedback on the draft GBER from numerous citizens, disabled people's organisations as well as from the Polish authorities. It will analyse this feedback now and will consider how to best address the concerns expressed to the benefit of disabled persons.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007406/13
til Kommissionen
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(24. juni 2013)

Om: Principielle udfordringer for kosttilskud 2

Jeg takker kommissionsmedlemmet for svar på spørgsmål E-003934/2013 om de principielle udfordringer for kosttilskud. Kommissionsmedlemmet angiver, at der kræves yderligere oplysninger om bestemte produkter for at kunne foretage en nøjagtig vurdering.

Konkret drejer det sig om urterne Withania Somnifera (Ashwaganda) og Tribulus Terrestris. De står begge opført i novel food-kataloget som anerkendte og accepterede i EU. De har været forhandlet og anvendt i tilstrækkeligt omfang før maj 1997, hvorfor Danmark ikke bør kunne forbyde dem under henvisning til forsigtighedsprincippet.

En lille iværksætter har importeret EU-godkendte urter til Danmark, men de er blevet forbudt af fødevarestyrelsen under henvisning til forsigtighedsprincippet.

Det er dræbende for EU's indre marked og har voldsomme konsekvenser for virksomheder og forbrugere, hvis nationale myndigheder pludselig laver særregler i strid med varernes frie bevægelighed.

Har Danmark overholdt EU-lovgivningen i den konkrete sag?

Er det muligt for de danske myndigheder at nedlægge forbud mod salg af ovennævnte urter?

Jeg indgår gerne i en personlig dialog med kommissionsmedlemmet, hvis der er behov for yderligere oplysninger for at vurdere den konkrete sag.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Tonio Borg
(14. august 2013)

Kommissionen vil gerne minde om, at »kataloget over nye fødevarer« ([1]) udelukkende er et IT-informationsredskab med ikke-bindende oplysninger om, hvorvidt et stof er omfattet af anvendelsesområdet for »forordningen for nye fødevarer« ([2]).

De stoffer, som det ærede medlem henviser til, findes i kataloget, hvilket ikke nødvendigvis betyder, at medlemsstaterne ikke kan regulere dem. Spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt medlemsstaten kan regulere et stof eller ej, afhænger af graden af harmonisering på EU-plan. Hvis stoffer ikke er omfattet af harmoniserede regler og medlemsstaterne vedtager regler, der regulerer dem, skal disse regler være i overensstemmelse med bestemmelserne i traktaterne, navnlig artikel 34 i traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde (TEUF), der forbyder kvantitative indførselsrestriktioner såvel som alle foranstaltninger med tilsvarende virkning. Som det imidlertid anføres i artikel 36 i TEUF, er artikel 34 i TEUF ikke til hinder for sådanne forbud eller restriktioner vedrørende indførsel, udførsel eller varer i transit, som er begrundet i hensynet til bl.a. beskyttelse af menneskers liv og sundhed. Det afgøres fra sag til sag, i hvilket omfang handelshindringer på ikke-harmoniserede områder kan være berettigede under hensyntagen til relevant retspraksis fra Domstolen i denne henseende.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/novelfood/novel_food_catalogue_en.htm
([2]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 258/97 af 27. januar 1997 om nye levnedsmidler og nye levnedsmiddelingredienser (EFT L 43 af 14.2.1997, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007406/13
to the Commission
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Fundamental challenges for food supplements 2

I thank the Member of the Commission for his answer to Written Question E-003934/2013 on the fundamental challenges for food supplements. He states that further information on the exact product is needed in order to carry out a precise assessment.

The matter specifically concerns the herbs Withania Somnifera (Ashwaganda) and Tribulus Terrestris. These are both listed in the Novel Food Catalogue as being recognised and accepted in the EU. They have been marketed and used to a sufficient extent before May 1997, which is why Denmark should not be able to ban them under the precautionary principle.

A small entrepreneur has imported EU-approved herbs into Denmark, but these have been banned by the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration on the basis of the precautionary principle.

It is fatal for the EU internal market and has serious consequences for businesses and consumers if national authorities suddenly produce special provisions that are contrary to the free movement of goods.

Has Denmark complied with EU legislation in this specific case?

Is it possible for the Danish authorities to impose a ban on the sale of the above herbs?

I am happy engage in a personal dialogue with the Commissioner if additional information is required to assess this case.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission would like to remind that the 'Novel Food Catalogue' ([1]) is merely an IT information tool that gives non-binding information as to whether a substance falls within the scope of application of the 'Novel Food Regulation' ([2]).

The fact that the substances referred to by the Honourable Member are contained in the catalogue therefore does not necessarily mean that Member States cannot regulate these. The question of whether the Member State can regulate a substance or not depends on the level of harmonisation at EU level. In the case where substances do not fall under harmonised rules and Member States adopt rules regulating them, these rules need to comply with the provisions of the EU Treaties, especially Article 34 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) prohibiting quantitative restrictions on imports and all measures having equivalent effect. However, as stated in Article 36 of the TFEU, Article 34 of the TFEU shall not preclude prohibitions or restrictions on imports, exports or goods in transit justified on grounds of, among other things, the protection of health and life of humans. The extent to which obstacles to trade, in non-harmonised areas, could be justified has to be carried out on a case by case basis taking into account the relevant case law of the Court Justice in this respect.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/novelfood/novel_food_catalogue_en.htm
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 258/97 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 January 1997 concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients, OJ L 43, 14.02.1997, p. 1.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007407/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(24 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κρούσματα βίας και κακοποίησης στην Ευρώπη της κρίσης

Σύμφωνα με τα αποτελέσματα πρόσφατης έρευνας που διενεργήθηκε από την Εταιρεία Μελέτης Ανθρώπινης Σεξουαλικότητας και το Ανδρολογικό Ινστιτούτο, στην Ελλάδα σημειώνεται αύξηση κατά 47% σε κρούσματα βίας (σωματικής, σεξουαλικής, λεκτικής). Το τελευταίο έτος στη χώρα μου περίπου τρεις στις δέκα ελληνίδες δηλώνουν ότι έχουν πέσει θύματα ξυλοδαρμού από το σύντροφό τους τουλάχιστον μία φορά στη ζωή τους, πρωτόγνωρα ευρήματα για τα ελληνικά δεδομένα, που οδηγούν τους επιστήμονες στον εντοπισμό μιας ευθείας σχέσης ανάμεσα στις κοινωνικοοικονομικές συνθήκες και στην ένταση περιστατικών ενδοοικογενειακής βίας, σεξουαλικής και σωματικής κακοποίησης.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία σχετικά με τα ποσοστά ενδοοικογενειακής βίας, σεξουαλικής και σωματικής κακοποίησης στα κράτη μέλη;

— Διαφαίνεται διασύνδεση με τις κοινωνικοοικονομικές συνθήκες που διαμορφώθηκαν ως απόρροια της κρίσης;

— Σύμφωνα με τα σχετικά στοιχεία και την ποιοτική μελέτη αυτών, μπορούν να εξαχθούν συμπεράσματα αναφορικά με το κοινωνικό προφίλ των θυτών αλλά και των θυμάτων;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η σταθερή προσήλωση της Επιτροπής στον τερματισμό της βίας κατά των γυναικών αναδεικνύεται ιδιαίτερα στον Χάρτη των Γυναικών, την στρατηγική για την ισότητα μεταξύ γυναικών και ανδρών (2010-2015) ([1]), τη «δέσμη μέτρων για τα θύματα», το έργο της σχετικά με την ευρωπαϊκή εντολή προστασίας και την σθεναρή στάση της ως προς την εξάλειψη του ακρωτηριασμού των γυναικείων γεννητικών οργάνων. Βασικές προτεραιότητες της Επιτροπής στο πεδίο αυτό είναι η κατά περίπτωση θέσπιση νομοθετικών μέτρων, η καταπολέμηση των διακρίσεων και η ενδυνάμωση των γυναικών, η βελτίωση των γνώσεων και η συλλογή δεδομένων, η ανταλλαγή ορθής πρακτικής, καθώς και η ευαισθητοποίηση και χρηματοδότηση.

Αποβλέποντας σε ενδελεχέστερη γνώση όσον αφορά την επικράτηση του φαινομένου της βίας κατά των γυναικών, η Επιτροπή διερευνά νέες δυνατότητες για την αξιοποίηση των τρεχουσών ερευνών της Eurostat και συμμετέχει ενεργά στις εργασίες του Οργανισμού Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων (FRA) και του Ευρωπαϊκού Ινστιτούτου για την Ισότητα των Φύλων (EIGE).

Το EIGE στηρίζει τα θεσμικά όργανα της ΕΕ και τα κράτη μέλη στις προσπάθειές τους για καταπολέμηση της βίας κατά των γυναικών συγκεντρώνοντας και παρέχοντάς τους αξιόπιστα και συγκρίσιμα δεδομένα, καθώς και πόρους σχετικά με τη βία κατά των γυναικών ([2]).

Το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2014, όταν καταστούν διαθέσιμα τα στοιχεία της έρευνας του FRA στα 28 κράτη μέλη ([3]) όσον αφορά τις εμπειρίες των γυναικών με τη βία, η Επιτροπή, μαζί με το EIGE και το FRA, θα εξετάσει τρόπους για την καλύτερη αξιοποίηση των αποτελεσμάτων της έρευνας.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:EL:PDF
([2]) Οι μελέτες του EIGE υπάρχουν στην ηλε-διεύθυνση: http://www.eige.europa.eu/content/activities/Gender-based-violence
([3]) Πληροφορίες για την εν εξελίξει έρευνα του FRA βρίσκονται στην ηλε-διεύθυνση: http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007407/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Cases of violence and abuse in Europe in crisis

According to the results of a recent survey carried out by the Greek Human Sexuality Survey Company and the Greek Andrologia Institute, there has been a 47% increase in the number of cases of physical, sexual and verbal violence in Greece. Over the past year in Greece, approximately three in ten Greek women have reported that they have been beaten by their partner at least once in their life. These are unprecedented findings for Greece and academics have established a direct link between socioeconomic conditions and levels of domestic violence and sexual and physical abuse.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

— Does it have recent data on domestic violence and sexual and physical abuse in the Member States?

— Does there appear to be a link with the socioeconomic conditions caused by the crisis?

— Can any conclusions be drawn from the data obtained and evaluated as to the social profile of the perpetrators and the victims?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission's full commitment to ending violence against women is seen particularly in the Women's Charter, the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) ([1]), the 'victims' package', its work on the European Protection Order and its firm stance on eliminating female genital mutilation. Adoption of legislative measures when appropriate, fighting against discrimination and empowering women, improving knowledge and data collection, exchanging good practices, as well as raising awareness and funding are Commission's main priorities in this field.

In order to increase knowledge about the prevalence of the phenomenon of violence against women, the Commission is currently exploring new possibilities to exploit current Eurostat surveys and is actively participating in the work of the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

EIGE supports the EU institutions and the Member States in their efforts to combat violence against women, by collecting and providing them with comparable and reliable data and resources on violence against women ([2]).

When the figures of the FRA's survey on women's experiences of violence in the 28 Member States ([3]) will be available in the first quarter of 2014, the Commission, together with the EIGE and the FRA, will consider how to best use the results of the survey.

([1]) COM(2010) 491 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0491:FIN:EN:PDF.
([2]) The EIGE studies are available at: http://www.eige.europa.eu/content/activities/Gender-based-violence.
([3]) Information on the ongoing FRA survey can be found at : http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-womens-well-being-and-safety-europe.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007408/13
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) und Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(24. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Abschiebung von Alma Schalabajewa aus Italien nach Kasachstan

Schwerbewaffnete italienische Spezialagenten in Zivil führten am 29. Mai 2013 ohne Vorlage eines Durchsuchungs- oder Haftbefehls eine Razzia in einer Wohnung außerhalb Roms durch. Sie fahndeten nach Muchtar Abljasow, einem bekannten kasachischen Dissidenten, den sie dort aber nicht antrafen. Stattdessen verhafteten sie seine Ehefrau, Alma Schalabajewa. Frau Schalabajewa wurde dann am 31. Mai unversehens unter dem Vorwand abgeschoben, sie habe ihren Personalausweis gefälscht. Belege über die Echtheit ihres Ausweises und die Tatsache, dass sie über gültige Aufenthaltsgenehmigungen der EU-Länder Lettland und Vereinigtes Königreich verfügte, wurden nicht beachtet. Auf ihr wiederholt vorgebrachtes Asylgesuch ging man ebenfalls nicht ein. Bereits vor Abschluss der Anhörung bezüglich ihres Gewahrsams am 31. Mai war ein Privatflugzeug nach Italien beordert worden, um sie kurzerhand nach Kasachstan zurückzubringen. Mindestens zwei kasachische Diplomaten warteten am Flughafen von Rom, um sie in Empfang zu nehmen. Gleichzeitig erschienen italienische Spezialagenten erneut in der Wohnung und brachten die Familie von Alma Schalabajewa durch einen Vorwand dazu, darin einzuwilligen, dass man deren sechsjährige Tochter mitnahm. Die Abschiebung der Mutter konnte ohne die Tochter nicht vonstattengehen, so dass schließlich beide zwangsweise in den Privatjet verfrachtet und direkt nach Kasachstan zurückgeflogen wurden. Nach ihrem Eintreffen dort händigte man Frau Schalabajewa die Kopien dreier Verfügungen aus: eine vom 30. Mai zur Einleitung strafrechtliche Ermittlungen, eine mit dem gleichen Datum, in der sie als Tatverdächtige bezeichnet wird, und eine vom 31. Mai mit dem Verbot für sie, die Stadt Almaty zu verlassen. Am 7. Juni wurde ohne vorherige Ermittlungen formell Anklage gegen Alma Schalabajewa erhoben.

Der Fall wirft gravierende Fragen hinsichtlich der offensichtlichen heimlichen Zusammenarbeit zwischen italienischen Spezialagenten und den staatlichen Stellen Kasachstans auf, einem Land mit einer verheerenden Menschenrechtsbilanz.

Ist die Hohe Vertreterin der Ansicht, dass dieser Einsatz italienischer Spezialagenten im Einklang mit EU-Rechtsnormen und dem Völkerrecht war, insbesondere, was die Rückführungsrichtlinie, die Rechte in einem Rückführungsverfahren, EU-Aufenthaltsrechte, die Rechte von Asylsuchenden und Flüchtlingen sowie das Recht auf Familienleben und die Rechte des Kindes anbelangt? Welche Maßnahmen gedenken der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst und seine Delegation in Astana zu ergreifen, um zu gewährleisten, dass die Grundrechte von Frau Schalabajewa bei den gegen sie eingeleiteten strafrechtlichen Ermittlungen geachtet werden?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007409/13
an die Kommission
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) und Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(24. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Abschiebung von Alma Schalabajewa aus Italien nach Kasachstan

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Der Fall wirft gravierende Fragen hinsichtlich der offensichtlichen heimlichen Zusammenarbeit zwischen italienischen Spezialagenten und den staatlichen Stellen Kasachstans auf, einem Land mit einer verheerenden Menschenrechtsbilanz.

Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass dieser Einsatz italienischer Spezialagenten im Einklang mit EU-Rechtsnormen und dem Völkerrecht war, insbesondere, was die Rückführungsrichtlinie, die Rechte in einem Rückführungsverfahren, EU-Aufenthaltsrechte, die Rechte von Asylsuchenden und Flüchtlingen sowie das Recht auf Familienleben und die Rechte des Kindes anbelangt?

Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission gegenüber den staatlichen Stellen Italiens zu ergreifen?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(9. August 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass die italienischen Behörden am 10. Juli 2013 eine interne Untersuchung der Rechtmäßigkeit dieser Abschiebung eingeleitet haben. Die Kommission wird die weiteren Entwicklungen und die Ergebnisse dieser Untersuchung aufmerksam beobachten.

Die EU hat die Entwicklungen in der Sache Alma Schalabajewa, der Ehegattin von Muchtar Abljasow, seit den Ereignissen, die zu ihrer Rückkehr nach Kasachstan geführt haben, ebenso wie die anschließend gegen sie eingeleiteten Ermittlungen konsequent verfolgt. Vertreter der EU-Delegation haben sich nach Almaty begeben, um den von Menschenrechtsaktivisten geäußerten Bedenken hinsichtlich der Gewährleistung der gesetzlichen Rechte von Alma Schalabajewa nachzugehen. Die Lage wurde mit einschlägigen Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NRO) erörtert, insbesondere mit dem kasachischen internationalen Büro für Menschenrechte und Rechtsstaatlichkeit (Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law) sowie mit dem Social Fund Libery und dem Social Fund Ar.Ruk.Hak. Die EU-Delegation hat in dieser Sache auch Kontakt zu einschlägigen internationalen Organisationen aufgenommen, u. a. zu dem Landes- und dem Regionalbüro des Flüchtlingskommissariats der Vereinten Nationen (UNHCR). Darüber hinaus steht die EU-Delegation in laufendem Kontakt mit Mitgliedstaaten, um Informationen über die Sache Schalabajewa auszutauschen und die Bemühungen zur Wahrung ihrer Rechte zu koordinieren. Die EU-Delegation hat auch die Vorbereitungen für das Treffen vom 2. Juli 2013 von Alma Schalabajewa mit ihren Angehörigen und NRO-Vertretern und Abgeordneten des EP verfolgt und die Ergebnisse dieses Treffens zur Kenntnis genommen.

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin wird diese Sache weiterhin sorgfältig beobachten und die kasachischen Behörden nachdrücklich auf die Notwendigkeit des ordnungsgemäßen Schutzes der Rechte von Frau Schalabajewa hinweisen.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007408/13
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) et Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Expulsion de M[me] Shalabayeva d'Italie au Kazakhstan

Le 29 mai 2013, sans présenter de mandat de perquisition ni de mandat d'arrêt, des agents des services spéciaux de la police italienne, en civil et fortement armés, ont fait irruption dans une résidence de la banlieue de Rome, à la recherche de Mukhtar Ablyazov, dissident kazakh de premier plan. N'y ayant pas trouvé M. Ablyazov, ils ont arrêté sa femme, Alma Shalabayeva. Or, le 31 mai, M[me] Shalabayeva a été brusquement expulsée, sous prétexte qu'elle aurait été en possession d'une fausse carte d'identité. Aucun compte n'a été tenu des preuves de l'authenticité de sa carte d'identité et du fait qu'elle disposait de permis de séjour valables émis par la Lettonie et le Royaume-Uni, États membres de l'Union. Ses demandes d'asile ont été purement et simplement écartées. Avant même la fin de son interrogatoire du 31 mai, un jet privé a été affrété pour la ramener sans tarder au Kazakhstan. Au moins deux diplomates kazakhs l'attendaient à l'aéroport de Rome. Pendant ce temps, les agents des services spéciaux italiens, qui étaient retournés au logement de M[me] Shalabayeva, ont obtenu, par la ruse, des membres de sa famille qu'ils leur livrent sa fille de six ans. L'expulsion de la mère ne pouvant s'effectuer sans la fille, toutes deux ont été contraintes de monter dans le jet privé qui les a conduit directement au Kazakhstan. À son arrivée au Kazakhstan, M[me] Shalabayeva s'est vu signifier trois décisions: l'une ouvrant une enquête criminelle à son encontre, en date du 30 mai, une autre, du même jour, la déclarant suspecte, et la dernière, en date du 31 mai, lui interdisant de quitter la ville d'Almaty. Enfin, le 7 juin, avant toute audition, M[me] Shalabayeva a été officiellement mise en examen.

Cette affaire suscite de graves interrogations, suggérant une collusion manifeste entre les agents des services spéciaux italiens et les autorités du Kazakhstan, pays dont le bilan en matière de Droits de l'homme est très mauvais.

La haute représentante estime-t-elle que l'opération qui a été menée par les agents des services spéciaux italiens est conforme au droit européen et international, notamment à la directive «retour», aux droits prévus dans le cadre des procédures d'expulsion, aux droits de séjour en vigueur dans l'Union, aux droits des demandeurs d'asile et des réfugiés, aux droits en matière de vie familiale et aux droits de l'enfant? Quelles mesures comptent prendre le Service européen pour l'action extérieure (SEAE) et sa délégation à Astana pour garantir à Mme Shalabayeva le respect de ses droits fondamentaux dans l'enquête criminelle poursuivie contre elle?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007409/13
à la Commission
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) et Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(24 juin 2013)

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Cette affaire suscite de graves interrogations, suggérant une collusion manifeste entre les agents des services spéciaux italiens et les autorités du Kazakhstan, pays dont le bilan en matière de Droits de l'homme est très mauvais.

La Commission estime-t-elle que l'opération qui a été menée par les agents des services spéciaux italiens est conforme au droit européen et international, notamment à la directive «retour», aux droits prévus dans le cadre des procédures d'expulsion, aux droits de séjour en vigueur dans l'Union, aux droits des demandeurs d'asile et des réfugiés, aux droits en matière de vie familiale et aux droits de l'enfant?

Quelles mesures compte-t-elle prendre à l'égard des autorités italiennes?

Réponse commune donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(9 août 2013)

La Commission a été informée de l'ouverture, le 10 juillet 2013, d'une enquête interne par le gouvernement italien destinée à vérifier la légalité de cette procédure d'expulsion. La Commission surveillera de près la progression et les conclusions de cette enquête.

L'Union européenne a suivi avec attention l'évolution de l'affaire impliquant Mme Alma Shalabayeva, l'épouse de M. Mukhtar Ablyazov, des événements qui ont conduit à son retour au Kazakhstan à l'enquête criminelle ensuite ouverte à son encontre. Suite aux préoccupations exprimées par les défenseurs des Droits de l'homme quant à la nécessité de garantir à Mme Shalabayeva le respect de ses droits légaux, la délégation de l'UE s'est rendue dans la ville d'Almaty. La situation a fait l'objet d'échanges avec les organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) concernées, notamment le Bureau international des Droits de l'homme et de l'État de droit au Kazakhstan, ainsi que le Fonds social Liberty et le Fonds social Ar.Ruk.Hak. La délégation de l'UE a également pris contact avec les organisations internationales compétentes en la matière, y compris les bureaux nationaux et régionaux du Haut-Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés (HCR). Elle est, de plus, en relation permanente avec les États membres pour que les informations relatives à l'affaire Shalabayeva soient échangées et que les efforts soient coordonnés pour garantir le respect de ses droits. La délégation de l'UE a également suivi la préparation et les conclusions de la réunion organisée le 2 juillet 2013 entre M^me^ Alma Shalabayeva et ses proches, en présence de membres d'ONG et de parlementaires européens venus la rencontrer.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante continuera de surveiller cette affaire de près et insistera auprès des autorités kazakhes pour que les droits légaux de M^me^ Shalabayeva soient dûment respectés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007408/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) and Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Deportation of Mrs Shalabayeva from Italy to Kazakhstan

Acting without presenting a search or arrest warrant, on 29 May 2013, heavily armed and non-uniformed Italian special agents raided a residence outside Rome searching for Mukhtar Ablyazov, a well-known Kazakh dissident. They did not find Ablyazov, but instead they arrested his wife, Alma Shalabayeva. Mrs Shalabayeva was suddenly deported on 31 May, on the pretext that she held allegedly forged ID. Proof of the authenticity of her ID, and the fact that she held valid residency permits issued by EU states Latvia and the United Kingdom, were ignored. Her pleas for asylum were brushed aside. Even before her detention hearing was completed on 31 May, a private jet had been ordered to whisk her to Kazakhstan. At least two Kazakh diplomats were at Rome's airport waiting for her to be brought there. Simultaneously, Italian special agents returned to the home and tricked the family into allowing Shalabayeva's six-year-old daughter to be taken away. The deportation of the mother could not proceed without the child, so both were forced onto the private jet and flown straight to Kazakhstan. Upon arrival in Kazakhstan, Shalabayeva was handed copies of three orders: an order initiating a criminal investigation against her, dated 30 May, an order dated the same day naming her as a suspect, and an order dated 31 May prohibiting her from leaving the city of Almaty. On 7 June, prior to any interrogations, she was formally indicted.

This case raises grave questions about the apparent collusion between Italian special agents and the authorities of Kazakhstan, a country with a dismal human rights record.

Does the High Representative think that this operation by Italian special agents is in line with European and international law, in particular with respect to the returns directive, rights in deportation proceedings, EU residency rights, rights of asylum-seekers and refugees, rights to family life and rights of the child? What steps do the European External Action Service (EEAS) and its delegation in Astana intend to take to guarantee Mrs Shalabayeva that her fundamental rights are respected as a criminal investigation against her continues?

Question for written answer E-007409/13
to the Commission
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen (Verts/ALE), Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE) and Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Deportation of Mrs Shalabayeva from Italy to Kazakhstan

Acting without presenting a search or arrest warrant, on 29 May 2013, heavily armed and non-uniformed Italian special agents raided a residence outside Rome searching for Mukhtar Ablyazov, a well-known Kazakh dissident. They did not find Ablyazov, but instead they arrested his wife, Alma Shalabayeva. Mrs Shalabayeva was suddenly deported on 31 May, on the pretext that she held allegedly forged ID. Proof of the authenticity of her ID, and the fact that she held valid residency permits issued by EU states Latvia and the United Kingdom, were ignored. Her pleas for asylum were brushed aside. Even before her detention hearing was completed on 31 May, a private jet had been ordered to whisk her to Kazakhstan. At least two Kazakh diplomats were at Rome's airport waiting for her to be brought there. Simultaneously, Italian special agents returned to the home and tricked the family into allowing Shalabayeva's six-year-old daughter to be taken away. The deportation of the mother could not proceed without the child, so both were forced onto the private jet and flown straight to Kazakhstan. Upon arrival in Kazakhstan, Shalabayeva was handed copies of three orders: an order initiating a criminal investigation against her, dated 30 May, an order dated the same day naming her as a suspect, and an order dated 31 May prohibiting her from leaving the city of Almaty. On 7 June, prior to any interrogations, she was formally indicted.

This case raises grave questions about the apparent collusion between Italian special agents and the authorities of Kazakhstan, a country with a dismal human rights record.

Does the Commission think that this operation by Italian special agents is in line with European and international law, in particular with respect to the returns directive, rights in deportation proceedings, EU residency rights, rights of asylum-seekers and refugees, rights to family life and rights of the child?

What steps does the Commission intend to take vis-à-vis the Italian authorities?

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

The Commission is aware that the Italian administration launched, on 10 July 2013, an internal investigation into the legality of this removal operation. The Commission will closely monitor further developments and the results of this investigation.

The EU has followed closely the developments of the case of Mrs Alma Shalabayeva, the spouse of Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov, from the outset of the events that brought her back to Kazakhstan and the investigation against her that ensued. The EU Delegation has visited Almaty to follow up on concerns expressed by human rights defenders about the necessity to guarantee Mrs Shalabayeva's legal rights. The situation has been discussed with relevant non-governmental organisations (NGOs), in particular the Kazakh International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, as well as the Social Fund Libery, and the Social Fund Ar.Ruk.Hak. The EU Delegation also contacted relevant international organisations on the matter, including the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) country and regional offices. Furthermore, the EU Delegation has ongoing contacts with Member States to share information on the Shalabayeva case and coordinate efforts to guarantee the safeguard of her rights. The EU Delegation also followed the preparations for and the results from the meeting on 2 July 2013 between Mrs Alma Shalabayeva and her relatives and members of NGOs and visiting European parliamentarians.

The HR/VP will continue to monitor the case closely and impress upon Kazakh authorities the need to ensure that the legal rights of Mrs Shalabayeva be duly observed.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007410/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(24 juni 2013)

Betreft: Internetzoekmachines

Bedrijven die internetzoekmachines exploiteren kunnen zoekresultaten manipuleren, ten nadele van zowel consumenten als concurrenten. Zij kunnen dit doen door bijvoorbeeld relevante resultaten weg te laten, de volgorde van de resultaten te wijzigen of hun eigen inhoud voorrang te geven.

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat bedrijven die zoekmachines exploiteren zich aan het objectiviteitsbeginsel moeten houden, hetgeen inhoudt dat zij op alle diensten -met inbegrip van hun eigen diensten- precies dezelfde normen moeten toepassen, door gebruik te maken van precies dezelfde algoritmen voor crawlen, indexeren, rangschikken, weergeven en straffen, teneinde de correcte werking van relevante markten (zoals de markt voor verticale zoekmachines) te waarborgen?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(21 augustus 2013)

De Commissie voert momenteel een onderzoek naar de zakelijke praktijken die Google in Europa met betrekking tot zoekopdrachten toepast. In het kader van dat onderzoek heeft zij mededingingsbezwaren geformuleerd ten aanzien van de praktijken waarvan sprake in de schriftelijke vraag.

Die bezwaren betreffen onder meer de wijze waarop Google bij de resultaten van internetzoekopdrachten zijn eigen gespecialiseerde zoekdiensten prominent in beeld brengt.

De Commissie maakt zich zorgen dat met deze praktijk op het gebied van gespecialiseerde zoekopdrachten ten onrechte internetverkeer wordt afgeleid van concurrenten van Google naar de eigen gespecialiseerde zoekdiensten van Google. Dit zou dus voor consumenten de mogelijkheden kunnen beperken om bij een potentieel relevanter aanbod aan gespecialiseerde zoekdiensten terecht te komen.

Momenteel beziet de Commissie de mogelijkheid om een oplossing voor deze bezwaren te vinden via juridisch bindende toezeggingen van Google. In dat verband heeft de Commissie Google gevraagd om met verbeteringen te komen voor de voorstellen die de onderneming eerder dit jaar heeft gedaan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007410/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Internet search engines

Companies exploiting Internet search engines are able to manipulate search results, to the detriment of both consumers and competitors. For example, they can do this by omitting relevant results, changing the order of appearance or prioritising their own content.

Does the Commission agree that in order to ensure the proper functioning of relevant markets (such as the market for vertical search engines), companies exploiting search engines should adhere to the 'even-handed principle', meaning that they must hold all services, including their own, to exactly the same standards, using exactly the same crawling, indexing, ranking, display and penalty algorithms?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission, in its current investigation of Google's search-related business practices in Europe, has expressed its competition concerns with regard to the practices referred to in the written question.

Those concerns relate *inter alia* to the way Google prominently displays its own specialised search services in its web search results.

The Commission is concerned that this practice unduly diverts traffic away from Google's competitors in specialised search towards Google's own specialised search services. It may therefore reduce the ability of consumers to find a potentially more relevant choice of specialised search services.

The Commission is examining the possibility for these concerns to be resolved via legally binding commitments from Google. In this regard, the Commission has asked Google to make improvements to proposals it made earlier this year.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007411/13
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(24 juni 2013)

Betreft: Onderzoek naar de Chinese telecommunicatiesector

Op 15 mei 2013 heeft de Commissie het principebesluit genomen om ambtshalve een antidumping- en antisubsidie-onderzoek in te stellen naar de invoer van mobiele telecommunicatienetwerken en de essentiële onderdelen daarvan uit China. Dit onderzoek blijkt met name gericht te zijn op Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd. en ZTE Corporation. Het betreft een ambtshalve ingestelde procedure, daar de Commissie geen klachten over deze bedrijven heeft ontvangen. Tot op heden is echter niet duidelijk wat de Commissie ertoe heeft bewogen om juist deze sector en deze bedrijven te onderzoeken. Dus:

1. Waarom heeft de Commissie dit onderzoek ingesteld in de telecommunicatiesector, een sector die bekendstaat om zijn open en mondiale karakter?

2. Kan de Commissie toelichting geven over de exacte aard van het probleem dat geleidheeft tot het onderzoek naar Huawei en ZTE?

Antwoord van de heer de Gucht namens de Commissie
(30 juli 2013)

De antidumping- en antisubsidiebasisverordeningen van de EU voorzien nadrukkelijk in de mogelijkheid om ambtshalve antidumping- of antisubsidieonderzoeken in te stellen. Soortgelijke bepalingen maken ook deel uit van de WTO-Overeenkomsten waarop de EU-wetgeving is gebaseerd. De desbetreffende wettelijke bepalingen vereisen dat de Commissie over voldoende bewijsmateriaal inzake schade veroorzakende dumping/subsidiëring, schade en een oorzakelijke verband hiertussen beschikt. De Commissie heeft in de telecommunicatienetwerksector uit openbaar toegangkelijke gegevens voldoende voorlopig bewijsmateriaal verzameld dat de invoer van telecommunicatieapparatuur en van de essentiële onderdelen daarvan uit China gedumpt en gesubsidieerd wordt en de bedrijfstak van de Unie die dezelfde producten vervaardigt in de EU schade berokkent. Op basis daarvan heeft de Commissie op 13 mei het principebesluit genomen om ambtshalve onderzoeken in te stellen. Een dienovereenkomstig besluit in concreto is nog niet vastgesteld om tijd voor het bereiken van een mogelijke minnelijke schikking te geven.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007411/13
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Investigation into Chinese telecom sector

On 15 May 2013, the Commission took the decision in principle to open an ex officio anti-dumping and an anti-subsidy investigation concerning imports of mobile telecommunications networks and their essential elements from China. The main targets of this investigation appear to be Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd and ZTE Corporation. This being an ex officio procedure, the Commission has received no complaint regarding these companies. To this day it is, however, unclear what led the Commission to investigate precisely this industry and these companies. Therefore:

1. Why did the Commission start this investigation in the telecom sector, a sector that is typical for its open and global nature?

2. Can the Commission elaborate on the exact nature of the problem that led to the targeting of Huawei and ZTE?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The EU anti-dumping and anti-subsidy Basic Regulations explicitly provide for the possibility to initiate ex officio anti-dumping or anti-subsidy investigations. Similar provisions are also part of the WTO Agreements on which the EU legislation is based. The relevant legal provisions require that sufficient evidence of injurious dumping/subsidisation, injury and a causal link is in the possession of the Commission. In the telecom networks sector, the Commission has collected from publicly available data sufficient prima facie evidence that the imports of telecom equipment and of its key components from China are dumped and subsidised and are causing injury to the domestic industry of the same products in the EU. On that basis, the Commission, on 13 May, took a decision in principle to open ex officio investigations. Such decision has not yet been activated to allow time for a possible amicable solution to be found.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007412/13
to the Commission
Paul Murphy (GUE/NGL)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Compensation for families of victims of factory fire in Pakistan

In Parliament's resolution of 17 January 2013 on 'recent casualties in textile factory fires, notably in Bangladesh', a reference is made to the 289 victims of a fire in a textile factory in Karachi, Pakistan in September 2012.

It appears that little has been done so far to help the surviving families of the victims of this devastating fire. NGOs have reported that many families are not in a position to comply with stringent rules and provide the necessary papers and/or DNA proof of their relative's tragic fate. This means victims will be left with no financial compensation. Furthermore, NGOs report that compensation that should have been paid months ago has not yet been received.

The Pakistan Government has yet to establish a governing body for the distribution of the relief fund supplied by German retailer KIK in November 2012, has yet to distribute compensation or aid to survivors and families affected, has yet to complete an independent investigation into the fire and has made no effort to improve safety conditions for factory workers since the devastating fire.

In addition, the German retailer involved has yet to agree sufficient redress and long-term compensation to victims and surviving families. The Italian auditing body, RINA, has yet to explain how it awarded the factory an internationally recognised social accountability certificate (SA8000) less than one month before the deadly fire.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What steps does the Commission plan to take to try to ensure that adequate compensation is paid to the victims of this tragedy and that safety conditions in factories are improved?

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

The Commission is aware of the textile factory fire in Karachi in September 2012.

The Commission works closely with the ILO and its partner countries to promote the respect of core labour standards and appropriate working conditions. It also encourages companies to adopt corporate social responsibility practices and adhere to internationally recognised principles and guidelines in this area, including with regard to occupational health and safety issues. Whilst the Commission welcomes initiatives whereby stakeholders, including retailers, provide compensation to victims, it has no funds which can be used for this purpose.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007413/13
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Compensation for victims of crime abroad

Under Article 12 of Council Directive 2004/80/EC relating to compensation to victims of crime, Member States must ensure that their national legislation provides for the existence of a compensation scheme ensuring that victims of crime committed in their respective territories receive fair and appropriate compensation.

According to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) in the UK, out of the 204 claims that have been submitted to their EU Compensation Assistance Team for compensation from Spain, no claims have received any financial compensation.

Will the Commission agree to take action against Member States that are not fulfilling their obligations under Article 12(2) of this directive?

How does the Commission plan to help EU citizens access their rights under Article 12(2) of this directive?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The rules on access to compensation in cross-border situations operate on the basis of Member States' own compensation schemes. A victim may be helped by the mechanisms set up under the directive 2004/80 to facilitate the administration of cross-border compensation claims. However, this directive only applies to victims of violent intentional crime so recourse to this legislation is therefore dependent not only on finding that an intentional violent criminal act has taken place but also on a variety of criteria on coverage and eligibility for compensation including the procedural requirements, which the directive leaves to the national law of the Member States.

Spain has satisfactorily implemented the 2004 Directive and has put in place a system for providing financial assistance for victims suffering injuries resulting from attacks on the person. However, there are a number of limitations and conditions for a victim to be eligible under the Spanish system, which fall outside the rather limited scope of the directive.

The Commission has recognised victims' needs and reinforced their rights to effective protection, support and access to justice by presenting the new Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, which was recently adopted. It is also now more specifically examining the problems and possible solutions in relation to how cross-border compensation to victims operates in practice.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007414/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Chittagong Hill Tracts

Conflict in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region of Bangladesh has left tens of thousands of Pahari people landless and now trapped in a cycle of violence with Bengali settlers.

The CHT region in south-eastern Bangladesh has seen internal armed conflict following Pahari demands for greater autonomy and the protection of their traditional lands. The 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord included a series of reforms, including commitments to restore traditional lands to the Pahari and to reduce troop numbers in the area. However, these commitments are yet to be fully implemented. The Land Commission established under the peace accord to arbitrate on land has yet to make a single ruling on a land dispute.

What steps is the High Representative taking to encourage the Bangladeshi Government to observe its obligations under the 1997 peace accord?

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

The EU has raised this matter, at the highest level, on several occasions, and continues to follow developments in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region closely. The Bangladeshi Government reiterated its intention to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord when it took office in January 2009. Despite subsequent steps taken by the Government to demonstrate its political will, such as the establishment of the National Committee for Implementation of the Peace Accord, some key areas have not yet been fully addressed.

Recently, the Government has proposed changes to the Land legislation designed to improve the procedure for the resolution of disputes. The EU Delegation in Dhaka, along with other interested development partners, has been active in lobbying Government and all stakeholders to ensure that the new legislation will enable a breakthrough in the implementation of this most crucial aspect of the Peace Accord.

The EU has allocated substantial amounts in development funding for the Chittagong Hill Tracts. During 2005-2013, a total of EUR 74 million have been allocated to various projects in the region ranging from local governance, health, water & sanitation, food security to education & vocational training.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007415/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(24 juni 2013)

Betreft: Niet tijdig melden van gendefecten bij gedoneerde zaadcellen

Het bewaren en distribueren van menselijke weefsels en cellen, waaronder spermacellen, wordt in de EU gereguleerd door m.n. de richtlijnen van 2004/23/EG en 2006/86/EG. Krachtens deze richtlijn moeten instellingen of bedrijven die actief zijn op het vlak van het verzamelen van weefsels en cellen „onverwijld ieder ernstig ongewenst voorval bij de verkrijging dat van invloed kan zijn op de kwaliteit en/of veiligheid van menselijke weefsels en cellen melden".

Op 27 juni 2009 meldt Academisch Ziekenhuis St-Lucas Gent aan de Deense spermabank Nordic Cryobank dat een kind van spermadonor 7042 van Cryobank het genetisch defect NF-1 (neurofibromatose) heeft. In de maanden daarna worden nog tal van vrouwen behandeld met donorzaad van dezelfde donor, ondanks meldingen over NF-1 ook door ziekenhuizen uit de VS. Pas op 21 december 2009 stuurt Nordic Cryobank een waarschuwing naar alle klant-ziekenhuizen die cellen van donor 7042 hebben gebruikt. Op 2 oktober 2012 stuurt de Deense overheid een EU „rapid alert" waarschuwing over donor 7042.

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

2. Is in deze zaak EU-richtlijn 2006/86/EG met voeten getreden?

3. Welke maatregelen zal de Commissie desgevallend nemen, inclusief gerechtelijke stappen?

4. Gaat de Commissie ermee akkoord dat de bestaande regelgeving niet volstaat om te garanderen dat cellen van éénzelfde donor slechts bij een beperkt aantal vrouwen (bvb. 6) terecht komen?

5. Welke maatregelen dringen zich op om ervoor te zorgen dat een snel en efficiënt Europees waarschuwingssysteem operationeel is?

6. Zal de Commissie een initiatief nemen met het oog op het opzetten van een Europese gegevensbank over weefsel- en celdonatie, zoals uitdrukkelijk gevraagd door het Europees Parlement in zijn resolutie van 11 september 2012, over vrijwillige, onbetaalde donaties van weefsels en cellen?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(7 augustus 2013)

De Commissie kan bevestigen dat zij van deze zaak op de hoogte is gebracht door een Rapid Alert-waarschuwing van de Deense bevoegde autoriteit voor weefsels en cellen ([1]). Het Rapid Alert System for Tissues and Cells (RATC) beschikt over een eigen platform en is sinds 1 februari 2013 volledig operationeel ([2]). Het RATC-platform heeft gedetailleerde operationele standaardprocedures (standard operating procedures) en is een doeltreffend systeem voor snelle communicatie tussen de lidstaten. De organisatie die de waarschuwing verstuurt moet ook een eindverslag uitbrengen zodra alle onderzoeken zijn afgerond. De Commissie heeft over deze zaak nog geen eindverslag ontvangen en kan zich dus niet uitspreken over eventuele tekortkomingen bij de naleving van de EU-wetgeving.

De toepassing van weefsels en cellen op de mens, met inbegrip van eventuele beperkingen van het gebruik, wordt door de lidstaten geregeld. De Commissie is ervan op de hoogte dat de Deense wetgeving reeds is gewijzigd en dat het aantal inseminaties van dezelfde spermadonor nu tot 12 is beperkt, met de aanbeveling van niet meer dan zes zwangerschappen in de eerste 12 maanden na afgifte van spermacellen van een donor ([3]). Uit hoofde van artikel 10, lid 3, van richtlijn 2004/23/EG ([4]) worden de lidstaten en de Commissie aangespoord een netwerk op te richten dat de registers van de nationale weefselinstellingen met elkaar verbindt. Hieraan wordt momenteel gewerkt in het kader van het Eurocet-project, zoals in de door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde resolutie van het Europees Parlement wordt vermeld.

([1]) Rapid Alert-waarschuwing van 2 oktober 2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dyna/enews/enews.cfm?al_id=1340.
([3]) http://www.sst.dk/Nyhedscenter/Nyheder/2012/VejledningOmKunstigBefrugtning.aspx.
([4]) PB L 102 van 7.4.2004, blz. 48.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007415/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Genetic defects in donated sperm cells: lack of timely reporting

The storage and distribution of human tissues and cells, including sperm cells, is regulated in the EU mainly by Directives 2004/23/EC and 2006/86/EC. Under the latter directive, establishments or firms involved in the collection of tissues and cells are required to report 'without delay… any serious adverse events that occur during procurement which may influence the quality and/or safety of human tissues and cells'.

On 27 June 2009 the Academisch Ziekenhuis St-Lucas teaching hospital in Ghent notified the Danish sperm bank Nordic Cryobank that a child fathered by Cryobank sperm donor 7042 had the genetic defect NF-1 (neurofibromatosis). However, in the subsequent months a number of women still received donor sperm from the same donor, in spite of reports of NF-1 from sources including hospitals in the USA. Only on 21 December 2009 did Nordic Cryobank issue a warning to all client hospitals which had used cells from donor 7042. On 2 October 2012 the Danish Government issued a Rapid Alert warning on donor 7042.

1. Is the Commission aware of this case?

2. Was Directive 2006/86/EC disregarded in this case?

3. If so, what measures will the Commission take, including legal action?

4. Does the Commission agree that the existing regulations are inadequate to guarantee that cells from a single donor are received by only a restricted number of women (e.g. 6)?

5. What measures are urgently called for to ensure that a rapid and effective European alert system is brought into operation?

6. Will the Commission take the initiative with a view to setting up a European data bank on tissue and cell donation, as specifically requested by the European Parliament in its resolution of 11 September 2012 on voluntary and unpaid donation of tissues and cells?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Commission can confirm that it became aware of the case following a Rapid Alert issued by the Danish Competent Authority for tissues and cells ([1]). The System of Rapid Alert for Tissues and Cells (RATC) migrated to its own dedicated platform and became fully operational on 1 February 2013 ([2]). The RATC platform has detailed standard operating procedures (SOP) and is an effective system for the rapid communications between Member States. The initiator of the alert is expected to also issue a final report once all investigations have been concluded. In this case the Commission has yet to receive the final report and thus cannot comment on any perceived failures to fulfil obligations under the EU legislation.

The actual human application of tissues and cells, including any restriction put on their use, is regulated at Member State level and the Commission is aware that changes have already been made to the relevant Danish legislation which now places a limit of 12 inseminations from any one donor of sperm with a recommendation of no more than six pregnancies in the first 12 months following delivery of a semen straw from a donor ([3]). Article 10(3) of Directive 2004/23/EC ([4]) calls on the Member States and the Commission to establish a network linking national tissue establishment registers. As mentioned in the European Parliament Resolution cited by the Honourable Member, this work is ongoing in the framework of the Eurocet project.

([1]) Rapid Alert initiated on October 2, 2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dyna/enews/enews.cfm?al_id=1340.
([3]) http://www.sst.dk/Nyhedscenter/Nyheder/2012/VejledningOmKunstigBefrugtning.aspx.
([4]) OJ L 102 7.4.2004 p. 48.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007416/13
do Komisji
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(24 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: E-learning i program Erasmus

W polskim szkolnictwie wyższym e-learning stawia pierwsze kroki. Rozwój tej formy edukacji jest o tyle istotny, że polscy studenci są na piątym miejscu w rankingu mobilności w ramach programu LLP Erasmus.

Duża cześć polskich studentów, by zwiększyć swoje szanse na rynku pracy, zdecydowała się na studiowanie dwóch kierunków. Osoby takie są ambitne, zdolne i pragną wykorzystać okres studiowania jak najefektywniej. Niestety możliwość wyjazdu na program Erasmus jest dla nich znacznie utrudniona. Nie można wyjechać na program Erasmus z dwóch instytutów jednocześnie. O ile zdawanie egzaminów na uczelni zagranicznej jest częścią programu, o tyle studenci dwóch kierunków muszą w tym samym czasie fizycznie zdawać egzaminy na uczelni macierzystej, co jest niewykonalne. Takie osoby są więc zmuszone wziąć urlop dziekański lub zrezygnować z wyjazdu. Niestety, studenci chcąc jak najszybciej wejść na rynek pracy, zazwyczaj wybierają to drugie rozwiązanie.

Czy Komisja mogłaby poinformować Parlament Europejski:

1. Czy Komisja widzi możliwość wsparcia e-learningu, jako oficjalnej formy kontaktu z wykładowcami i podchodzenia do egzaminów dla studentów studiujących dwa kierunki, którzy chcieliby skorzystać z programu LLP Erasmus?

2. Czy Komisja widzi szansę wprowadzenia dyrektywy regulującej formalności związane z programem LLP Erasmus, tak by studenci studiujący dwa kierunki w uczelni macierzystej, mogli wyjechać w ramach tych samych kierunków na część studiów na uczelni partnerskiej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(2 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Przyszły program na rzecz edukacji, szkolenia i młodzieży na okres 2014-2020, Erasmus+, poszerzy zakres wsparcia UE dla nowych form nauczania i uczenia się w celu zaspokojenia coraz bardziej różnorodnych potrzeb studentów. Dzięki strategicznym partnerstwom instytucji szkolnictwa wyższego z różnych państw z organizacjami z innych sektorów kształcenia i szkolenia oraz być może z przedsiębiorstwami program Erasmus+ będzie wspierać integrację większej różnorodności form studiów (uczenie się na odległość, w niepełnym wymiarze godzin, modularne). Będzie także wspierać nowe podejścia pedagogiczne poprzez lepsze wykorzystanie technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych (takich jak nowe formy platform współpracy i kursów internetowych, na przykład masowe otwarte kursy internetowe, międzynarodowa internetowa nauka oparta na współpracy itp.). Z myślą o studentach, którzy z reguły nie są mobilni na dłuższy okres czasu, wspomniane strategiczne partnerstwa będą wspierać krótkoterminową fizyczną mobilność trwającą do 2 miesięcy połączoną z mobilnością wirtualną, między innymi w celu zachęcenia studentów do pracy nad rzeczywistymi projektami realizowanymi przez przedsiębiorstwa.

W ramach programu Erasmus+ studenci studiujący dwa kierunki w macierzystej uczelni co do zasady będą mogli studiować te same kierunki w jednej (lub dwóch) z uczelni partnerskich. Zgodę na taki tryb muszą jednak wyrazić uczelnia wysyłająca i przyjmująca w ramach porozumienia o programie zajęć podpisywanego ze studentem. Ułatwione zostanie to dzięki zobowiązaniu się uczelni – poprzez podpisanie Karty Szkolnictwa Wyższego Erasmus – do aktualizowania swoich katalogów studiów z wystarczającym wyprzedzeniem, tak by studenci mogli wybierać zajęcia na długo przed rozpoczęciem mobilności.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007416/13
to the Commission
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: E-learning and the Erasmus programme

E-learning is in its early stages in the Polish higher education system. The development of this form of education is an important issue, as Polish students occupy fifth place in the Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme mobility ranking.

A large number of Polish students are opting to study two separate courses in order to improve their chances on the labour market. Such people are ambitious, talented and wish to use their time at university as effectively as possible. However, they experience significant difficulties when trying to participate in the Erasmus programme, as there is no provision in this programme for students with two home universities. Given that sitting exams at a foreign university is an element of the programme, and that students taking two courses must also sit exams at their home university at the same time, it is not feasible for such students to participate in the programme. They are thus either forced to take sabbatical leave or to give up on taking part in the Erasmus programme. Regrettably, students, who are keen to get onto the labour market as quickly as possible, usually opt for the latter.

1. Does the Commission see scope for supporting e-learning as an official form of contact with lecturers and of approaching exams for students taking two courses who wish to benefit from the Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme?

2. Does it see scope for introducing a directive regulating the formalities associated with the Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme, so that students taking two courses at their home university may take the same courses during their studies at a partner university?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

The future programme for education, training and youth for the period 2014-2020, Erasmus+, will extend the scope of EU support towards new forms of teaching and learning, to cater for the increasingly diverse needs of the student population. Through strategic partnerships of higher education institutions from different countries, with organisations from other sectors of education and training or possibly with business, Erasmus+ will support the integration of a greater variety of study modes (distance, part-time, modular learning). It will also support new pedagogical approaches through a better exploitation of ICT (new forms of collaborative platforms and on line courses such as Massive Open Online Courses, Collaborative Online International Learning …). For students who are typically not mobile for a long period of time, short term physical mobility of less than 2 months blended with virtual mobility will also be supported in the context of those strategic partnerships, for example to encourage students working on real life projects submitted by enterprises.

Students taking two courses at their home university will in principle be able to take the same courses at one (or two) partner universities abroad under Erasmus+. However, it will be up to the sending and receiving institutions to accept this practice via the learning agreement(s) signed between them and the student. This will be facilitated as higher education institutions will commit, by signing the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, to update their course catalogue early enough so that students can make their choice of courses well in advance of the start of their mobility.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007417/13
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Programa de apoio cautelar a Portugal

Vários países europeus estão sob assistência financeira, sendo a Comissão um dos principais intervenientes nestes programas de apoio.

Desde abril de 2011 que várias instituições internacionais (CE, BCE, FMI) têm estado a apoiar Portugal na resolução da crise financeira que o país enfrenta, nomeadamente ao nível do desenvolvimento de novas medidas de cortes orçamentais e aumento da eficiência dos serviços públicos.

O Programa de Assistência Financeira desenvolvido em parceria com as instituições internacionais termina em junho de 2014, perspetivando-se algumas dificuldades para Portugal inverter a trajetória de declínio económico e aumento das taxas de desemprego.

Portugal atravessa uma grave crise, demonstrando-se que faltam estímulos ao crescimento económico e à criação de emprego que alavanquem o desenvolvimento económico e social.

A seguir ao Programa de Assistência Financeiro, poderá ser necessário adotar um outro tipo de programa que vise apoiar o crescimento económico e a geração de emprego, injetando algum dinheiro na economia através de uma série de novos investimentos que modernizem o país.

O Comissário Olli Rehn referiu no Parlamento Europeu que a UE «está a trabalhar em conjunto com os respetivos governos no sentido de preparar uma saída bem-sucedida dos programas da UE-FMI de reforma económica e ajustamento orçamental para a Irlanda e Portugal».

Enquanto, por um lado, o BCE poderá apoiar o país no regresso aos mercados, o BEI poderá auxiliar as empresas portuguesas a ter acesso a financiamento a taxas mais competitivas e assim impulsionar uma série de investimentos no país.

1. Como é que Portugal poderá regressar à trajetória de crescimento económico e criação de emprego?

2. Quais os apoios económicos que as instituições europeias poderão dar a este novo impulso de que Portugal necessita?

3. Quais as instituições europeias que poderão participar neste novo «Programa Cautelar» que está a ser desenhado pela Comissão — BCE, BEI, CE?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(12 de setembro de 2013)

A questão da melhor forma de assegurar uma saída harmoniosa de Portugal do atual programa foi longamente debatida entre as autoridades portuguesas e os seus parceiros internacionais. A recente crise política provocou um retrocesso, uma vez que os mercados reagiram de forma negativa aos sinais de falta de coesão no seio do Governo. Todavia, com a aprovação, por parte do Presidente da República português, do Governo remodelado, e com a apresentação do programa bienal, verifica-se uma acalmia gradual dos mercados, pelo que Portugal, em cooperação com os seus parceiros internacionais, pode prosseguir a estratégia acordada para tornar possível o retorno da economia a um crescimento sólido e sustentável.

Várias são as opções possíveis no que toca à fase pós-programa. Embora seja prematuro avançar com um cenário e um esquema específicos, neste momento parece provável que Portugal possa solicitar algum tipo de apoio para facilitar o seu regresso aos mercados. A versão mais leve consistiria numa LCCP ([1]) concedida pelo MEE. Se Portugal for elegível para um programa TMD ([2]) do BCE e quiser aproveitar essa oportunidade, terá de optar por uma LCCR ([3]) pelo MEE. Ambos os tipos de programas implicam uma certa forma de condicionalidade que, no entanto, não seria muito diferente de uma mera supervisão pós-programa, que de qualquer forma será aplicável a Portugal em conformidade com o pacote duplo.

Em ambas as variantes, a Comissão, em cooperação com o BCE, e, possivelmente, com o FMI, seria implicada no controlo da condicionalidade. O BEI não seria diretamente implicado no âmbito destes programas, mas a sua participação em paralelo, para assegurar o suficiente financiamento da economia, que constitui uma componente importante para uma estratégia de crescimento bem-sucedida, tem de ser ponderada.

([1]) Linha de Crédito Preventiva Condicionada.
([2]) Transações Monetárias Diretas.
([3]) Linha de Crédito com Condições Reforçadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007417/13
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Precautionary support programme for Portugual

A number of countries are being financially assisted, with the Commission playing a leading role in these support programmes.

Since April 2011, several international institutions (the Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)) have been supporting Portugal in its efforts to overcome the crisis, particularly by developing new measures to reduce the budget and increase the efficiency of public services.

The financial assistance programme devised in conjunction with the European institutions ends in June 2014. It is likely that Portugal will continue to find it difficult to reverse the process of economic decline and increasing unemployment.

Portugal is undergoing a serious crisis, in which there is a clear lack of incentives for economic growth and job creation to promote economic and social development.

Following on from the financial assistance programme, it may be necessary to adopt another form of programme to support economic growth and job creation, by injecting funds into the economy through a series of new investments to modernise the country.

Commissioner Olli Rehn recently told the European Parliament that the EU is working in conjunction with the governments concerned to ensure a successful conclusion to the EU-IMF economic reform and budget adjustment programmes for Ireland and Portugal.

While, on the one hand, the ECB could support the country's return to the markets, the European Investment Bank (EIB) could help Portuguese enterprises gain access to funding at more competitive rates, which would provide the impulse for a series of investments in the country.

1. How can Portugal get back on track towards economic growth and job creation?

2. What forms of economic support can the European institutions provide to back this new initiative needed by Portugal?

3. Which European institutions will be able to participate in this new 'precautionary programme' being drawn up by the Commission — the ECB, the EIB and the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The question of how Portugal can ensure a smooth exit from the current programme was discussed between the Portuguese authorities and its international partners for some time. The recent political crisis has meant a setback in this regard, as markets reacted negatively to the signs of lack of cohesion in the government. However, with the confirmation of the reshuffled government by the Portuguese President and the presentation of the two-year programme, there is evidence that calm is gradually returning on the markets so that Portugal, in cooperation with its internatinoal partners, can continue working on the agreed strategy that will allow the economy to return to solid and sustainable growth.

There are a number of options that can be envisaged for post-programme arrangements. Although it is premature to speculate with a specific scenario and scheme, at the present stage it seems likely that Portugal may require some kind of backstop to faciliate its return to markets. The lightest version would be a PCCL ([1]) by the ESM. If Portugal qualifies for an OMT ([2]) programme by the ECB and wants to avail itself of this opportunity it would have to choose an ECCL ([3]) by the ESM. Both types of programme, come with some form of conditionality which would, however, not be very different from post-programme surveillance that will apply in any case to Portugal in accordance with the Two-Pack.

In both programme variants, the Commission in cooperation with the ECB and, possibly, the IMF, would be involved in the surveillance of the conditionality. The EIB would not be directly implicated under either of these programmes but its parallel involvement in ensuring sufficient financing of the economy, which will be a major component of a succesful growth strategy, has to be ascertained.

([1]) Precautionary Conditions Credit Line.
([2]) Outright Monetary Transactions.
([3]) Enhanced Conditions Credit Line.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007418/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: France réactionnaire

Selon le Président de la Commission, les positions françaises sur «l'exception culturelle» dans les négociations sur le traité transatlantique de libre-échange sont «réactionnaires».

Cela fait des années que, partout en Europe, les politiques nationales utilisent l'Europe comme bouc émissaire. «C'est la faute à Bruxelles!» Promenez-vous ici ou là dans toutes les capitales européennes, c'est devenu le slogan des hommes de gauche et de droite chez les 27. Des populistes comme des plus démocrates. L'austérité? C'est Bruxelles. L'ouverture des frontières? C'est Bruxelles. La vache folle? Bruxelles encore. La finance folle, les normes en tout genre, la remise en cause du modèle social: Bruxelles! Encore et toujours Bruxelles. La vérité vraie, c'est que, jusque-là, il était très rare que le Président de la Commission s'en prenne à un État membre. Les doctes propos des commissaires sur l'austérité ou sur les réformes prenaient des allures de recommandations, la Commission pointait du doigt les mauvais élèves. Mais le ton n'était pas celui de l'invective. Même Jacques Delors, à l'époque où il avait la pleine confiance de l'Allemagne et de la France et où la Commission avait encore un peu de pouvoir, ne se serait jamais permis de prendre de front un État en traitant les uns ou les autres de «réactionnaires». L'Europe a souvent connu des crises. Mais les affrontements étaient le fait des États. Et la Commission jouait le rôle de médiateur et arrondissait les angles. La sortie du président Barroso est donc extrêmement dangereuse pour l'Europe elle-même.

1. Compte tenu de tout cela, la Commission maintient-elle son jugement sur la France comme étant réactionnaire?

2. Le Président de la Commission ne doit-il pas prêter serment en début de mandat en jurant de servir «l'intérêt général européen»?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(8 août 2013)

La citation mentionnée par l'Honorable Parlementaire est erronée. La Commission et le président lui-même ont éclairci ce point à l'occasion d'une conférence de presse le 24 juin.

Le président de la Commission ainsi que l'ensemble de ses membres sont très soucieux de promouvoir l'intérêt général de l'Union, ainsi qu'en dispose l'article 17 du traité sur l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007418/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: 'Reactionary' France

According to the President of the Commission, France's stance on the 'cultural exception' in transatlantic free-trade agreement negotiations is 'reactionary'.

National politicians throughout Europe have been using Europe as a whipping boy for years. 'It's Brussels' fault!' Take a walk around any European capital and you will see that this has become the slogan of both left-wingers and right-wingers throughout the 27 EU Member States — the slogan of demagogues and democrats alike. Austerity? Brussels' fault. Opening up of borders? Brussels' fault. Mad cows? Brussels again. Mad financial markets, red tape and the undermining of the social model? Brussels! Time and again, it's Brussels that gets the blame! The fact of the matter is that, up to now, it has been very rare for the President of the Commission to attack a Member State. The Commissioners' learned pronouncements on austerity and on reforms have always been couched as recommendations, and the tone was always one of encouragement, not confrontation. Even Jacques Delors, back when he enjoyed the full confidence of Germany and France — and when the Commission still had some power — would never have dared to attack a Member State by throwing around the term 'reactionary'. Europe has gone through a number of crises, but clashes of this kind have always been between Member States. The Commission has always played the role of mediator and attempted to smooth things out. Mr Barroso's outburst is thus extremely dangerous for Europe.

1. Given the above, does the Commission still see France as 'reactionary'?

2. Is the President of the Commission not required to swear an oath to serve Europe's generalinterest at the beginning of his term of office?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The quote referred to by the Honourable Member is erroneous. The Commission, including the President himself on the occasion of a press point on 24 June, has put the record straight on this topic.

The President of the Commission and all its Members are fully committed to promote the general interest of the Union as ruled by Article 17 of the Treaty on the European Union.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007419/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Susy De Martini (ECR), Silvia Costa (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Oreste Rossi (EFD), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Sergio Berlato (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Luigi Berlinguer (S&D), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Franco Bonanini (NI), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Carlo Casini (PPE) e Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile violazione normativa appalti pubblici a danno dell'AnsaldoBreda

Il 3 giugno 2013 la società ferroviaria nazionale belga NMBS in modo unilaterale ha ufficialmente rescisso il contratto con la società italiana AnsaldoBreda per la produzione di 3 treni ad alta velocità «Fyra V250». A sua volta la società ferroviaria nazionale olandese NS ha annunciato il recesso dal contratto riguardante la produzione di 16 treni di cui 9 già consegnati. L'importo totale di tali contratti si aggira sui 400 milioni di euro. Tali prodotti hanno passato tutti i test di sicurezza, ottenendo le relative certificazioni per la messa in esercizio e le relative autorizzazioni rilasciate in conformità alle regole ed alle certificazioni previste dalle normative nazionali ed europee.

In un momento di crisi economica europea ed internazionale si teme che simili atti, oltre a ledere l'interesse dei cittadini europei a fruire di un servizio transfrontaliero tecnologicamente avanzato di trasporto, possano avere ripercussioni negative sui livelli occupazionali e sull'indotto industriale di una azienda oggi leader europeo nel settore dei trasporti con più di 2400 dipendenti.

Premesso che l'Unione europea pone particolare attenzione allo sviluppo delle reti europee di trasporto, può la Commissione europea precisare quanto segue:

— un simile comportamento è in linea con la legislazione relativa agli appalti pubblici?

— un simile comportamento influisce negativamente rispetto ad uno sviluppo armonico nel quadro dei progetti europei transnazionali delle reti per il trasporto ad alta velocità?

— esiste una valutazione in merito alle possibili ricadute in termini economici e dei livelli occupazionali, un quadro della situazione?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(9 agosto 2013)

1. La Commissione attira l'attenzione degli onorevoli deputati sul fatto che le direttive 2004/17/CE ([1]) e 2004/18/CE ([2]) relative alle procedure d'appalto non prevedono disposizioni specifiche relative all'esecuzione dei contratti che risultano da tali procedure. In particolare non coordinano le condizioni alle quali le amministrazioni aggiudicatrici o gli enti aggiudicatori possono recedere da detti contratti o annullarli. Pertanto, le decisioni della SNCB (Société nationale des chemins de fer belges) e della NS («Nederlandse Spoorwegen») relative ai contratti con la società AnsaldoBreda rientrano nella gestione delle condizioni d'esecuzione dei contratti stessi tra le parti contraenti interessate e sono escluse dal campo d'applicazione delle direttive sopra citate.

2. La rete transeuropea si sviluppa in base a norme d'interoperabilità e funzionamento comuni all'intera rete ferroviaria ad alta velocità nel quadro della rete transeuropea di trasporto. Nondimeno, la scelta del materiale rotabile appartiene agli operatori, salvo il rispetto delle norme europee.

([1]) Direttiva 2004/17/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 31 marzo 2004, che coordina le procedure di appalto degli enti erogatori di acqua e di energia, degli enti che forniscono servizi di trasporto e servizi postali (GU L 134 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1).

([2]) Direttiva 2004/18/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 31 marzo 2004, relativa al coordinamento delle procedure di aggiudicazione degli appalti pubblici di lavori, di forniture e di servizi (GU L 134 del 30.4.2004, pag. 114).

3. La Commissione non ha i mezzi per valutare le conseguenze economiche e l'impatto sull'occupazione di ogni decisione presa dalle amministrazioni aggiudicatrici nell'ambito dell'esecuzione dei rispettivi appalti. In ogni caso, una siffatta valutazione dovrebbe tener conto non solo delle conseguenze economiche e dell'impatto di tali decisioni sull'occupazione, ma anche di altre considerazioni d'interesse pubblico, quali la soddisfazione delle esigenze delle amministrazioni aggiudicatrici/degli enti aggiudicatori e del pubblico interessati, cui dovrebbe condurre la corretta esecuzione degli appalti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007419/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Susy De Martini (ECR), Silvia Costa (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Oreste Rossi (NI), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Sergio Berlato (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Luigi Berlinguer (S&D), Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Franco Bonanini (NI), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Carlo Casini (PPE) and Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of public procurement legislation at the expense of AnsaldoBreda

On 3 June 2013, NMBS, the Belgian national rail company, unilaterally officially rescinded its contract with Italian company AnsaldoBreda for the manufacture of three high-speed 'Fyra V250' trains. In addition, NS, the Dutch national rail company, announced it was withdrawing from the contract for the manufacture of 16 trains, nine of which have already been delivered. The total value of these contracts is approximately EUR 400 million. These products have passed all the safety tests, obtaining the relevant certifications for being placed in service and the relevant permits issued in compliance with the rules and certifications laid down by national and European legislation.

At a time of economic crisis in Europe and internationally, we fear that, in addition to damaging the opportunities for European citizens to benefit from a technologically advanced cross-border transport service, such actions may have adverse effects on employment levels and on the supply chain of a company that is currently a European leader in the transport sector, with over 2 400 employees.

As the European Union is particularly interested in the development of European transport networks, can the European Commission say:

— Is such conduct in line with public procurement legislation?

— Does such conduct have an adverse impact on harmonious developmentin the context of transnational European projects for high-speed transport networks?

— Has an assessment been made of the potential consequences on the economy and employment levels, giving an overview of the situation?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(9 août 2013)

1. La Commission attire l'attention des Honorables Parlementaires sur le fait que les directives 2004/17/CE ([1]) et 2004/18/CE ([2]) sur la passation des marchés ne prévoient pas de dispositions spécifiques relatives à l'exécution des contrats qui résultent de ces procédures. En particulier, elles ne coordonnent pas les conditions dans lesquelles les pouvoirs adjudicateurs ou les entités adjudicatrices peuvent résilier ou annuler ces contrats. Ainsi, les décisions de la SNCB (société nationale des chemins de fer belges) et de la NS («Nederlandse Spoorwegen») relatives aux contrats avec la société AnsaldoBreda relèvent de la gestion des conditions d'exécution de ces contrats par les parties contractantes concernées et échappent donc au champ d'application de ces directives.

2. Le réseau transeuropéen se développe sur la base des normes d'interopérabilité et de fonctionnalité communes pour la totalité du réseau ferroviaire à haute vitesse dans le cadre du Réseau Transeuropéen de Transport. Néanmoins, le choix du matériel roulant ressort de la responsabilité des opérateurs sous condition que les normes européennes soient respectées.

([1]) Directive 2004/17/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 31 mars 2004 portant coordination des procédures de passation des marchés dans les secteurs de l'eau, de l'énergie, des transports et des services postaux (JO L 134 du 30.04.2004, p. 1).
([2]) Directive 2004/18/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 31 mars 2004 relative à la coordination des procédures de passation des marchés publics de travaux, de fournitures et de services (JO L 134 du 30.04.2004, p. 114).

3. La Commission n'a pas les moyens d'évaluer les conséquences économiques et sur l'emploi propres à chaque décision prise par les pouvoirs adjudicateurs dans le cadre de l'exécution de leurs marchés respectifs. En tout état de cause, une telle évaluation devrait tenir compte, non seulement, des conséquences économiques et sur l'emploi desdites décisions, mais encore, d'autres considérations d'intérêt public telles que la satisfaction des besoins des pouvoirs adjudicateurs/entités adjudicatrices et du public concernés que la bonne exécution de ces contrats est censée rencontrer.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007420/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: Accord de libre-échange avec les États-Unis: protéger l'agriculture européenne doit être une priorité

Le compromis trouvé le 14 juin va permettre d'ouvrir les négociations pour un accord de commerce et d'investissement avec les États-Unis. Cet accord peut être une chance pour l'Europe, qui pourrait gagner près d'un demi-point de croissance supplémentaire par an. La différence, les Européens la verraient dans leur quotidien, car cet accord pourrait leur apporter en moyenne 545 euros de revenus supplémentaires par foyer.

La protection de l'exception culturelle, grâce à l'exclusion des services audiovisuels du mandat de négociation, est une décision qui correspond aux attentes des Européens. La position du Parlement européen, soutenue par la France, a prévalu. Or, ce compromis reste fragile, car il comprend la possibilité d'inclure le secteur audiovisuel à un stade ultérieur des négociations. Mais la protection de l'audiovisuel, aussi déterminante soit-elle, ne doit pas occulter d'autres questions tout aussi essentielles: j'avais demandé très clairement, au cours de l'élaboration de la résolution du Parlement européen sur la question, qu'une attention particulière soit donnée aux échanges agricoles.

Les Européens, les agriculteurs européens, et l'ensemble de la filière agro-alimentaire refusent que l'on brade nos exigences en matière de qualité et de santé. Le respect des préférences collectives a été intégré au mandat. Nous devons en effet garantir un haut niveau de protection de l'environnement, des travailleurs et des consommateurs, et préserver les exigences existantes au sein des États membres. Mais ce respect demandera une vigilance continue, tout au long des négociations.

Ce que nous voulons pour notre agriculture, c'est une véritable réciprocité: nos produits s'exportent, mais nous voulons mettre fin aux barrières qui existent encore et nous empêchent de partager notre savoir-faire. Nous avons confiance en la capacité de notre agriculture de s'affirmer sur le marché mondial, mais nous ne devons pas, pour y parvenir, porter atteinte à sa qualité.

La Commission doit donner à l'agriculture européenne les moyens de saisir l'ensemble des possibilités offertes par ce futur accord.

1. Concrètement, comment compte-t-elle s'assurer que les intérêts de notre agriculture et de l'ensemble de notre filière agro-alimentaire seront garantis tout au long des négociations?

2. La Commission peut-elle clairement affirmer sa volonté d'en faire une priorité dans ces négociations, qui doivent aboutir à un accord respectant pleinement notre spécificité et notre identité?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(20 août 2013)

Les accords commerciaux tels que le partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement doivent certainement respecter, dans le domaine de l'agriculture, un juste équilibre entre nos intérêts offensifs et défensifs. Comme l'indique l'Honorable Parlementaire, le partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement pose des défis majeurs, mais il offre aussi de nouvelles possibilités découlant des concessions de nos partenaires en ce qui concerne les obstacles tarifaires et non tarifaires et une meilleure protection des indications géographiques de l'UE.

Parallèlement, on ne peut s'attendre à ce que les secteurs particulièrement sensibles puissent supporter un niveau excessif d'importations supplémentaires qui viendrait s'ajouter à la pression exercée sur la production et les prix intérieurs moyens. Dans ces secteurs, notamment dans le secteur animal, il est clair que la marge dont nous disposons pour l'octroi d'éventuelles concessions en matière d'accès au marché est étroite. Le caractère sensible d'une série de secteurs agricoles dans le cadre des négociations avec les États-Unis a été reconnu et, selon le rapport final du groupe de travail de haut niveau sur l'emploi et la croissance, il est peu probable que les produits les plus sensibles fassent l'objet d'une élimination totale des tarifs: un traitement spécial sera envisagé pour ces produits afin de minimiser les éventuels effets négatifs sur le marché de l'UE.

Enfin, ces négociations n'ont pas pour but de nuire à la santé des consommateurs de l'UE ou à l'environnement. L'UE possède l'un des cadres législatifs les plus avancés en ce qui concerne la protection de la vie humaine et de la santé publique, de la santé et du bien-être des animaux, de l'environnement et des intérêts des consommateurs. Il importe de veiller, dans l'intérêt des citoyens de l'UE, au maintien des normes strictes déjà en place.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007420/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Free trade agreement with the US: protecting European agriculture must be a priority

The compromise reached on 14 June 2013 clears the way for negotiations to begin on a free trade and investment agreement with the United States. The agreement represents a real opportunity for Europe, which could benefit from an additional half-a-percentage-point increase in GDP per year. In practical terms, for the average European household this would equate to an extra EUR 545 in annual income.

The decision to protect the cultural exception by excluding audiovisual services from the negotiating mandate is one that reflects the wishes of many Europeans. Parliament's position, backed by France, prevailed. Nevertheless, this compromise is far from satisfactory, as it leaves open the possibility of including the audiovisual sector at a later stage of the negotiations. But the need to protect the audiovisual sector, vital as it is, must not divert attention away from issues of equal importance. When Parliament was drafting its resolution on the issue, I specifically called for very close attention to be paid to agricultural trade.

The general public, farmers and the entire agri-food industry in Europe will not allow our health and quality standards to be watered down in exchange for concessions elsewhere. The mandate insists on respect for collective preferences, and we must therefore ensure a high level of environmental, worker and consumer protection, and maintain the requirements currently in force in Member States. But to do so will require vigilance throughout the negotiations.

What we want for our agriculture is true reciprocity. Although we export our products, we want to do away with the remaining barriers preventing us from sharing our know-how. We have full confidence in our agricultural sector's ability to compete in the global market, but this must not come at the expense of quality.

The Commission must put European agriculture in a position to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by this future agreement.

1. How exactly does the Commission intend to protect the interests of our agriculture and the entire agri-food industry throughout the negotiations?

2. Can it pledge to make this a priority during the negotiations, which should culminate in an agreement which fully respects the specific nature and identity of European agriculture?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Trade agreements, including TTIP, have certainly to strike the right balance between our offensive interests in agriculture and our defensive ones. As you note, the TTIP raises significant challenges, but it also provides new opportunities stemming from our partners' concessions, on tariff and non-tariff barriers and on the enhanced protection of EU geographical indications.

At the same time, particularly sensitive sectors cannot be expected to sustain an excessive level of additional imports that would put further pressure on average domestic prices and production. In these cases, notably in the animal sector, our limits in terms of possible additional market access concessions are clearly tight. The sensitivity of a series of agricultural sectors in the negotiations with the U.S. has been acknowledged, and, in line with the Final Report of the High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth, the most sensitive products are unlikely to undergo full elimination of tariffs: special treatment will be considered for such products to minimise any negative impacts on the EU market.

Finally, these negotiations have not the aim to compromise the health of EU consumers or the environment. EU has one of the most advanced legislative frameworks serving to protect human life and public health, animal health and welfare, environment and consumer interests. It is in the EU citizen's interests to ensure that the existing high standards will be maintained.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007421/13
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: La protection des abeilles et le moratoire d'interdiction des pesticides néonicotinoïdes

La Commission européenne, consciente du taux de mortalité anormalement élevé des abeilles, a proposé la mise en place d'un moratoire afin d'interdire l'utilisation des trois pesticides supposés les plus néfastes. Cette mesure a été acceptée par une majorité d'États membres. C'est un point positif, car ce n'était pas gagné d'avance et cela représente un pas en avant.

Cependant, ce moratoire, bien qu'encourageant, reste insuffisant sur plusieurs points. Les trois pesticides concernés polluent en effet les sols pendant des années et une dose même infime du produit est source de mortalité pour les abeilles. De plus, l'interdiction ne concerne que certains types de plantes réputées pour attirer les abeilles. Enfin, l'interdiction ne porte que sur une période de l'année.

Au vu de ces limites, et compte tenu du fait qu'une interdiction totale serait plus appropriée (ainsi, en Italie, la mortalité a diminué — passant de 30 % à 15 % — suite à l'interdiction totale des pesticides):

1. La Commission est-elle consciente des limites du moratoire imposé, notamment concernant la limitation saisonnière de l'interdiction, et prévoit-elle en conséquence une prochaine étape comportant des mesures plus ambitieuses pour assurer la protection effective des abeilles?

2. Compte tenu des limitations évoquées plus haut, la Commission peut-elle estimer l'efficacité du moratoire partiel qu'elle va imposer? Comment peut-elle garantir l'efficacité de sa mesure?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(25 juillet 2013)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à prendre connaissance de sa réponse à la question écrite nº E-007011/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007421/13
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Protection of bees and the temporary ban on neonicotinoid-based pesticides

Recognising the abnormally high death rate among bees, the Commission proposed a moratorium on the use of what are considered the three most harmful pesticides, and a majority of the Member States approved the measure. That much is positive: it was not a foregone conclusion that the moratorium would be imposed and it is a step forward.

While encouraging, however, the temporary ban is inadequate in several respects. The three substances in question continue to pollute land on which they are used for years, and even the tiniest doses are deadly to bees. Secondly, the ban applies only to certain types of crop that are known to attract bees; and thirdly, it will be in force for only part of the year.

Given these limitations and recognising that a total ban would be more appropriate (in Italy, for example, after the pesticides in question were banned completely, bee mortality fell from 30% to 15%):

1. Does the Commission acknowledge the limitations of the moratorium, and particularly of its seasonal application, and is it therefore planning a further step, with more ambitious measures to afford bees real protection?

2. Given the limitations outlined, can the Commission estimate how effective the intended partial ban will be? How can it ensure that the measure it has taken will work?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007011/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007422/13
alla Commissione
Franco Frigo (S&D)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Discarica per il trattamento di rifiuti

La ditta «Adige Ambiente» S.r.l. ha presentato alla Regione Veneto una domanda per la realizzazione di un nuovo sito di stoccaggio di rifiuti speciali non pericolosi da realizzarsi a Valeggio sul Mincio, Verona. La discarica andrebbe a situarsi in una zona a ridosso dell'ex discarica per RSU in postmortem di Ca' Baldassare. Il progetto prevede l'ulteriore scavo di georisorse per l'ampliamento della cava dismessa di Cà Balestra, il cui fondo è inquinato da idrocarburi pesanti e non è ancora ripristinata ad uso agricolo.

Nella discarica saranno effettuate operazioni di smaltimento di rifiuti misti (circa 300 CER) con elevato contenuto sia di rifiuti organici e biodegradabili che di rifiuti inorganici con recupero di biogas. L'area si trova in una zona caratterizzata da una forte stabilità con gradiente termico maggiore di quello adiabatico secco ostacolando, cosi, le correnti d'aria verso l'alto che favoriscono la diluizione delle concentrazioni degli inquinanti gassosi e odorigeni causati dalla combustione di biogas e dalla gestione dei rifiuti putrescibili.

Nel sottosuolo, formato prevalentemente da ghiaie alluvionali ad elevata permeabilità, è presente una consistente falda freatica senza soluzione di continuità con le acque del Lago di Garda situato a Nord. Tale falda alimenta per uso potabile i pozzi delle provincie di Verona e Mantova. A questo si aggiungono le forti preoccupazioni da parte di cittadini che temono sia per le conseguenze sulla produzione agroalimentare locale caratterizzata da certificazioni di qualità sia per la loro salute, dato il rischio che nel nuovo sito vengano conferiti rifiuti pericolosi. Inoltre, considerata la vicinanza con l'aeroporto «Catullo» di Verona, c'è il rischio di richiamare fauna selvatica pericolosa per gli aerei di passaggio.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, si chiede se la Commissione ritiene che siano state rispettate tutte le disposizioni della normativa UE ovvero la direttiva 2011/92/CE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati, la direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti e la direttiva 1999/31/CE modificata dal regolamento 1882/2003 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(8 agosto 2013)

Spetta alle autorità competenti degli Stati membri decidere in merito all'autorizzazione delle discariche, assicurando il rispetto delle pertinenti disposizioni della legislazione dell'UE, in particolare la direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti ([1]) (la direttiva quadro sui rifiuti), la direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti ([2]) (la «direttiva Discariche») e la direttiva 2011/92/UE concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati ([3]) (la «direttiva VIA»).

Al momento la Commissione non dispone di alcuna informazione specifica da cui risulti che le autorità italiane competenti abbiano rilasciato un'autorizzazione non conforme alla pertinente legislazione dell'Unione europea.

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.
([2]) GU L 182 del 16.7.1999.
([3]) GU L 26 del 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007422/13
to the Commission
Franco Frigo (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Landfill for waste treatment

The firm 'Adige Ambiente' s.r.l has applied to the Veneto region to construct a new site to store special non-hazardous waste, to be built in Valeggio sul Mincio, Verona. The landfill would be located in an area close to the former Ca' Baldassare landfill for municipal solid waste. The project provides for the further excavation of geo-resources in order to expand the disused Cà Balestra quarry, the bottom of which is polluted with heavy hydrocarbons and has not yet been restored for agricultural use.

Mixed waste would be disposed of in the landfill (approximately 300 certified emission reductions) with a high content of both organic and biodegradable waste and inorganic waste, allowing the recovery of biogas. The area is very stable and has a temperature gradient greater than the adiabatic dry gradient, thus hampering air flow in an upward direction and promoting the dilution of concentrations of gaseous and strong smelling pollutants caused by the combustion of biogas and the handling of putrescible waste.

In the underground soil, consisting primarily of highly permeable alluvial gravel, there is a substantial underground water table, with no break between it and the waters of Lake Garda, located to the north. This aquifer supplies the drinking-water wells of the provinces of Verona and Mantua. In addition, residents have serious concerns, fearing both the consequences on local food production, which is currently certified as being of high quality, and for their health, given the risk that hazardous waste might be dumped at the new site. Furthermore, in view of the proximity of Verona's 'Catullo' airport, there is the risk of attracting wildlife that might be dangerous for passing aircraft.

In view of the above, does the Commission consider that all EC law provisions have been complied with? These include Directive 2011/92/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, Directive 2008/98/EC on waste and Directive 1999/31/EC as amended by Regulation (EC) No 1882/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

Decisions about the authorisation of landfills are taken by the competent authorities in Member States. They must comply with relevant requirements in EC law, particularly the directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([1]) (the 'Waste Framework Directive'), Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste ([2]) (the 'Landfill Directive') and Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([3]) (the 'EIA Directive').

At this stage, the Commission does not have any specific information indicating that the competent Italian authorities have issued a permit which is non-compliant with relevant EU legislation.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([3]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007423/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Relazioni tra l'Unione europea e l'Ucraina

A novembre 2013 l'UE e l'Ucraina dovrebbero firmare un accordo di associazione per incrementare la circolazione di beni e persone tra i due paesi e favorire una più stretta integrazione.

L'Ucraina si è avviata sulla strada che altri paesi dell'ex blocco sovietico hanno percorso dieci anni fa, e, passo dopo passo, sta realizzando le condizioni stabilite dall'UE per la firma dell'accordo di associazione.

Il paese recentemente ha tuttavia accettato lo status di osservatore nell'Unione euroasiatica, ovvero l'unione doganale tra Russia, Bielorussia e Kazakistan, guidata da Mosca. La partecipazione all'unione doganale, che potrebbe procurare a Kiev il sospirato sconto sul gas con i russi, non è tuttavia compatibile con l'accordo di libero scambio che i leader dell'UE intendono firmare con l'Ucraina a novembre.

Industria e interessi economici ucraini sono, infatti, ancora strettamente legati alla Russia, suo primo partner commerciale (con un volume di scambi superiore a quello tra l'Ucraina e il resto d'Europa).

L'Ucraina auspica un futuro europeo e i suoi legami di sangue, di storia, di fede, ma anche i trattati moderni, sono le fondamenta su cui è possibile costruire un ponte duraturo tra l'Europa e la Russia.

Ciò premesso, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

— poiché l'Ucraina è il solo paese in Europa ad avere un piede nell'Unione euroasiatica e un accordo di libero scambio con l'UE, è possibile un equilibrio tra l'integrazione con l'Europa e il riavvicinamento ai russi, trasformando così in opportunità la posizione di ponte che è la caratteristica geografica dell'Ucraina?

— In quanto osservatore nell'Unione euroasiatica, può l'Ucraina costituire un canale attraverso cui veicolare i valori europei e i legami con l'Europa, attenuando i sospetti reciproci e costruendo una pace più duratura con gli altri paesi dell'ex blocco sovietico?

— In che modo intende la Commissione affrontare lo stato attuale dell'Ucraina alla luce del suo nuovo rapporto con l'Unione euroasiatica? Intende accelerare il processo d'integrazione europeo?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(3 settembre 2013)

Nella dichiarazione congiunta del vertice UE-Ucraina del 25 febbraio 2013 entrambe le parti hanno ribadito il loro impegno per l'associazione politica e l'integrazione economica dell'Ucraina con l'Unione europea e a favore dell'eventuale firma dell'accordo di associazione, comprendente una zona di libero scambio globale e approfondito, in tempo utile per il vertice del partenariato orientale che si terrà nel novembre 2013.

Sebbene abbia riconosciuto l'importanza per l'Ucraina di mantenere buone relazioni con tutti i paesi vicini, l'UE ha dichiarato che l'integrazione del paese nell'unione doganale sarebbe tecnicamente incompatibile con la zona di libero scambio globale e approfondito e che la collaborazione con l'unione doganale non deve precludere la possibilità di firmare l'accordo di associazione, né contrastare con gli impegni che l'Ucraina ha assunto nei confronti dell'Unione a norma di detto accordo.

L'UE si aspetta pertanto di essere consultata dall'Ucraina in merito all'intenzione di collaborare con l'unione doganale, al fine di evitare allontanamenti dalle disposizioni dell'accordo di associazione.

Per quanto riguarda le relazioni dell'Unione europea con l'Unione euroasiatica, l'UE accoglie con favore i meccanismi di integrazione economica regionale purché rispettino pienamente le norme dell'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio (OMC), non creino ostacoli agli scambi e siano aperti all'adesione degli Stati che decidono autonomamente di parteciparvi. Ogni Stato è libero di aderire a qualsiasi progetto di integrazione sulla base dei propri interessi nazionali, con decisione sovrana. Inoltre, l'integrazione regionale non dovrebbe incidere negativamente sulle relazioni dell'UE con i paesi vicini orientali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007423/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Ukraine relations

The EU and Ukraine are due to sign an association agreement in November 2013 to increase the movement of goods and persons between the two countries and encourage closer integration.

Ukraine has set off down the road travelled 10 years ago by other former Soviet block countries and, step by step, is fulfilling the conditions laid down by the EU for signature of the association agreement.

Ukraine has, however, recently been granted observer status at the Euroasian Union, a Moscow-led customs union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. Participation in the customs union could give Kiev the lower gas prices it wants from the Russians. However it is not compatible with the free trade agreement EU leaders are planning to sign with Ukraine in November.

Ukraine's industry and economic interests are still closely linked to Russia, which is its largest trade partner (the volume of trade is higher than that between Ukraine and the rest of Europe).

Ukraine hopes that its future will lie in Europe. There are blood ties, historical ties and faith ties between the two, as well as modern treaties, and these are the foundations on which a lasting bridge may be built between Europe and Russia.

Could the Vice-President/High Commissioner answer the following questions:

— Since Ukraine is the only country in Europe to have a foot in the Eurasian Union and a free trade agreement with the EU, can integration with Europe and rapprochement with the Russians be balanced, thereby transforming Ukraine's geographical position as a bridge between the two into an opportunity?

— As an observer at the Eurasian Union, could Ukraine be a channel through which European values and links with Europe can be spread, allaying mutual suspicions and building a more lasting peace with other former Soviet block countries?

— What approach does the Commission plan to take to Ukraine's current status in light of its new relations with the Eurasian Union? Will it speed up the European integration process?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

In the joint statement of the 25 February 2013 EU-Ukraine Summit, both sides reconfirmed their commitment to the political association and economic integration of Ukraine with the EU and to the possible signing of the Association Agreement, with its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA), by the time of the Eastern Partnership Summit in November 2013.

While the EU has acknowledged the importance for Ukraine to keep good relations with all its neighbours, it has made clear that Ukraine's integration with the Customs Union would be technically incompatible with the AA/DCFTA and that any cooperation with the Customs Union should leave intact the possibility of signing the AA/DCFTA and not contradict Ukraine's commitments with the EU under this Agreement.

The EU therefore expects to be consulted by Ukraine on any plans to cooperate with the Customs Union in order to prevent any potential dis-alignment with the AA/DCFTA provisions.

As regards the EU's relations with the Eurasian Union, the EU welcomes regional economic integration schemes as long as they fully comply with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, do not create trade barriers, and are open for countries to join as a result of an autonomous choice. Eeach country should make free, sovereign decisions on whether to join any integration project, on the basis of its own national interest. Furthermore, regional integration should not have detrimental effects on the EU's relations with its Eastern neighbourhood.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007424/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Organizzazione di eventi sportivi internazionali in Brasile: possibile uso illecito dei canali di finanziamento forniti per lo sviluppo economico e sociale del paese

Di recente la stampa internazionale ha denunciato che circa 170.000 abitanti di 12 città in Brasile rischiano di dover lasciare le loro case a causa dei preparativi per i Campionati di calcio del 2014 e le Olimpiadi del 2016. I progetti di nuove infrastrutture, in preparazione di questi due eventi in Brasile, hanno portato allo sgombero forzato di diverse famiglie e comunità, già dal 2012.

Le autorità competenti si sono impegnate con l'istituzione di un comitato per monitorare le violazioni dei diritti umani in relazione alle installazioni effettuate per il Mondiale. Le famiglie sono state spostate in sobborghi lontani e in alloggi inadeguati, spesso con accesso limitato ai servizi di base (quali sanità, scuole, pavimentazione e fognature) e in aree con gravi problemi di sicurezza. Come contropartita per lo spostamento è stata loro offerta una somma di denaro irrisoria rispetto al reale valore dell'abitazione di proprietà.

Migliaia di famiglie sfollate dalle proprie case si trovano in alloggi precari, mentre il diritto all'abitazione costituisce un principio fondamentale, sancito dai trattati internazionali ed europei.

Le autorità competenti, per la realizzazione del progetto da 63,2 milioni di dollari, al centro dei prossimi eventi sportivi, potrebbero usare anche soldi pubblici, sottraendoli ad altri settori di cruciale importanza per la popolazione, quali la sanità pubblica e l'istruzione.

L'UE mantiene un partenariato strategico (avviato dal vertice di Lisbona del 4 luglio 2007) come contesto in cui intensificare le relazioni con il Brasile. I diritti dell'uomo, la democrazia e il buon governo sono valori comuni di cui i due partner promuovono il rispetto attraverso le norme e gli strumenti internazionali. I programmi tematici sulle riforme o sullo sviluppo sociale costituiscono strumenti appropriati per promuovere lo sviluppo sociale del Brasile, riducendone la dipendenza dagli aiuti europei. Il persistere delle disparità sociali e regionali rappresenta ancora un problema.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire sulla menzionata situazione in Brasile?

Non ritiene che tale situazione possa portare a un uso illecito dei canali di finanziamento forniti per lo sviluppo economico e sociale del paese, in particolare per il potenziamento di servizi quali sanità, istruzione e tutela ambientale?

Ritiene la Commissione che le autorità nazionali abbiano attuato, con i residenti costretti a lasciare le proprie case, una vera trattativa al fine di garantire tutte le alternative allo sfratto e che abbiano offerto un risarcimento completo o alternative di alloggio adeguato?

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

1. Il tema dei diritti umani viene regolarmente affrontato nell'ambito del nostro dialogo politico e del dialogo specialmente dedicato ai diritti umani. I casi di sfratto, in relazione o meno a grandi progetti di infrastrutture, sono costantemente seguiti dalla stampa locale e dalle organizzazioni della società civile nonché dai nostri servizi. L'agenda del dialogo sui diritti umani viene definita con la partecipazione attiva delle organizzazioni della società civile. Il prossimo dialogo sui diritti umani si svolgerà in Brasile nell'ottobre 2013.

2. Il Brasile è un paese a reddito medio-alto che, a partire dalle prossime prospettive finanziarie, non sarà più ammissibile a beneficiare di aiuti da parte dell'UE nel quadro dello strumento di cooperazione allo sviluppo, ad eccezione di alcuni programmi tematici e di cooperazione regionale. Il Brasile non dipende dagli aiuti dell'UE e l'incidenza sulla spesa pubblica totale degli importi ancora disponibili è alquanto limitata. La cooperazione allo sviluppo in Brasile viene attuata attraverso progetti attentamente monitorati; è pertanto estremamente difficile che i fondi siano utilizzati per scopi diversi da quelli inizialmente previsti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007424/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Possibility of economic and social development funding being used improperly in connection with the hosting of international sporting events in Brazil

According to reports that have appeared recently in the press, some 170 000 people in 12 cities in Brazil may be forced to leave their homes as a result of the preparations for the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympic Games in 2016. Families and communities have been being forcibly relocated since 2012, to clear space for new infrastructure for the two events.

The Brazilian authorities have set up a human rights monitoring committee to detect any violations that may occur in connection with World Cup infrastructure projects. Despite this, the relocated families have been moved into substandard housing in far-off suburbs, in many cases with limited access to basic services (e.g. healthcare, schools, proper roads and sewage systems) and in areas with major public safety problems. The compensation they have been offered is derisory, falling far short of real property market values.

Thousands of families have been moved out of their own homes into makeshift housing, despite the fact that housing is a fundamental right enshrined in international and EU treaties.

In order to finance a USD 63.2 million project which is a centrepiece of the forthcoming events, the authorities could make use of public funds diverted from other policy areas of crucial importance to Brazilian society, such as public health and education.

At the Lisbon Summit of 4 July 2007, the EU decided to establish a strategic partnership with Brazil in order to forge closer relations with the country. The two partners share a common interest in fostering human rights, democracy and good governance through international standards and instruments. Thematic programmes focusing on social reforms or development are seen as appropriate means of promoting social development in Brazil and reducing the country's dependence on aid from the EU. Social and regional disparities are another problem that needs to be addressed.

What information can the Commission provide on the above situation?

Would it not agree that it could result in funds provided for the purpose of promoting economic and social development in Brazil, and in particular to improve the situation in a number of key areas such as health, education and environmental protection, being used improperly?

Does it believe that the Brazilian authorities have been conducting proper prior consultations with the people who are being forced to leave their homes, in order to ensure that all other options are explored and that full compensation or decent replacement housing is offered?

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

1. Human rights are a subject regularly dealt with in our poltical dialogue and in the specially dedicated human rights dialogue. The subject of evictions, whether or not in connection to major infrastructure projects, is regularly followed by local press and Civil Society Organisations as well as by our services. The agenda for the human rights dialogue is organised with the active involvement of Civil Society Organisations. The next Human Rights dialogue will take place in Brazil, in October 2013.

2. Brazil is an upper middle income country and starting from the next financial perspectives it will be no-longer eligible for EU aid under the Development Cooperation Instrument, except for some thematic programmes and regional cooperation. Brazil is not dependent on EU aid and the incidence on total public expenditure of the amounts still available is extremely limited. Development cooperation in Brazil is implemented via closely monitored projects; therefore the possibility of distorting the use of funds from their original destination is remote.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007425/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Il fenomeno ecomafia: dati allarmanti per l'Europa e per i PVS

Il traffico e lo smaltimento illecito dei rifiuti coinvolgono l'intera Europa, ma anche paesi in via di sviluppo, ad esempio in Africa e Asia. In particolare, un recente rapporto pubblicato in Italia evidenzia un aumento dei numeri del fenomeno dell'ecomafia: un fatturato annuo di oltre 16 miliardi di euro, più di 34 mila reati accertati con 28 mila persone denunciate, 302 i clan coinvolti. Le attività eco-criminali assumono una dimensione globale: l'avvelenamento dell'aria, la contaminazione delle falde acquifere, l'inquinamento dei fiumi e delle coltivazioni agricole e la contaminazione con metalli pesanti, diossine e altre sostanze cancerogene dei prodotti alimentari. Inoltre, è stato rilevato che i reati sono commessi in ogni fase del ciclo: produzione, trasporto e smaltimento e quindi di difficile individuazione.

La criminalità ambientale sta sfruttando tutte le nuove opportunità offerte dall'economia: l'Ufficio centrale antifrode dell'Agenzia delle dogane segnala che i quantitativi di materiali sequestrati nel corso del 2012 sono raddoppiati rispetto al 2011, passando da 7.000 a circa 14.000 tonnellate, grazie soprattutto ai cosiddetti cascami, cioè materiali che dovrebbero essere destinati ad alimentare l'economia del riciclo, e invece finiscono in Corea del Sud (è il caso dei cascami di gomma), Cina e Hong Kong (cascami e avanzi di materie plastiche, destinati al riciclo o alla combustione), Indonesia e di nuovo Cina per carta e cartone, Turchia e India, per metalli come ferro e acciaio.

Il traffico illegale di rifiuti e le attività di smaltimento sono diventati uno dei settori a più rapida crescita del crimine organizzato, nonché uno tra i business illegali più redditizio (coi proventi della vendita all'estero e il mancato costo dei trattamenti necessari per renderli effettivamente riciclabili). Questi flussi comportano un doppio danno per l'economia, perché si pagano contributi ecologici per attività di trattamento e di riciclo che non vengono effettuate e vengono penalizzate le imprese che operano nella legalità, costrette a chiudere per la mancanza di materiali. L'Europa è diventata il crocevia di traffici internazionali destinati a raggiungere le coste dell'Africa e dell'Asia e nel contempo il traffico di rifiuti è anche una minaccia per la salute dei cittadini, specialmente nei paesi più poveri dov'è impossibile realizzare bonifiche.

Può pertanto la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

— Quali azioni intende intraprendere nel 2014 per combattere il mercato delle ecomafie in Europa e verso i paesi terzi?

— Prevede l'introduzione di norme che rendano effettiva tale azione di contrasto attraverso un adeguato sistema di sanzioni e controlli?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2013)

La Commissione continua ad adoperarsi per contrastare in modo efficace la criminalità organizzata, ivi compresi i reati ambientali. La natura sempre più multicriminale della criminalità organizzata richiede un approccio orizzontale, utile anche a combattere i reati contro l'ambiente. Rientrano in questo tipo di approccio le indagini finanziarie, la confisca dei beni e l'adattamento di Europol all'evoluzione della criminalità organizzata e delle forme gravi di criminalità, in particolare mediante la negoziazione della proposta di regolamento Europol.

La Commissione sta includendo nella legislazione sui rifiuti disposizioni specifiche per promuovere l'applicazione della legge e combattere i reati ambientali. La recente proposta di modifica del regolamento relativo alle spedizioni di rifiuti ([1]) ([2]) impone a ogni Stato membro di predisporre dei piani volti ad individuare e ridurre le attività illecite, quali le spedizioni di rifiuti UE verso paesi non appartenenti all'OCSE. Tali piani dovrebbero fissare degli obiettivi di ispezione, assegnare gli incarichi di attuazione, individuare i bisogni formativi e valutare i rischi legati a specifici flussi di rifiuti sulla base di informazioni fornite, ad esempio, dai servizi di *intelligence* della polizia. La recente rifusione della direttiva RAEE ([3]) ha inoltre introdotto requisiti minimi per le spedizioni di apparecchiature elettriche ed elettroniche usate sospettate di costituire rifiuti.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1013/2006.
([2]) COM(2013)516 def., adottato dalla Commissione l'11 luglio 2013 attualmente all'esame dei colegislatori: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0516:FIN:IT:PDF
([3]) Direttiva 2012/19/UE.

Le attività di Europol nel campo dell'ecomafia sono numerose e diversificate; in particolare, Europol ha emesso nel giugno 2011 un avviso di minaccia OC-SCAN sullo smaltimento illecito di rifiuti. Un'altra valutazione della minaccia rappresentata dai reati contro l'ambiente sarà pubblicata ad agosto del corrente anno.

La criminalità ambientale è stata identificata e riconosciuta una minaccia emergente nel 2013 in seguito alla valutazione Europol della minaccia rappresentata dalla criminalità organizzata e dalle forme gravi di criminalità. Dal 2011, la piattaforma Europol per esperti (EPE) EnviCrimeNet riunisce annualmente esperti delle agenzie preposte all'applicazione della legge e di altre amministrazioni specializzate che si occupano di reati ambientali. La terza riunione di EnviCrimeNet è prevista a novembre 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007425/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: The eco-mafia phenomenon: alarming data for Europe and developing countries

Waste trafficking and the unlawful disposal of waste are taking place across Europe, and also involve developing countries, for example in Africa and Asia. Specifically, a recent report published in Italy highlights an increase in the figures for the eco-mafia phenomenon: an annual turnover of over EUR 16 billion, over 34 000 crimes detected with 28 000 persons charged, and 302 clans involved. Environmental crimes are occurring worldwide: poisoning of the air, contamination of aquifers, pollution of rivers and agricultural crops and contamination of food with heavy metals, dioxins and other carcinogenic substances. In addition, crimes are being committed at all stages in the cycle, from production to transport and disposal, making it difficult to identify them.

Environmental crime is making the most of all the new opportunities offered by the economy: the Italian customs authority's central anti-fraud office states that twice the quantity of material was seized in 2012 as in 2011, with an increase from 7 000 to approximately 14 000 tonnes, mainly as a result of 'waste'. These are materials that ought to be channelled to the recycling economy, but instead end up in South Korea (for waste rubber), China and Hong Kong (waste and scrap from plastic materials, intended for recycling or incineration), Indonesia and, once again, China for paper and cardboard, and Turkey and India for metals such as iron and steel.

The illegal trafficking of waste and disposal activities have become one of the fastest growing sectors in organised crime, and one of the most profitable illegal businesses (with the proceeds of sales abroad and the savings in the cost of treatment required to make them properly recyclable). These flows damage the economy in two ways, because environmental payments are made for processing and recycling activities that are not carried out, and enterprises operating legally are penalised, and forced to close for lack of materials. Europe has become the crossroads for international traffic to the coasts of Africa and Asia and at the same time waste trafficking also poses a threat to people's health, particularly in the poorer countries where it is impossible to carry out reclamation work.

— What actions does the Commission intend to take in 2014 to combat the environmental mafia market in Europe and to non-EU countries, and

— does it intend to introduce rules to make such action effective through a proper system of sanctions and checks?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

The Commission continues efforts to fight organised crime, including environmental crime. The growing polycriminal nature of organised crime calls for a horizontal approach that also serves the fight against environmental crime. Financial investigations, confiscation of assets or the adaptation of Europol to the evolution of serious and organised crime notably through the negotiation of the Europol Regulation proposal are part of such an approach.

The Commission is including specific provisions in waste legislation to promote enforcement and combat environmental crime. Its recent proposal amending the Waste Shipment Regulation ([1]) ([2]) would require each Member State to establish a plan to detect and reduce illegal activity such as shipping EU waste to non-OECD countries. These plans would set inspection goals, assign enforcement tasks, identify training needs and assess risks for specific waste streams based on information such as police intelligence. The recent recast of the WEEE Directive ([3]) also laid down minimum requirements for shipments of used electric and electronic equipment suspected to be waste.

Europol activities in the field of eco-mafia are multiple and diverse; in particular Europol issued an OC-Scan on illegal waste disposal in June 2011. Another threat assessment on environmental crime will be issued in August 2013.

Environmental crime was identified and qualified as an emerging threat in 2013 following the Serious and Organised Threat Assessment. Since 2011 a Europol Platform for Experts (EPE) EnviCrimeNet has brought together specialists from Law Enforcement Agencies and other specialised administrations dealing with environmental crime for annual meetings. Its third meeting is scheduled for November 2013.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006.
([2]) COM(2013) 516 final adopted by the Commission on 11 July 2013 and now with the co-legislators: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/shipments/pdf/COM_2013_516_en.pdf
([3]) Directive 2012/19/EU.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007426/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: La diffusione del virus HIV: la situazione taciuta delle carceri in Iran

Dai primi anni del 2000 l'Iran ha intrapreso una strutturata lotta all'HIV, il fenomeno della tossicodipendenza dilagante nel paese ha assunto, infatti, negli ultimi anni dati allarmanti sui tassi di contagio dell'HIV all'interno delle carceri iraniane. Il problema della trasmissione del virus è particolarmente acuto nelle carceri iraniane a causa del fatto che una buona parte dei detenuti del paese sono colpevoli di reati riconducibili alla droga e nel 2001 è stato accertato che in una prigione la percentuale di sieropositivi tra tutti i detenuti era del 63 %.

Come dimostrano i dati di varie organizzazioni internazionali, in Iran vivono numerose persone che fanno uso di droghe pesanti arrivate dal vicino Afghanistan e spesso ricorrono al sesso a pagamento, anche omosessuale, per procurarsi gli stupefacenti. A quanto risulta non esistono statistiche ufficiali particolarmente attendibili riferite all'HIV, ma si ritiene che ben più di 100.000 iraniani convivano con il virus. Secondo diverse fonti di stampa, negli ultimi tempi in Iran le politiche di lotta all'HIV sono state allentate per diversi motivi, tra i quali l'atteggiamento di diffidenza delle autorità nazionali nel rendere note le condizioni dei malati e più in generale del servizio sanitario nazionale, temi che potrebbero accendere i riflettori su comportamenti sociali non in linea con la politica della Repubblica islamica.

Può la Commissione, alla luce dei dati sopra esposti, comunicare se sia in possesso di dati che confermino la situazione di contagio nelle carceri iraniane?

Può esporre la sua posizione in merito alla politica adottata dall'Iran per contrastare la diffusione del virus dell'HIV?

Ha essa già elaborato piani o programmi per la lotta alla diffusione dell'HIV in Iran e, in caso di risposta negativa, quali misure intende adottare?

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

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni che confermino o smentiscano l'aumento dei tassi di prevalenza e incidenza dell'HIV tra la popolazione carceraria dell'Iran e l'eventuale rallentamento della politica governativa di lotta all'HIV/AIDS.

La limitata assistenza della Commissione all'Iran, che viene erogata attraverso le organizzazioni internazionali e le organizzazioni non governative (ONG), è destinata alle persone più vulnerabili. Parte di questa assistenza è fornita tramite progetti che prevedono la realizzazione di attività connesse all'HIV/AIDS. In linea con il suddetto mandato, la Commissione non prevede attualmente di attuare in Iran programmi bilaterali in materia di HIV/AIDS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007426/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Spread of HIV: failure to divulge full extent of the problem in Iranian prisons

Since the beginning of the 21st century, Iran has been seeking to adopt a systematic response to the rampant spread of the HIV virus, a problem largely attributable in recent years to widespread drug addiction and one that has assumed particularly alarming proportions in Iranian prisons, many of whose inmates are serving sentences for drugs-related offences. Statistics for 2001 showed that, in one case, 63% of prison inmates had tested HIV positive.

According to international observers, many people in Iran are addicted to hard drugs entering the country from neighbouring Afghanistan, frequently engaging in sexual and homosexual practices to fund their habit. While no reliable official statistics appear to have been drawn up, it is believed that well over 100 000 Iranians are infected with the virus. At the same time, the press has recently been reporting that containment measures by the authorities appear to be slackening. This may be attributed to a number of factors, including a reluctance to disclose full details regarding the plight of those infected and the general state of the Iranian health service and fears that the facts emerging might draw unwelcome attention to social behaviour not in conformity with the principles of the Islamic Republic.

In view of this:

Does the Commission have information confirming reported HIV levels in Iranian prisons?

What view does it take of the containment strategies adopted by the Iranian authorities?

Has it already drawn up plans or programmes in support of these and, if not, what measures does it intend to adopt?

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

The Commission has no information that could either validate or invalidate an increase in HIV prevalence and incidence rates among prison inmates in Iran, nor about any set back in the authorities' HIV/AIDS containment policy.

The Commission's current and limited assistance to Iran is provided through international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and is targeting the most vulnerable people. Some of this assistance is provided through projects that include HIV/AIDS-related activities. In line with its abovementioned mandate, the Commission is currently not envisaging any bilateral programme on HIV/AIDS in Iran.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007427/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili distorsioni della concorrenza: modalità di determinazione delle tariffe del Decreto Legislativo 194/2008

In Italia il Decreto Legislativo 194/2008 ha recepito il regolamento 882/2004 CE; le norme in questione disciplinano, tra l'altro, le modalità di finanziamento dei controlli sanitari ufficiali sugli alimenti. In particolare, nella Sezione B, Allegato IV, del regolamento, vengono fissati gli importi minimi di tasse od oneri che devono essere corrisposti, al fine di sovvenzionare gli apparati di controllo istituiti dalle autorità competenti, per alcune tipologie di prodotto: carni bovine, ovine, caprine, suine, equine, pollame, selvaggina, prodotti ittici e latte. In tali casi l'importo da corrispondere è determinato dal prodotto tra la tassa unitaria e la quantità lavorata, definita in alternativa dal peso o dal numero di capi. Nel Decreto Legislativo, specificatamente nella Sezione 6 dell'Allegato A, vengono, però, stabilite le tariffe anche per altri prodotti alimentari, dal vino e altre bevande alcoliche, al cioccolato o al miele, prodotti che non sono ricompresi nella Sezione B, Allegato IV del Regolamento. Il legislatore italiano ha, infatti, fissato tre diversi importi forfettari (400, 800 e 1500 EUR/anno), ognuno dei quali assegnato a una fascia produttiva annua definita in base alle quantità prodotte di ogni tipologia di alimento.

Considerato che applicando il principio della suddivisione per fasce produttive annue viene meno il principio di proporzionalità, generando disparità in termini di adempimenti contributivi. Quanto precedentemente esposto può essere evidenziato con un semplice confronto tra due ipotetiche aziende vinicole, una, di modeste dimensioni, produttrice di 1.000 ettolitri di vino che, assumendo un prezzo medio di 200 EUR/ettolitro e con l'importo della prima fascia da dover corrispondere (400 EUR), sconterebbe un impatto dello 0,2 % della tariffa sul proprio fatturato e un'altra che, a parità di condizioni e a fronte di una produzione di 100.000 ettolitri, sarebbe chiamata a pagare l'importo di terza fascia, 1500 EUR, somma equivalente allo 0,0075 % del fatturato, ovvero oltre venti volte meno della prima; — l'articolo 11, comma 1, del Decreto Legislativo prevede anche una maggiorazione dell'importo dovuto di almeno il 20 % e «fino alla verifica dell'avvenuta effettiva copertura del costo del servizio prestato».

Si viene a chiedere alla Commissione: — se ritenga che la legislazione italiana in oggetto non sia in contrasto con le disposizioni comunitarie, in particolare con le norme che disciplinano la concorrenza. In caso affermativo, quali provvedimenti intende adottare?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2013)

Il regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 ([1]) autorizza — in alcuni casi obbliga — le autorità competenti degli Stati membri a recuperare i costi dei controlli ufficiali attraverso la riscossione di tasse basate sui costi versate dagli operatori controllati. Tali tasse, obbligatorie o no, possono essere fissate forfettariamente in modo tale da riflettere una quota dei costi annuali generali sostenuti dall'autorità incaricata della riscossione, o da compensare il costo effettivo da essa sostenuto. In nessun caso la tassa può superare il costo effettivo dei controlli. Dal momento che alcuni costi di controllo rimangono costanti, quali che siano le dimensioni dell'impresa, è possibile che le tasse basate sui costi abbiano un impatto sui costi di produzione come chiarito dall'on. deputato.

Per quanto riguarda i vini e le bevande alcoliche, si applicano norme specifiche in conformità dei regolamenti (CE) n. 1234/2007, (CE) n. 607/2009 e (CE) n. 110/2008 i quali stabiliscono che i costi sostenuti per le verifiche o la certificazione devono essere sostenuti dagli operatori ad esse soggetti. Tuttavia, per quanto riguarda le bevande alcoliche, gli Stati membri possono decidere altrimenti.

Sulla base delle informazioni fornite non è possibile stabilire se i livelli d'imposizione applicati dall'Italia contengano un elemento di aiuto di Stato e configurino una violazione delle norme sulla concorrenza.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2004R0882:20060525:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007427/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Possible distortions of competition: methods for determining tariffs under Legislative Decree 194/2008

In Italy, Legislative Decree No 194/2008 transposed Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. One of the areas governed by these provisions is the methods to fund official health checks on food. Specifically, Section B of Annex IV to the regulation sets the minimum rates for fees or charges to be paid, with a view to subsidising the control mechanisms established by the competent authorities, for certain types of product: beef and veal, sheepmeat, goatmeat, pigmeat, horsemeat, poultry, wild game meat, fishery products and milk. In these cases, the amount to be paid is determined by multiplying the unit rate by the quantity processed, defined either by weight or number of animals. In the legislative decree, and specifically in Section 6 of Annex A, however, rates are also set for other food products, ranging from wine and other alcoholic beverages to chocolate and honey, although these products are not included in Section B of Annex IV to the regulation. Italian legislators have set three different lump sum amounts (EUR 400, 800 and 1 500 per year), each of which is allocated to an annual production band defined according to the quantities of each type of food produced.

Applying the principle of subdivision by annual production bands has an adverse impact on the principle of proportionality, giving rise to disparities in terms of payment obligations. This can be demonstrated by making a simple comparison between two hypothetical wine-producing firms. One, of modest size, produces 1 000 hectolitres of wine which, assuming an average price of EUR 200/hectolitre and with the fee applicable to band 1 to be paid (EUR 400), would mean the tariff has an impact of 0.2% on its turnover. Another firm, operating under the same conditions, produces 100 000 hectolitres. It would have to pay the amount in band 3, EUR 1 500, which is equivalent to 0.0075% of its turnover. Thus the impact on the second firm is over 20 times less than on the first. Article 11(1) of the legislative decree also provides for an increase of at least 20% on the amount owed 'until it has been verified that the cost of the service provided has actually been covered'.

Could the Commission say whether it believes that the Italian legislation at issue conflicts with EU provisions, and particularly the rules governing competition? If so, what steps does it intend to take?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([1]) permits — in some cases requires — Member States' competent authorities to recover the cost of official controls through the collection of cost-based fees from the controlled operators. Whether mandatory or not, such fees may be charged at a flat-rate, reflecting a share of the overall annual costs incurred by the charging authority, or compensate the actual cost incurred by it. In no case must the fee exceed the actual costs of the controls. As some control costs remain constant, regardless of business size, it is possible that cost-based fees impact on production costs as explained by the Honourable Member.

Concerning wines and spirits, specific rules apply in accordance with Regulations (EC) No.1234/2007, (EC) No 607/2009 and (EC) No 110/2008 which provide that the costs incurred for verifications or certification shall be borne by the operators subject to them/it. However, as regards spirit drinks, Member States may decide otherwise.

On the basis of the information provided it is not possible to establish whether the fee levels applied by Italy contain an element of state aid and entail a violation of competition rules.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2004R0882:20060525:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007428/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(24 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Sindrome di Down e altre anomalie genetiche fetali: nuovo test più preciso e meno invasivo di quelli attualmente in uso

Un recente studio, condotto su un campione di 1.005 future mamme alla 10 settimana, ha messo a punto un nuovo test prenatale che analizzando il DNA del nascituro con un semplice prelievo del sangue materno, è in grado di rilevare la sindrome di Down e altre possibili anomalie genetiche del feto.

Questo tipo di esame, eseguibile già dal primo trimestre, risulta essere un buon metodo di diagnosi non invasivo ed estremamente preciso rispetto alle attuali metodiche di screening disponibili, di cui le più comuni sono l'ecografia e l'analisi ormonale e le più precise il prelievo dei villi coriali e la amniocentesi che però comportano un rischio di aborto spontaneo.

Al fine di assicurare un risultato certo ed attendibile e un metodo non invasivo né per la madre né per il feto, il nuovo test è la soluzione perfetta; si pensi che i tassi di falsi positivi sono stati più bassi (0,1 %) rispetto alle attuali metodiche di screening prenatale (3,4 %) e che il tutto avviene con un semplice esame del sangue della madre. Quindi non è più necessario ricorrere ad ultrasuoni, esami ormonali o invasivi e pericolosi che possono generare episodi di aborto.

Considerato che il nuovo test prenatale, altamente attendibile e specifico, si presenta come una alternativa fattibile e concreta rispetto agli attuali metodi di screening più invasivi e incerti e il tasso di falsi positivi, con il nuovo test, è nettamente diminuito rispetto ai metodi standard:

può la Commissione far sapere quale sarà la sua posizione riguardo a questo nuovo test prenatale e se ritiene opportuno approfondire la ricerca in tale campo?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(7 agosto 2013)

La messa a punto di test diagnostici di elevata qualità, affidabili, accurati e sicuri per le anomalie fetali genetiche rappresenta un obiettivo importante per la ricerca in questo campo. I test diagnostici in vitro rientrano nel campo di applicazione della direttiva 98/79/CE ([1]), a norma della quale i dispositivi medici in vitro possono essere immessi sul mercato dal fabbricante a condizione che sia rispettata la procedura di valutazione della conformità. La Commissione non interviene in questa procedura di valutazione.

Nell'ambito del programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione in corso (7° PQ), la Commissione ha garantito un considerevole sostegno finanziario alla ricerca nel settore sanitario sulle malattie genetiche. I più recenti inviti del 7° PQ relativi alla tematica «Salute», ad esempio, comprendevano temi relativi allo sviluppo di strumenti diagnostici molecolari e l'armonizzazione, la convalida e la standardizzazione dei test genetici. Inoltre, circa 500 milioni di EUR sono stati investiti nella ricerca sulle malattie rare, comprese le disfunzioni genetiche rare.

Il settore delle malattie genetiche presumibilmente beneficerà di continuo di finanziamenti nell'ambito di Orizzonte 2020, dove la ricerca concernente i determinanti della salute, i meccanismi della malattia e il miglioramento della diagnostica costituirà probabilmente una delle principali aree d'intervento.

([1]) GU L 331 del 7.12.1998, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007428/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: More accurate and less invasive screening method to detect Down's syndrome and other genetic foetal abnormalities

Recent research based on a sample of 1005 women in their tenth week of pregnancy has made it possible to develop a prenatal test for the analysis of foetal DNA which can accurately detect Down's syndrome and other possible foetal abnormalities by means of a blood sample alone.

This form of screening, which can be carried out in the first trimester, is not invasive and is far more accurate than other procedures to date, including ultrasound and hormonal analysis, which are the most commonly used. Chorionic villus sampling and amniocentesis currently yield the most accurate results but at the same time involve a risk of miscarriage.

The new prenatal diagnosis procedure, which is non-invasive for both mother and foetus, is the ideal way of obtaining a clear and accurate result, simply requiring the mother to undergo a blood test and yielding a much lower false positive rate (0.1%) than standard screening methods (3.4%), thereby obviating the need for ultrasound, hormone analyses or any invasive and hazardous procedures which might possibly cause a miscarriage.

What view does the Commission take of the new prenatal test, bearing in mind that it produces clear and accurate results and is a genuinely viable alternative to current screening methods, which are more invasive and less reliable and produce a higher rate of false positives? Is it in favour of carrying out additional research in this field?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

High quality, robust, accurate, and safe diagnostic tests for genetic foetal abnormalities is an important objective for research in this field. In vitro diagnostic tests fall under Directive 98/79/EC [1] according to which *in vitro* medical devices can be placed on the market by the manufacturer provided that the applicable conformity assessment procedure is followed. The Commission does not intervene in this assessment procedure.

Through the current Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7), the Commission has provided considerable funding support for health research on genetic disorders. The most recent FP7 'Health' theme calls, for instance, included topics addressing the development of molecular diagnostic tools, and the harmonisation, validation, and standardisation of genetic testing. In addition, some EUR 500 million has been invested in rare disease research, including rare genetic disorders.

The field of genetic disorders will likely receive continued funding through Horizon 2020, under which research on the determinants of health, disease mechanisms and the improvement of diagnostics will likely be some of the main focus areas.

[1] OJ L 331, 7.12.1998, p. 1-37.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007429/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(24 juni 2013)

Betreft: Gebrek aan transparantie bij subsidiëring van NGO's

De organisatie NGO Watch bracht onlangs een kritisch rapport uit over de manier waarop de EU subsidies aan NGO's verleent: „Lack of Due Diligence and Transparency in European Union Funding for Radical NGOs."

NGO Watch analyseert de situatie aan de hand van een voorbeeld: de „Coalition of Women for Peace" (CWP), die gelijktijdig gesubsidieerd wordt in het kader van „Partnership for Peace" en „European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights").

Er bestaan ernstige twijfels of de activiteiten van CWP in overeenstemming zijn met de officiële doelstellingen van deze groepering. In de praktijk roept CWP op tot sanctie- en boycotacties tegen Israël, en zijn er talrijke aanwijzingen dat ze samenwerkt met allerlei gewelddadige groepen.

Is de Commissie bekend met de grieven van NGO Watch betreffende CWP? Overweegt de Commissie de toelagen van deze organisatie te schrappen of te verminderen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Waarom worden de (volledige) evaluatieverslagen over gesubsidieerde NGO's niet openbaar gemaakt, zodat belastingbetalers en andere belangstellenden de mogelijkheid krijgen te weten hoe hun geld besteed wordt?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(12 augustus 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de beschuldigingen die in de „NGO ([1]) Monitor" zijn geuit ten aanzien van de „Coalition of Women for Peace" (CWP). De Commissie verleent geen subsidies aan de desbetreffende organisatie, maar cofinanciert een van de projecten van de CWP in het kader van het Europees instrument voor democratie en mensenrechten. Het project wordt in juli 2013 beëindigd. De CWP is ook een partner in een project dat door een andere ngo ten uitvoer wordt gelegd en dat wordt gefinancierd in het kader van het programma „Partnerschap voor de Vrede". Op grond van het toezicht en de evaluatie tot op heden zijn er geen redenen om een van deze contracten te annuleren.

Evaluaties van alle door de EU gefinancierde projecten worden uitgevoerd en bekendgemaakt overeenkomstig het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie, zoals nader wordt bepaald in de verordening die op het desbetreffende instrument van toepassing is — in dit geval dus het Europees instrument voor democratie en mensenrechten (EIDHR) en het Europees nabuurschaps- en partnerschapsinstrument (ENPI) — alsook in de desbetreffende interinstitutionele overeenkomsten tussen de Commissie, de Raad van Ministers en het Parlement.

([1]) Niet-gouvernementele organisatie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007429/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Lack of transparency in subsidies to NGOs

The organisation NGO Watch recently issued a critical report entitled 'Lack of Due Diligence and Transparency in European Union Funding for Radical NGOs', concerning the way in which the EU grants subsidies to NGOs.

NGO Watch's analysis of the situation uses the example of the Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP), which is also subsidised under the Partnership for Peace and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

There are serious doubts as to whether the activities of CWP tally with its official objectives. In practice CWP campaigns for sanctions and boycotts against Israel, and there are many indications that it collaborates with all kind of violent groups.

Is the Commission aware of the accusations by NGO Watch against CWP? Is the Commission considering cancelling or reducing the subsidies to this organisation? If not, why not?

Why are the (full) evaluation reports on subsidised NGOs not published, so that taxpayers and other stakeholders can have the opportunity to know how their money is being spent?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the accusations made by 'NGO ([1]) Monitor' against the 'Coalition of Women for Peace' (CWP). The Commission does not subsidise the organisation in question but co-funds one of its projects implemented in the framework of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, which ends in July 2013. CWP is also a partner in a project implemented by another NGO financed under the 'Partnership for Peace' programme. According to monitoring and evaluation carried out to date, there are no grounds for cancelling either of the contracts referred to.

Evaluations of all projects financed by the EU are carried out and published in accordance with the Treaty of the European Union; as specified in the relevant instrument's regulation, in this case — the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument; and in the relevant interinstitutional agreements between the Commission, the Council of Ministers and Parliament.

([1]) Non-governmental organisation.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007430/13
à Comissão
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(24 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Contratos de swap em Portugal

Tendo o Governo português admitido que os contratos de swap celebrados por empresas públicas com diversos bancos e instituições financeiras tiveram um impacto desastroso nas contas públicas de Portugal, agravando o défice orçamental em vários milhares de milhões de euros, porque não recomenda a Comissão Europeia, inclusive como membro da Troika que monitoriza o programa de resgate, ao Governo português que denuncie os contratos em questão, apoiando o Governo no caso de os bancos e instituições financeiras contestarem a denúncia em tribunal?

A denúncia dos contratos de swap referidos seria fundamental para corrigir o impacto orçamental tóxico destes contratos (que de outra maneira irá sobrecarregar injustamente os contribuintes portugueses), garantir eficácia à supervisão do sistema bancário/financeiro, evitando o risco sistémico e, sobretudo, recuperar a confiança dos cidadãos nas instituições governamentais e europeias.

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(7 de agosto de 2013)

O Governo português efetuou uma auditoria que revelou perdas potenciais até um montante máximo de 3 mil milhões de EUR, em termos de valor líquido atualizado, associadas aos contratos de *swap* de taxas de juro assinados pelo setor empresarial do Estado (SEE) entre 2003 e 2010. As empresas públicas de transportes foram as principais utilizadoras destes instrumentos derivados que, por vezes, foram além do simples efeito de cobertura do risco.

O Governo iniciou negociações com os bancos que venderam estes produtos derivados, a fim de limitar as perdas potenciais mediante a cessação antecipada dos contratos problemáticos. Até agora, o Governo conseguiu fazer cessar todos estes contratos assinados, exceto com um dos bancos em causa. De acordo com as últimas informações, ainda não foi alcançado um acordo com o banco em questão, que introduziu pedidos de indemnização junto dos tribunais do Reino Unido para validar os contratos de *swap*. O Governo português acionou o Tribunal Cível de Lisboa no sentido de anular vários contratos de *swap* celebrados entre as empresas públicas e o banco, com base no facto de estes não terem sido previamente submetidos à apreciação do Tribunal de Contas.

Está atualmente em curso um inquérito parlamentar sobre os instrumentos de gestão dos riscos financeiros das empresas do setor empresarial do Estado e vários magistrados do Ministério Público estão a investigar a legalidade dos contratos de derivados em causa. A Comissão não está em posição de interferir neste processo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007430/13
to the Commission
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Debt swap contracts in Portugal

In view of the fact that the Portuguese Government has admitted that debt swap contracts between public enterprises and various banks and financial institutions have had a disastrous impact on Portugal's public accounts and have increased the budget deficit by several billion euros, why does the Commission, as a member of the Troika overseeing the bail-out programme, not recommend that the Portuguese Government revoke such contracts, and offer its support in the event that the banks and financial institutions decide to respond by taking the Government to court?

Revoking these swap contracts would be a fundamental step towards correcting their toxic impact on the budget (which would otherwise be borne by Portuguese taxpayers), ensuring efficient supervision of the banking/financial system, avoiding systemic risk and, above all, restoring citizens' confidence in governmental and European institutions.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Portuguese Government has carried out an audit that revealed potential losses of up to EUR 3 billion, in net present value terms, associated with interest rate swaps (IRS) contracts signed by state-owned enterprises (SOEs) between 2003 and 2010. Transport SOEs were the main users of these derivatives which sometimes went beyond mere hedging purposes.

The Government has initiated negotiations with the banks that sold these derivative products in order to limit potential losses by early termination of the problematic contracts. Until now the Government managed to terminate these contracts with all but one bank involved. According to the latest information, agreement with the outstanding bank has not been reached yet and the latter has presented claims in UK's courts to validate the IRS contracts. The Portuguese Government has brougth this case to the Lisbon civil court to cancel several swaps between SOEs and the bank on the grounds that they were not submitted to the court of auditors beforehand.

There is currently a parliamentary committee inquiring into SOEs' financial risk management instruments and several public prosecutors investigate the legality of the derivative contracts in question. The Commission is not in a position to interfere in this process.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub P-007431/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Il-proposta IMD 2 u l-prinċipji ta' sussidjarjetà u proporzjonalità

Fit-3 ta' Lulju 2012, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet reviżjoni tad-Direttiva dwar il-Medjazzjoni fl-Assigurazzjoni magħrufa bħala IMD 2. L-emendi proposti huma numerużi.

L-Artikolu 8 (ekwivalenti għall-Artikolu 4 tal-IMD 1) jipprovdi li "l-intermedjarji tal-assigurazzjoni u tar-riassigurazzjoni… għandhom jkollhom l-għarfien u l-kapaċità xierqa". Għalkemm il-piż tal-infurzar jitqiegħed fuq l-Istati Membri, l-IMD 2 tagħti l-Kummissjoni l-abbiltà li tadotta atti delegati biex tiddefinixxi "għarfien suffiċjenti", "livell tal-kwalifiki professjonali, l-esperjenzi u l-ħiliet" u "l-passi" li l-intermedjarji għandhom jieħdu biex jaġġornaw l-għarfien u l-abbiltajiet tagħhom.

L-Artikolu 21 tal-IMD 2 jipprojbixxi prattiki ta' "bejgħ abbinat", fejn prodott jista' jinxtara biss ma' prodott wieħed ieħor jew aktar minn wieħed, iżda jippermetti prattiki ta' gruppar (*bundling*) fejn prodotti disponibbli separatament jinbiegħu orħos meta jinbiegħu flimkien, skont regolamentazzjoni addizzjonali. It-tnejn huma magħrufa flimkien bħala prattiki ta' "bejgħ inkroċjat". L-IMD 2 issostni li prattiki ta' "bejgħ abbinat" "jistgħu jgħawġu l-kompetizzjoni u jolqtu ħażin lill-konsumaturi" iżda la toffri bażi teoretika u lanqas empirika għal din il-pretensjoni.

Jidher li l-Artikolu 8 jmur kontra l-prinċipju ta' sussidjarjetà. It-Taqsima 3.2 tal-proposta tal-Kummissjoni dwar is-sussidjarjetà u l-proporzjonalità tonqos milli tispjega għaliex il-Kummissjoni temmen li l-Istati Membri mhumiex kapaċi jiddefinixxu standards għall-intermedjarji tal-assigurazzjoni. Minbarra dan, il-proposta ma tispjegax kif jew għaliex intermedjarji tal-assigurazzjoni jistgħu jew huma mistennija jikkonformaw mar-regolamenti li jistgħu jinbidlu kwalunkwe ħin b'ordni tal-eżekuttiv, minflok permezz ta' proċess leġiżlattiv fil-livell nazzjonali jew sovranazzjonali.

Jidher li l-Artikolu 21 imur kontra l-prinċipju ta' proporzjonalità, li jobbliga l-leġiżlazzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea tieħu l-anqas miżuri oneruża u restrittivi possibli għall-ilħuq ta'objettiv. Il-projbizzjoni diretta tal-bejgħ inkroċjat hija l-aktar mod restrittiv biex ikun indirizzat il-ksur potenzjali tal-liġi. Għalhekk, jista' jkun iġġustifikat biss jekk: 1) il-Kummissjoni tkun tista' tipprova li jeżisti ħafna ksur tal-liġi minn bejgħ abbinat 2) l-ebda skema regolatorja oħra barra dik ta' projbizzjoni diretta, li tinkludi, iżda mhijiex limitata għal, regolamenti estensivi dwar il-bejgħ inkroċjat u l-bejgħ tal-assigurazzjonijiet b'mod ġenerali li huma inklużi fil-bqija tal-IMD 2, ma tista' tipprevjeni prattiki ta' bejgħ abbinat ħżiena.

Il-Kummissjoni kif tiddefendi l-legalità tal-IMD 2 fid-dawl ta' dan it-tħassib?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Lulju 2013)

Hija prassi komuni fil-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE li lill-Kummissjoni, skont l-Artikolu 290 tat-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea (TFUE), tingħatalha s-setgħa biex tadotta atti delegati biex tissupplimenta jew temenda ċerti elementi mhux essenzjali tal-att leġiżlattiv.

Il-ħsieb tal-Kummissjoni għall-Artikolu 8 huwa li tistabbilixxi qafas għal għarfien u abbiltà xierqa għall-intermedjarji tal-assigurazzjoni fl-abbozz tad-Direttiva. L-att iddelegat se jissupplimenta d-direttiva bl-elementi tekniċi u mhux essenzjali.

L-għan ewlieni tal-proposta tal-IMD 2 huwa l-harsien tal-konsumatur wara li tispiċċa l-kriżi finanzjarja, inkluż rigward il-kwistjoni li jingħaqdu prodotti finanzjarji differenti offruti lil konsumaturi bl-imnut. Filwaqt li jista' jkun li oqsma differenti jeħtieġu xi approċċi ftit differenti, il-Kummissjoni taqbel bi sħiħ mal-għan ġenerali li tiżgura l-konsistenza f'partijiet differenti tal-leġiżlazzjoni finanzjarja.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007431/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: IMD 2 proposal and subsidiarity and proportionality principles

On 3 July 2012, the Commission proposed a revision of the Insurance Mediation Directive, known as IMD 2. The proposed changes are numerous.

Article 8 (equivalent to Article 4 of IMD 1) provides that 'insurance and reinsurance intermediaries… shall possess appropriate knowledge and ability'. Although the enforcement burden is placed on Member States, IMD 2 gives the Commission the ability to adopt delegated acts to define 'adequate knowledge', 'professional qualifications, experiences and skills' and 'steps' intermediaries should take to update their knowledge and abilities.

Article 21 of IMD 2 bans 'tying' practices, whereby a product can only be purchased in combination with one or more other products, but permits 'bundling' practices, whereby products available separately are sold at a discount when bought together, subject to additional regulation. Both are collectively referred to as 'cross-selling' practices. IMD 2 asserts that tying practices 'can distort competition and negatively affect consumers' but offers neither a theoretical nor empirical basis for this claim.

Article 8 appears to violate the principle of subsidiarity. Section 3.2 of the Commission's proposal, on subsidiarity and proportionality, fails to explain why the Commission believes that Member States are incapable of defining standards for insurance intermediaries. Furthermore, the proposal does not explain how or why insurance intermediaries can or should be expected to comply with regulations that may be changed at any time by executive fiat, instead of through a legislative process at either national or supranational level.

Article 21 appears to violate the principle of proportionality, which obligates European Union legislation to take the least onerous and restrictive measures possible to achieve an objective. The outright ban on cross-selling is the most restrictive way to deal with potential wrongdoing. Thus, it can only be justified if: 1) the Commission can prove that widespread wrongdoing from tying is present, and 2) no other regulatory scheme short of an outright ban, including but not limited to the extensive regulations on cross-selling and insurance sales generally that are included in the rest of IMD 2, could prevent wrongful tying practices.

How does the Commission defend the legality of IMD 2 in light of these concerns?

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

It is common practice in EU legislation to delegate, in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), to the Commission the power to adopt delegated acts to supplement or amend certain non-essential elements of the legislative act.

The Commission's intention with Article 8 is to lay down a framework for adequate knowledge and ability for insurance intermediaires in the draft Directive. The delegated act will supplement the directive with technical, non-essential elements.

The IMD 2 proposal's primary objective is consumer protection in the aftermath of the financial crisis, including as regards the issue of tying of different financial products being offered to retail customers. Whilst different areas may necessitate slightly different approaches, the Commission fully agrees with the general aim of ensuring consistency in different parts of financial legislation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007432/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Fortalecimiento de las redes de comunicaciones

Varios estudios resaltan el retraso en el despliegue de las redes de telecomunicaciones de nueva generación en Europa. Entre las causas que se mencionan se halla la fragmentación de los mercados de telecomunicaciones, la existencia de numerosas empresas y la gran intervención en los precios entre las operadoras propietarias de las redes y las llamadas operadoras virtuales.

Recientemente se ha difundido el interés de las empresas norteamericanas de telecomunicaciones por este mercado europeo que adolece de tanta fragmentación.

Por ello pregunto a la Comisión:

¿No considera que debe facilitar la inversión en el establecimiento de las nuevas redes a las empresas europeas y, de manera especial, fomentar los vínculos, convenios o incluso fusiones de las mismas para el mejor despliegue de redes europeas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(1 de agosto de 2013)

El despliegue de redes de banda ancha de nueva generación constituye el núcleo de la Agenda Digital para Europa de la Comisión, que ha fijado objetivos ambiciosos en este ámbito, como por ejemplo alcanzar una cobertura del 100 % de la población con redes de alta velocidad (30 Mbps) en el horizonte de 2020, mediante el establecimiento de objetivos en materia de banda ancha para 2020 ([1]).

Si bien a finales de 2012, la cobertura de la población de la UE con redes de banda ancha con velocidades iguales o superiores a 30 Mbps ascendió al 54 %, frente al 39 % un año antes, la Comisión sigue preocupada por las actuales tendencias inversoras en comparación con nuestros competidores en los Estados Unidos y Asia.

La Comisión considera que la falta de un mercado único en el sector de las telecomunicaciones constituye un importante obstáculo a las inversiones y a la contribución del sector al crecimiento del PIB de la UE ([2]).

Para hacer frente a la situación, y de conformidad con las conclusiones del Consejo Europeo de los días 14 y 15 de marzo de 2013, la Comisión presentará en septiembre medidas concretas para completar el mercado único de las telecomunicaciones lo antes posible.

Respecto al fomento de vínculos, convenios y fusiones entre empresas europeas, la Comisión considera que entre sus funciones no se encuentra determinar de antemano la apariencia del futuro mercado de la UE, definir la estructura de la industria o defender a los líderes nacionales, sino más bien impulsar la innovación con el fin de prosperar y permitir a la industria europea aprovechar oportunidades de negocio más prometedoras, al tiempo que se estimula la inversión en redes, se fomenta la competencia y se garantizan los máximos beneficios para los consumidores, respetando plenamente las normas de competencia de la UE.

([1]) En su Comunicación «Una Agenda Digital para Europa», de 26 de agosto de 2010, (COM(2010) 245 final/2), la Comisión establece como objetivos que, para 2020, todos los europeos tengan acceso a unas velocidades de Internet superiores a 30 Mbps, y que el 50 % o más de los hogares europeos estén abonados a conexiones de Internet por encima de los 100 Mbps.

([2]) Se calcula que el potencial sin explotar de un mercado único de las comunicaciones electrónicas equivale a un importe anual de un máximo del 0,9 % del PIB, es decir, 110 000 millones de euros para la economía de la UE en su conjunto, de conformidad con el estudio «Steps towards a truly Internal Market for e-communications in the run-up to 2020», Ecorys, TU Delft y TNO, noviembre de 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007432/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Strengthening of communications networks

According to several studies, the deployment of next-generation telecommunications networks is delayed in Europe. Among the reasons for the delay, these studies cite the fragmentation of telecommunications markets, the existence of a large number of companies and extensive price intervention between operators that own the networks and 'virtual operators'.

US telecommunications companies have recently expressed their interest in the European market, which is so fragmented.

Does the Commission not take the view that it should make it easier for European companies to invest in setting up new networks and, in particular, promote links, agreements and even mergers among European companies, for the best possible deployment of European networks?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The deployment of next-generation broadband networks lies at the heart of the Commission's Digital Agenda for Europe, which has set ambitious targets in this regard including achieving 100% population coverage with high speed networks (30 Mbps) by 2020, with the setting of broadband targets by 2020 ([1]).

While by the end of 2012, the coverage of the EU population by broadband networks with speeds of 30 Mbps and above amounted to 54%, against 39% one year before, the Commission is concerned about the current investment trends in comparison to our competitors in the US and Asia.

The Commission considers that the lack of a Single Market in telecommunications is a significant obstacle to investment and to the sector's contribution to the EU GDP growth ([2]).

In order to tackle the situation, and in accordance with the conclusions of the European Council of 14-15 March 2015, the Commission will come forward in September with concrete measures to complete the Single Market telecoms as early as possible.

As regards the easing of links, agreements and mergers between European companies, the Commission considers that its role is not to predetermine what the future EU market will look like, to define the industry structure or to defend national champions. It is rather to allow innovation to thrive and to enable European industry to seize the most promising business opportunities, while driving investment in networks, enhancing competition and ensuring maximum benefits for the consumers, in the full respect of EU competition rules.

([1]) In its communication 'A Digital Agenda for Europe', of 26.08.2010, COM(2010)245 final/2, the Commission sets the following targets: by 2020, the entire EU population to be covered by broadband networks above 30 Mbps and 50% or more of European households subscribe to Internet connections above 100 Mbps.

([2]) It is estimated that the untapped potential of a single market for electronic communications corresponds to a yearly amount of a maximum of 0.9% GDP, or 110 billion euros for the EU economy as a whole, according to the study 'Steps towards a truly Internal Market for e-communications in the run-up to 2020,' Ecorys, TU Delft and TNO, November 2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007433/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: La buena noticia de reducción del precio de itinerancia y la inseguridad jurídica generada

Se cumple ahora un año de la entrada en vigor del Reglamento (UE) n° 531/2012, de 13 de junio de 2012, relativo a la itinerancia en las redes públicas de comunicaciones móviles en la Unión Europea. Entre las medidas que introdujo destacó el control de los precios por la prestación de los servicios de itinerancia o alquiler del uso de las redes de comunicaciones al imponerse una progresiva reducción de los mismos porque se fijaban precios máximos en los sucesivos años hasta 2017 y 2022, ambos inclusive.

Sin embargo, hace pocos días, desde la Comisión Europea se ha anunciado que se suprimirán todos esos costes de itinerancia a partir del 1 de julio de 2014.

Reconozco la trascendencia de esta medida que está pensada para fomentar el desarrollo de las comunicaciones. Además es una medida muy positiva en defensa de los consumidores.

Por ello pregunto

1. ¿No considera la Comisión que se puede haber quebrado el principio de confianza legítima al imponer primero a las empresas de telecomunicaciones unos planes a diez años y ahora reducirlos a solo un año?

2. ¿Qué medidas tiene previstas la Comisión para afrontar este problema?

3. ¿No advierte la Comisión que generar inestabilidad jurídica y económica es una de las causas del gran retraso del despliegue de las nuevas redes de telecomunicaciones?

4. ¿Cómo es posible que durante el largo tiempo de elaboración de la propuesta de la Comisión COM(2011) 402 y durante el año de tramitación del Reglamento con nuevos informes y debates no se atendieran las peticiones de reducción del coste de itinerancia y ahora de manera sorpresiva la Comisión anuncie su supresión?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

El Consejo Europeo de primavera de 2013 hizo hincapié en la importancia del mercado único digital para el crecimiento y, en sus conclusiones, insta a la Comisión a presentar a tiempo medidas concretas para el Consejo Europeo de octubre con el fin de establecer un mercado único de la tecnología de la información y las comunicaciones lo antes posible. La Comisión está trabajando actualmente en un paquete de medidas legislativas que deberían permitir a los operadores ofrecer servicios digitales en toda la Unión Europea y a los ciudadanos y empresas gozar de dichos servicios en cualquier lugar de Europa. Las tarifas de itinerancia son un ejemplo de la ausencia de un verdadero mercado único actualmente. La seguridad jurídica y tiempo suficiente para adaptarse a un nuevo requisito reglamentario son elementos importantes del éxito de la política reguladora. La reducción gradual de las tarifas de itinerancia desde 2007 ha ofrecido a los operadores la posibilidad de adaptar sus planes de negocio. Respetando el mismo principio, la Comisión está estudiando otras medidas para incentivar a los operadores a ofrecer la itinerancia a precios nacionales sobre la base de las medidas en favor de la competencia del Reglamento sobre la itinerancia de 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007433/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Good news about the reduction in the price of roaming and the resulting legal uncertainty

It has now been one year since Regulation (EU) No 531/2012 of 13 June 2012 on roaming on public mobile communications networks within the Union entered into force. One measure introduced by that regulation was price controls for the provision of roaming services, i.e. rental of the use of communications networks. The regulation imposes a progressive reduction in the price of these services by setting maximum prices for the coming years, up to 2017 and 2022 (both inclusive).

However, a few days ago, the Commission announced that all of these roaming charges would be abolished as from 1 July 2014.

I recognise the significance of this measure, which is intended to promote the development of communications. It is also a very positive consumer protection measure.

1. Does the Commission not think it might have violated the principle of the protection of legitimate expectations by initially imposing 10-year plans on telecommunications companies and now reducing those plans to just one year?

2.What steps does the Commission plan to take to address this problem?

3. Does the Commission not see that legal and economic instability is one of the reasons for the long delay in the deployment of new telecommunications networks?

4. How is it possible that during the long period of time in which Commission proposal COM(2011) 402 was developed, and during the year of proceedings for the regulation, including new reports and debates, petitions to reduce the cost of roaming were not taken into account, and now the Commission suddenly announces that this cost is to be abolished?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The 2013 Spring European Council stressed the importance of the digital single market for growth and, in its conclusions, called for concrete measures to be presented by the Commission in time for the October European Council to establish a Single Market for Information and Communications Technology as early as possible. The Commission is currently working on a set of legislative measures which should allow operators to provide digital services across the EU and allow citizens and businesses to enjoy such services from anywhere in Europe. Roaming charges are an example of the absence of a genuine single market today. Legal certainty and sufficient time to adapt to a new regulatory requirement constitute important elements of successful regulatory policy. The gradual reduction of roaming charges since 2007 has provided operators an opportunity to adapt their business plans. Respecting the same principle, the Commission is considering further measures to incentivise operators to provide roaming at domestic price levels building on the pro-competitive measures of the 2012 Roaming Regulation.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007434/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Atención a las personas axesuadas

Varias han sido las ocasiones en las que desde este Parlamento Europeo se ha llamado la atención sobre la necesidad de luchar contra las discriminaciones por razones de orientación sexual como establece el artículo 21 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea. Algunas medidas se están adoptando en la buena dirección ante las múltiples denuncias de los colectivos de homosexuales, bisexuales y transexuales. Sin embargo, sorprende que ni desde la Agencia de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea ni desde los servicios de la Comisión se hayan incluido actuaciones similares respecto a las personas asexuadas que padecen iguales discriminaciones como bien explica el Profesor Bogaert en su libro «Understanding Asexuality».

Por ello pregunto a esa Comisión:

¿No considera necesario incorporar la atención a las personas asexuadas en los programas de lucha por la igualdad con independencia de la orientación sexual?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión Europea condena todas las formas y manifestaciones de intolerancia, por considerarlas incompatibles con los valores y principios en los que se sustenta la Unión Europea.

Es prioritario para la Comisión asegurar que la legislación de la Unión se ajuste plenamente a la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, incluido su artículo 21, que prohíbe toda discriminación por razón de orientación sexual. Esto significa, en la práctica, que antes de su adopción todas las propuestas legislativas de la UE se escrutan minuciosamente a fin de determinar su compatibilidad con la Carta. Además, la Comisión supervisa la aplicación del Derecho de la UE por los Estados miembros para asegurarse de que en ella no se produce ningún tipo de discriminación.

La Directiva 2000/78/CE del Consejo, relativa al establecimiento de un marco general para la igualdad de trato en el empleo y la ocupación ([1]), prohíbe la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual en el ámbito del empleo y la ocupación. Esa normativa se ha incorporado a los ordenamientos jurídicos nacionales de todos los Estados miembros. La Comisión desconoce la existencia de denuncias de discriminación presentadas por personas asexuadas y carece de datos que demuestren semejante discriminación.

El Programa de Derechos, Igualdad y Ciudadanía, actualmente en fase de negociación con el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo, contempla la financiación de medidas de lucha contra la discriminación. Los programas anuales fijarán las prioridades anuales y los ámbitos de intervención de la Comisión, así como el calendario de convocatorias de propuestas.

([1]) DO L 303 de 2.12.2000, p.16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007434/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Giving attention to asexual people

On several occasions, Parliament has called attention to the need to fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation, as established in Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Some positive measures are being taken in response to multiple complaints from gay, bisexual and transsexual groups. However, it is surprising that neither the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights nor the Commission services have included similar actions with regard to asexual people, who suffer the same discrimination, as Professor Bogaert clearly explains in his book *Understanding Asexuality*.

Does the Commission not believe it should give attention to asexual people in programmes to ensure equality regardless of sexual orientation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The European Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of intolerance, as they are incompatible with the values and principles upon which the European Union is founded.

The Commission's priority is to ensure that Union legislation fully complies with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including its Article 21 which prohibits discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation. In practice, this means that all proposed EU legislation is carefully scrutinised against the Charter before being adopted. The Commission is also monitoring Member-State implementation of EC law in view of ascertaining that the law is not applied in a way that would constitute discrimination based on any ground.

Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation ([1]) prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment and occupation. This legislation has been transposed into national laws of all Member States. The Commission is not aware of reported cases of discrimination by asexual persons in employment in the framework of this directive and does not dispose of any solid evidence of discrimination suffered by this group.

Funding for anti-discrimination is foreseen under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, currently under negotiation with the European Parliament and the Council. The annual work programmes will set the yearly priorities and areas of action for the Commission and the programme of the calls for proposals.

([1]) OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p.16.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007435/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(24 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Consecuencias del Cuarto Paquete Ferroviario

Como sabe, la Comisión adoptó el pasado mes de enero el cuarto paquete ferroviario, una serie de medidas, a través de las cuales, se pretende llevar a cabo, entre otras acciones, la liberalización del transporte nacional de viajeros por ferrocarril en todos los Estados miembros.

¿Estima la Comisión que la apertura del mercado fomentará una oferta global y equilibrada?

¿Ha tenido en cuenta la Comisión las peculiaridades geográficas, económicas y sociales en esta propuesta?

¿Cómo salvaguarda la Comisión que los niveles de seguridad no se verán afectados por la liberalización, ya que se podrían reducir las inversiones en mantenimiento de material e infraestructura?

¿Cree que es necesaria una mayor protección social para los trabajadores y trabajadoras, de manera que se proteja el empleo, los derechos adquiridos y las condiciones laborales y sociales en caso de que los trabajadores y trabajadoras sean subrogados como consecuencia de la liberalización y fragmentación de las empresas?

Por último, ¿comprende la preocupación de los sindicatos por la futura privatización de RENFE y ADIF en España así como su división en cuatro subsectores?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de agosto de 2013)

El cuarto paquete ferroviario propone una liberalización gradual regulada con el fin de lograr mejores servicios ferroviarios sin afectar por ello las prerrogativas de los Estados miembros en cuanto a la organización de las obligaciones de servicio público.

La liberalización de los mercados de transporte nacional de viajeros por ferrocarril aumentará probablemente la oferta de servicios ferroviarios, ya que los nuevos participantes en el mercado ofrecerán nuevos servicios y tarifas. En lo que se refiere a las obligaciones de servicio público, los ahorros derivados de la licitación competitiva pueden ser reinvertidos por las autoridades públicas en la contratación de servicios ferroviarios adicionales.

El cuarto paquete ferroviario combina la liberalización de los servicios comerciales a través del acceso abierto con licitaciones competitivas para la contratación de servicios públicos. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las evaluaciones de impacto del cuarto paquete ferroviario ([1]) que se alimentan de la experiencia y situación de la amplia mayoría de los Estados miembros y que contienen la evaluación tanto del impacto económico como del social.

En lo que se refiere a la seguridad, las evaluaciones de impacto constituyen una prueba documental de que no hay correlación entre la liberalización del mercado y los niveles de seguridad. No hay tampoco ninguna prueba de que la inversión en mantenimiento de equipos e infraestructuras pueda verse afectada por la liberalización.

El Reglamento n° 1370/2007 sobre las obligaciones de servicio público ya permite el traslado de personal en caso de concesión de un contrato a un operador diferente, ya que el término traspaso se remite explícitamente a su acepción en la Directiva 2001/23/CE. La Comisión no es competente para intervenir en la asignación de funciones en los diferentes sectores de la actividad ferroviaria.

Por último, la Comisión no dispone de detalles suficientes en relación con la posible reorganización de los ferrocarriles españoles y, por consiguiente, no está en situación de formular ninguna observación.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/packages/2013_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007435/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Consequences of the fourth railway package

In January 2013 the Commission adopted the fourth railway package, a series of measures aimed *inter alia* at liberalising national rail passenger transport in all the Member States.

Does the Commission believe that opening up the market will promote an integrated and balanced supply?

Has the Commission taken account of specific geographical, economic and social characteristics in this proposal?

How will the Commission ensure that safety levels will not be affected by liberalisation, since investment in equipment and infrastructure maintenance could be reduced?

Does the Commission see a need to provide greater social protection for workers in relation to jobs, acquired rights and working and social conditions in the event that workers are replaced as a consequence of liberalisation and business fragmentation?

Finally, does the Commission understand the concern expressed by Spanish trade unions at the prospect of Renfe and Adif being privatised and broken up into four subsectors?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

The 4th railway package proposes a progressive regulated market opening to achieve better rail services. It does not affect the Member States' prerogatives to organise public service obligations.

The opening up of domestic passenger rail markets is likely to increase the supply of rail services as new entrants will propose new services and new fares. As far as public services obligations are concerned, the savings resulting from competitive tenders can be reutilised by public authorities to procure additional rail services.

The 4th railway package combines the opening of commercial services through open access with competitive tenders for public service contracts. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the impact assessments of the 4th railway package ([1]) which draw on the experience and the situation of the vast majority of Member States and which contain both an economic and a social impact assessment.

As far as safety is concerned, the impact assessments provide documented evidence that there is no correlation between market opening and safety rates. There is also no evidence that investment in equipment and infrastructure maintenance could be affected by market opening.

Regulation 1370/2007 on public service obligations already allows for the transfer of staff in the event of a contract award to a different operator, as it explicitly refers to transfers within the meaning of Directive 2001/23/EC. The Commission has no competence to intervene as regards the allocation of jobs in different railway business units.

Finally, the Commission does not have sufficient details regarding the possible reorganisation of Spanish railways and is not therefore in a position to comment.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/packages/2013_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007436/13
a la Comisión
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(24 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Libre Comercio UE-Tailandia

La Unión Europea y Tailandia han iniciado la apertura de las negociaciones para un futuro Acuerdo de Libre Comercio entre ambas partes para impulsar sus relaciones comerciales. En lo que respecta al sector pesquero, esta diputada ha tenido conocimiento de un informe de la organización EJF *(«Environmental Justice Foundation»),* en el que se denuncia «tráfico de personas» en el sector de la pesca de Tailandia, y donde se «fuerza» a trabajadores a permanecer a bordo de buques durante meses, en condiciones «brutales». Como la Comisión Europea conoce, Tailandia es el tercer país pesquero del mundo y líder en la exportación de atún. Tailandia cuenta con una flota superior a los 12 000 barcos y exporta productos del mar por valor de 5 600 millones de euros, y pese a que en su sector pesquero trabajan 650 000 personas, hay carencia de marineros debido a las «duras condiciones» de esta actividad. De ello pudiera desprenderse que Tailandia vende en los mercados productos a bajo coste sin respetar los derechos de los trabajadores.

Por ello, ¿podría la Comisión indicar si, en las negociaciones que se están llevando a cabo, se está teniendo en cuenta si las condiciones laborales de los pescadores tailandeses cumplen con los mínimos requisitos de la UE y de la OIT, ya que además de ser denigrante, podría suponer una competencia desleal si finalmente se incluyera este sector en el acuerdo?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente del informe de Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) sobre el sector pesquero de Tailandia. La UE concede gran importancia a la inclusión de disposiciones sobre comercio y desarrollo sostenible en las negociaciones del Acuerdo de libre comercio entre la UE y Tailandia. Dichas disposiciones incluyen referencias al cumplimiento y la aplicación efectiva de las normas básicas y los convenios de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT), al cumplimiento efectivo de la legislación laboral nacional y a la no aplicación de exenciones a la misma. Las disposiciones en materia de comercio y desarrollo sostenible también podrían proporcionar un marco para el diálogo sobre las normas laborales, entre otros con las partes interesadas correspondientes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007436/13
to the Commission
Dolores García-Hierro Caraballo (S&D)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: EU-Thailand free-trade agreement

The European Union and Thailand have opened negotiations on a future free-trade agreement with the aim of boosting their trade relations. With regard to the fisheries sector, the organisation Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) has produced a report exposing 'human trafficking' in Thailand's fisheries sector, where workers are 'forced' to remain on boats for months in 'brutal' conditions. As the Commission knows, Thailand is the third largest fishing nation in the world and the leading exporter of tuna. Thailand has a fleet of over 12 000 vessels and exports seafood products worth EUR 5.6 billion. Even though 650 000 people work in its fisheries sector, the harsh conditions mean that there is a shortage of seamen. This might indicate that Thailand is selling low-cost products on the market and failing to respect workers' rights.

Is the question of whether the working conditions of Thai fishermen meet minimum EU and ILO conditions being taken into account in the current negotiations, since failure to meet those conditions would not only be deplorable in itself but would also amount to unfair competition, in the event that the fisheries sector is included in the ensuing agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the report of the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) on Thailand's fisheries sector. The EU attaches great importance to including provisions on trade and sustainable development in the negotiation of the EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement. These provisions include references to adherence to, and effective implementation of, core International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards and conventions and to enforcement of, and non-derogation from, domestic labour laws. The trade and sustainable development provisions could also provide a framework for dialogue in the area of labour standards, including with relevant stakeholders.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007437/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: De nuevo actuaciones degradantes en un «Lugar de importancia comunitaria»

La Comisión acordó declarar el espacio marino denominado «Estrecho oriental» como lugar de importancia comunitaria mediante la Decisión 2009/95, de 12 de diciembre (código ES 6120032). En mayo de 2011, la Comisión publicó también la nueva Estrategia de biodiversidad con más actuaciones para proteger los hábitats. Siguiendo estas directrices, el Gobierno español, mediante el Real Decreto 1620/2012, de 1 de diciembre, declaró «Zona especial de conservación» ese lugar de importancia comunitaria de la región biogeográfica mediterránea de la Red natura 2000, adoptando medidas de conservación y limitando o prohibiendo actividades claramente dañinas, como en el caso de los rellenos.

Sin embargo, a pesar de todas estas previsiones, se están realizando rellenos irregulares y actuaciones con el fin de ganar terreno al mar, que perjudican gravemente la fauna y biodiversidad de ese espacio.

Con anterioridad ya he puesto de manifiesto ante la Comisión algunos riesgos ambientales que afectan a ese entorno (preguntas números E-4560 y E-12441 de 2011, E-7803/2012). La respuesta que he obtenido es que se abriría un periodo de información, por ello me permito insistir:

¿Qué resultados ha obtenido la Comisión durante estos meses? ¿Piensa adoptar alguna medida ejecutiva para garantizar la adecuada protección de la biodiversidad de ese lugar de interés comunitario?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de agosto de 2013)

En las próximas semanas, la Comisión, tras una serie de contactos preliminares con las autoridades del Reino Unido a propósito de la contaminación en la Bahía de Algeciras, solicitará con carácter oficial en las próximas semanas a tales autoridades que expliquen las causas de esa contaminación y las acciones correctoras previstas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007437/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: More damaging activities at a site of Community importance

The Commission designated the marine space 'Estrecho oriental' as a site of Community importance in Decision 2009/95/EC of 12 December 2008 (code ES6120032). In May 2011, the Commission also published the new biodiversity strategy, with more actions to protect habitats. In line with these guidelines, the Spanish Government designated this site of Community importance for the Mediterranean biogeographical region in the Natura 2000 network as a 'Special conservation area' by means of Royal Decree No 1620/2012 of 1 December. With this designation, the Spanish Government established conservation measures and limited or prohibited clearly harmful activities, such as landfilling.

However, in spite of all of these measures, unlawful landfilling and activities intended to reclaim land from the sea are taking place. These activities seriously harm the fauna and biodiversity of this space.

I have already alerted the Commission of several environmental risks affecting this area (Questions E-4560 and E-12441 of 2011 and E-7803/2012). In response, I was told that an information-gathering period would begin, so I would like to raise the issue again:

What results has the Commission obtained in recent months? Does it plan to adopt any executive measures to ensure that the biodiversity of this site of Community interest is adequately protected?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission can inform the Honourable Member that following preliminary contacts with the UK authorities on the matter of the pollution in the Bay of Algeciras, the Commission will in the coming weeks formally ask the UK authorities to explain the related causes and the foreseen remedial actions.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007438/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: Pollution de la mer Méditerranée

La pollution de la mer Méditerranée devient inquiétante: les polluants organiques, les déchets plastiques, les résidus médicamenteux, associés à la surpêche, menaceraient, selon diverses études nationales, la biodiversité de la mer Méditerranée. La mer Méditerranée, si elle ne représente que 0,3 % du volume des eaux océaniques, regroupe 7 à 8 % des espèces maritimes connues. En cela, il apparaît nécessaire d'agir pour la préservation de cet espace.

C'est avant tout la croissance de la population qui est la cause première de cette pollution élevée. En outre, la population des pays riverains est passée de 285 millions à 427 millions d'habitants entre 1970 et 2000. Cette croissance est aggravée par l'urbanisation grandissante mais aussi par la littoralisation, c'est-à-dire l'augmentation des populations vivant près de la côte.

En ce que la pollution est un phénomène transfrontalier, il est évident que les pays européens doivent réfléchir à des solutions d'action conjointe.

1. La Commission entend-elle lutter plus activement contre la pollution maritime en Méditerranée, notamment par la coordination des États membres limitrophes?

2. La Commission envisage-t-elle la mise en place d'un partenariat spécial sur la question de la pollution maritime entre l'Union et les États limitrophes non membres de l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(23 août 2013)

1. La Commission continuera à jouer un rôle actif dans la lutte contre la pollution dans la Méditerranée, notamment en apportant sa contribution aux travaux de la Convention de Barcelone sur la protection du milieu marin et du littoral de la Méditerranée, à laquelle l'Union européenne est partie, tout comme l'ensemble des pays riverains de la Méditerranéenne. La Commission soutient également activement l'initiative «Horizon 2020» en faveur de la dépollution dans le cadre de l'Union pour la Méditerranée.

2. Au regard des engagements régionaux ambitieux pris au titre de la Convention de Barcelone, la Commission ne prévoit pas actuellement d'établir d'autres partenariats spécifiques avec les pays méditerranéens non-membres de l'Union concernant la question de la pollution marine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007438/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Pollution in the Mediterranean

Pollution in the Mediterranean has reached alarming levels: according to numerous national studies, organic pollutants, waste plastics and drug residues, together with overfishing, constitute a real threat its biodiversity. The Mediterranean, although it makes up only 0.3% of global sea water, contains 7 to 8% of known marine species. Action is therefore urgently needed to conserve this marine ecosystem.

The severity of this pollution is chiefly attributable to population growth: between 1970 and 2000 the population of neighbouring countries increased from 285 million to 427 million people. The situation is compounded by both galloping urbanisation and the phenomenon of coastal population growth.

Since marine pollution is a cross-border issue, Europe's countries should clearly be considering joint solutions.

1. Does the Commission intend to take a more active role in combating pollution in the Mediterranean, particularly by coordinating efforts made by the neighbouring countries?

2. Does the Commission plan to set up a special partnership between the EU and neighbouring non-EU countries on the issue of marine pollution?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2013)

1. The Commission will continue to play an active role in combating pollution in the Mediterranean, i.a. through its contribution to the work of the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean to which the EU is a party, as are all countries having a Mediterranean shoreline. The Commission is also actively supporting the Horizon 2020 depollution initiative under the Union of the Mediterranean.

2. In view of the far-reaching regional commitments under the Barcelona Convention, the Commission is currently not planning to set up specific additional partnerships with the Mediterranean non-EU countries on this issue of marine pollution.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007439/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: Possibles effets de la pollution atmosphérique sur la santé

La pollution de l'air est un fait reconnu, étendu en particulier à nos villes, en Europe comme ailleurs. Cependant, il semblerait que les effets de cette pollution sur la santé soient sinon négligés, du moins amoindris.

Une étude, publiée en mars 2011 par l'Institut français de veille sanitaire et menée dans 12 pays européens, a démontré que la diminution des particules fines dans l'air de nos villes permettrait d'augmenter l'espérance de vie. Par exemple, à Marseille, si on respectait l'objectif de qualité de l'OMS, soit 10 µg/m³, l'espérance de vie augmenterait de 8 mois. Dépasser ces recommandations entraînerait également, selon cette étude, une augmentation des pathologies chroniques. Cette étude a montré que le fait d'habiter à proximité du trafic routier serait à l'origine de 15 % des cas d'asthme chez l'enfant et de l'augmentation des maladies respiratoires et cardiovasculaires chez les plus de 65 ans.

D'autre part, une récente étude menée par des scientifiques américains et publiée dans la revue «Environmental Health Perspectives» a mis en lumière une possible corrélation entre pollution atmosphérique et autisme. Selon cette étude, les femmes enceintes exposées à des taux élevés de particules polluantes auraient deux fois plus de risques de donner naissance à un enfant autiste.

1. La Commission a-t-elle eu connaissance de ces études? Entend-elle vérifier la véracité des résultats de ces différentes études?

2. Au cas où ces résultats seraient avérés, la Commission entend-elle renforcer son action afin de prévenir les risques graves de la pollution sur la santé?

3. Il est admis que les principaux problèmes de santé dus à la pollution sont avant tout concentrés dans les agglomérations urbaines. Ne serait-il pas intéressant d'envisager une plus grande coopération entre les grandes villes européennes afin d'adopter une réponse commune adéquate?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(20 août 2013)

1. La Commission a pleinement connaissance du projet mentionné (APHEIS) et de ses études de suivi, qui ont été cofinancés par la Commission ([1]). Les résultats et les outils d'évaluation de ce projet ont été largement utilisés par la Commission pour informer les citoyens de l'Union à propos des dommages provoqués par la pollution atmosphérique et des raisons pour lesquelles il est important de prendre des mesures, notamment lors d'une session spéciale de l'édition 2013 de la semaine verte qui avait pour thème «De l'air pur pour nos villes». La Commission se fonde également sur les conseils de l'OMS et procède actuellement à l'actualisation des facteurs de risque de pollution atmosphérique au regard des derniers résultats de la recherche scientifique.

2. Une stratégie thématique révisée en matière de pollution atmosphérique, que la Commission envisage d'adopter à l'automne 2013, visera à assurer le respect de toutes les obligations existantes d'ici à 2010 et définira de nouveaux objectifs en matière de santé et d'environnement pour la période 2025-2030. Elle devrait également s'accompagner de propositions législatives visant à limiter l'exposition de la population aux PM2,5 et à d'autres polluants préoccupants, et à garantir le respect des engagements internationaux.

3. Au cours de ces deux dernières années, la Commission et l'Agence européenne pour l'environnement ont mené conjointement un «projet pilote urbain» avec 12 grandes villes européennes ([2]) en recensant plusieurs solutions envisageables, dont une coopération de plus grande envergure et plus cohérente entre les villes européennes. La Commission réfléchit à présent à la meilleure manière d'exploiter les conclusions de ce projet et fera part des résultats de l'analyse dans le cadre de la révision de la stratégie sur la qualité de l'air mentionnée ci-dessus.

De plus, le programme CIVITAS relevant du 7e programme-cadre pour la recherche et l'innovation encourage l'expérimentation, par les villes européennes, de mesures innovantes visant à décongestionner les routes et à améliorer la qualité de l'air dans les agglomérations urbaines.

([1]) Programme de la DG SANCO concernant les maladies liées à la pollution.
([2]) Projet pilote sur la mise en œuvre de la législation sur la qualité de l'air — Leçons tirées de la mise en œuvre de la législation sur la qualité de l'air au niveau urbain. http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-implementation-pilot-2013

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007439/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Possible effects of pollution in the atmosphere on health

Air pollution is a recognised fact, particularly so in our towns and cities, whether in Europe or elsewhere. However it seems that the effects of this pollution on health are, if not ignored, at least played down.

A study conducted in 12 European countries and published in March 2011 by France's 'Institut de Veille Sanitaire' showed that reducing the quantity of fine particles in the air in our cities and towns would help increase life expectancy. In Marseille, for instance, if the WHO's quality target were to be met, i.e. 10µg/m3, life expectancy would rise by eight months. Equally, exceeding these recommended figures would bring about a rise in chronic pathologies. The study demonstrated that living in the vicinity of road traffic could be at the root of 15% of cases of asthma in children and the rise in respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses in people over 65.

In addition, a recent study by American scientists published in the journal 'Environmental Health Perspectives' brought to light a possible correlation between air pollution and autism. The study concluded that pregnant women who are exposed to high levels of polluting particulates are twice as likely to give birth to an autistic child.

1. Is the Commission aware of these studies? Will it ascertain the veracity of the findings in these different studies?

2. In the event of these findings being established, will the Commission step up its action to prevent the serious risks to health caused by pollution?

3. It is an acknowledged fact that the principle health problems caused by pollution are found in a far greater concentration in urban agglomerations. Would it not be worth considering greater cooperation between major European towns and cities in order to adopt an appropriate common solution?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

1. The Commission is fully aware of the mentioned project (APHEIS) and its follow-up studies which were co-financed by the Commission ([1]). The results and the assessment tools have been extensively used by the Commission in communicating with EU citizens on air pollution damage and the benefits of taking action, e.g. in a special session of the Green Week 2013 'Clean Air for All'. The Commission also uses the WHO advice and is currently updating the air pollution risk factors in view of the latest results from science.

2. A revised Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution which is envisaged for adoption by the Commission in autumn 2013, will aim at full compliance with current obligations by 2020 and set out new health and environment objectives for the period 2025-30. It is also expected to be accompanied by legislative proposals to limit population exposure to $PM_{2.5}$ and other pollutants of concern, and to ensure compliance with international commitments.

3. In the past two years the Commission and the European Environment Agency have jointly conducted a 'city pilot' with 12 major European cities ([2]) identifying options including broader and more coherent cooperation between European cities. The Commission is now considering how to best take forward these findings and will report on the outcome of the analysis as part of the air quality review referred to above.

Additionally the Civitas programme under the 7th Research and Innovation Framework programme supports collaboration of EU cities to test innovative measures with the aim to reduce congestion and improve air quality in urban agglomeration.

([1]) Pollution-Related Diseases Programme of the DG SANCO.
([2]) Air Implementation Pilot — Lessons learnt from the implementation of air quality legislation at urban level: http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-implementation-pilot-2013

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007440/13
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: Covoiturage en Europe

Le covoiturage poursuit sa démocratisation en Europe, et est en passe de devenir un incontournable dans le secteur du transport routier. Toutefois, ce moyen de transport innovant pourrait voir son essor ralenti par le manque de soutien de la part des autorités: le covoiturage reste une initiative privée.

Le covoiturage est pour plusieurs raisons un moyen de transport intéressant dans le contexte actuel: au-delà de la réduction des coûts de transport pour l'usager, il permet la limitation du nombre de véhicules particuliers sur les voies de circulation et de limiter l'empreinte écologique du transport particulier. Cependant, la multiplicité et la diversité des acteurs et des sites sont un frein au développement et à l'essor du covoiturage en France, la plupart de ces sites souffrant d'une faible fréquentation. Le regroupement d'acteurs et la mise en commun des bases de données des sites pourraient répondre à ce problème.

La Commission entend-elle étudier le réel potentiel du covoiturage en Europe? Envisage-t-elle de mettre en œuvre des dispositions permettant de soutenir le développement du covoiturage en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(7 août 2013)

La Commission ne favorise aucun mode ou forme de transport local en particulier. Il appartient aux acteurs locaux de décider en fonction des circonstances locales et de leurs préférences. Toutefois, la Commission européenne soutient la recherche et les activités de diffusion concernant les solutions de mobilité nouvelles et innovantes (y compris l'autopartage), notamment par le biais de l'initiative Civitas. Notre soutien permet d'expérimenter différentes solutions et de partager des informations sur les bonnes pratiques et les expériences.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007440/13
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Car sharing in Europe

Car sharing is gaining currency in Europe and is set to become an integral part of the road transport sector. Nevertheless, this innovative concept could soon see its progress hampered by a lack of government support; car sharing is still very much a private initiative.

In the current climate, this alternative means of transport is particularly appealing for a number of reasons. While users benefit from cheaper travel costs, both society and the environment benefit from fewer passenger cars on the roads and a smaller ecological footprint left by personal transport. However, the development and growth of car sharing in France is being hindered by the proliferation of different operators and websites, many of which have little traffic. This could be resolved by bringing operators together and merging online databases.

Does the Commission intend to explore the real potential of car sharing in Europe? Does it intend to take any action to support its development in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Commission does not favour any particular mode or form of local transport — that is for local actors to decide according to their local circumstances and preferences. However the European Commission does support research and dissemination activities into new and innovative mobility solutions (including car sharing) in particular through the CIVITAS initiative. Our support helps to test different solutions and to share information about best practices and experiences.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007441/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE) et Philippe Juvin (PPE)
(24 juin 2013)

Objet: Qualité de l'air intérieur

La qualité de l'air intérieur a été reconnue, pour la première fois, comme un domaine prioritaire dans le 6e programme d'action pour l'environnement.

Il s'agit d'un enjeu majeur pour la santé publique. En effet, l'air à l'intérieur des bâtiments peut être jusqu'à cinquante fois plus pollué que l'air extérieur. Cela entraîne des risques importants pour la santé des groupes les plus vulnérables, notamment les enfants, les personnes âgées et les personnes souffrant de maladies respiratoires.

Force est de constater qu'aucune action politique concrète n'a été entreprise jusqu'ici. Alors que le rapport EnVIE (Co-ordination Action on Indoor Air Quality and Health Effects) de 2009 a souligné la nécessité d'une approche intégrée sur la qualité de l'air intérieur, il nous semble indispensable de l'inclure dans les priorités environnementales de l'Union européenne pour les années à venir.

Dès lors, quelles mesures la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de prendre afin de traduire les recommandations du 7e programme d'action pour l'environnement en initiatives politiques ou législatives concrètes?

Par ailleurs, compte tenu des risques importants pour la santé et du fait que les gens passent près de 90 % de leur temps dans des bâtiments, la Commission a-t-elle l'intention de prendre des mesures additionnelles dans ce domaine?

Enfin, quand la Commission envisage-t-elle de donner suite à la recommandation du rapport EnVIE concernant le livre vert sur la qualité de l'air intérieur?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(20 août 2013)

Le programme d'action général de l'Union pour l'environnement à l'horizon 2020, qui a récemment été adopté, prévoit que la réalisation des objectifs en matière de qualité de l'air intérieur nécessite en particulier:

1. de «mettre en œuvre une politique de l'Union actualisée sur la qualité de l'air, […] ainsi que […] des mesures de lutte contre la pollution atmosphérique à la source.» [point 52, sous-point a)];

2. «d'élaborer, d'ici 2018, une stratégie de l'Union pour un environnement non toxique […] afin de garantir: … 4) la réduction maximale de l'exposition aux substances chimiques présentes dans les produits, […] en vue de […] réduire l'exposition aux substances dangereuses à l'intérieur des bâtiments». [point 52, point d)];

En ce qui concerne le premier point, l'exposition à l'intérieur des bâtiments à la plupart des polluants atmosphériques réglementés par l'Union est principalement imputable à des sources extérieures, à l'exception du tabagisme à l'intérieur des bâtiments et de l'utilisation de combustibles solides ([1]). La pollution extérieure sera traitée dans le cadre de la révision de la politique sur l'air ambiant que la Commission prévoit d'effectuer à l'automne 2013 ([2]). Pour ce qui est du tabagisme à l'intérieur des bâtiments, la Commission a publié un rapport sur la mise en œuvre de la recommandation de 2009 du Conseil relative aux environnements sans tabac ([3]). Les principales mesures prises à la source par l'Union et directement liées à la qualité de l'air intérieur ont trait à l'utilisation domestique de combustibles solides (lots 15 et 20, directive 2009/125/CE relative à l'écoconception). Une décision sur l'acte d'exécution y afférent est attendue pour l'automne 2013.

Quant au second point, la Commission approfondira la question de l'exposition aux produits, y compris à l'intérieur des bâtiments, dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du 7e programme d'action environnemental.

Ces initiatives couvrent les priorités définies et aucune mesure supplémentaire n'est prévue.

([1]) OMS 2013, Review of evidence on health aspects of air pollution, p. 176.
([2]) Voir http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm (en anglais uniquement)
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/smoke-free_implementation_report_en.pdf (en anglais uniquement)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007441/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE) and Philippe Juvin (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Indoor air quality

For the first time indoor air quality has been made a priority area of action, with the Sixth Environment Action Programme.

Indoor air quality is a major public health challenge; indoor air may be up to 50 times more polluted than outdoor air, and therefore poses a significant heath risk for vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and people with respiratory diseases.

No real political action has yet been taken, but as far back as 2009, the FP7 'Coordination Action on Indoor Air Quality and Health Effects' (EnVIE) report called for an approach to ensuring indoor air quality. We believe, therefore, that it must remain an EU environmental priority in the years to come.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to turn these recommendations into actual initiatives or legislation?

Furthermore, given the significant health and the fact that people spend almost 90% indoors, does the Commission intend to take any further steps?

Lastly, when does the Commission intend to make good on the EnVIE report's recommendation to publish a green paper on indoor air quality?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The recently agreed General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 states that achieving the objectives for indoor air quality requires in particular:

1. 'Implementing updated EU policy on air quality, … and…measures to combat air pollution at source.' (para 52(i))

2. 'Developing by 2018 an EU strategy for a non-toxic environment… to ensure: … 4) the minimisation of exposure to chemicals in products… with a view to …reducing indoor exposure to harmful substances.' (para 52(iv)).

On the first, indoor exposures to most EU-regulated air pollutants are primarily due to outdoor sources, with the exception of indoor smoking and the burning of solid fuel [1]. Outdoor pollution will be addressed in the Commission's review of ambient air policy, scheduled for autumn 2013 [2]. On indoor smoking, the Commission has published a report on implementation of the 2009 Council Recommendation on smoke-free environments [3]. The main EU source measures directly relevant for indoor air quality address solid fuel domestic combustion (Lots 15 and 20, Ecodesign Directive 2009/125/EC). A decision on the relevant implementing act is expected in autumn 2013.

On the second point, the Commission will further investigate the issue of exposures to products, including those exposures occurring indoors, as part of the implementation of the 7th EAP.

These initiatives cover the priorities identified and no further measures are planned.

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[1] WHO 2013, Review of evidence on health aspects of air pollution, p. 176.
[2] See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/review_air_policy.htm
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/docs/smoke-free_implementation_report_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007442/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Tariffi antidumping kontra panelli solari Ċiniżi

Fl-4 ta' Ġunju 2013, il-Kummissjoni ħabbret deċiżjoni unanima biex tibda tariffi proviżorji kontra importazzjonijiet ta' panelli solari Ċiniżi, filwaqt li tistenna r-riżultati ta' investigazzjonijiet kompluti antisussidji u antidumping f'Diċembru. Din id-deċiżjoni tidher li qajmet ritaljazzjoni min-naħa taċ-Ċiniżi.

Skont il-kummenti tal-Kummissarju tal-UE għall-Kummerċ Karel De Gucht, "l-istima tagħna tal-prezz tal-bejgħ ġust ta' panell solari Ċiniż se tkun fil-fatt 88 % ogħla mill-prezz attwali li jinbiegħu għalih fis-suq Ewropew". Fil-parti l-kbira tagħha l-industrija solari tal-Unjoni Ewropea teżisti grazzi għas-sussidji, li fil-preżent qed jitnaqqsu iżda kellhom impatt biex jistabbilixxu l-industrija. L-UE innifsha kellha "tużżani" ta' programmi ekonomiċi li jappoġġaw enerġija b'livell baxx ta' karbonju, minbarra l-programmi mmexxija mill-Istati Membri infushom.

Il-kalkolu tal-Kummissjoni li l-panelli solari Ċiniżi kienu qed jinbiegħu taħt il-valur tas-suq jikkunsidra l-valur tas-suq naturali jew il-valur tas-suq meta meta wieħed iqis il-programmi Ewropej kollha jappoġġaw l-enerġija solari? Liema effett huwa akbar u x'metodu qed tuża l-Kummissjoni biex tikkumpara? Peress li diversi setturi importanti tal-ekonomija Ewropea jista' jkollhom ritaljazzjoni Ċiniża sinifikanti matul is-sitt xhur li ġejjin, il-Kummissjoni x'inhi tagħmel biex tagħmel l-evidenza speċifika tad-dumping disponibbli u trasparenti fl-istess ħin?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur De Gucht f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Awwissu 2013)

L-investigazzjoni wriet dumping sinifikanti. Il-kwistjoni ta' programmi ta' appoġġ tal-UE mhijiex relatata ma' dan. Dak li huwa importanti huwa li esportazzjonijiet iddampjati/sussidjati jikkawżaw ħsara għall-produtturi tal-UE. Dawn l-investigazzjonijiet jitwettqu bi trasparenza sħiħa, il-Kummissjoni għamlet informazzjoni mhux kunfidenzjali disponibbli u l-partijiet interessati jistgħu jikkummentaw.

Fis-27 ta' Lulju 2013, kumpaniji esportaturi Ċiniżi ppreżentaw offerta ta' impenn formali dwar il-prezz li l-Kummissjoni sabet li hija aċċettabbli. Verżjoni mhux kunfidenzjali tal-offerta hija disponibbli għall-partijiet interessati li jistgħu jipprovdu kummenti.

Iċ-Ċina tabilħaqq dan l-aħħar bdiet xi investigazzjonijiet ta' difiża kummerċjali kontra l-esportazzjonijiet tal-UE f'setturi differenti. Bħal kull membru ieħor tal-Organizzazzjoni Dinjija tal-Kummerċ (WTO), iċ-Ċina hija intitolata li tagħmel użu minn dawn l-istrumenti, iżda dan għandu jsir b'konformità sħiħa mar-regoli relevanti tad-WTO. Il-Kummissjoni tibqa' viġilanti u tissorvelja mill-qrib dawn il-każijiet sabiex tiżgura li l-esportaturi tal-UE jkunu jistgħu jeżerċitaw b'mod sħiħ id-dritt tagħhom tad-difiża u li r-regoli rilevanti, inkluż dwar it-trasparenza, jiġu applikati b'mod strett. Jekk dan ma jkunx il-każ, il-Kummissjoni mhux sejra toqgħod lura milli tintervjeni kif xieraq.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007442/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Anti-dumping tariffs against Chinese solar panels

On 4 June 2013, the Commission announced a unanimous decision to initiate provisional tariffs against imports of Chinese solar panels, awaiting the results of full anti-subsidy and anti-dumping investigations in December. This decision appears to have triggered Chinese retaliation.

According to remarks by EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht, 'our estimate of the fair sale price of a Chinese solar panel would actually be 88% higher than the current price for which they are sold on the European market'. The European Union's solar industry owes much of its existence to subsidies, which are currently being phased out but still had an impact in establishing the industry. The EU itself has 'dozens' of economic programmes that support low-carbon energy, in addition to the programmes run by Member States themselves.

Does the Commission's calculation that Chinese solar panels are being sold below market value consider natural market value, or market value given all of the European programmes that support solar energy? Which effect is larger, and what method does the Commission use to make the comparison? Since several important sectors of the European economy may bare significant Chinese retaliation over the next six months, what is the Commission doing to make the specific evidence of dumping available and transparent in the meantime?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

The investigation has shown significant dumping. The issue of EU support programmes is not related to this. What matters is that dumped/subsidised exports cause injury to EU producers. These investigations are carried out in full transparency, the Commission has made non-confidential information available and interested parties are allowed to comment.

On 27 July 2013, Chinese exporting companies presented a formal price undertaking offer which the Commission found acceptable. A non-confidential version of the offer has been made available to interested parties who may provide comments.

China has indeed recently initiated some trade defence investigations against EU exports in different sectors. Like any other World Trade Organisation (WTO) member, China is entitled to make use of these instruments, but this should be done in full compliance with the relevant WTO rules. The Commission continues to be vigilant and closely monitors these cases in order to ensure that EU exporters can fully exercise their right of defence and that the relevant rules, including on transparency, are strictly applied. Should that not be the case, the Commission would not hesitate to duly intervene.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007443/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Ajru Uniku Ewropew

Reċentement, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet pjan ġdid (IP/13/523) biex taċċellera l-ħolqien ta' "Ajru Uniku Ewropew" bħala parti mill-isforz tagħha biex tnaqqas l-ispiża tal-ivvjaġġar bl-ajru u tiżgura l-moviment ħieles taċ-ċittadini tal-UE.

Filwaqt li dan il-pakkett il-ġdid huwa mistenni jtejjeb l-effiċjenza tal-ġestjoni tat-traffiku bl-ajru u jakkomoda l-volum dejjem jiżdied ta' traffiku bl-ajru, x'inhi l-istima tal-ispejjeż assoċjati rigward ir-riforma? Apparti milli timponi l-penali, x'miżuri qed tippjana li tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex tiżgura li l-pjan ma jibqax lura bħalma ġara lill-pakkett preċedenti? Il-Kummissjoni kif tippjana li tgħin Stati Membri biex ittaffi t-tħassib rigward il-kwistjonijiet ta' sikurezza u l-possibiltà ta' telf tal-impjiegi fl-industrija affettwata?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Kallas f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-valutazzjoni tal-impatt tal-Kummissjoni tistima li se jkunu neġliġibbli l-kosti monetarji tal-inizjattiva l-ġdida, billi f'bosta pajjiżi din l-aħħar proposta se jkollha impatt biss fuq il-mod tal-ħidma u mhux fuq ir-riżorsi meħtieġa. F'termini ta' impjiegi, il-valutazzjoni tal-impatt tistima li se jkun hemm ċaqliq fl-impjiegi bi tnaqqis ta' xi 3000-9000 impjieg fis-servizzi fuq l-art, li tagħmel tajjeb għalihom żieda fl-impjiegi ta' madwar 13 000 f'xogħlijiet oħra tat-traffiku tal-ajru. Ta' min wieħed isemmi, madankollu, li bosta minn dawn l-impjiegi x'aktarx jintilfu xorta billi l-industrija għaddejja minn transizzjoni teknoloġika mill-kbarnett, li sejra gradwalment tneħħi ħafna mit-teknoloġija sorpassata u intensiva f'termini ta' xogħol. L-inizjattiva proposta tal-Ajru Uniku Ewropew 2+ se tgħin biex din il-bidla meħtieġa tipproduċi l-benefiċċji meħtieġa. Fi 3-4 Stati Membri, il-proposta se teħtieġ xi 10-20 post ġdid fl-awtoritajiet tas-superviżjoni, bl-ispejjeż amministrattivi assoċjati.

L-inizjattiva proposta tal-Ajru Uniku Ewropew 2+ għandha l-għan li tirfed u tgħaġġel il-proċess ta' riforma tal-ATM fl-Ewropa, partikolarment bis-saħħa tat-tisħiħ tal-iskema tal-prestazzjoni, aktar effiċjenza fil-forniment tas-servizzi ta' appoġġ, il-promozzjoni ta' shubijiet industrijali u t-tisħiħ tal-rwol tal-Amministratur tan-Netwerk.

Il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha wkoll tkompli tappoġġa l-kooperazzjoni bejn l-awtoritajiet nazzjonali ta' superviżjoni fuq il-livell tal-UE, sabiex ikunu jistgħu jiżguraw aħjar is-sorveljanza min-naħa tal-forniturі lokali tas-servizzi.

Barra minn hekk, l-inizjattiva tinkludi rekwiżiti stretti dwar l-indipendenza tal-awtoritajiet nazzjonali sabiex jiġi żgurat li m'għadhomx dipendenti fuq il-forniturі tas-servizzi li suppost ikunu qed jissorveljaw.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007443/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Single European Sky

The Commission recently proposed a new plan (IP/13/523) to accelerate the creation of a 'Single European Sky', as part of its effort to reduce the cost of air travel and to ensure the free movement of EU citizens.

Whilst this new package is expected to improve the efficiency of air traffic management and accommodate the increasing volume of air traffic, what is the estimation of associated costs regarding the reform? Apart from imposing penalties, what measures does the Commission plan to take to ensure the plan does not fall behind schedule as the previous package did? How does the Commission plan to assist Member States in allaying concerns regarding safety issues and the possibility of job cuts in the affected industry?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission impact assessment estimates that the monetary costs of the new initiative will be negligible, because in most countries the latest proposal would have an impact only on the way of working, not the resources needed. In terms of jobs the impact assessment estimates that there will be a shift in employment with a reduction of some 3000-9000 jobs in ground services, being offset against a rise in employment in other air traffic jobs of roughly 13 000. It should however be noted that many of the job losses are likely to take place in any case as the industry is undergoing a major technological shift, which will phase out much of the outdated and work-intensive technology. The proposed Single European Sky 2+ initiative will help ensure that this necessary change produces the required benefits. In 3-4 Member States the proposal will require some 10-20 new positions in the oversight authorities, with the associated administrative costs.

The proposed Single European Sky 2+ initiative aims to consolidate and accelerate the process of reform of ATM in Europe in particular through the strengthening of the performance scheme, more efficiency in the provision of support services, the promotion of industrial partnerships and the reinforcement of the role of the Network Manager.

The Commission also intends to continue to support cooperation between national supervisory authorities at EU-level, in order for them to better ensure the oversight of the local service providers.

Moreover the initiative includes strict requirements on the independence of the national authorities to ensure that they are no longer dependent on the service providers that they are supposed to oversee.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007444/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Is-sikurezza tal-ikel (RAFF)

Dan l-aħħar, il-Kummissjoni ppubblikat rapport dwar is-Sistema ta' Twissija Rapida għall-Ikel u l-Għalf (RAFF) (IP/13/520), li jiġbor fih ir-rendiment tas-sistema RAFF. Ir-rapport juri li s-sistema ppreveniet b'suċċess ir-rikorerrenza ta' xi kwistjonijiet serji ta' sikurezza tal-ikel. Fil-preżent, ir-RAFF isservi prinċipalment ta' sistema għall-iskambju ta' informazzjoni dwar is-sikurezza tal-ikel iżda mhux dwar il-frodi tal-ikel. Il-Kummissjoni kif tippjana li ttejjeb l-effiċjenza tas-sistema għall-iskambju ta' informazzjoni rigward il-fenomeni emerġenti tal-frodi tal-ikel fl-Istati Membri? Il-Kummissjoni kif tippjana li tinkoraġġixxi l-Istati Membri jirrapportaw dwar il-frodi tal-ikel, peress li dan jista' jkollu impatt negattiv fuq il-fiduċja tal-konsumaturi u r-rieda li jixtru prodotti li jiġu prodotti fl-Istat Membru li jirrapporta?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(2 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Matul il-kwistjoni tal-laħam taż-żiemel, is-sistema ta' Twissija Rapida għall-Ikel u l-Għalf (RASFF) intużat biex tiġi skambjata informazzjoni rilevanti minkejja l-fatt li każijiet ta' frodi tal-ikel mhux dejjem jaqgħu fl-ambitu tagħha. Il-każ enfasizza li d-disinn attawli tal-RASFF ma jippermettilhiex li taqdi l-ispeċifiċitajiet kollha relatati ma' frodi tal-ikel. Il-Kummissjoni qed tirrifletti fuq kif dan jista' jiġi indirizzat.

Rigward il-frodi tal-ikel b'mod ġenerali, il-Kummissjoni, fost affarijiet oħra, qed taħdem b'mod attiv biex ittejjeb il-kapaċità tal-UE u qed timmappja għodod u mekkaniżmi eżistenti bil-għan li jiġu żviluppati sinerġiji u kuntatti fost l-awtoritajiet kompetenti. Qed isiru wkoll sforzi biex titqajjem kuxjenza mal-atturi rilevanti permezz ta' netwerk ta' punti ta' kuntatt ta' frodi tal-ikel fl-Istati Membri u l-organizzazzjoni ta' taħriġ u konferenzi u li ssaħħaħ il-kooperazzjoni fost l-awtoritajiet tal-Istati Membri inkarigati mill-kwistjonijiet ta' frodi tal-ikel.

Il-Kummissjoni hija kunfidenti li t-titjib tal-kooperazzjoni transkonfinali f'każijiet ta' frodi potenzjali hija essenzjali sabiex tinżamm il-fiduċja tal-konsumaturi madwar l-UE fil-funzjonament tas-sistema ta' kontroll tal-UE fl-intier tagħha.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007444/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Food safety (RAFF)

The Commission recently published a report on the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RAFF) (IP/13/520), summarising the performance of the RAFF system. The report shows that the system has successfully prevented the recurrence of some serious food safety issues. Currently, RAFF serves as a system mainly for information exchange on food safety but not on food fraud. How does the Commission plan to improve the efficiency of the system for exchanging information regarding emerging food fraud phenomena in the Member States? How does the Commission plan to encourage Member States to report on food fraud, as this may have a negative impact on consumer confidence and willingness to buy products that are produced in the reporting Member State?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

During the horsemeat affair, the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) was used to exchange relevant information despite the fact that food fraud cases do not always fall within its scope. The case highlighted that the RASFF's current design does not allow it to cater for all of the specificities related to food fraud. The Commission is reflecting upon how this could be addressed.

Regarding food fraud in general, the Commission is, amongst other things, actively working to improve the EU's capacity and is mapping existing tools and mechanisms with a view to developing synergies and contacts amongst competent authorities. Efforts are also being made to raise awareness with relevant actors through a network of food fraud contact points in the Member States and organisation of trainings and conferences and to strengthen cooperation among Member States' authorities tasked with food fraud matters.

The Commission is confident that improving cross-border cooperation in cases of potential frauds is essential to maintain the confidence of consumers across the EU in the functioning of the EU control system as a whole.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007445/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Għajnuna biex jitnaqqas il-faqar fl-UE

Matul is-sessjoni plenarja ta' Ġunju fi Strasburgu, l-MEPs approvaw proposta għal fond ta' EUR 3.5 biljun għall-aktar ċittadini foqra tal-UE. Dan il-fond suppost ikun distribwit bejn l-2014 u l-2020 u jissodisfa l-ħtiġijiet l-aktar bażiċi ta' persuni bla dar u tfal imċaħħda. Skont il-Eurostat, fl-2011 wieħed minn kull erbat itfal Ewropej kienu f'riskju ta' faqar. Minbarra dan, skont il-Eurostat, 40 miljun ċittadin tal-UE sofrew minn privazzjoni materjali qawwija. Jidher li dawn iċ-ċifri jirrappreżentaw il-ħtieġa ta' baġit akbar għall-perjodu 2014-2020.

Il-Kummissjoni tippjana li żżid dan il-baġit ta' EUR 3.5 biljun biex jirrifletti l-ħtieġa akbar ta' finanzjament? Jekk dan hu l-każ, il-Kummissjoni mil-liema sors qed tistenna li tirċievi għajnuna finanzjarja addizzjonali? Iż-żieda f'dan il-baġit tista' twassal għal tnaqqis baġitarju f'oqsma oħra? Jekk iva, f'liema oqsma speċifiċi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-Kummissjoni tilqa' b'sodisfazzjon il-ftehim li sar bejn il-Parlament u l-Kunsill li jiġi allokat baġit obbligatorju ta' EUR 2,5 biljun lill-Fond Ewropew għall għajnuna Ewropea għal dawk l-aktar fil-bżonn, flimkien ma' EUR 1 biljun li l-Istati Membri jistgħu jimmobilizzaw fuq bażi volontarja.

Il-Kummissjoni ma tipprevedi l-ebda żieda ta' dawn l-ammonti li se jwasslu biex ir-riżorsi jkunu fil-livell tal-baġit tal-istrument attwali għal għajnuna għall-ikel.

Ta' min wieħed jinnota li r-riżorsi tal-FEAD se jitniżżlu fil-kapitolu tal-Koeżjoni tal-baġit u li l-allokazzjoni ta' kull Stat Membru se titnaqqas mill-pakkett tiegħu għall-Fondi Strutturali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007445/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Helping alleviate poverty in the EU

During the June Strasbourg plenary session, a proposal for a fund of EUR 3.5 billion for the poorest citizens of the EU was approved by MEPs. This fund is supposed to be distributed between 2014 and 2020 and to meet the most basic needs of homeless people and of deprived children. According to Eurostat, in 2011 one in four European children were at risk of poverty. Furthermore, according to Eurostat, 40 million EU citizens suffer from severe material deprivation. These numbers seem to represent a need for a higher budget for the period 2014-2020.

Does the Commission plan to increase this EUR 3.5 billion budget to reflect the increased need for funding? If so, from what source does the Commission expect to get the extra financial assistance? Would increasing this budget lead to budgetary cuts in other areas? If so, which specific areas?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(13 août 2013)

La Commission se réjouit de l'accord intervenu entre le Parlement et le Conseil de doter le Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis d'un budget obligatoire de 2.5 milliards d'euros, renforcé d'un milliard que les États membres pourront mobiliser sur base volontaire.

La Commission n'envisage pas une augmentation de ces montants, qui permettent d'amener les ressources au niveau du budget de l'instrument d'aide alimentaire actuel.

Il est à noter que les ressources du FEAD seront imputées au chapitre Cohésion du budget et que l'allocation de chaque État membre viendra en déduction de son enveloppe pour les Fonds structurels.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007446/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Sistema tal-eCall

Fit-13 ta' Ġunju 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposti li se jiżguraw li, minn Ottubru 2015, kull karozza u vettura ħafifa se jkunu mgħammra b'sistema tal-eCall. Skont l-IP/11/1010, is-sistema tal-eCall se ssir obbligatorja fl-UE. Skont il-MEMO/13/547 huwa mistenni li din is-sistema se ssalva 2 500 ħajja kull sena.

Il-Kummissjoni kif bi ħsieba tiżgura li kull karozza se tinkludi s-sistema tal-eCall sa' Ottubru 2015?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(1 ta' Awwissu 2013)

L-Artikoli 1, 2 u 4 tal-proposta tal-KE għal Regolament ([1]) jispeċifikaw li din tapplika għall-approvazzjoni tat-tip KE tal-vetturi tal-kategoriji M1 u N1. Il-manifatturi għandhom juru li, f'konformità mar-Regolament propost u l-atti ta' delega adottati rreferuti, it-tipi ġodda ta' vetturi kollha msemmija fl-Artikolu 2 huma mgħammra b'sistema eCall fil-vettura. L-Artikolu 7 qed joħloq l-obbligi għall-Istati Membri dwar il-ħruġ tal-approvazzjoni tat-tip KE fir-rigward tas-sistema eCall għat-tipi ġodda ta' vetturi. L-Artikolu 10 qed jistabbilixxi pieni għan-nuqqas ta' konformità.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/safety/com-2013-316_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007446/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: eCall system

On 13 June 2013, the Commission adopted proposals which would ensure that, as of October 2015, every car and light vehicle would be fitted with the eCall system. According to IP/11/1010, the eCall system will be made mandatory inside the EU. It is expected that this system will save 2 500 lives every year according to MEMO/13/547.

How does the Commission intend to ensure every car will include the eCall system by October 2015?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

Articles 1, 2 and 4 of the EC proposal for a regulation ([1]) specify that it applies to the EC type-approval of vehicles of categories M1 and N1. The manufacturers shall demonstrate that all new types of vehicles referred to in Article 2 are equipped with an eCall in-vehicle system, in accordance with the proposed regulation and the referred delegated acts. Article 7 is setting the obligations for the Member States concerning granting EC type approval in respect of the eCall in-vehicle system to new types of vehicles. Article 10 is setting the penalties for non-compliance.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/safety/com-2013-316_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007447/13
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(24 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: L-industrija tal-azzar fl-Ewropa

Il-Kummissjoni reċentament nediet pjan ta' azzjoni (MEMO/13/523) li jimmira biex l-industrija staġnata tal-azzar issir aktar kompetittiva fis-suq globali. L-isfidi ewlenin li taffaċċja l-industrija huma forza tax-xogħol li qed tixjieħ u żieda fl-ispejjeż tal-produzzjoni meta mqabbla mal-kompetituri f'pajjiżi terzi. Il-Kummissjoni kif tippjana li tgħin biex tiġbed aktar ħaddiema żgħażagħ fl-industrija? L-industrija tal-azzar iġġieldet biex tiżgura li l-kummerċ tagħha jkun profittabbli minħabba spejjeż tal-enerġija għoljin u liġijiet ambjentali aktar stretti fl-UE. Il-Kummissjoni kif tippjana li ssib bilanċ bejn il-protezzjoni ambjentali u ż-żamma tal-kompetittività tal-industrija tal-azzar Ewropea? Il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana biex tieħu passi biex issib soluzzjoni vijabbli biex tnaqqas l-ispejjeż tal-enerġija għall-produzzjoni tal-azzar?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Nhar il-11 ta' Ġunju 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat Komunikazzjoni li tistipula Pjan ta' Azzjoni għal industrija tal-azzar kompetittiva u sostenibbli fl-Ewropa ([1]). L-għan tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni huwa li jgħin lil dan is-settur jindirizza l-isfidi tal-lum il-ġurnata, b'mod partikulari t-tnaqqis attwali fid-domanda, u li jwitti t-triq għal kompetittività futura billi jrawwem l-innovazzjoni u joħloq it-tkabbir u l-impjiegi.

Il-forza tax-xogħol tal-industrija tal-azzar għaddejja minn bidla bla preċedent: sal-2025, madwar 30% mill-ħaddiema jkunu telqu. Għaldaqstant, jeħtieġ li l-industrija tkun kapaċi tiġbed talent żagħżugħ u kreattiv. Huwa għalhekk li l-Kummissjoni qiegħda tippromwovi l-ingaġġar ta' ħaddiema żgħażagħ fis-settur, bis-saħħa tat-tisħiħ tal-iskemi ta' apprendistat, u ta' proċeduri ta' ingaġġar orjentati lejn iż-żgħażagħ.

L-UE hija impenjata li tindirizza l-kompetittività marbuta mal-politiki tagħha fir-rigward tat-tibdil fil-klima. Mill-banda l-oħra, l-isfida taż-żidiet fil-prezzijiet tal-elettriku marbuta mal-ETS tista' tittaffa bl-għajnuna tal-Linjigwida tal-UE għall-Għajnuna mill-Istat ([2]), li jagħtu lok għall-kumpens ta' tali kostijiet f'ċerti ċirkustanzi, biex tiġi evitata t-tnixxija tal-karbonju.

Fost inizjattivi oħra biex inaqqsu l-kostijiet tal-enerġija, il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tipproponi li tkun ta' gwida għall-Istati Membri fir-rigward ta' skemi ta' appoġġ għall-enerġija rinnovabbli; li tanalizza l-kompożizzjoni u l-fatturi tal-prezzijiet u l-kostijiet tal-enerġija; u li tirrapporta dwar il-prezzijiet tal-elettriku f'isem l-industrija u l-komponenti tagħha fl-UE u f'ekonomiji kbar oħra. Il-Kummissjoni se ssejjaħ ukoll lill-Istati Membri biex jevalwaw l-impatt tal-miżuri kollha nazzjonali fir-rigward tal-prezz tal-enerġija għall-industriji li jużaw ħafna enerġija (EIIs), u biex jikkunsidraw miżuri xierqa biex inaqqsu l-kost tal-enerġija għal-EIIs.

([1]) COM(2013) 407, 11.6.2013.
([2]) 2009/C 235/04.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007447/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Steel industry in Europe

The Commission has recently released an action plan (MEMO/13/523), which aims to help the stagnant steel industry become more competitive in the global market. The main challenges faced by the industry are the aging skilled work force and higher production costs compared to competitors in third countries. How does the Commission plan to help attract more young workers into the industry? The steel industry has struggled to ensure that its business is profitable due to high energy costs and stricter environmental laws in the EU. How does the Commission plan to the find a balance between environmental protection and maintaining the competitiveness of the European steel industry? Does the Commission plan to take steps to find a viable solution to reduce the energy costs for steel production?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission adopted on 11 June 2013 its communication setting out an Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe ([1]). It aims to help this sector confront today's challenges, in particular the current drop in demand, and lay the foundations for future competitiveness by fostering innovation, creating growth and jobs.

The steel industry workforce is undergoing an unprecedented change; close to 30% will leave up to 2025. It thus needs to be able to attract young and creative talent. This is why the Commission promotes the employment of young people in the sector through the reinforcement of apprenticeship schemes and youth-oriented recruitment processes.

The EU is committed to addressing competitiveness linked to its climate change policies. The challenge of the ETS-related increases of electricity prices can however be mitigated by the EU State Aid Guidelines ([2]) which allow for compensation of such costs under certain circumstances to prevent carbon leakage.

Amongst other initiatives to reduce energy costs, the Commission proposes to issue guidance to Member States on renewable energy support schemes; to analyse the composition and drivers of energy prices and costs and report on electricity prices for industry and its components in the EU and major economies. The Commission will also call upon Member States to assess the impact of all national measures on the price of energy for Energy Intensive Industries (EII) and consider appropriate measures to reduce the cost of energy for EII.

([1]) COM(2013) 407, 11.6.2013.
([2]) 2009/C 235/04.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007448/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(24 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Utajnienie wniosku o derogację dla Polski w sprawie wspólnego systemu podatku od wartości dodanej dotyczącego pojazdów samochodowych, paliwa do ich napędu oraz innych wydatków eksploatacyjnych

Przedstawiciel Związku Dealerów Samochodowych z siedzibą w Warszawie poinformował mnie o skierowanym do Ministra Finansów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej wniosku z dnia 24 stycznia 2013 r. Przedmiotowy dokument dotyczył udostępnienia – w trybie przepisów ustawy o dostępie do informacji publicznej – kserokopii skierowanego do Komisji Europejskiej „Wniosku o derogację dla Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na podstawie art. 395 dyrektywy Rady 2006/112/WE w sprawie wspólnego systemu podatku od wartości dodanej", dotyczącego pojazdów samochodowych, paliwa od ich napędu oraz innych wydatków eksploatacyjnych.

Pismem z dnia 12 lutego 2013 r. Ministerstwo Finansów odmówiło udostępnienia powyższej informacji. Argumentując powyższą decyzję, Ministerstwo podniosło kwestię m.in. konsultacji, co do możliwości udostępnienia treści przedmiotowego wniosku o derogację z Komisją Europejską. Ministerstwo w swoim piśmie z dnia 12 lutego 2013 r. do ZDS wskazało, że Komisja Europejska zaznaczyła w odpowiedzi przekazanej dla Ministerstwa, że „udostępnienie przedmiotowego wniosku o derogację poważnie naruszyłoby proces podejmowania decyzji".

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać:

1. Czy Komisja Europejska zaleciła Ministerstwu Finansów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej utajnienie wniosku o derogację dla Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na podstawie art. 395 dyrektywy Rady 2006/112/WE w sprawie wspólnego systemu podatku od wartości dodanej, wobec czego nie może on stanowić informacji publicznej w rozumieniu przepisów krajowych, tj. art. 1 ust. 1 ustawy o dostępie do informacji publicznej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(9 sierpnia 2013 r.)

W dniu 5 lutego 2013 r. służby Komisji otrzymały od polskiego Ministerstwa Finansów wniosek o wydanie opinii w sprawie możliwości udostępnienia polskiego wniosku o derogację na podstawie art. 395 dyrektywy Rady 2006/112/WE w sprawie wspólnego systemu podatku od wartości dodanej.

W ramach konsultacji z polskim Ministerstwem Finansów służby Komisji odpowiedziały w dniu 8 lutego 2013 r., że stoją na stanowisku, iż udostępnienie przedmiotowego polskiego wniosku o derogację z dnia 3 grudnia 2012 r. naruszyłoby ochronę procesu podejmowania decyzji przez Komisję zgodnie z art. 4 ust. 3 akapit pierwszy rozporządzenia (WE) nr 1049/2001. Powodem takiego stanowiska służb Komisji był fakt, że polski wniosek o derogację był analizowany przez Komisję. Komisja nie podjęła jeszcze decyzji w tej sprawie, a udostępnienie tego dokumentu na obecnym etapie miałoby negatywny wpływ na odpowiednie dyskusje i oceny, a tym samym poważnie naruszyłoby proces podejmowania decyzji.

Równocześnie należy zauważyć, że wniosek o derogację jest dokumentem pochodzącym od władz polskich, dlatego też nie są one prawnie zobowiązane do konsultowania się ze służbami Komisji w sprawie jego ewentualnego udostępnienia. Służy Komisji nie są uprawnione do wydawania polskim władzom instrukcji w tej sprawie i wyraziły tylko swoją opinię, która nie jest wiążąca dla polskich władz.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007448/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(24 June 2013)

Subject: Classification as secret of Poland's request for a derogation from the common system of value added tax with reference to motor vehicles, their fuels and other running expenses

A representative of the Warsaw-based Polish Union of Car Dealers notified me of a request sent to the Polish Ministry of Finance on 24 January 2013. This document requested — in accordance with the provisions of the Polish Act on Access to Public Information — that a photocopy be made available of Poland's request to the Commission for a derogation, under Article 395 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax, with reference to motor vehicles, their fuels and other running expenses.

In a letter dated 12 February 2013, the Ministry of Finance refused to make this information available. In justifying its decision, the Ministry mentioned it had consulted the Commission regarding making the text of the aforementioned request available. In the aforementioned letter, the Ministry informed the Polish Union of Car Dealers that the Commission had indicated in its response to the Ministry that making the request for a derogation available would constitute a serious breach of the decision-making process.

In light of the above:

1. Did the Commission instruct the Ministry of Finance to classify as secret Poland's request for a derogation under Article 395 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax, with the result that it may not be considered public information as defined by national provisions, namely Article 1(1) of the Act on Access to Public Information?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

On 5 February 2013 the Commission services received from the Polish Ministry of Finance a request for opinion on the possible public disclosure of the Polish request for derogation under Article 395 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax.

In response to the consultation by the Polish Ministry of Finance, the Commission services replied on 8 February 2013 that their position is that the disclosure of the Polish request for derogation dated 3 December 2012 would undermine the protection of the decision-making process of the Commission in accordance with Article 4 (3), first paragraph of Regulation (EC) 1049/2001. The reason for this position of the Commission services was that the Polish request for derogation was under the scrutiny of the Commission. The Commission decision on this matter has not yet been taken and the public disclosure of the document at that stage would have a negative impact on the relevant discussions and evaluation thus seriously undermining the ongoing decision-making process.

At the same time it should be noted that the request for derogation is a document originating from the Polish authorities and, therefore, they have no legal obligation to consult the Commission services on its possible public disclosure. The Commission services have no power to instruct the Polish authorities on this matter and have only provided an opinion which is not binding on the Polish authorities.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-007449/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(25 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Αναθεώρηση των σχεδίων ιδιωτικοποίησης ΕΥΔΑΠ και ΕΥΑΘ

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Πρωτοβουλία Πολιτών για το νερό (European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) right2water) έχει συγκεντρώσει μέχρι τώρα 1,5 εκατομμύρια υπογραφές Ευρωπαίων Πολιτών που αντιτίθενται στα σχέδια ιδιωτικοποίησης του νερού σε διάφορες χώρες της Ευρώπης ([1]). Ως αποτέλεσμα, ο Επίτροπος Barnier σε δήλωσή του ([2]) αναγνώρισε ότι είναι καθήκον της Επιτροπής να λάβει σοβαρά υπόψη τις ανησυχίες που εκφράζονται από τόσους πολίτες, πρότεινε στους υπόλοιπους Επιτρόπους και στον πρόεδρο Barroso την αφαίρεση ειδικά του νερού από την πρόταση οδηγίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με την ανάθεση των συμβάσεων παραχώρησης ([3]) και τόνισε ότι θα συνεργαστεί με το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση.

Στην Ελλάδα όμως, τόσο η ΕΥΑΘ όσο και η ΕΥΔΑΠ έχουν προγραμματιστεί να ιδιωτικοποιηθούν στα πλαίσια των μνημονιακών δεσμεύσεων της χώρας, παρά το γεγονός ότι έρευνες δείχνουν ότι το 64% των ελλήνων πολιτών είναι αντίθετοι σε ένα τέτοιο ενδεχόμενο ([4]) και ότι οι δυο επιχειρήσεις δεν επιβαρύνουν το ελληνικό δημόσιο. Σημειώνεται ότι τον Ιούνιο 2010 το Υπουργείο Οικονομικών ανακοίνωσε ([5]) τη μείωση της συμμετοχής του Δημοσίου (από 74% σε 51%) στις ΕΥΑΘ και ΕΥΔΑΠ μέσω του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ ([6]), ενώ τον Οκτώβριο 2011 υπογράφηκε ([7]) η μεταφορά συγκεκριμένων περιουσιακών στοιχείων στο ΤΑΙΠΕΔ, μεταξύ των οποίων το 27% της ΕΥΔΑΠ και το 40% της ΕΥΑΘ. Τον Ιανουάριο ανακοινώθηκε ([8]) ότι, μέχρι τον Οκτώβριο του 2013, θα έχει ολοκληρωθεί η ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΕΥΑΘ και ότι το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ κρίνει προσφορότερη την ιδιωτικοποίηση του 51% ενώ θα δοθεί το υπόλοιπο 23% που κατέχει, για ιδιωτικοποίηση μελλοντικά. Τέλος, το 21% των μετοχών της ΕΥΑΘ διακινούνται μέσω του Χρηματιστηρίου Αθηνών.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Εκτιμά ότι στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, και με δεδομένες την πρωτοβουλία Barnier που προέκυψε ως αποτέλεσμα της Ευρωπαϊκής Πρωτοβουλίας Πολιτών right2water, καθώς και τη διαφαινόμενη αντίρρηση της πλειοψηφίας των ελλήνων πολιτών για την ιδιωτικοποίηση των εταιρειών ύδρευσης, θα πρέπει να αναθεωρηθεί η σχετική μνημονιακή δέσμευση της χώρας;

— Αν ναι, σε τι ενέργειες προτίθεται να προβεί άμεσα ο εκπρόσωπός της στην Τρόικα με δεδομένο το προαναφερθέν χρονοδιάγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης της ΕΥΔΑΠ και της ΕΥΑΘ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη δηλώσει ότι δεν έχει πολιτική που να υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να ιδιωτικοποιούν τις υπηρεσίες ύδρευσης. Η Επιτροπή αναγνωρίζει ότι το νερό είναι δημόσιο αγαθό που έχει ζωτική σημασία για τους πολίτες και ότι η διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων αποτελεί ευθύνη των κρατών μελών και, γι' αυτό τον λόγο, έχει πάρει ουδέτερη θέση επί του θέματος της δημόσιας ή της ιδιωτικής ιδιοκτησίας των υδάτινων πόρων, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ. Όσον αφορά την πρόταση οδηγίας για την ανάθεση των συμβάσεων παραχώρησης, οι συννομοθέτες συμφώνησαν ότι ο τομέας του νερού δεν θα καλύπτεται από την οδηγία. Η Επιτροπή θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί στενά την κατάσταση σε αυτόν τον ευαίσθητο τομέα.

Η επιλογή για το ποιες, σε ποιο βαθμό και με ποια σειρά θα πρέπει να ιδιωτικοποιηθούν οι δημόσιες επιχειρήσεις ή τα δημόσια περιουσιακά στοιχεία αποτελεί αποκλειστική ευθύνη των κρατών μελών, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των διάφορων δυσκολιών που αντιμετωπίζουν και των στόχων που έχουν καθορίσει. Στην ΕΕ υπάρχει ευρύ φάσμα δημόσιων και ιδιωτικών καθεστώτων ιδιοκτησίας όσον αφορά τις εταιρίες ύδρευσης. Τόσο στα δημόσια όσο και στα ιδιωτικά καθεστώτα διαπιστώνονται περιπτώσεις με προβλήματα, αλλά και περιπτώσεις που θεωρούνται επιτυχείς. Η Επιτροπή θεωρεί, εντούτοις, ότι η ίδρυση μιας ρυθμιστικής αρχής, καθώς και μια αγορά που λειτουργεί κατά τρόπο εύρυθμο αποτελούν τις απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις για την εγγύηση της επιτυχίας αυτών των καθεστώτων με στόχο την προστασία των συμφερόντων των καταναλωτών και τη διατήρηση της ποιότητας του περιβάλλοντος.

([1]) http://www.right2water.eu/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/docs/speeches/20130621_water-out-of-concessions-directive_en.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0897:FIN:EL:DOC
([4]) http://tvxs.gr/node/131469
([5]) http://www.savegreekwater.org/?p=1497
([6]) ΤΑΙΠΕΔ: Ταμείο Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου.
([7]) http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_economyepix_1_16/11/2011_462935
([8]) http://tvxs.gr/news/ellada/se-idiotes-mexri-ton-oktobrio-i-eyath

Τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία που περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης για τις χώρες του προγράμματος είναι το αποτέλεσμα των αποφάσεων των εθνικών αρχών και μόνο. Οι συζητήσεις στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος προσαρμογής επικεντρώνονται στις γενικές ανάγκες χρηματοδότησης του προγράμματος, περιλαμβανομένων των εσόδων ιδιωτικοποίησης από την πώληση κρατικών περιουσιακών στοιχείων σε επενδυτές, αλλά η κατάρτιση του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποίησης και η επιλογή των περιουσιακών στοιχείων αποτελούν αποκλειστική ευθύνη των οικείων κρατών μελών.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007449/13
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Review of privatisation plans for the Greek companies EYDAP and EYATH

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) right2water has so far gathered 1.5 million signatures of European citizens opposed to water privatisation plans in various European countries ([1]). As a result, Commissioner Barnier has issued a statement ([2]) acknowledging that it is the Commission's duty to take seriously the concerns voiced by so many citizens and has proposed to the other Commissioners and to President Barroso that water should be withdrawn from the scope of the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of Council on the award of concessions ([3]), and stressed that he would be cooperating with the European Parliament and the Council to this end. In Greece, however, plans are afoot to privatise both the EYATH and EYDAP utilities companies under the Greece's memorandum commitments, despite the fact that surveys show that 64% of Greek citizens are opposed to such a plan ([4]), and that the two companies do not impose any financial burden on the Greek State. It should be noted that in June 2010 the Ministry of Finance announced ([5]) a reduction in the State's share (from 74% to 51%) in EYATH and EYDAP through TAIPED ([6]), while in October 2011 an agreement was reached ([7]) to transfer certain assets to TAIPED, including a 27% share in EYDAP and a 40% share in EYATH. In January it was announced ([8]) that by October 2013 the privatisation of EYATH will have been completed and that TAIPED deems it more expedient to privatise 51% now and the remaining 23% share that it holds some time in future. Finally, 21% of EYATH shares are traded on the Athens Stock Exchange.

In view of the above, will the Commission say whether it considers that, in the light of Commissioner Barnier's initiative that was inspired by the European Citizens' Initiative right2water and the clear opposition of the majority of Greek citizens to the privatisation of water companies, the Greece memorandum commitment to privatise the utilities in question should be reviewed? If so, what steps will its representative in the Troika take forthwith, given the aforementioned timeframe for the privatisation of EYDAP and EYATH?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission has already stated that it does not have a policy of forcing Member States (MS) to privatise water services. The Commission recognises that water is a public good which is vital to citizens and that the management of water resources is a matter for MS, and therefore has a neutral position on the public or private ownership of water resources, in accordance with Article 345 of the TFEU. With regard to the proposal for a directive on the award of concessions contracts, the agreement has been reached between the co-legislators that water sector will not be covered by the directive. The Commission will continue monitoring closely the situation in this sensitive sector.

The choice of what, how far and in which sequence public assets or companies should be privatised remains entirely with the MS, taking into account the various constraints they face and objectives they set for themselves. EU-wide experience offers a variety of different public or private property models for water utilities. In both public and private models, there are cases of problematic outcomes, but also success stories. However, the Commission considers that the creation of a regulatory authority and an appropriate market functioning environment are crucial prerequisites for guaranteeing the success of any of these models to protect consumers' interests and maintain environmental values.

The assets included in the privatisation program for program countries are the exclusive result of the national authorities' decision. Discussions in the context of the adjustment programme are focusing on the overall program financing needs, including privatisation receipts resulting from the sales of state-owned assets to investors, but the design of the privatisation program and the choice of assets remain entirely with the MS concerned.

([1]) http://www.right2water.eu/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/docs/speeches/20130621_water-out-of-concessions-directive_en.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0897:FIN:EL:DOC
([4]) http://tvxs.gr/node/131469
([5]) http://www.savegreekwater.org/?p=1497
([6]) the Hellenic Republic Assets Development Fund
([7]) http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_economyepix_1_16/11/2011_462935
([8]) http://tvxs.gr/news/ellada/se-idiotes-mexri-ton-oktobrio-i-eyath

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007450/13
to the Commission
Derek Roland Clark (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Premature disclosure of inside information on the Cyprus 'bailout'

Thank you, Mr Rehn, for your three-line reply (to my Written Question P-004891/2013 *'Premature Disclosure of Inside Information on the Cyprus "bailout"')* in which you waited six weeks to studiously avoid answering my questions.

I did not ask who was responsible for examining and investigating the use of inside information for the purposes of prosecuting criminal offences in Cyprus. I asked whether the Commission was going to do anything to investigate wrongful disclosure of confidential information.

1. I therefore ask again (in respect of my Written Question P-004891/2013):

(a) when was the Commission first made aware of the allegations and suspicions I set out therein? and

(b) does the Commission intend to conduct any of the examinations or investigations listed therein?

2. If the Commission does not intend to conduct any such examination, investigation or any inquiry into the matters outlined in my Written Question P-004891/2013 (including for example indirectly by liaising with the relevant Cypriot authorities), what, if any, effort is the Commission going to make to ensure that EU taxpayers' money used in respect of the bailout of Cyprus has not covered, and does not cover, losses that have been increased as a result of criminal acts or breaches of confidentiality?

3. In respect of each question 1 and 2 above: if not, why not?

4. If the Commission is going to rely solely on the under-resourced police force of a bankrupt country to police the activities of people who have benefitted from a bailout of many billions of euros (or who have come into contact with information leaked from or by officials), what reassurance do taxpayers in the European Union have that any 'bailout' will be conducted as efficiently as possible and that the officials involved will not leak confidential information?

Out of a courtesy that is due to the nature of your office, I should mention that I intend to send copies of this written question and your reply (together with the previous written question and reply) to the Court of Auditors.

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

In reply to the Honourable Member question, investigating insider trading is outside the mandate of the Commission.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-007451/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(25 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Mandatul european de arestare — modificări ale legii croate privind cooperarea judiciară în materie penală cu statele membre

La 18 iunie 2013, Comisia pentru legislație a Parlamentului croat a sprijinit proiectul de modificare a legii croate privind cooperarea judiciară în materie penală cu statele membre. Mandatele europene de arestare (MEA) vor intra în domeniul de aplicare a legii privind cooperarea judiciară în materie penală cu statele membre, dar datorită amendamentului adus la articolul 132, MEA vor fi limitate la infracțiunile comise după 7 august 2002.

Totuși, astfel cum a fost indicat în publicația săptămânală germană *Focus* la 16 iunie 2013, autoritățile germane și-au exprimat deja intenția de a transmite Croației, după aderarea acesteia la UE, o cerere de arestare și de extrădare a lui Josip Perković, un fost agent al serviciilor de informații iugoslave, care este suspectat de organizarea asasinării dizidentului croat Stjepan Đureković, lângă München, în iunie 1983.

1. Are Comisia cunoștință de modificările aduse legii croate privind cooperarea judiciară în materie penală cu statele membre?

2. Poate Comisia să precizeze dacă aceste modificări respectă principiile statului de drept ale UE și normele și practicile care reglementează cooperarea judiciară în materie penală între statele membre?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(18 iulie 2013)

Comisia cunoaște modificarea adusă de Croația legislației sale privind cooperarea judiciară în materie penală și faptul că aplicarea mandatului european de arestare a fost limitată la infracțiunile care au avut loc după 7 august 2002.

Printr-o scrisoare din partea doamnei Viviane Reding, vicepreședinte al Comisiei, adresată Ministrului Justiției al Croației, Comisia a semnalat Croației că această acțiune nu este în conformitate cu Decizia-cadru privind mandatul european de arestare ([1]) și cu angajamentul de a se alinia la acquis-ul UE în domeniul justiției, luat de Croația în momentul aderării sale. Articolul 32 din decizia-cadru a permis statelor membre, în momentul adoptării acestei decizii de către Consiliu, să declare că instrumentul respectiv nu se aplică infracțiunilor comise înainte de o anumită dată. Conform prevederii, o astfel de declarație nu poate fi făcută în nici un alt moment. Prin urmare, Croația nu are posibilitatea de a face o astfel de declarație.

Comisia contează pe disponibilitatea autorităților croate de a consulta Comisia pentru a clarifica această problemă.

([1]) Decizia-cadru 2002/584/JAI a Consiliului din 13 iunie 2002 privind mandatul european de arestare și procedurile de predare între statele membre (JO L190, 18.7.2002).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007451/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: European Arrest Warrant — changes to the Croatian law on judicial cooperation in criminal matters with Member States

On 18 June 2013, the Legislation Committee of the Croatian Parliament supported the draft amendments made to the law on judicial cooperation in criminal matters with Member States. European Arrest Warrants (EAWs) will fall under the scope of the law on judicial cooperation in criminal matters with Member States but due to the amendment on Article 132, EAWs will be limited to crimes perpetrated after 7 August 2002.

However, as reported by the German weekly *Focus* on 16 June 2013, the German authorities have already expressed their intention to send Croatia, upon its accession to the EU, a request for the arrest and extradition of Josip Perković, a former Yugoslav intelligence agent who is suspected to have organised the assassination of the Croatian dissident Stjepan Đureković near Munich in June 1983.

1. Is the Commission aware of the changes introduced to the Croatian law on judicial cooperation in criminal matters with Member States?

2. Can the Commission explain whether these changes are in conformity with the rule-of-law principles in the EU, and with the rules and practices governing judicial cooperation in criminal matters among Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 July 2013)

The Commission is aware of the change introduced by Croatia to their law on judicial cooperation in criminal matters and the limitation of the application of the European arrest warrant to offences that have occurred after 7 August 2002.

By means of a letter of Vice-President Viviane Reding to the Justice Minister of Croatia, the Commission has pointed out to Croatia that this approach is not in conformity with the European Arrest Warrant Framework Decision ([1]) and with Croatia's commitment upon accession to full alignment with the EU Justice *acquis*. Article 32 of the framework Decision allowed Member States to make a declaration at the time of the adoption of the framework Decision by the Council to the effect that the instrument would not apply to offences committed before a specific date. This provision does not provide for such a declaration to be made at any other time. It is therefore not now open to Croatia to make such a declaration.

The Commission counts on the readiness of the Croatian authorities to consult the Commission with a view to clarify this matter.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States, OJ L190, 18.7.2002.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007452/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Discapacidad y educación. Recopilación de datos

Considerando que la educación es la vía de entrada a una participación plena en la sociedad y que sin ella los ciudadanos verán minada su capacidad para disfrutar de unos plenos derechos y asumir funciones importantes en la sociedad, principalmente por medio del empleo productivo;

Considerando la Convención Derechos Personas con Discapacidad;

Considerando la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020: un compromiso renovado para una Europa sin barreras;

Considerando el segundo de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, y en vista del contenido y falta de datos para el informe sobre el Estado Mundial de la Infancia 2013: niños y niñas con discapacidad elaborado por Unicef;

Considerando las evidencias del informe *Inclusive Education For Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges* realizado por la Red Académica de Expertos en Discapacidad Europeos (ANED), en el que se indica una grave carencia de recopilación de datos sólidos para elaborar estadísticas fiables y transparentes con que demostrar el progreso y los puntos por mejorar de los sistemas educativos de cada uno de los países miembros;

¿Cómo tiene pensado la Comisión favorecer una mejor recopilación de datos sólidos, necesaria para demostrar con transparencia y veracidad el estado del acceso a la educación de los menores con discapacidad, su trayectoria educativa y su rendimiento, así como los obstáculos y barreras a que se enfrentan o que son motivo de su fracaso escolar?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión reconoce plenamente la importancia de la recopilación de datos en su objetivo de ayudar a los Estados miembros a aplicar y lograr una verdadera inclusión en sus sistemas de educación y formación. Los objetivos expuestos en la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad ([1]) para el período 2010-2020 se reflejan en las políticas y los programas en materia de aprendizaje permanente. Erasmus+, el programa que sucede al Programa de Aprendizaje Permanente, mantendrá los mismos objetivos. Por otra parte, la Agencia Europea para el Desarrollo de la Educación de Alumnos con Necesidades Educativas Especiales (con sede en Odense, Dinamarca) contribuye notablemente a la consecución de estos objetivos, al proporcionar a los ministerios de educación, así como a otras partes interesadas de los Estados miembros y a escala europea, información fidedigna basada en datos contrastados para la planificación, la aplicación, el seguimiento y la evaluación de sus políticas ([2]).

En 2011, Eurostat, en colaboración con los Estados miembros, comenzó a trabajar para estudiar la posibilidad de recopilar datos destinados a establecer un indicador más armonizado y comparable sobre los alumnos con necesidades especiales. No obstante, el resultado de esta labor (estudios estadísticos a escala nacional y cuestionarios para el conjunto de veintisiete Estados miembros) demostró que tal indicador se limitaría al contexto de un aprendizaje segregado, más que inclusivo, por lo que podría no reflejar plenamente las tendencias actuales en este ámbito.

A petición de la Comisión, en 2012 se publicó un informe, elaborado por expertos, relativo a las necesidades especiales en los ámbitos de la educación, la formación y el empleo. En dicho informe figuran información y ejemplos de buenas prácticas que pueden servir de inspiración a los Estados miembros para establecer unas prácticas eficaces en materia de educación inclusiva ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.european-agency.org/
([3]) http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports/activities/reports/disability-special-needs-1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007452/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Compiling data on disability and education

Education is the gateway to full participation in society. Without education, our ability to enjoy our rights to the full and to take on important roles in society, primarily through employment, would be seriously undermined.

On that basis, the UN's second Millennium Development Goal aims to provide all children with access to education and involves measures to improve such access for children with disabilities.

In this specific area, the UN has drawn up its Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the EU has published its European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe.

However, two reports on the subject have highlighted the glaring lack of data which could serve as the basis for compiling reliable, transparent statistics demonstrating the progress being made by the education system of each member state, and the scope for further improvements, namely:

— the Unicef report on the State of the World's Children 2013: Children with Disabilities;

— the ANED (Academic Network of European Disability experts) report on Inclusive Education for Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges.

How does the Commission intend to improve the compilation of reliable data in this field, which is needed to give a true picture of the situation regarding access to education for children with disabilities, their educational development and their performance, and of the obstacles and barriers they face and which in some cases lead to them failing at school?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The importance of data collection is well recognised by the Commission in its goal of helping Member States implement and achieve true inclusiveness in their education and training systems. The objectives set out in the 2010-2020 European Disability Strategy ([1]) are reflected in the 'Lifelong Learning' policies and programmes. 'Erasmus+', the successor programme to 'Lifelong Learning', will maintain the same objectives. In addition, the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (Odense, Denmark) contributes significantly to meeting such objectives by providing ministries of education, as well as other stakeholders in Member States and at European level, with reliable evidence-based information in order to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their policies ([2]).

In 2011, Eurostat, in cooperation with the Member States, undertook work in order to assess the possibility of collecting data for a more harmonised and comparable indicator on pupils with special needs. However, the outcome of this work (statistics enquiries at country level and 27 country questionnaires) demonstrated that any such indicator would be limited to the context of segregated, rather than inclusive, learning, and could therefore not fully capture the current trends in the field.

At the request of the Commission, an expert report addressing special needs in education, training and employment was published in 2012. The report presents information and examples of good practice from which Member States can gain inspiration for effective inclusive education practices ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.european-agency.org/.
([3]) http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports/activities/reports/disability-special-needs-1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007453/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Aplicaciones en materia de educación de la Convención sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad y en la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020

Considerando que la educación es la vía de entrada a una participación plena en la sociedad y que sin ella los ciudadanos verán minados su capacidad para disfrutar de unos plenos derechos y asumir funciones importantes en la sociedad, principalmente por medio del empleo productivo;

Considerando lo ratificado en la Convención sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad;

Considerando el artículo 5 de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020;

Considerando el segundo de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, y el informe sobre el Estado Mundial de la Infancia 2013: niños y niñas con discapacidad, elaborado por Unicef;

Considerando el informe de la OCDE titulado «No más fracasos: diez pasos hacia la equidad en la educación (2007)», según el cual la educación justa e inclusiva desarrolla habilidades para participar plenamente en la sociedad, y el fracaso educativo conlleva enormes costes financieros y sociales a largo plazo en materia de salud, subsidios, bienestar de la infancia y en los sistemas de seguridad social;

Considerando las evidencias del informe *Inclusive Education For Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges* realizado por la Red Académica de Expertos Europeos de la Discapacidad (ANED), en el que se indica que los países miembros todavía no consiguen que una vez finalizada la educación obligatoria las personas con discapacidad se promocionen a niveles de educación terciarios o accedan al empleo; que hay un abismo en igualdad de oportunidades entre menores con y sin discapacidad; y que aún hay muchos países que segregan a los menores en instituciones especiales;

¿Qué medidas tiene pensado adoptar la Comisión para poner realmente en práctica lo ratificado y aprobado en la Convención sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad y en la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de agosto de 2013)

En el marco de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 y respetando plenamente las competencias de los Estados miembros, la Comisión promueve la educación de las personas con discapacidad en el sistema educativo general y mediante una ayuda individualizada eficaz. La Comunicación «Mejorar las competencias en el siglo XXI» ([1]) subraya los beneficios que reporta una enseñanza individualizada que responda a las necesidades de cada estudiante en escuelas que favorezcan una plena integración.

La Comunicación de la Comisión «Replantear la educación» ([2]) aboga por nuevos planteamientos que respondan mejor a las necesidades de todos los educandos, incluso de aquellos con discapacidades. La próxima iniciativa de la Comisión «Educación abierta» fomentará prácticas educativas abiertas adaptadas a las necesidades de las personas con discapacidad, combinadas con instrumentos acreditados para el aprendizaje en línea.

La Comisión apoya financieramente a Eadsne ([3]), que facilita la puesta en común de conocimientos sobre la situación educativa de las personas con discapacidad. Promueve una educación integradora de calidad mediante una cooperación política a largo plazo y el intercambio de conocimientos en toda Europa.

Los programas «Aprendizaje permanente» y «Juventud en acción» permiten a todos los ciudadanos europeos proseguir un aprendizaje. El nuevo programa Erasmus+ seguirá haciéndolo después de 2013, fomentando también la participación de los estudiantes con necesidades especiales.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/sec2177_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/com669_en.pdf
([3]) Agencia Europea para el Desarrollo de la Educación Especial.

En virtud de los acuerdos de asociación con la Comisión para el período 2014-2020, los Estados miembros pueden utilizar importantes recursos de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos 2014-2020 para la educación de personas con discapacidad y para infraestructuras educativas.

El Reglamento (CE) n° 1080/2006 permite que el FEDER sea utilizado para inversiones en educación, incluida la infraestructura. La accesibilidad de las personas con discapacidad debe respetarse en todos los proyectos de infraestructura financiados por el FEDER ([4]).

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lexuriserv/lexuriserv.do?uri=oj:l:2006:210:0001:0011:en:pdf — véase el artículo 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007453/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Education in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Education is the gateway to full participation in society. A lack of education undermines people's ability to enjoy full rights and to assume important roles in society, primarily through productive employment.

Consequently, the UN's second Millennium Development Goal aims to provide all children with access to education, which also means improving access to education for children with disabilities.

On the subject of disability, the UN drew up its Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the EU published its European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, of which Article 5 relates to education and training.

Similarly, Unicef prepared a report on the 'State of the World's Children 2013: Children with Disabilities'.

The OECD's report 'No More Failures: Ten Steps to Equity in Education (2007)', finds that fair, inclusive education develops the skills required to participate fully in society and that failures in the education system have enormous long-term financial and social ramifications, in terms of health, benefit payments, child welfare and social security systems.

What is more, the ANED (Academic Network of European Disability experts) report on 'Inclusive Education for Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges', shows that some member countries are still failing to get people with disabilities into employment or tertiary education once they have completed compulsory schooling. It also reports a gap in equal opportunities between children with disabilities and those without, and reveals that many countries still segregate disabled children in special schools.

How does the Commission intend to implement the provisions ratified and approved in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

With full respect of the Member States' competence, and as part of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, the Commission promotes the education of people with disabilities within the general education system and with effective individualized support. The communication 'Improving competences for the 21st Century' ([1]) notes the benefits of individualised teaching responding to each learner's needs in fully inclusive schools.

The Commission Communication 'Rethinking Education' ([2]), calls for new approaches, to better serve the needs of all learners, also those with disabilities. The forthcoming Commission initiative 'Opening up Education' will promote open educational practices tailored to the needs of the disabled, combined with accreditation tools for online learning.

The Commission financially supports EADSNE ([3]), that facilitates the sharing of knowledge on the educational situation of people with disabilities. It promotes inclusive education and the quality of education through long-term policy cooperation and knowledge exchange across Europe.

The Lifelong Learning and the Youth in Action programmes enable all citizens to pursue learning across Europe. The new Erasmus+ programme will continue to do so after 2013, promoting also the participation of learners with special needs.

Under the Partnership Agreements with the Commission for 2014-2020, Member States can plan to use substantial resources from the ESI Funds 2014-2020 for the education of people with disabilities and for education infrastructure.

Regulation No 1080/2006 allows the ERDF to be used for education investments including infrastructure. Accessibility for people with disabilities has to be respected in all infrastructure projects supported by the ERDF ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/sec2177_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/com669_en.pdf
([3]) European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:210:0001:0011:EN:PDF- See Art 16.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007454/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Formación del profesorado ante la diversidad

Considerando que la educación es la vía de entrada a una participación plena en la sociedad y que sin ella los ciudadanos verán minada su capacidad para disfrutar de unos plenos derechos y asumir funciones importantes en la sociedad, principalmente por medio del empleo productivo;

Considerando el artículo 24 de la Convención sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad;

Considerando el artículo 5 de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 en que la Comisión se comprometió a respaldar una educación y formación inclusivas y de calidad a fin de suprimir las barreras para las personas con discapacidad en los sistemas generales de educación y de aprendizaje permanente, y a facilitar una formación y apoyo adecuados a los profesionales de todos los niveles educativos;

Considerando las evidencias del informe *Inclusive Education For Young Disabled People in Europe*: *Trends, Issues and Challenges* realizado por la Red Académica de Expertos Europeos de la Discapacidad (ANED) en el que se señala que hay un abismo en la igualdad de oportunidades entre menores con y sin discapacidad; que aún hay muchos países que segregan en instituciones especiales a los menores con discapacidad, en especial a aquellos cuya discapacidad es sensorial (visual y auditiva) y/o intelectual; y, por último, que aquellos países que vinculan las dificultades de los estudiantes con discapacidad a cuestiones de organización pedagógica y a las prácticas escolares suelen tener mejores estadísticas de transición a niveles de educación secundaria y terciaria que aquellos países que ponen en práctica un enfoque diagnóstico de la discapacidad, esto es, que se centran más en las incapacidades atribuidas que en la capacidad real, poniendo un techo al potencial del menor y que, por consiguiente, se debe abogar por un enfoque mediante el cual las escuelas consideren la diversidad como un recurso para todo el estudiantado y no como una limitación;

¿Qué medidas tiene pensado poner en práctica la Comisión para que la formación del profesorado prepare a los futuros profesionales con estrategias, conocimientos y nociones de justicia social de modo que todos estén capacitados para responder ante la diversidad y las necesidades de aprendizaje de todos los estudiantes y se evite así la segregación y la exclusión por motivos de supuestas «necesidades especiales»?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

La Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020, que se refleja en las políticas del aprendizaje permanente, recomienda una educación de tipo inclusivo, sin segregación, especialmente en lo que se refiere a los niños con necesidades especiales.

Disponer de una formación del profesorado que aumente la sensibilización sobre discapacidad y justicia social para responder a las necesidades de todos los alumnos es fundamental para la aplicación de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 y del marco estratégico para la cooperación europea en la educación y la formación (ET 2020).

Los Ministros de Educación acordaron ([1]) que los profesores deben tener las capacidades pedagógicas para trabajar con clases heterogéneas y la Comisión coincide ([2]) en que estos deben poseer las competencias para poder enseñar a los alumnos con distintas capacidades y trasfondo social o familiar. Por tanto, la Comisión ha pedido a los Estados miembros que revisen la calidad de la formación del profesorado y de su desarrollo profesional con arreglo a una definición de las competencias del profesorado ([3]).

A través del método abierto de coordinación, la Comisión trabaja con los Estados miembros, que son los responsables del contenido y la organización de sus sistemas educativos y, por tanto, de la definición de las competencias del profesorado, para elaborar orientaciones políticas sobre la manera de lograr las reformas necesarias.

El programa Erasmus + apoyará económicamente la aplicación de estas reformas.

([1]) Conclusiones del Consejo sobre la mejora de la calidad de la educación del profesorado (DO C 300 de 12.12.2007).
([2]) Documento de trabajo de la Comisión titulado «Apoyo a las profesiones docentes», SWD(2012) 374 final.
([3]) «Un nuevo concepto de educación: invertir en las aptitudes para lograr mejores resultados socioeconómicos», COM(2012) 669 final.

La Agencia Europea para el Desarrollo de la Educación de Alumnos con Necesidades Educativas Especiales y la Red Académica de Expertos Europeos en Discapacidad ([4]) contribuyen a mejorar los conocimientos sobre las oportunidades y los niveles educativos de las personas con discapacidad.

Un informe NESSE ([5]) presenta la información y las mejores prácticas que pueden inspirar a los Estados miembros para elaborar políticas de educación inclusiva.

([4]) http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/education-training

([5]) Educación y discapacidad o personas con necesidades especiales: políticas y las prácticas en la educación, la formación y el empleo de los estudiantes con discapacidad o con necesidades educativas especiales en la EU (2012).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007454/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Teacher training — embracing diversity

Education is the gateway to full participation in society. A lack of education undermines people's ability to enjoy their rights to the full and to assume important roles in society, primarily through productive employment.

In Article 5 of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 the Commission made a commitment to support inclusive and high-quality education and training in order to eliminate barriers preventing persons with disabilities from enjoying full access to general education and lifelong learning schemes, and to provide adequate training and support for professionals working at all levels of education.

The ANED (Academic Network of European Disability experts) report on *Inclusive Education for Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges* states that there is a disparity between the opportunities available to young people who do not have disabilities and those who do. According to the report, there are still many countries which place young people with disabilities in special institutions, in particular those whose disabilities are of a sensory (visual and auditory) and/or intellectual nature. The report also argues that countries which consider the difficulties experienced by students with disabilities to be a result of the way in which the curriculum is structured and the teaching methods employed tend to have more disabled students moving into secondary and higher education than countries which apply a diagnosis-based approach to disability. The latter, in focusing more on what a young person cannot do, rather than on what he/she is capable of doing, limits that young person's potential. It is therefore important to champion an approach whereby schools see diversity as a resource for the whole student body, rather than as a limitation.

In view of the above, and of Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

How will the Commission ensure that trainee teachers are taught about disability and social justice and given suitable strategies so that they are equipped to embrace diversity and to meet the learning needs of all students, thereby preventing segregation and exclusion on grounds of 'special needs'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The 2010-2020 European Disability Strategy, which is reflected in 'Lifelong Learning' policies, recommends inclusive rather than segregated education, especially regarding special needs children.

Teacher education that raises awareness about disability and social justice to meet the needs of all students is key to the implementation of the 2010-2020 European Disability Strategy and strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020).

Education ministers agreed ([1]) that teachers should have the pedagogical skills to work with heterogeneous classes and the Commission concurs ([2]) that they require competences to teach learners with different abilities and backgrounds. It has therefore called on Member States to review the quality of teachers' education and professional development based on a definition of required teacher competences ([3]).

Through the Open Method of Coordination, the Commission works with Member States — which are responsible for the content and organisation of their education systems and therefore also for defining teacher competences — to produce policy guidelines on how necessary reforms can be achieved.

The 'Erasmus+' programme will financially support the implementation of such reforms.

The European Agency for the Development of Special Needs Education and the 'Academic Network of European Disability Experts' ([4]) contribute to increasing knowledge about opportunities and education levels of disabled people.

A NESSE report ([5]) presents information and best practices from which Member Sates can gain inspiration for inclusive education policies.

([1]) Conclusions of the Council on improving the quality of teacher education, OJEC C 300, 12.12.2007.
([2]) 'Supporting the Teaching Professions', SWD(2012) 374 final.
([3]) 'Rethinking Education', COM(2012) 669 final.
([4]) http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/education-training
([5]) Education and Disability/Special Needs: Policies and Practices in Education, Training and Employment to Students with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs in the EU, 2012.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007455/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Sistemas educativos plenamente inclusivos

Considerando que la educación es la vía de entrada a una participación plena en la sociedad y que sin ella los ciudadanos verán minadas su capacidad para disfrutar de unos plenos derechos y asumir funciones importantes en la sociedad, principalmente por medio del empleo productivo.

Considerando el artículo 24 de la Convención Derechos Personas Con Discapacidad.

Considerando el artículo 5 de la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020, en que la Comisión se comprometió a respaldar una educación y formación inclusivas y de calidad a fin de suprimir las barreras para las personas con discapacidad en los sistemas generales de educación y de aprendizaje permanente, y a facilitar una formación y apoyo adecuados a los profesionales de todos los niveles educativos.

Considerando las evidencias del informe «Inclusive Education For Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges», elaborado por la ANED, que señala que hay un abismo en igualdad de oportunidades entre menores con y sin discapacidad; que aún hay muchos países que segregan en instituciones especiales a los menores con discapacidad, en especial a aquellos cuya discapacidad es sensorial (visual y auditiva) y/o intelectual; y que aquellos países que vinculan las dificultades de los estudiantes con discapacidad a cuestiones de organización pedagógica y a las prácticas escolares suelen tener mejores estadísticas de transición a niveles de educación secundaria y terciaria que aquellos países que ponen en práctica un enfoque diagnóstico de la discapacidad, esto es, que se centran más en las incapacidades atribuidas que en la capacidad real, poniendo un techo al potencial del menor, y que, por consiguiente, se debe abogar por un enfoque mediante el cual las escuelas consideren la diversidad como un recurso para todo el estudiantado y no como una limitación.

¿Qué ajustes razonables cree la Comisión que se pueden adoptar de cara a reformar los sistemas educativos para que sean plenamente inclusivos? y con esto me refiero a que la educación de personas con discapacidad no solo deje de ser segregada sino que en aquellos casos en los que sea integrada en centros educativos ordinarios, los menores con discapacidad se incluyan en aulas ordinarias y se fomente su participación activa en la vida escolar y del aula de modo que no se den casos de marginación o exclusión por parte de profesionales ni del resto del estudiantado.

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

La Comisión considera que los sistemas de educación y formación deben ser inclusivos y que los niños con necesidades especiales deben asistir a clases ordinarias en centros escolares corrientes, promoviendo su participación activa en el colegio y la vida escolar. En este entorno inclusivo, las necesidades especiales requieren, sin embargo, una atención específica. Este es el enfoque adoptado en la Estrategia Europea sobre Discapacidad 2010-2020 y en el marco estratégico para la cooperación europea en el ámbito de la educación y la formación «Educación y Formación 2020».

Dado que los Estados miembros son responsables de determinar el contenido de la enseñanza y la formación, así como de la organización de los sistemas educativos, el papel de la Comisión consiste en ayudarles y aconsejarles para aplicar una verdadera inclusividad.

Para conseguir estos objetivos se contará en particular con el apoyo del nuevo programa «Erasmus+» para la educación, la formación, la juventud y el deporte en el periodo 2014-2020, y de la Agencia Europea para el Desarrollo del Alumnado con Necesidades Educativas Especiales (Odense, Dinamarca).

Un informe de la red de expertos europeos en ciencias sociales de educación y formación (*Network of Experts in Social Sciences in Education and Training*, NESSE) ([1]) presenta información y las mejores prácticas en las que pueden inspirarse las políticas de educación inclusivas de los Estados miembros.

Además, a través de la *Academic Network of European Disability Experts* (Red Académica de Expertos Europeos en Discapacidad) ([2]), la Comisión está aumentando los conocimientos sobre las oportunidades y los niveles educativos de las personas con discapacidad.

([1]) Education and Disability/Special Needs: Policies and Practices in Education, Training and Employment to Students with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs in the EU (Educación y Discapacidad / Necesidades Especiales: Políticas y Prácticas en Educación, Formación y Empleo para Estudiantes con Discapacidad y Necesidades Educativas Especiales en la EU), 2012.

([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/education-training

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007455/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Fully inclusive education systems

Education is the gateway to full participation in society. A lack of education undermines people's ability to enjoy their rights to the full and to assume important roles in society, primarily through productive employment.

In Article 5 of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 the Commission made a commitment to support inclusive and high-quality education and training in order to eliminate barriers preventing persons with disabilities from enjoying full access to general education and lifelong learning schemes, and to provide adequate training and support for professionals working at all levels of education.

The ANED (Academic Network of European Disability experts) report on *Inclusive Education for Young Disabled People in Europe: Trends, Issues and Challenges* states that there is a disparity between the opportunities available to young people who do not have disabilities and those who do. According to the report, there are still many countries which place young people with disabilities in special institutions, in particular those whose disabilities are of a sensory (visual and auditory) and/or intellectual nature. The report also argues that countries which consider the difficulties experienced by students with disabilities to be a result of the way in which the curriculum is structured and the teaching methods employed tend to have more disabled students moving into secondary and higher education than countries which apply a diagnosis-based approach to disability. The latter, in focusing more on what a young person cannot do, rather than on what he/she is capable of doing, limits that young person's potential. It is therefore important to champion an approach whereby schools see diversity as a resource for the whole student body, rather than as a limitation.

In view of the above, and of Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

What changes does the Commission think can reasonably be made to ensure that education systems are fully inclusive? People with disabilities should no longer be taught in separate institutions, but should attend ordinary classes in standard educational establishments and be encouraged to participate actively in school and classroom life so that they are not marginalised or excluded by teachers or other students.

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The Commission believes that education and training systems should be inclusive and that children with special needs should attend ordinary classes in standard educational establishments and be encouraged to participate actively in school and classroom life. In such an inclusive environment, special needs should nevertheless be addressed specifically. This is the approach of the 2010-2020 European Disability Strategy, as well as of the 'Education and Training 2020' strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training.

Given that Member States are responsible for determining the content of teaching and training and the organisation of education systems, the Commission's role is to help and advise them in pursuing true inclusiveness.

Progress towards these objectives will be supported in particular by the new 'Erasmus+' programme for education, training, youth and sport for the 2014-2020 period, and by the European Special Needs Agency (Odense, Denmark).

A NESSE report ([1]) presents information and best practices from which Member States can gain inspiration for inclusive education policies.

Moreover, through the Academic Network of European Disability Experts ([2]), the Commission is increasing knowledge about opportunities and education levels of disabled people.

([1]) Education and Disability/Special Needs: Policies and Practices in Education, Training and Employment to Students with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs in the EU, 2012.
([2]) http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/education-training.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007456/13
an die Kommission
Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE) und Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(25. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Weiterbehandlung der schriftlichen Anfrage E-001896/2013

In der Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-001896/2013 wurde darauf hingewiesen, dass sich die Vertretung der EU im Verwaltungsrat der Europäischen Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung (EBWE) bei dem Beschluss, der Kupfer- und Goldmine Oyu Tolgoi in der Mongolei einen Kredit zu gewähren, auf die Ansichten der Dienststellen der Kommission stützte.

Könnten weitere Informationen dazu vorgelegt werden, wie die Kommission die Vertretung der EU im Verwaltungsrat im Hinblick auf den Kredit der EBWE für die Kupfer- und Goldmine Oyu Tolgoi in der Mongolei beraten hat, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Strategie der EU in Bezug auf die Mongolei, durch die die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums stärker gefördert werden soll als Bergbauarbeiten?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(3. September 2013)

Die Unterlagen und der Schriftverkehr des EU-Vertreters im EBWE-Direktorium (einschließlich des Meinungsaustauschs mit Kommissionsdienststellen) über im EBWE-Direktorium beratene Fragen sind vertraulich und können nicht offengelegt werden. Dies ist in der Informationspolitik der Bank, die die Kommission im Rahmen ihrer engen Arbeitsbeziehungen zu dieser Einrichtung beachtet, ausdrücklich festgelegt.

Im Rahmen der Halbzeitüberprüfung des EU-Länderstrategiepapiers für die Mongolei wurden die Ziele dem sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Wandel in der Mongolei angepasst und ein Abschnitt über die wirtschaftspolitische Steuerung der mineralgewinnenden Industrie in das EU-Mehrjahresrichtprogramm 2011-2013 eingefügt. Die Strategie der EU in Bezug auf die Mongolei konzentriert sich also nicht nur auf die ländliche Entwicklung, sondern berücksichtigt auch den Bergbau.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007456/13
to the Commission
Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE) and Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Follow-up on Written Question E-001896/2013

In its answer to Written Question E-001896/2013, the Commission pointed out that the Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) drew on Commission services' views when deciding to grant a loan to the Oyu Tolgoi copper and gold mine in Mongolia.

In light of this, could the Commission provide further information with regard to the advice given by the Commission to the Director of the EBRD concerning the EBRD loan for the Oyu Tolgoi copper and gold mine in Mongolia, especially in light of the EU-Mongolia strategy which proposes a focus on rural development as opposed to mining activities?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

Documents and correspondence involving the EU Director of the EBRD (including his exchanges of views with Commission Services) on matters related to EBRD Board deliberations are confidential and cannot be disclosed. This is clearly set out in the Bank's Public Information Policy, which the Commission respects in the wider context of its close working relations with this Institution.

During the mid-term review of the EU's Country Strategy Paper for Mongolia, the objectives were aligned to the social and economic changes in Mongolia and a section on the economic governance of extractive industries was included in the EU Multiannual Indicative Programme 2011-2013. In this way, the EU-Mongolia strategy not only focuses on rural development but also considers mining activities.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007457/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(25 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Migrazzjoni irregolari

Fit-22 ta' Ġunju 2013 saret laqgħa bilaterali fi Tripli bejn il-Prim Ministru Malti, Dr Joseph Muscat u l-kontroparti tiegħu Libjan, Ali Zeidan.

Matul din il-laqgħa, il-Prim Ministru Zeidan wera r-rieda tiegħu li jikkoopera dwar il-kwistjoni tal-migrazzjoni irregolari. Madankollu, hu esprima wkoll il-ħtieġa għall-assistenza internazzjonali biex tgħin lil-Libja tgħasses il-fruntieri tagħha u tiżgura kundizzjonijiet umani għal persuni li jfittxu l-asil.

Fid-dawl ta' dan ta' hawn fuq, il-Kummissjoni x'tip ta' assistenza hija lesta li tipprovdi lil-Libja sabiex ittaffi l-problema tal-influss ta' migranti irregolari li jidħlu fl-Ewropa permezz ta' Stati Membri periferiċi bħal Malta?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjur Füle f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Settembru 2013)

Il-kooperazzjoni tal-UE mal-Libja tinkludi appoġġ biex jitjiebu l-migrazzjoni u l-ġestjoni tal-fruntieri bħala prijorita fundamentali. L-UE diġà tiffinanzja inizjattivi li jtejbu l-kapaċitajiet tal-awtoritajiet Libjani li jimmaniġġaw il-flussi migratorji b'mod li jirrispetta aħjar id-drittijiet tal-bniedem tal-immigranti u l-liġi dwar ir-refuġjati u li jinkludi inizjattivi speċifiċi ta' protezzjoni għal persuni vulnerabbli.

Dawn il-programmi jindirizzaw il-ħtiġijiet tal-migranti li jinqabdu f'sitwazzjonijiet diffiċli billi jipprovdulhom risponsi umanitarji xierqa u mfassla, bħalma huma l-provvista tas-servizzi tas-saħħa u l-mediċini, l-oġġetti tal-iġjene u assistenza biex jerġgħu lura lejn darhom volontarjament b'dinjità u sikurezza.

F'termini ta' bini ta' kapaċità, żewġ programmi tal-UE li għaddejjin bħalissa jappoġġaw direttament lill-Ministeru tal-Intern, inkluż dwar it-taħriġ tal-persunal tiegħu fuq id-drittijiet tal-bniedem u jappoġġaw ir-reviżjoni tal-qafas leġiżlattiv dwar il-migrazzjoni irregolari u kwistjonijiet relatati.

Barra minn hekk, fit-22 ta' Mejju 2013 il-Kunsill approva l-użu ta' missjoni tal-UE għall-assistenza mal-fruntieri fil-Libja. L-għan tal-missjoni hu li tappoġġa l-awtoritajiet Libjani biex jiżviluppaw kapaċità għat-titjib tas-sigurtà tal-fruntieri tagħhom tal-art, tal-baħar u tal-ajru f'terminu ta' żmien qasir, u jiżviluppaw Strateġija usa' ta' Ġestjoni Integrata tal-Fruntieri fuq medda twila ta' żmien. Fil-prattika, il-missjoni se tipprovdi taħriġ u konsulenza lill-awtoritajiet Libjani bil-għan li jsaħħu s-servizzi tal-fruntiera skont l-i*standards* internazzjonali u l-aħjar prattika.

Barra minn hekk, l-UE ffinanzjat il-Programm Seahorse li se jibda f'Settembru 2013 bil-għan li jżid il-kapaċità tal-awtoritajiet Libjani li jindirizzaw il-migrazzjoni irregolari u t-traffikar illegali billi jsaħħu s-sistema ta' sorveljanza tal-fruntieri tagħhom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007457/13
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Irregular migration

On 22 June 2013, a bilateral meeting was held in Tripoli between the Maltese Prime Minister, Dr Joseph Muscat and his Libyan counterpart, Ali Zeidan.

During this meeting, Prime Minister Zeidan expressed his willingness to cooperate on the issue of irregular migration. However, he also expressed the need for international assistance in order to help Libya patrol its borders and to ensure humane conditions for asylum-seekers.

In light of the above, what kind of assistance is the Commission willing to provide to Libya in order to alleviate the problem of the influx of irregular migrants into Europe through peripheral Member States such as Malta?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

EU cooperation with Libya includes support to improve migration and border management as a key priority. The EU already funds initiatives improving the capacities of Libyan authorities to manage migration flows in a way that better respects human rights of migrants and refugee law and that includes specific protection initiatives for vulnerable people.

These programmes address the needs of migrants caught up in distressful and difficult situations by providing them with appropriate and tailored humanitarian responses, such as provision of health services and medication, hygiene items and assistance to return home voluntarily in dignity and safety.

In terms of capacity building, two ongoing EU programmes are directly supporting the Ministry of Interior, including on training of its staff on human rights and supporting the revision of the legislative framework on irregular migration and related issues.

In addition, on 22 May 2013 the Council approved the deployment of an EU border assistance mission in Libya. Its objective is to support the Libyan authorities to develop capacity for enhancing the security of their land, sea and air borders in the short term and to develop a broader Integrated Border Management strategy in the long term. In practice, the mission will provide training and mentoring to the Libyan authorities with a view to strengthening the border services in accordance with international standards and best practice.

Moreover, the EU funded Seahorse Programme will start in September 2013 aiming at increasing the capacity of the Libyan authorities to address irregular migration and illicit trafficking by strengthening their border surveillance system.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007458/13
à la Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(25 juin 2013)

Objet: Aides apportées à la Somalie

Après le conflit interne de 1991 et la chute du dernier gouvernement national, la Somalie a vu son territoire se morceler, si bien que le Nord du pays a proclamé unilatéralement son indépendance sous le nom de Somaliland.

Le gouvernement de Mogadiscio ne contrôle donc qu'une partie du territoire somalien et dans la zone du Somaliland, le clan des Issaks, représentant +/– 35 % de la population, accapare le pouvoir et exerce de fortes discriminations, tant sur le plan social que politique, sur les autres clans de la région.

La situation dans le pays est donc extrêmement critique à de nombreux points de vue et les objectifs à atteindre avec le soutien de l'aide européenne touchent autant la gouvernance que l'éducation, le développement économique ou la sécurité alimentaire. Le 10e Fonds européen de développement (FED) prévoit d'allouer à la Somalie plus de 215 millions d'euros d'ici la fin de l'année 2013, d'où ces différentes questions:

1. Une partie de l'aide au développement européenne est-elle attribuée aux zones non régies par le gouvernement central de Mogadiscio?

2. Si oui, les autorités non reconnues du Somaliland bénéficient-elles d'un soutien (financier, matériel ou autre) de l'Union européenne?

3. La Commission a-t-elle conscience des discriminations fortes dont sont victimes les clans du Somaliland autres que le clan Issak?

4. Quelles mesures la Commission met-elle en place pour s'assurer que l'aide du FED bénéficie bien à l'ensemble de la population somalienne, en particulier à l'ensemble des clans du Somaliland?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(13 août 2013)

L'UE a mobilisé 412 millions d'euros dans le cadre de la coopération au développement en faveur de la Somalie pour la période 2008-2013 au titre du 10e FED. La majeure partie de ces fonds vise des zones accessibles suffisamment sécurisées et dotées d'un système de gouvernance transparent (Somaliland et Puntland). Il convient de noter que l'UE n'accorde pas directement de ressources financières aux autorités du Somaliland et du Puntland. Elle couvre un large éventail de domaines civils par l'intermédiaire d'organismes de mise en œuvre tels que les agences onusiennes et les organisations non gouvernementales (ONG). Les projets de l'UE ciblent en particulier les domaines prioritaires pour une coopération en Somalie, à savoir le soutien à une gouvernance efficace, l'éducation et les initiatives visant à stimuler le développement économique. L'aide au développement de l'UE dans les régions du sud et du centre de la Somalie est principalement destinée à Mogadiscio et à ses alentours directs, où les conditions de sécurité permettent aux partenaires au développement d'intervenir. Le soutien de l'UE au Somaliland concerne la population dans son ensemble, les groupes vulnérables bénéficiant d'un soutien spécifique. En outre, le soutien de l'UE à la démocratisation, aux Droits de l'homme et à l'égalité des sexes offre à tous les habitants du Somaliland les moyens d'instaurer la paix, la stabilité et la prospérité.

Les activités de l'UE s'étendent sur l'ensemble du territoire au bénéfice de la population somalienne dans toutes les zones accessibles, et ne sont pas fondées sur une distribution selon les clans. Les programmes respectent les domaines prioritaires thématiques susmentionnés et font l'objet d'un suivi attentif et d'une évaluation régulière.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007458/13
to the Commission
Anne Delvaux (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Aid to Somalia

Since the outbreak of civil war in 1991 and the fall of the last national government, Somalia has split in two, with the north of the country unilaterally proclaiming its independence and calling itself Somaliland.

The Mogadishu government controls only part of Somalia and in Somaliland the Isaaq clan, which makes up some 35% of the population, is monopolising power and engaging in harsh social and political discrimination against the other clans in the region.

So the situation in Somalia is dire in many respects and EU aid must focus as much on governance as on education, economic development and food security. More than EUR 215 million will be allocated to Somalia by the end of 2013 under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF).

1. Has any EU development aid been assigned to areas not under the control of the central government in Mogadishu?

2. If so, do the non-recognised authorities in Somaliland receive any support (financial, practical or other) from the European Union?

3. Is the Commission aware of the harsh discrimination suffered by Somaliland clans other than the Isaaq clan?

4. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that EDF aid is of benefit to all of the Somali population, in particular all of the clans in Somaliland?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The EU has mobilised EUR 412 million in development cooperation for Somalia between 2008-2013 under the 10th EDF, and the majority of these funds are targeted towards accessible areas with adequate security and transparent governance (Somaliland and Puntland). It is to be noted that the EU is not providing funds directly to the Somaliland and Puntland authorities. The EU works in a broad range of civilian sectors through implementing agencies such as the UN and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The EU projects are specifically targeting the priority areas for cooperation in Somalia, being supporting effective governance, education and stimulating economic development. EU development aid to South-Central Somalia is mainly targeting Mogadishu and direct surroundings where security conditions do allow for development partners to intervene. The EU support to Somaliland is to the population as a whole, with specific support for any vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the EU support to democratisation, human rights and gender empowers all the people of Somaliland to achieve peace, stability and prosperity.

The EU activities are developed throughout the entire country to the benefit of the Somali population in all accessible areas and are not based on any clan distribution. The programmes follow the lines of the thematic priority areas indicated above and are closely monitored and regularly evaluated.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007459/13
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(25 juin 2013)

Objet: Fermetures des usines de Poullaouen et Chateaugiron (France) du groupe Marine Harvest

Après Doux et l'incertitude autour de Gad, dans la région Bretagne en France, la société Marine Harvest, leader mondial de la production et de la transformation du saumon, implantée dans un grand nombre de pays et cotée à la bourse d'Oslo en Norvège, vient de décider de la fermeture de ses usines de Poullaouen et Chateaugiron en Bretagne. Plus de 450 salariés seront licenciés par cette entreprise au nom de la compétitivité.

1. La Commission est-elle au courant de ce projet de fermeture?

2. La Commission considère-t-elle que le concept de compétitivité, qui se traduit par du chômage et la dévitalisation de territoires, est compatible avec un projet d'Europe sociale?

3. Le groupe Marine Harvest a-t-il reçu des aides à la production de la part de l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(21 août 2013)

La Commission est vivement préoccupée par les conséquences sociales et économiques que peuvent avoir les licenciements prévus dans les usines de la société Marine Harvest à Poullaouen et Châteaugiron.

1-2. La Commission n'a pas le pouvoir d'intervenir dans les décisions des entreprises. Elle les incite cependant à respecter les bonnes pratiques d'anticipation et de gestion socialement responsable des restructurations. À la suite de la parution de son livre vert ([1]) en janvier 2012 et de l'adoption du rapport Cercas par le Parlement européen le 15 janvier 2013, la Commission entend proposer une communication établissant un cadre de qualité qui intégrera la législation et les initiatives de l'UE en matière de restructuration et présentera les meilleures pratiques à mettre en œuvre par toutes les parties concernées. La Commission tient également à souligner que les travailleurs touchés par des restructurations peuvent prétendre à un soutien du Fonds social européen et, sous réserve que les conditions nécessaires soient réunies, du Fonds européen d'ajustement à la mondialisation.

3. D'après les informations reçues, Marine Harvest n'a pas bénéficié d'aides à la production de la part de l'Union.

([1]) Voir les réponses et une synthèse à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en (en anglais).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007459/13
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Closure of Marine Harvest factories in Poullaouen and Chateaugiron (France)

After the events at Doux and the uncertainties surrounding GAD in Brittany, Marine Harvest — a world-leader in salmon production and processing, which has a presence in a large number of countries and is listed on the Oslo stock exchange — has decided to close its factories in Poullaouen and Chateaugiron in Brittany. More than 450 employees are to be laid off by the company as part of a drive for greater competitiveness.

1. Is the Commission aware of plans to close these plants?

2. Does the Commission believe that the concept of 'competitiveness', which turns out to be synonymous with unemployment and the destruction of communities, is consistent with the ideal of a social Europe?

3. Has Marine Harvest received any production aid from the EU?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission is deeply concerned at the social and economic consequences that the planned redundancies in the Marine Harvest's factories in Poullaouen and Chateaugiron may bring.

1 and 2. The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company's decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practices of anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring. Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([1]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report, the Commission will propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and will present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders. The Commission would also point out that workers affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

3. According to information received, Marine Harvest has not received EU production funding

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-007460/13
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(25 Meitheamh 2013)

Ábhar: Treoir maidir le fógraíocht mhíthreorach agus cosaint d'fhiontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide

Tá cleachtais mhíthreoracha comhlachtaí clárúcháin áirithe ag cur isteach go mór ar fhiontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide san Eoraip; tá breis is 13 000 gearán déanta mar gheall ar chleachtais den chineál sin. Tá billí agus sonraisc is ionann agus na mílte euro i gcomhair seirbhísí míthreoracha atá ar chostais uafásach ard á bhfáil ag gnóthais ar fud na hEorpa. Is iad na fiontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide a chruthaigh 85 % de phoist nua AE le 10 mbliana anuas agus, mar sin, ní mór cosaint agus cúnamh a chur ar fáil dóibh siúd. Ós rud é go bhfuil fiontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide faoi bhrú millteanach ag na scéimeanna clárúcháin seo, an bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt maidir leis an méid atá á dhéanamh chun a chinntiú go bhfuil fiontair bheaga agus mheánmhéide ar an eolas faoi na cleachtais mhíthreoracha seo agus faoi na roghanna atá ann dóibh siúd atá buailte acu?

Cad atá déanta go dtí seo ag an gCoimisiún d'fhonn a chinntiú go bhfuil an Treoir maidir le fógraíocht mhíthreorach agus chomparáideach, agus a bhfuil i gceist maidir le comhlachtaí a bhíonn i mbun camscéimeanna a chur ar dhúliosta, á gcur i bhfeidhm ag údaráis náisiúnta na mBallstát, de réir na teachtaireachta ón gCoimisiún chuig an bParlaimint agus chuig an gComhairle i mí na Samhna 2012?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Reding thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(20 Lúnasa 2013)

Tar éis Teachtaireachta a glacadh i Samhain 2012 ([1]), ghríosaigh an Coimisiún na Ballstáit gníomhú maidir leis an ábhar sin bunaithe ar an Treoir atá ann faoi láthair, go háirithe, i gcreat na ceardlainne a reáchtáladh an 1 Márta 2013.

Le linn an chruinnithe sin, phléigh na Ballstáit cásanna a bhí ann le déanaí agus mhalartaigh siad na dea-chleachtais maidir le forfheidhmiú in aghaidh cleachtas míthreorach idir ghnólachtaí. Léirítear ón taithí atá ann gur éirigh thar barr le bearta múscailte feasachta a rinneadh ar an leibhéal áitiúil chun gnólachtaí a chur ar an eolas faoi rioscaí a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ann. Spreag an Coimisiún na Ballstáit chun tacú lena leithéid de bhearta mar dhea-chleachtais.

Ag an am céanna, mar a fógraíodh sa teachtaireacht, tá an Coimisiún ag déanamh measúnú faoi láthair ar thionchar athbhreithnithe reachtaigh spriocdhírithe chun raon feidhme chur i bhfeidhm na rialacha atá ann faoi láthair a shoiléiriú agus chun sásra forfheidhmiúcháin trasteorann ceart a chur ar bun.

([1]) COM(2012) 702.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007460/13
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Protecting small and medium enterprises against misleading advertising

The misleading practices of certain registration companies are greatly affecting some small and medium enterprises in Europe; more than 13 000 complaints have been made concerning such practices. Businesses throughout Europe are getting bills and invoices to the tune of thousands of euros at astronomical prices for misleading services. Small and medium enterprises have created 85% of new jobs in the EU in the last 10 years and consequently these small companies need protection and assistance.

Since small and medium enterprises are under extreme pressure from these registration schemes, could the Commission provide information about what is being done to ensure that small and medium enterprises are informed of these misleading practices and about the choices available to the companies that are affected by them?

What has the Commission done to date to ensure that the Member States' national authorities have enforced the Misleading and Comparative Advertising Directive, and that companies involved in fraudulent activity are blacklisted, in accordance with the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 27 November 2012 ?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Following a communication adopted in November 2012 ([1]), the Commission urged Member States to act on this matter based on the current Directive, in particular, in the framework of the workshop organised on March 1st 2013.

During this meeting, Member States discussed recent cases and exchanged best practices in enforcement against business-to-business misleading practices. Experience shows that awareness raising actions undertaken at local level were very successful in informing businesses about potential risks. The Commission encouraged Member States to support such actions as best practices.

At the same time, as announced in the communication, the Commission is currently assessing the impact of a targeted legislative revision in order to clarify the scope of application of the current rules and to set up a proper cross-border enforcement mechanism.

([1]) COM(2012)702.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007461/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Errori di giudizio contro l'Italia

Nel vs. Occasional paper n. 138 (Macroeconomic Imbalances Italy 2013) sono contenuti giudizi sulla competitività dell'Italia assolutamente infondati e lesivi dell'immagine dell'industria manifatturiera italiana, che è la seconda d'Europa e la quinta al mondo per valore aggiunto. A pagina 8 si afferma: «Italy's specialisation model is very similar to that of emerging markets such as China, with most of the value added in relatively low-tech traditional sectors, mainly due to Italian firms' limited innovation capacity». Questo genere di giudizi è ampiamente contestato da economisti e da specialisti della materia. Escludendo le materie prime e l'energia e senza considerare il boom di alcune economie emergenti come la Cina, l'export italiano dei soli manufatti è cresciuto nell'ultimo decennio più della media del G-7 e meno soltanto di quello tedesco. L'Italia è uno dei soli 5 Paesi del G-20 a presentare un surplus strutturale con l'estero per i beni manufatti. Il modello di specializzazione dell'Italia è molto cambiato negli ultimi 15 anni. Nel 2012, su 94 miliardi di euro di surplus manifatturiero con l'estero, l'Italia ne ha generati ben 76,4 (cioè oltre l'80 % del totale) con macchine e apparecchi, elettrotecnica, mezzi di trasporto diversi dagli autoveicoli, prodotti in metallo e articoli in gomma e materie plastiche: dunque non certo con beni tradizionali. Inoltre, la quota di export dell'Italia verso i Paesi extra-UE è molto cresciuta ed è oggi più alta di quella della Germania. Nel 2012 l'Italia ha esportato verso i soli suoi primi 37 mercati emergenti quasi 100 miliardi di euro. Infine, secondo il Trade Performance Index elaborato dall'UNCTAD-WTO, su 14 macrosettori del commercio mondiale la Germania risulta prima per competitività in ben 8 settori, ma l'Italia segue subito dopo, davanti a tutti gli altri Paesi del mondo, con tre primi posti e tre secondi posti per competitività, nonché con un sesto posto.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Si rende conto dei danni d'immagine che un simile giudizio procura all'Italia, essendo i documenti della stessa Commissione in grado di influenzare non solo l'opinione dei governi degli altri Stati membri ma anche i media, i mercati finanziari e le agenzie di rating?

2. È disposta a modificare questi giudizi, tenendo conto dei dati che l'interrogante ha fornito e al quale sembrano inoppugnabili?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(6 agosto 2013)

Nel documento speciale (Occasional Paper) n. 138 ([1]), il personale della Commissione riconosce l'esistenza di imprese manifatturiere italiane competitive che hanno compiuto progressi a livello della qualità (cfr. pag. 34). Tuttavia, la transizione del settore manifatturiero italiano verso attività basate maggiormente sulle tecnologie è stata lenta e la quota della produzione di contenuto tecnologico medio e medio-elevato resta piuttosto limitata rispetto al valore aggiunto reale della produzione (cfr. pag. 33, grafico 3.14). L'indice delle prestazioni del commercio (Trade Performance Index) elaborato dall'UNCTAD/OMC mostra che nel 2011 l'Italia era ai primi posti in diversi settori: tessile, pelletteria, abbigliamento, manufatti di base e macchinari non elettronici. Tuttavia, la stessa banca dati indica che in questi (e altri) macro-settori la quota detenuta dall'Italia sul mercato delle esportazioni — un indicatore della competitività esterna ampiamente utilizzato — è calata significativamente fra il 2007 e il 2011. Secondo i servizi della Commissione, un fattore determinante è la notevole sovrapposizione fra le strutture delle esportazioni dell'Italia e di alcuni mercati emergenti, un elemento che espone l'Italia a una forte concorrenza internazionale. La valutazione della Commissione è ampiamente condivisa dai ricercatori del settore, come ha dimostrato recentemente una pubblicazione della Banca d'Italia (Questioni di Economia e Finanza, n. 193: «Il sistema industriale italiano tra globalizzazione e crisi»).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp138_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007461/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Mistaken opinions about Italy

Your Occasional Paper No 138 (Macroeconomic Imbalances Italy 2013) contains opinions about Italy's competitiveness that are completely unfounded and damaging to the image of the Italian manufacturing industry, which ranks second in Europe and fifth in the world in terms of value added. On page 8, it is stated that: 'Italy's specialisation model is very similar to that of emerging markets such as China, with most of the value added in relatively low-tech traditional sectors, mainly due to Italian firms' limited innovation capacity.' This view is widely contradicted by economists and specialists. Excluding raw materials and energy, and without considering the boom in certain emerging economies such as China, Italian exports of manufactured goods alone have risen by more than the G-7 average over the last 10 years, with only German exports doing better. Italy is one of only five countries in the G-20 to show a structural foreign trade surplus for manufactured goods. Italy's specialisation model has changed a great deal in the last 15 years. In 2012, out of a EUR 94 billion manufacturing surplus, Italy generated a full EUR 76.4 billion (more than 80% of the total) with machinery and equipment, electrical goods, non-automotive transport equipment, metal products, and rubber and plastic articles: in other words, certainly not with traditional goods. Furthermore, the share of Italy's exports to non-EU countries has greatly increased and is now higher than that of Germany. In 2012, Italy exported goods worth almost EUR 100 billion to its 37 main emerging markets alone. Finally, according to the UNCTAD/WTO Trade Performance Index, out of 14 international trade macro-sectors, Germany ranks first for competitiveness in eight sectors, but Italy is a close second, ahead of all the other countries of the world, with three best and three second-best positions for competitiveness, as well as one sixth position.

1. Is the Commission aware of the damage that such a view causes to Italy, since the Commission's documents are capable of influencing not only the opinion of other Member State governments, but also the media, financial markets and rating agencies?

2. Is it prepared to modify these views in the light of the data supplied in this question, which appears to be incontrovertible?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

In the Occasional Paper (OP) No 138 ([1]), Commission staff acknowledges the existence of competitive Italian manufacturing companies that have been able to move up in the quality ladder (see page 34). However, the shift of the Italian manufacturing sector towards more technologically-intensive activities has been slow and the share of medium-high and high tech in total manufacturing real value added remains rather limited (see page 33, Graph 3.14). The UNCTAD/WTO Trade Performance Index shows that Italy occupied top rankings in textiles, leather products, clothing, basic manufactures and non-electronic machinery in 2011. The same dataset however reveals that in these (and other) macro-sectors, Italy's export market share — a widely used indicator of external competitiveness — has eroded significantly between 2007 and 2011. The considerable overlap between Italy's and some emerging markets' export structures which exposes Italy to strong international competition plays in the Commission staff's view an important role in this respect. The Commission's assessment is widely shared among researchers, as demonstrated recently by a Bank of Italy paper (Questioni di Economia e Finanza, No 193: 'Il sistema industriale italiano tra globaliszazione e crisi').

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp138_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007462/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi della zona euro: la Corte Costituzionale tedesca deciderà per l'Unione

La Corte costituzionale federale tedesca è chiamata oggi a pronunciarsi sulla validità dell'*Outright Monetary Transaction* (OMT), il programma lanciato nel settembre 2012, ma finora mai attivato, da Mario Draghi che consente alla Banca centrale europea (BCE) di acquistare senza limiti obbligazioni emesse dai paesi che si sono indebitati a causa dell'attuale crisi economica. 35.000 cittadini tedeschi hanno presentato ricorso alla Corte costituzionale, chiamata ora a valutare la legittimità del programma OMT volto a salvare tutti i costi la stabilità della zona euro. La *Bundesbank* osteggia la proposta ritenendo la misura rischiosa per i contribuenti e limitativa del potere sovrano della Germania, in particolare nell'uso dei fondi pubblici. In caso di perdite, infatti, la BCE attuerebbe una ricapitalizzazione che verrebbe fornita dai paesi sovrani che ne detengono le quote; essendo la Germania il primo azionista con il 18 % del capitale totale, il peso maggiore ricadrebbe sui contribuenti tedeschi, seguiti dalla Francia e dall'Italia.

Può la Commissione precisare come valuta il fatto che sia la Corte costituzionale tedesca a pronunciarsi sulla legittimità dell'operato di un organo transnazionale e dotato di ampie autonomie e indipendenza come la BCE?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(6 agosto 2013)

La Commissione non si esprime in merito ad atti di organi giurisdizionali nazionali. L'articolo 263 del TFUE conferisce alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea il compito di pronunciarsi sui ricorsi per annullamento contro gli atti della Banca centrale europea. In base all'articolo 267 del TFUE gli organi giurisdizionali nazionali hanno la possibilità di sottoporre una questione pregiudiziale alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007462/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Euro area crisis: German Constitutional Court to make a decision on the EU's behalf

The Federal Constitutional Court of Germany was called upon today to rule on the validity of the Outright Monetary Transaction (OMT) facility, the programme launched by Mario Draghi in September 2012, but yet to be activated, whereby the European Central Bank (ECB) can buy unlimited amounts of bonds issued by countries that are in debt as a result of the current economic crisis. In Germany, 35 000 members of the public have submitted an appeal to the Constitutional Court, which has now been called upon to assess the legitimacy of the OMT programme intended to preserve the stability of the euro area at all costs. The Bundesbank opposes the proposal, as it considers it to be risky for taxpayers and a restriction on Germany's sovereign power, particularly in its use of public funds. In the event of losses, the ECB would recapitalise the banks, which would be funded by the sovereign countries holding ECB shares. As Germany is the majority shareholder with 18% of the total capital, German taxpayers would bear the brunt of the cost, followed by those in France and Italy.

Can the Commission say what it thinks of the fact that the German Constitutional Court is to rule on the legitimacy of the actions of the ECB, a transnational body that is largely autonomous and independent?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

The Commission does not comment actions taken by national courts. Article 263 TFEU entrusts the Court of Justice of the European Union with the responsibility of dealing with actions for annulment against acts of the European Central Bank. Article 267 TFEU opens the possibility for a national court to ask a preliminary question to the ECJ.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007463/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Falso miele di produzione cinese venduto in Europa

Coldiretti, l'organizzazione degli imprenditori agricoli a livello nazionale ed europeo, ha reso noto che i test effettuati negli Stati Uniti dagli esperti anticontraffazione sul miele importato dalla Cina hanno rilevato in tre barattoli su quattro la presenza di piombo e altre sostanze dannose per la salute tra cui il cloramfenicolo, un antibiotico batteriostatico. Il miele, venduto come puro negli Stati Uniti e in Europa, sarebbe in realtà un composto di sciroppo di mais o riso contenente dolcificanti a base di malto e zucchero grezzo di scarsa qualità, mentre solo una minima percentuale di prodotto sarebbe vero miele. Gli esportatori cinesi, per aggirare i dazi previsti sulle importazioni dalla Cina, spediscono il miele in Thailandia, Vietnam e Indonesia dove, prima di essere rietichettato, viene sottoposto a un processo di filtrazione per rendere impossibile la determinazione dell'origine esatta. Attraverso le nuove tecniche di ultrafiltrazione il miele è sottoposto a processi di riscaldamento, annacquamento e pressione meccanica che finiscono per eliminare anche il polline. Il prodotto finale così ottenuto, secondo quanto stabilito dalla proposta di modifica delle norme sullo status giuridico del polline nel miele adottata dalla Commissione il 21 settembre 2012, non può più considerarsi miele in quanto privo di polline.

È la Commissione a conoscenza dei fatti?

Considerando che il fenomeno, seppure in misura minore, interessa anche l'Europa, ritiene che la direttiva 2011/110/CE, del 20 dicembre 2001, sul divieto di eliminare il polline dal miele e sull'obbligo di informare correttamente il consumatore attraverso un'appropriata etichettatura qualora il filtraggio porti all'eliminazione di una quantità importante di polline, sia sufficiente a combattere il tipo di contraffazioni in oggetto e a garantire la sicurezza alimentare dei consumatori europei?

Dal momento che l'Europa produce 200 000 tonnellate di miele di qualità, circa il 13 % della produzione mondiale, come intende sostenere i produttori di miele europei costretti a far fronte ai prodotti di provenienza asiatica immessi sul mercato a prezzi molto più bassi?

Ritiene che la tecnologia laser a isotopi che, sulla base dell'analisi del vapore emesso dal miele riscaldato risale all'origine dei pollini determinando la reale provenienza del miele stesso, possa rappresentare una soluzione al problema nonostante si trovi ancora in fase di sperimentazione?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(13 agosto 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle accuse sull'adulterazione del miele importato dalla Cina.

La direttiva 2001/110/CE ([1]) stabilisce la definizione e le caratteristiche di composizione del miele. Il termine «miele» si applica unicamente al prodotto così come definito nella direttiva citata. Se il miele è stato ottenuto eliminando sostanze organiche o inorganiche estranee, con una conseguente riduzione significativa dei pollini, deve essere commercializzato sotto il nome «miele filtrato». L'utilizzo di tecniche di ultrafiltrazione per l'eliminazione del polline, finalizzate a rendere impossibile l'identificazione dell'origine, è vietato.

Gli Stati membri sono responsabili dell'applicazione della normativa UE sul miele, in particolare negli ambiti della sicurezza alimentare, delle norme di commercializzazione e dell'etichettatura. Per quanto concerne i controlli ufficiali, diverse analisi possono essere effettuate per individuare i residui, i pollini e le caratteristiche che determinano la qualità dei prodotti commercializzati con la denominazione di «miele» sul mercato europeo. I prodotti non conformi alla legislazione UE concernente il miele non possono essere commercializzati come «miele».

Le misure di sostegno al settore dell'apicoltura sono finanziate a livello UE nel quadro del regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007 ([2]), che istituisce un'unica organizzazione comune dei mercati, e del regolamento (CE) n. 1698/2005 ([3]) sul sostegno al programma di sviluppo rurale. Secondo il recente studio di valutazione sui provvedimenti in materia di apicoltura, tali misure di sostegno consentono di mantenere nell'Unione la produzione di miele di alta qualità. Inoltre, le importazioni verso l'UE di miele naturale sono soggette a un dazio convenzionale del 17,3 %.

La tecnologia laser a isotopi è una tecnica interessante che potrebbe risultare utile in alcuni casi particolari per determinare l'origine del miele.

([1]) GU L 10 del 12.01.2002.
([2]) GU L 299 del 16.11.2007.
([3]) GU L 277 del 21.10.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007463/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Tainted Chinese honey sold in Europe

According to Coldiretti, the trade association for Italian and European farmers, tests carried out in the United States by anti-counterfeiting experts on honey imported from China have revealed the presence, in three out of four jars, of lead and other toxic substances including chloramphenicol, a bacteriostatic antibiotic. The honey, sold as pure in the US and Europe, is actually a mixture of corn or rice syrup containing malt-based sweeteners and raw sugar of low quality, while only a tiny percentage of the product is real honey. To evade the duty on imports from China, the Chinese exporters ship the honey to Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia, where, before being labelled, it is put through a filtering process that makes it impossible to determine the true origin. Using new ultra-filtration techniques, the honey is subjected to a series of processes of heating, watering-down and mechanical pressure that eventually remove even the pollen. According to the proposal for amendment of the rules on the legal status of pollen, as adopted by the Commission on 21 September 2012, the final product thus obtained can no longer be considered as honey, since it contains no pollen.

Is the Commission aware of this matter?

Since this issue also concerns Europe, albeit to a lesser extent, does it consider that directive 2011/110/EC of 20 December 2001 — which states that no pollen is to be removed and that 'where such filtering leads to the removal of a significant quantity of pollen, the consumer must be correctly informed to that effect by means of an appropriate indication on the label' — is sufficient to combat this type of counterfeiting and protect the food safety of EU consumers?

Bearing in mind that Europe produces 200 000 tonnes of high-quality honey, around 13% of global production, how does it intend to support European honey producers faced with Asian products placed on the market at far lower prices?

Does it believe that laser isotope technology — which, by analysing the vapour given off by honey when heated, traces the origin of the pollen and determines the honey's true provenance — might offer a solution to the problem, even though this technology is still at the experimental stage?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the allegations that honey imported from China is adultered.

Directive 2001/110/EC ([1]) lays down the definition and composition criteria of honey. The term 'honey' applies only to the product as defined in the directive. If honey has been obtained by removing foreign inorganic or organic matter which results in a significant removal of pollen, it must be traded under the product name 'filtered honey'. The use of ultrafiltration techniques to remove pollen from honey so its origin cannot be identified is prohibited.

Member States are responsible for the implementation of EU legislation on honey having regard to in particular, food safety, marketing standards and labelling. In the context of official controls, different analyses can be performed to identify residues, pollen and to characterise the quality of products placed as 'honey' on the EU market. Products which do not to comply with EU legislation relating to honey cannot be marketed as honey.

Measures to support the apiculture sector are funded at EU level in the framework of the single Common Market Organisation Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 ([2]) and of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development programme ([3]). According to the recently performed evaluation study of the apiculture measures, these support measures allow for the maintenance in the EU of the production of high quality honeys. In addition, imports of natural honey into the EU are submitted to a conventional rate of duty of 17.3%.

Laser isotope technology is an interesting technique and could be useful in certain particular cases to determine the origins of honey.

([1]) OJ L 10, 12.01.2002.
([2]) OJ L 299,16.11.2007.
([3]) OJ L 277, 21.10.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007464/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Penalizzazione delle esportazioni di vini italiani a causa dei dazi russi

Il 4 luglio 2012 il Servizio doganale federale della Russia (FTS) ha fissato per le importazioni di vini italiani un livello di tassazione pari a 3 dollari per litro, quindi circa 1,60 euro per le bottiglie da 0,75 litri e 2,12 euro per quelle da 1 litro, mentre allo stesso tempo per i vini francesi e spagnoli i livelli fissati sono di 1,22 euro al litro e 0,80 euro per le bottiglie da 0,75 litri. Con tale provvedimento le esportazioni di vino italiano nel paese, che nel 2011 sono raddoppiate raggiungendo il 91 % del totale, hanno subito un aumento dell'imposizione fiscale che ha determinato un incremento del 30 % nei prezzi al consumo, con conseguenze negative sulla distribuzione, l'importazione e la vendita. Oltre a penalizzare i produttori italiani nella concorrenza con i maggiori esportatori europei, il provvedimento rischia di mettere in pericolo il posto di lavoro di quanti sono impiegati nel settore.

Considerando che in Russia l'80 % delle importazioni di vino riguarda etichette italiane e che la Russia rappresenta il terzo mercato di sbocco del vino «made in Italy» dopo Germania e Inghilterra, non ritiene la Commissione che sia opportuno tutelare le imprese vitivinicole italiane che hanno rafforzato nel tempo gli sforzi di penetrazione concentrando le loro risorse sul mercato russo?

Quali misure considera efficaci per porre rimedio a una situazione estremamente penalizzante e discriminatoria per l'Italia e quindi garantire il ripristino di pari condizioni per le esportazioni di vino italiano rispetto ai vini di altri paesi?

Considerando che i dazi all'importazione sui vini italiani riguardano non solo la Russia, ma anche Cina, Brasile, Giappone, Tailandia e India, ritiene che anche la conclusione di accordi multilaterali, bilaterali o regionali atti a infrangere le barriere protezioniste possa costituire una valida soluzione?

Come valuta i provvedimenti del governo russo, terzo partner commerciale dell'Unione dopo Stati Uniti e Cina, atti a ostacolare le esportazioni europee nel settore vitivinicolo, oltre che in quelli automobilistico e agricolo (con una perdita di 7 miliardi di euro l'anno), anche alla luce dell'adesione del paese all'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio (OMC) avvenuta lo scorso 22 agosto 2012?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(16 settembre 2013)

La Commissione condivide le preoccupazioni dell'onorevole parlamentare in merito ad un accesso equo dei vini europei al mercato russo. È tuttavia importante osservare che si tratta di un problema più generale che riguarda il metodo applicato dalle autorità doganali russe per determinare il valore delle merci alle frontiere. Sebbene la Russia applichi la stessa aliquota del dazio all'importazione, pari al 20 %, a tutti i vini europei, essa determina il valore delle importazioni basandosi sui «prezzi di riferimento» — listini prezzi non pubblici stabiliti dal governo — piuttosto che sul valore di transazione effettivo della partita. Questo problema riguarda soprattutto la frutta fresca e trasformata come pure il vino.

La Commissione sta affrontando il problema nel quadro del gruppo di lavoro UE-Russia sulle questioni delle frontiere doganali, che si è riunito l'ultima volta il 18 giugno 2013 ed ha esaminato la questione. La Commissione è determinata a portare avanti tale questione con le autorità russe fino alla sua risoluzione, tenendo conto degli impegni assunti dalla Russia a seguito dell'adesione all'OMC.

La Commissione conduce inoltre discussioni approfondite con la Russia per ottenere la rimozione di altre barriere commerciali alle importazioni dell'UE. Qualora non fosse possibile ottenere risultati a livello bilaterale, la Commissione non esiterà a prendere in considerazione i meccanismi multilaterali nell'ambito dell'OMC, come dimostrato il 9 luglio 2013, quando l'UE ha avviato una richiesta di consultazioni in merito alla tassa discriminatoria applicata dalla Russia al riciclaggio dei veicoli importati.

In generale la Commissione ritiene che la conclusione di accordi multilaterali o bilaterali con i partner principali per liberalizzare il commercio e gli investimenti sia il mezzo più efficace per promuovere gli interessi dei produttori dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007464/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Penalisation of Italian wine exports due to Russian import duties

On 4 July 2012, Russia's Federal Tax Service (FTS) set the import duty on Italian wines at USD 3 per litre. This represents around EUR 1.60 for a 0.75 litre bottle and EUR 2.12 for a 1 litre bottle, whereas the duty on French and Spanish wines stands at EUR 1.22 per litre, or EUR 0.80 for a 0.75 litre bottle. This measure means that Italian wine exports to Russia, which doubled in 2011 to around 91% of the total, have suffered a rise in duty that has produced a 30% increase in retail prices, with negative consequences for distribution, imports and sales. As well as penalising Italian producers in terms of competition with the main European exporters, the measure threatens to endanger the jobs of all those who work in the sector.

Since 80% of Russian wine imports carry Italian labels and since Russia is the third-largest market for Italian wines, after Germany and Italy, does the Commission not consider it appropriate to protect Italian wine-producing companies, which over time have strengthened their penetration efforts by focusing their resources on the Russian market?

What measures does it believe might be effective to remedy an extremely penalising and discriminatory situation for Italy and thus create a level playing field once again between Italian wine exports and wines from other countries?

Bearing in mind that import duties on Italian wines concern not only Russia, but also China, Brazil, Japan, Thailand and India, does it consider that the conclusion of multilateral, bilateral or regional agreements to break down protectionist barriers might be an effective solution?

How does it view the measures taken by the Russian Government — the EU's third-largest trading partner after the United States and China — to place obstacles in the way of European exports in the wine sector, as well as in the automotive and farming sectors (with a loss of EUR 7 billion per year), particularly in the light of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on 22 August 2012?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 September 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern regarding the fair access of European wines to the Russian market. However, it is important to note that the problem is a more general issue linked to the method applied by the Russian Customs authorities for establishing the value of goods at the border. While Russia applies the same import duty rate of 20% on all EU wines, it establishes the value of imports based on 'reference prices' — non-public pricelists set by the Government — rather than the actual transaction value of the consignment. This problem mainly affects fresh and processed fruit, as well as wine.

The Commission is addressing the problem within the framework of the EU-Russia Working Group on customs border issues, which last met and discussed the issue on 18 June 2013.The Commission is determined to pursue the issue further with the Russian authorities until it is resolved, taking into account the Russia's WTO accession commitments.

The Commission is also in intensive discussions with Russia to try to have removed other trade barriers to EU imports. If no results can be achieved bilaterally, the Commission will not hesitate to consider the multilateral WTO mechanisms, as demonstrated on 9 July 2013, when the EU launched a request for consultations against Russia's discriminatory recycling fee for imported vehicles.

In general the Commission considers that concluding multilateral agreements or bilateral agreements with key partners to liberalise trade and investment to be the most effective way of promoting the interests of EU producers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007465/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: I laboratori cinesi danneggiano le piccole aziende calzaturiere del Veneto

La Filctem, Federazione italiana lavoratori chimica tessile energia manifatture del Veneto lancia un allarme: quasi il 50 % del settore calzaturiero della zona di Riviera del Brenta è gestito da cinesi. Nonostante le fabbriche di scarpe registrino una ripresa nella produzione, decine di tomaifici, suolifici e tacchifici della zona rischiano la chiusura. È in aumento infatti il numero di laboratori cinesi che producono suole e tacchi impiegando lavoratori in nero e immigrati clandestini sottopagati con conseguenze negative per l'occupazione locale. Risparmiando sul costo del lavoro e senza alcuna garanzia di qualità, i cinesi vendono la propria produzione a prezzi più concorrenziali costringendo le ditte venete alla chiusura. Nel periodo 2001-2011 a fronte di una crescita del 66,7 % dei tomaifici con titolare cinese, passati da 30 a 200, quelli italiani sono crollati del 65 % passando da 380 a 130. La diminuzione ha riguardato anche il numero degli addetti che da 14.260 è passato a 10.516, con una flessione del 26 %.

Può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

— è a conoscenza di questa situazione?

— Non ritiene opportuno adottare misure di sostegno alle piccole aziende che, puntando sugli investimenti, sulla tecnologia e l'innovazione, garantiscono prodotti di qualità per i consumatori?

— Come intende intervenire rispetto alle politiche economiche cinesi che si basano sull'immigrazione clandestina e lo sfruttamento della mano d'opera in violazione dei diritti dell'uomo?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(22 agosto 2013)

L'Unione europea si oppone al lavoro dei cittadini di paesi terzi in situazione di soggiorno irregolare e ha adottato una normativa volta a sanzionare i datori di lavoro che impiegano tali persone ([1]). Ad ogni Stato membro spetta la responsabilità di decidere il numero di cittadini di paesi terzi che è disposto ad ammettere legalmente sul proprio territorio a scopo di lavoro. La direttiva sul permesso unico ([2]) sancisce, per i cittadini di paesi terzi che rientrano nel campo di applicazione di detta direttiva e che soggiornano regolarmente in base alla legislazione UE o nazionale, il diritto alla parità di trattamento rispetto ai cittadini del paese ospitante.

La Commissione si oppone anche al lavoro nero di cittadini di paesi terzi che soggiornano legalmente e ha avviato una consultazione ([3]) con i rappresentanti delle organizzazioni sindacali e datoriali in merito ad eventuali provvedimenti preventivi e dissuasivi dell'Unione europea.

Inoltre la Commissione continuerà, attraverso vari programmi, a sostenere le PMI, in particolare quelle ispirate a nuovi modelli di impresa e che perseguono nuove tecnologie, creatività e innovazione. Ad esempio il programma COSME ([4]) prevede, tra l'altro, il sostegno a beni di consumo con una marcata componente di design (quali tessili, abbigliamento, calzature e altri prodotti della moda).

Nel quadro del partenariato strategico globale tra l'Unione europea e la Cina, la Commissione mantiene un dialogo ad alto livello in materia di migrazione e mobilità nel cui contesto si discute anche dell'immigrazione clandestina; a ciò si aggiungono un dialogo strutturato UE-Cina in materia di lavoro, occupazione e affari sociali e il dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani. Le tematiche cui ha fatto riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare sono sollevate in tali sedi.

([1]) Direttiva 2009/52/CE.
([2]) Direttiva 2011/98/UE.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=it&catId=89&newsId=1936&furtherNews=yes
([4]) Programma per la competitività delle imprese e delle PMI per il periodo 2014-2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007465/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Chinese workshops damaging small footwear companies in the Veneto region

The Veneto branch of Filctem, the Italian Federation of chemical, textile, energy and manufacturing workers has sounded the alarm: almost half of the footwear sector in the Riviera del Brenta area is controlled by Chinese companies. Although shoe factories are seeing an upswing in production, dozens of upper makers, sole makers and heel makers in the area are facing closure. The number of Chinese workshops producing soles and heels using underpaid undeclared workers and illegal immigrants is on the rise, which is having negative consequences for local jobs. By saving on labour costs and providing no guarantee of quality, Chinese companies sell their products at more competitive prices, forcing local Veneto companies to close. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of Chinese-owned upper makers went up by 66.7%, from 30 to 200, while the number of Italian makers fell by 65%, from 380 to 130. The number of workers also fell from 14 260 to 10 516, a drop of 26%.

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— Does it think it should take steps to support small companies that focus on investment, technology and innovation to guarantee quality products for consumers?

— What will it do about Chinese economic policies, which are based on illegal immigration and labour exploitation in violation of human rights?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

The EU opposes the employment of illegally-staying third-country nationals and has put in place legislation to sanction employers who do so ([1]). Each Member State remains responsible for determining the volumes of third-country nationals it admits legally to work. The Single Permit Directive ([2]) gives third-country nationals covered by that directive, residing on the basis of EU or national law, the right to equal treatment compared to nationals.

The Commission also opposes undeclared work, of legally-staying third-country nationals, and has launched a consultation ([3]) with representatives of trade unions and employers' organisations on possible EU measures to prevent and deter it.

Furthermore, the Commission will continue to support SMEs, in particular those focusing on new business models, technologies, creativity and innovation through a number of programmes. For example, COSME ([4]) foresees, amongst other forms of funding, support for design-based consumer goods (such as textiles, clothing, footwear and other fashion goods).

Within the framework of the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, the Commission maintains a High Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility which also discusses irregular migration; a structured EU-China Dialogue on Labour, Employment and Social Affairs, and the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue. The topics mentioned by the Honourable Member are raised in these fora.

([1]) Directive 2009/52/EC.
([2]) Directive 2011/98/EU.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1936&furtherNews=yes
([4]) Programme for the Competitiveness of the Enterprises and SMEs for years 2014-2020.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007466/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: La diffusione delle sale slot pregiudica la sicurezza e l'ordine pubblico locale

Secondo l'amministrazione autonoma dei monopoli di Stato, l'Italia risulta essere il più grande mercato del gioco d'azzardo legale in Europa con un fatturato di 90 miliardi di euro registrato nel 2012. Il settore, previsto in ulteriore crescita nei prossimi anni, coinvolge solo in Italia 15 milioni di persone. Tuttavia, degli 8 miliardi che lo Stato ricava dall'attività, 6 sono destinati a curare le dipendenze da gioco. Si calcolano infatti circa 800 000 malati e 3 milioni di giocatori a rischio. Oltre al problema della dipendenza, la diffusione su larga scala delle sale slot ha registrato un impatto negativo sulle realtà locali: degrado e problemi di ordine pubblico, problemi sociali e affettivi per le famiglie rovinate dal gioco e aumento della criminalità organizzata che guadagna con il gioco d'azzardo più che con gli altri traffici illeciti. Dal momento che in molti casi le sale si trovano in prossimità di scuole, oratori e contesti delicati per l'ordine pubblico, per tutelare i propri cittadini alcuni comuni hanno approvato alla fine del 2012 il regolamento «Disposizioni per la valorizzazione del commercio negli ambiti del tessuto urbano consolidato» che vieta l'apertura di sale slot nei borghi storici, a 400 metri da luoghi di culto, ospedali, case di cura, cimiteri, scuole e insediamenti destinati all'educazione ed allo svago di bambini e ragazzi. Tali misure preventive, tuttavia, si scontrano con la legislazione nazionale che attribuisce la facoltà di rilasciare le licenze per l'apertura di nuove sale slot al questore, secondo quanto ribadito nella circolare del Ministero dell'Interno del 19 aprile 2012 in cui si afferma che il rilascio delle licenze di pubblica sicurezza alle sale può avvenire «eventualmente anche in contrasto con regolamenti comunali che, se adottati, non possono interferire con la competenza dell'autorità di pubblica sicurezza».

Nonostante il principio di sussidiarietà rimandi agli Stati membri la competenza legislativa riguardo alla disposizione geografica degli esercizi commerciali, alla luce del problema sociale rappresentato dal gioco d'azzardo negli Stati membri, non riterrebbe la Commissione opportuno intervenire a livello di UE per avvicinare le diverse legislazioni al fine di regolamentare la diffusione sul territorio dell'Unione delle sale slot?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

La Commissione riconosce la pertinenza e l'importanza del problema della tutela dei consumatori nel settore del gioco d'azzardo. Nella situazione attuale, gli Stati membri possono, entro i limiti stabiliti dalla Corte di giustizia dell'UE, stabilire gli obiettivi della loro politica in materia di gioco d'azzardo e il livello di protezione che intendono perseguire. Tuttavia, un'attuazione efficace da parte degli Stati membri delle rispettive legislazione nazionali, di cui uno dei prerequisiti è la conformità al diritto dell'UE, è essenziale per conseguire gli obiettivi di interesse pubblico delle rispettive politiche relative al gioco d'azzardo.

Come annunciato nella sua comunicazione sul gioco d'azzardo *on-line* ([1]), la Commissione sta preparando due raccomandazioni con l'obiettivo di fornire un elevato livello di protezione comune ai consumatori dei servizi di gioco d'azzardo, compresa la tutela dei minori, e di garantire una pubblicità del gioco d'azzardo socialmente responsabile. Sebbene le raccomandazioni siano incentrate sul gioco d'azzardo *on-line*, possono essere pertinenti anche per i servizi di gioco d'azzardo *off-line*. Gli Stati membri saranno incoraggiati ad attuare le raccomandazioni, inoltre, le discussioni portate avanti dal gruppo di esperti sul gioco d'azzardo favoriranno lo scambio di esperienze e di buone prassi, anche in materia di politiche nazionali di controllo del rispetto della normativa.

([1]) COM(2012)596 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007466/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Spread of slot machine arcades threatening local safety and law and order

According to the Autonomous Administration of State Monopolies, Italy is Europe's biggest legal gambling market, with a turnover of EUR 90 billion in 2012. The sector, which is expected to see further growth in the coming years, involves 15 million people in Italy alone. However, of the EUR 8 billion that the State receives from this business, EUR 6 billion is spent on treating gambling addiction. It is estimated that around 800 000 people suffer from this condition, and that 3 million players are at risk. In addition to the problem of addiction, the large-scale spread of slot machine arcades has had a negative impact on local communities: law and order problems, social and emotional problems for families ruined by gambling, and an increase in organised crime, which earns more from gambling than from other illegal activities. In many cases, the arcades are situated close to schools, youth clubs and places susceptible to law and order problems. For this reason, at the end of 2012 a number of municipalities sought to protect their citizens by adopting the regulation entitled 'Disposizioni per la valorizzazione del commercio negli ambiti del tessuto urbano consolidato' [Measures to develop commerce as part of a robust urban fabric], which prohibits the opening of slot machine arcades in historic towns, within 400 metres of places of worship, hospitals, nursing homes, cemeteries, schools or places intended for the education or entertainment of children and young people. However, these preventive measures run counter to national legislation that gives the head of the police authority the power to issue licences to open new slot machine arcades, as pointed out in the circular of the Ministry of Interior dated 19 April 2012, which states that police licences may be granted to arcades even where this conflicts with municipal regulations, which, if adopted, cannot interfere with the competence of the police authority.

Although the Member States, under the principle of subsidiarity, have legislative competence with regard to the geographical location of commercial operations, does the Commission not think it should, in the light of the social problem posed by gambling in the Member States, take action at EU level to harmonise the various laws, in order to control the spread of slot machine arcades within the EU?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission acknowledges the pertinence and importance of the issue of protection of consumers in the area of gambling. In the current situation, Member States may, within the limits established by the Court of Justice of the EU, set out the objectives of their gambling policy and the level of protection sought.Nonetheless, effective enforcement by Member States of their national legislation — a prerequisite of which is compliance with EC law — is essential for the attainment of the public interest objectives of their gambling policy.

As announced in its communication on online gambling ([1]) the Commission is preparing two recommendations with the aim of providing a high level of common protection of consumers of gambling services, including the protection of minors, and gambling advertising which is socially responsible. Although the focus of the recommendations is on online gambling they may also be relevant for offline gambling services. Member States will be encouraged to implement the recommendations. Furthermore, discussions in the Group of Experts on Gambling Services will encourage an exchange of experiences and good practices, including on national enforcement policies.

([1]) COM(2012) 596 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007467/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: L'industria italiana risponde alla crisi: l'esempio dei lavoratori di Helios Technology

Il 15 marzo scorso il Tribunale di Reggio Emilia ha dichiarato il fallimento di Aion Renewables, gruppo di cui fa parte Helios Technology di Carmignano di Brenta, una delle più importanti aziende del settore fotovoltaico in Italia. Di fronte al rischio di licenziamento, i 136 dipendenti si sono riuniti in cooperativa per salvare l'azienda veneta. Tale iniziativa ha permesso loro di godere di un anno di cassa integrazione straordinaria, una soluzione temporanea ma necessaria per garantire una forma di entrata ai lavoratori e alle loro famiglie.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza dei fatti?

2. Ritiene che l'iniziativa promossa dai lavoratori di Helios Technology possa fungere da esempio per i dipendenti di altre aziende a rischio licenziamento e, in tal caso, non riterrebbe opportuno portare a conoscenza dell'iniziativa gli Stati membri?

3. Come intende sostenere questa iniziativa di costituire una cooperativa, dei lavoratori di Helios Technology per il rilancio della produzione, alla luce anche dell'annuncio dell'8 maggio scorso di introdurre un sistema di dazi sui pannelli fotovoltaici importati nel mercato europeo con l'obiettivo di tutelare le aziende europee del settore?

4. Non ritiene che un intervento a sostegno di Helios Technology e delle altre aziende italiane del settore contribuisca a raggiungere l'obiettivo dell'Unione di incrementare entro il 2020 la quota di energia prodotta da fonti rinnovabili come stabilito dalla Comunicazione «Europa 2020 — Una strategia per una crescita intelligente, sostenibile e inclusiva» (COM(2010)2020 def.) del 3 marzo 2010?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(14 agosto 2013)

La Commissione non ha la facoltà di interferire in decisioni aziendali specifiche. Essa esorta tuttavia le aziende ad attenersi alle buone pratiche in materia di anticipazione e gestione socialmente responsabile delle ristrutturazioni.

In seguito al suo libro verde ([1]) del gennaio 2012 e all'adozione da parte del Parlamento europeo, il 15 gennaio 2013, della relazione Cercas, la Commissione proporrà una comunicazione che stabilisce un quadro di qualità volto a definire la legislazione e le iniziative dell'UE in materia di ristrutturazioni e a presentare le migliori pratiche da applicarsi a cura di tutte le parti interessate. Inoltre la Commissione ricorda che, in caso di chiusura di imprese, il datore di lavoro è tenuto a rispettare i propri obblighi in materia di informazione e consultazione dei lavoratori, in conformità al diritto dell'Unione ([2]).

La Commissione ricorda altresì che i lavoratori coinvolti in ristrutturazioni hanno la possibilità di accedere ai finanziamenti del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) e, qualora risultino in possesso dei requisiti necessari, del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione.

L'Italia si sta progressivamente avvicinando all'obiettivo nazionale del 17 % per l'energia da fonti rinnovabili, fissato in forza della direttiva 2009/28/CE sulle energie rinnovabili. Nel 2010, l'Italia registrava una quota di energia da fonti rinnovabili pari al 10,4 %, ben al di sopra dell'obiettivo intermedio pari al 7,6 %. Nonostante riconosca che sono necessari ulteriori sforzi anche in Italia al fine di raggiungere l'obiettivo per il 2020, la Commissione è altresì del parere che sostenere specifici fornitori di tecnologia delle fonti energetiche rinnovabili non ha necessariamente una ricaduta positiva in termini di incremento della quota di energia da fonti rinnovabili di uno Stato membro.

([1]) Cfr. le risposte e una sintesi accessibili dal link: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

([2]) In particolare, la direttiva 2002/14/CE che istituisce un quadro generale relativo all'informazione e alla consultazione dei lavoratori nella comunità europea, GU L 80 del 23.3.2002; la direttiva 98/59/CE concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi, GU L 225 del 12.8.1998; la direttiva 2009/38/CE riguardante l'istituzione di un comitato aziendale europeo o di una procedura per l'informazione e la consultazione dei lavoratori nelle imprese e nei gruppi di imprese di dimensioni comunitarie, GU L 122 del 16.5.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007467/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Italian industry's response to the crisis: the example of Helios Technology workers

On 15 March 2013, the Court of Reggio Emilia declared the bankruptcy of Aion Renewables, the parent group of Helios Technology based in the municipality of Carmignano di Brenta, one of the leading companies in the Italian photovoltaic sector. Faced with the risk of redundancy, 136 workers formed a cooperative to save the Veneto-based company. This initiative has enabled them to receive one year's allowance from the emergency wage guarantee fund, a temporary solution but one that is necessary to guarantee some kind of income for the workers and their families.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation?

2. Does it think that the initiative taken by the Helios Technology workers could serve as an example for workers in other companies at risk of redundancy and, if so, does it not think it should bring this initiative to the attention of the Member States?

3. How will it support this initiative by Helios Technology workers to set up a cooperative to restart production, also in view of the announcement of 8 May 2013 that a system of duties would be introduced for photovoltaic panels imported on to the European market, with the aim of safeguarding European companies in the sector?

4. Does it not think that supporting Helios Technology and other Italian companies in the sector could help achieve the EU's goal of increasing the amount of energy produced from renewable sources by 2020, as set by Communication (COM(2010) 2020 final) of 3 March 2010 'Europe 2020 — A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth'?

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

The Commission has no powers to interfere in specific company's decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practices of anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring.

Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([1]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report, the Commission will propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and will present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders. In addition, the Commission reminds that, in case of closure of undertakings, the employer has to respect his/her obligations relating to information and consultation of workers in accordance with EC law ([2]).

The Commission would also point out that workers affected by restructuring may qualify for support from the ESF and, provided that the necessary conditions are met, from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

Italy is currently on track towards its national 17% renewable energy target, established under Directive 2009/28/EC on renewable energies. In 2010, Italy had a renewable energy share of 10.4%, well above the interim target of 7.6%. While it acknowledges that further efforts are required also in Italy in order to meet the target for 2020, the Commission is also of the view that supporting specific renewable energy technology providers will not necessarily contribute to increasing a Member State's renewable energy share.

([1]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en

([2]) In particular, Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community, OJ L 80, 23.3.2002; Directive 98/59/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998; Directive 2009/38/EC on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees, OJ L 122 of 16.5.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007468/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Mancanza di una regolamentazione comunitaria sulle reti Lte: cittadini europei penalizzati

Gsm Association, l'Associazione internazionale di operatori di telefonia mobile, ha rilevato il crescente divario tra Europa e Stati Uniti nelle reti di ultima generazione. Le connessioni sulle reti statunitensi sono più veloci del 75 % rispetto a quelle sulle reti europee e già nei prossimi mesi il gap sarà destinato ad aumentare. Gli americani infatti, grazie allo sviluppo della tecnologia di ultima generazione Lte 4G, entro la fine del 2013 copriranno il 19 % delle connessioni con la nuova rete, contro una percentuale europea inferiore al 2 %, garantendo così ai loro utenti un ammontare di minuti cinque volte superiore e una quantità doppia di dati nella connessione rispetto ai cittadini europei. In Europe la struttura del mercato e i diversi regimi normativi degli stati membri, oltre a contrastare con la necessità di regole omogenee decisive per lo sviluppo del mercato, hanno ostacolato l'innovazione del settore. Attualmente Spagna, Irlanda, Slovacchia e Bulgaria non dispongono ancora dell'infrastruttura per le reti Lte mentre in 9 dei 23 paesi membri che hanno già introdotto la tecnologia avanzata, tra cui Francia, Italia e Olanda, nell'ultimo trimestre 2012 nessuna delle connessioni realizzate era attiva. Alla fine dello stesso anno, mentre negli Stati Uniti gli utenti Lte erano 31 milioni , in Germania erano solo 570.000, lo 0,6 % della popolazione, e in Gran Bretagna appena 41.000.

La Commissione:

— come valuta i mancati progressi dell'Unione nella diffusione delle reti di ultima generazione considerando che già nel 2008 il Commissario Europeo Viviane Reding aveva richiamato l'attenzione sul ritardo dell'Europain materia?

— può riferire circa lo stato attuale della situazione relativamente all'adozione della Comunicazione «Un'agenda digitale europea» (COM(2010)245) del 19 maggio 2010 che propone di realizzare un mercato unico digitale, di garantire una connessione «veloce» e «superveloce» accessibile a tutti e a prezzi competitivi attraverso reti di nuova generazione, di raddoppiare le spese pubbliche nelle sviluppo delle tecnologie dell' informazione e della comunicazione e al pacchetto di misure di attuazione dell'Agenda presentato il 20 settembre 2010 nel quale viene indicato l'obiettivo di assicurare entro il 2020 l'accesso internet a tutti i cittadini con una velocità di connessione superiore a 30 Mbitps e per almeno il 50 % delle famiglie con velocità superiore a 100 Mbitps?

— con riferimento al rapporto del 13 giugno scorso sull'avanzamento dell'Agenda Digitale in Europa, come intende procedere alla creazione di un mercato unico delle telecomunicazioni nel più breve tempo possibile affinché i cittadini europei possano beneficiare pienamente dei vantaggi delle innovazioni digitali?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(5 agosto 2013)

Nel contesto dell'attuale transizione globale verso un'economia digitale, l'Europa deve disporre delle reti ad alta velocità (sia fisse che mobili) più moderne per fornire la connettività necessaria. La Commissione si impegna pertanto attivamente a promuovere la disponibilità di reti di comunicazione ad alta velocità quali elementi fondamentali per rilanciare la crescita e l'occupazione in Europa. A tale proposito, l'Agenda digitale per l'Europa ha fissato obiettivi ambiziosi. I progressi sono monitorati periodicamente con il quadro di valutazione annuale ([1]). Alla fine del 2012, le tecnologie della banda larga veloce (VDSL, FTTP e cavo DOCSIS 3.0) capaci di fornire una velocità di download di almeno 30 Mbps erano accessibili al 54 % degli utenti europei. A gennaio 2013, il tasso di diffusione degli abbonamenti alla banda larga ultraveloce (con velocità di download di almeno 100 Mbps), era molto limitato e si attestava sul 2 % degli utenti.

A seguito dell'invito del Consiglio europeo di primavera a proporre misure concrete per completare il mercato unico delle TIC, la Commissione sta preparando una proposta legislativa sul mercato unico delle telecomunicazioni che consentirà agli operatori di fornire servizi digitali in tutta l'UE e a imprese e cittadini di usufruirne ovunque si trovino in Europa. In particolare, per quanto riguarda lo sviluppo di reti LTE e di altre reti senza fili, l'iniziativa affronterà la frammentazione delle norme di assegnazione dello spettro, un elemento che ovviamente incide sulle condizioni per gli investimenti nell'Unione.

([1]) Cfr. http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007468/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Lack of EU legislation on long-term evolution (LTE) networks penalising EU citizens

The GSM Association, the international association of mobile telephone operators, has pointed out the growing gap between Europe and the United States with regard to latest-generation networks. US network connections are 75% faster than European network connections and in the next few months the gap is set to get bigger. Development of the latest-generation 4G LTE technology means that by the end of 2013, 19% of US citizens' connections will be to the new network, compared with less than 2% in Europe, thus guaranteeing US users five times more minutes and double the amount of data over the connection compared with their European counterparts. In Europe, the market structure and the Member States' different regulatory systems, as well as conflicting with the need for standardised rules that are crucial for market development, have hampered innovation in the sector. At present, Spain, Ireland, Slovakia and Bulgaria still do not have the infrastructure in place for LTE networks, while in 9 of the 23 Member States that have already introduced advanced technology, including France, Italy and the Netherlands, none of the connections was active in the last quarter of 2012. Whereas there were 31 million LTE users in the United States by the end of 2012, in Germany there were only 570 000, 0.6% of the population, and barely 41 000 in the United Kingdom.

— What does the Commission think of the lack of progress made by the EU in rolling out latest-generation networks, given that in 2008 Commissioner Reding pointed out that the EU was lagging behind in this area?

— Can it say what is the state of play is regarding the adoption of Communication (COM(2010) 245) of 19 May 2010 'A digital agenda for Europe', which proposed creating a digital single market, guaranteeing competitively-priced 'fast' and 'ultra-fast' connections for all, by means of new-generation networks, and doubling public spending on developing information and communication technology, and regarding the package of measures to implement the agenda presented on 20 September 2010, which set the objective of ensuring Internet access for all EU citizens by 2020 with a connection speed greater than 30 Mbits and a speed greater than 100 Mbits for at least half of all households?

— With regard to the report of 13 June on the progress of the digital agenda for Europe, how will the Commission go about creating a single telecoms market as soon as possible so that EU citizens can take full advantage of digital innovations?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

As we witness a global transition towards a digital economy, Europe must have the most modern, high-speed networks (fixed and mobile) that deliver the connectivity which underpins it. The Commission is therefore fully committed to promoting the availability of high speed communications networks as a key driver for growth and jobs in Europe. In this respect the Digital Agenda for Europe has set ambitious targets. Progress is regularly reported in the annual scorebord ([1]). At the end of 2012, fast broadband technologies (VDSL, FTTP and cable DOCSIS 3.0) capable of providing at least 30 Mbps download were available to 54% of European households. As for ultrafast broadband subscriptions (at least 100 Mbps download), the take-up rate was very limited, at 2% of households, in January 2013.

Following the call by the Spring European Council to come forward with concrete measures to complete the single market for ICT, the Commission is finalising a legislative proposal on the Telecoms Single Market which would enable operators to provide digital services across the EU and allow citizens/businesses to enjoy such services from anywhere in Europe, wherever they are. In particular as regards the development of LTE and other wireless networks, the initiative would tackle the fragmentation of spectrum assignment rules, which is clearly undermining the investment environment in the Union.

([1]) see http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007469/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Un tappo innovativo per l'integrità dei prodotti e la sicurezza dei consumatori

Un'impresa del Nord Italia, produttrice di detergenti e disinfettanti, ha brevettato un tappo innovativo in grado di garantire la sicurezza dei prodotti contenuti nelle confezioni grazie ad un sigillo di garanzia capace di evidenziare l'eventuale apertura, e nello stesso tempo permettere di provare la profumazione e le altre caratteristiche del contenuto senza alterare la composizione e far iniziare la scadenza. Attualmente nessuna azienda produttrice di bagnoschiuma, shampoo, detersivi e cosmetici è in grado di garantire al consumatore l'acquisto sicuro dei propri prodotti, essendo questi facilmente apribili e manomissibili dallo scaffale dei punti vendita. Il brevetto prevede inoltre la possibilità di inserire nel tappo dei cosmetici una vaschetta con un campione di prodotto, mentre per gli altri detergenti sarà possibile utilizzare il tappo come deodorante per ambiente.

La Commissione:

— ritiene che questo tappo possa rappresentare uno strumento valido per tutelare l'integrità dei prodotti e la sicurezza dei consumatori nel rispetto della Direttiva 2003/15/CE del Parlamento e del Consiglio del 27 febbraio 2003 che modifica la direttiva 76/768/CEE del Consiglio concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri relative ai prodotti cosmetici?

— dal momento che l'eventuale introduzione di codesto tappo beneficerà sia i produttori che i consumatori, ritiene opportuno sostenere, ed eventualmente in quale modo, la realizzazione del brevetto?

Risposta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2013)

Il regolamento (CE) n. 1223/2009 ([1]) («regolamento sui prodotti cosmetici») contiene disposizioni generali in materia di etichettatura e imballaggio dei prodotti cosmetici. L'obiettivo di queste norme è garantire che i prodotti cosmetici messi a disposizione sul mercato siano sicuri per la salute umana se utilizzati in condizioni d'uso normali o ragionevolmente prevedibili, tenuto conto in particolare della presentazione del prodotto, dell'etichettatura e delle istruzioni per l'uso e l'eliminazione, o di qualsiasi altra indicazione o informazione da parte della persona responsabile.

Il regolamento sui prodotti cosmetici non prevede l'obbligo di un tappo di sicurezza per sigillare i prodotti cosmetici. È responsabilità del fabbricante garantire la sicurezza dei prodotti cosmetici immessi sul mercato. Il fabbricante che ritenga necessario sigillare alcuni prodotti per evitarne la contaminazione dovrebbe provvedere in tal senso.

Il sistema dei brevetti svolge un ruolo importante nel promuovere l'innovazione, consentendo, tra l'altro, al titolare del brevetto di attrarre fondi da investire nella commercializzazione dell'invenzione brevettata. La Commissione non finanzia la commercializzazione di singoli brevetti. Tuttavia, l'helpdesk europeo sui DPI, progetto finanziato dalla Commissione, fornisce una prima consulenza e formazione in materia di proprietà intellettuale alle PMI dell'UE che aderiscono a partenariati transnazionali. Uno degli aspetti trattati è la gestione della proprietà intellettuale e il titolare del brevetto può senza dubbio avvalersi di questo servizio.

L'UE offre inoltre una serie di programmi di finanziamento e di misure a sostegno dell'innovazione e delle imprese a forte crescita: ne è un esempio la prossima iniziativa Orizzonte 2020. Va infine rilevato che qualsiasi sostegno finanziario a progetti innovativi si basa su un processo di selezione competitiva.

([1]) GU L 342 del 30.11.2009, pag. 59.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007469/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: An innovative cap to guarantee the integrity of products and consumer safety

A detergent and disinfectant manufacturer based in northern Italy has patented an innovative cap that can guarantee the safety of packaged products, thanks to a seal that can show if the packaging has been opened and at the same time allows the consumer to smell the product and sample the other characteristics of the product contained in the packaging without altering the composition or causing the contents to start to deteriorate. At present, no manufacturer of bubble bath, shampoo, cleansers and cosmetics can guarantee consumers that the product they have bought is safe, as products can easily be opened and tampered with on the shop shelves. The patent also provides for the possibility of including in the cap of cosmetics containers a reservoir containing a sample of the product, while for other detergents it will be possible to use the cap as an air freshener.

— Does the Commission think that this cap might be a good way of protecting the integrity of products and consumer safety in compliance with Directive 2003/15/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 February 2003 amending Council Directive 76/768/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to cosmetic products?

— Given that were this cap to be introduced it would benefit manufacturers and consumers, does the Commission think it should support the patent, and if so, how?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([1]) (Cosmetics Regulation) contains general provisions on the labelling and packaging of cosmetic products. The aim of these provisions is to ensure that cosmetic products, made available on the market, are safe for human health when used under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions of use, taking account, in particular, of the product's presentation, its labelling, instructions for its use and disposal, or any other indication or information provided by the responsible person.

The Cosmetics Regulation does not foresee an obligation to seal cosmetic products with a safety cap. It is the responsibility of the manufacturer to ensure the safety of the cosmetic product placed on the market. If manufacturers consider that some products need to be sealed in order to protect them from contamination, they should do so.

The patent system plays an important role in fostering innovation and enabling the patent holder to attract funding to invest in the commercialisation of the patented invention. The Commission does not fund on an individual basis the commercialisation of patents. However, the European IPR Helpdesk, a project funded by the Commission, provides first line advice and training on IP to EU SMEs involved in transnational partnerships. This includes IP management and the patent holder is very welcome to use this service.

In addition, the EU offers a range of funding programs and measures supporting innovation and high-growth companies, such as the upcoming Horizon 2020. Please note that any financial support to innovative projects is based on a competitive process.

([1]) OJ L 342, 30.11.2009, p. 59.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007470/13
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Aspetti linguistici nell'applicazione della direttiva 2002/22/CE sul numero universale di emergenza

La direttiva 2002/22/CE, come modificata dalla direttiva 2009/136/CE, prevede l'esistenza di un numero universale di emergenza, il 112.

In particolare gli articoli 22, paragrafo 2, articolo 26, paragrafo 2, e l'articolo 1, paragrafo 36, della direttiva 2002/22/CE fanno riferimento alla qualità del servizio, all'accesso a informazioni complete e di facile consultazione e al trattamento opportuno per i clienti tramite un'adeguata risposta.

Vista la libertà di movimento dei cittadini europei, è piuttosto probabile che il 112 venga digitato da un cittadino che non conosce la lingua ufficiale del Paese in cui si trova. In tal caso potrebbero esserci dei problemi nell'avere un adeguato soccorso chiamando il numero universale di emergenza, riducendo quindi l'efficacia del servizio.

Può pertanto la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. Quanta attenzione è stata prestata alla problematica linguistica nel recepimento da parte degli Stati membri?

2. A suo parere per la mancanza di disposizioni specifiche il servizio può risultare meno efficace?

3. Come intende la Commissione supplire ove sia rilevato un vuoto normativo?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(1º agosto 2013)

L'articolo 26 della direttiva 2002/22/CE sul servizio universale stabilisce le norme per il funzionamento del numero universale europeo di emergenza 112. Tali disposizioni prevedono che alle chiamate al 112 sia fornita una risposta adeguata e che dette chiamate siano gestite nel modo più consono all'organizzazione nazionale dei sistemi di emergenza. Sebbene non vi sia l'obbligo specifico di gestire le chiamate al 112 nelle lingue dei vari Stati membri, data la crescente necessità di rendere questo servizio più efficace per i cittadini che viaggiano o per chi proviene da paesi diversi, la maggior parte degli Stati membri ha adottato misure volte ad affrontare le questioni linguistiche.

Gli operatori del 112 sono dunque più preparati a rispondere alle chiamate in altre lingue dell'Unione europea. In base alle informazioni fornite dagli Stati membri alla Commissione, l'inglese è la lingua più comune oltre alle lingue specifiche dei singoli paesi. I centri di risposta del servizio 112 sono in grado di rispondere alle chiamate in inglese in 22 Stati membri ([1]). Almeno una parte dei centri nazionali di emergenza può rispondere alle chiamate in tedesco e/o in francese (in entrambe le lingue in 11 paesi ([2]) ([3])). Inoltre, molti Stati membri hanno migliorato i propri sforzi linguistici per soddisfare le necessità dei cittadini dei paesi vicini ([4]).

La Commissione continuerà a sostenere gli sforzi degli Stati membri, ad esempio attraverso l'attività del gruppo di esperti sull'accesso di emergenza che si occupa dei principali aspetti tecnici dell'attuazione del servizio 112, al fine di migliorare attivamente le competenze linguistiche degli operatori del servizio di emergenza 112 nonché lo scambio di buone pratiche nel settore.

([1]) Bulgaria, Repubblica ceca, Danimarca, Germania, Estonia, Grecia, Spagna, Francia, Cipro, Italia, Lettonia, Lituania, Lussemburgo, Ungheria, Malta, Paesi Bassi, Austria, Polonia, Romania, Slovenia, Finlandia e Svezia.

([2]) Bulgaria, Ungheria, Italia, Paesi Bassi e Repubblica ceca (direttamente o con trasferimento a un altro centro di raccolta delle chiamate di emergenza — PSAP se necessario), Spagna, Lituania, Polonia (26 PSAP possono gestire direttamente queste chiamate dirette), Romania (con trasferimento), Slovacchia (con trasferimento) e Finlandia (con servizio di interpretazione).

([3]) Bulgaria (con trasferimento di chiamata a un altro PSAP se necessario), Repubblica ceca (assistenza linguistica), Germania (secondo le disponibilità/trasferimento nella regione di confine), Grecia, Irlanda, Italia, Romania (chiamate dirette), Spagna (può non essere disponibile in tutti i PSAP), Paesi Bassi (quasi sempre), Slovacchia (con trasferimento), Finlandia (con servizio di interpretazione).

([4]) Pertanto le chiamate in polacco possono essere gestite dai PSAP in Lituania, Slovacchia (nei PSAP di alcune zone), Germania (lungo il confine con la Polonia), Irlanda; chiamate in ungherese: in Romania (con trasferimento di chiamata a un altro PSAP se necessario), Slovenia (nei PSAP di alcune zone) e Slovacchia (nei PSAP di alcune zone); chiamate in ceco: in Slovacchia e in Polonia (4 PSAP); chiamate in slovacco — in Polonia (3 PSAP), chiamate in italiano: in Slovenia (nei PSAP di alcune zone) e in Romania (con trasferimento di chiamata a un altro PSAP se necessario); chiamate in portoghese: in Spagna (potrebbero non essere disponibili in tutti i PSAP); chiamate in sloveno: in Italia e chiamate in finlandese: in Estonia. È offerta inoltre assistenza linguistica per le lingue dei paesi che confinano con l'UE dai PSAP tedeschi e ungheresi nelle zone di confine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007470/13
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Linguistic aspects of implementing Directive 2002/22/EC on the single emergency number

Directive 2002/22/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/136/EC, establishes a single emergency number, 112.

In particular, Article 22(2), Article 26(2) and Article 1(36) of Directive 2002/22/EC refer to the quality of service, access to comprehensive and user-friendly information and appropriately answering users' calls so they are handled properly.

Considering the freedom of movement enjoyed by EU citizens, it is quite likely that 112 will be dialled by people who do not speak the official language of the country they are in. In that case they could have problems getting the right emergency help when calling the single emergency number, thus making the service less effective.

1. To what extent were language-related problems in Member States' transposition of the directive taken into consideration?

2. Does the Commission think that the lack of specific provisions may make the service less effective?

3. How does the Commission plan to fill any legal vacuum that is found?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

Article 26 of the Universal Service Directive 2002/22/EC sets out the rules for functioning of the single European emergency call number 112. These provisions include a requirement for the calls to 112 to be appropriately answered and handled in a manner best suited to the national organisation of emergency systems. Although there is no specific requirement to handle calls to 112 in languages of different Member States, as a reflection of the growing need to make this service more effective for citizens who are travelling or coming from different countries, most Member States have implemented measures to address the issue of languages.

112 operators are thus increasingly able to answer calls in other European Union languages. According to information provided to the Commission by the Member States, English is the most commonly used language besides the native language(s) of a particular country. 112 emergency call centres can normally handle English-language calls in 22 Member States ([1]). At least a part of national emergency centres can handle calls in German and/or French (both in 11countries ([2]) ([3])). In addition, several Member States have fine-tuned their language efforts to address the needs of citizens of neighbouring countries ([4]).

The Commission will continue to assist Member States in their efforts, for instance via the work of the Expert Group on Emergency Access which deals with relevant technical aspect on the implementation of 112, to actively improve the foreign language capabilities of 112 emergency operators and to exchange best practice in this area.

([1]) Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden.

([2]) Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic (by call directly or by transfer to another public safety answering point-PSAP if necessary), Spain, Lithuania, Poland (26 PSAPs can handle such direct calls), Romania (by transfer), Slovakia (by transfer) and Finland (by involving interpretation service).

([3]) Bulgaria (by call transfer to another PSAP if necessary), the Czech Republic (language support), Germany (subject to availability/transfer in the border region), Greece, Ireland, Italy, Romania (direct calls), Spain (may not be available in all PSAPs), the Netherlands (most of the time), Slovakia (by transfer), Finland (by involving interpretation service).

([4]) Thus, calls in Polish can be handled by PSAPs in Lithuania, Slovakia (in PSAPs of certain areas), Germany (along the Polish border), Ireland; calls in Hungarian — in Romania (by call transfer to another PSAP if necessary), Slovenia (in PSAPs of certain areas) and Slovakia (in PSAPs of certain areas); calls in Czech — in Slovakia and Poland (4 PSAPs); calls in Slovak — in Poland (3 PSAPs), calls in Italian — in Slovenia (in PSAPs of certain areas) and Romania (by call transfer to another PSAP if necessary), calls in Portuguese — in Spain (may not be available in all PSAPs), calls in Slovenian — in Italy and calls in Finnish — in Estonia. Languages of the neighbouring EU countries are also catered for by German and Hungarian PSAPs in border areas.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007471/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(25 juni 2013)

Betreft: E120 kleurstof (Cochenille, Karmijn, Karmijnzuur, Carmine)

E120 is een rode kleurstof, onttrokken aan schildluizen. Het vocht van de kevers/luizen wordt gemengd met andere stoffen (bvb. tin) om het kleurechter te maken. De kleurstof wordt gebruikt in verschillende bekende voedingsproducten, chocolade, drinkyoghurt, … maar ook in farmaceutische producten. Om de kleurstof te verkrijgen worden de insecten overgoten met heet water (daarna gedroogd), fijngestampt en gestoomd. Om 1 kg van E120 te verkrijgen, heeft men 155 000 insecten nodig.

Er bestaat ook een gelijkaardige kleurstof (E124) die synthetisch van oorsprong is.

Op 13 juni verschenen in de media berichten dat een lading Europese chocolade in China geblokkeerd was omwille van de aanwezigheid van deze kleurstof. Ook EFSA heeft al onderzoek gedaan naar mogelijk allergische reacties ten gevolge van E120. Ook hyperactiviteit bij kinderen zou een mogelijke bijwerking kunnen zijn.

1. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het gebruik van deze niet onomstreden kleurstof?

2. Beschikt de Commissie over wetenschappelijke studies waaruit blijkt dat dit product geen enkel risico vormt voor de volksgezondheid, met name van kinderen?

3. Kan de Commissie onderzoeken of in het kader van RL 2003/89/EG en met name met het oog op transparantie voor de gebruiker, via het label op het product aan de consument geen informatie moet worden verstrekt over de herkomst van deze kleurstof?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(5 augustus 2013)

Overeenkomstig Verordening (EG) nr. 1333/2008 inzake levensmiddelenadditieven ([1]) is E 120 (Cochenille, karmijnzuur, karmijn) toegestaan als levensmiddelenadditief in de functionele klasse van de kleurstoffen. Om de consumenten te informeren over de aanwezigheid van E 120 moet het overeenkomstig Richtlijn 2000/13/EG ([2]) in de lijst van ingrediënten vermeld staan. Volgens de EU-wetgeving hoeft de oorsprong van dit additief niet op het etiket te worden vermeld.

De veiligheid van E 120 is beoordeeld door het Wetenschappelijk Comité voor de menselijke voeding ([3]) en wordt momenteel opnieuw beoordeeld door de Europese Autoriteit voor voedselveiligheid (EFSA). De herbeoordeling zal ten laatste op 31 december 2015 voltooid zijn. Zij heeft betrekking op alle aspecten van de gezondheid van kinderen en mogelijke allergische reacties op E 120.

Indien nodig zal de Commissie passende risicobeperkingsmaatregelen nemen op grond van de resultaten van de wetenschappelijke herbeoordeling door de EFSA.

([1]) PB L 354 van 31.12.2008, blz. 16.
([2]) PB L 109 van 6.5.2000, blz. 29.
([3]) Reports from the Scientific Committee for Food (14th series). Opinion expressed 1983. Food-science and techniques, 1984.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007471/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: E120 colouring (Cochineal, Carmine, Carminic acid)

E120 is a red colouring obtained from the cochineal beetle. Fluid from the beetles is mixed with other substances (e.g. tin) to make it more colour-fast. The colouring is used in various well-known food products — chocolate, yoghurt drinks, etc. — as well as in pharmaceutical products. In order to obtain the colouring, hot water is poured on the insects (after which they are dried), and they are ground and steamed. In order to obtain 1 kg of E120, 155 000 insects are needed.

There is also a colouring of a similar shade (E124) which is of synthetic origin.

On 13 June, it was reported in the media that a consignment of European chocolate had been apprehended in China because it contained this colouring. The EFSA has likewise investigated possible allergic reactions to E120. Hyperactivity in children is said to be another possible side effect.

1. What view does the Commission take of the use of this rather controversial colouring?

2. Does the Commission have any scientific studies indicating that this product poses no threat to public health, particularly the health of children?

3. Can the Commission investigate whether Directive 2003/89/EC does not require consumers to be provided with information about the origin of this colouring by means of product labelling, particularly in the interests of transparency for consumers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

According to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 on food additives ([1]), E 120 (Cochineal, Carminic acid, Carmines) is an authorised food additive within the functional class of colours. In order to inform consumers the presence of E 120 has to be listed in the list of ingredients in accordance with Directive 2000/13/EC ([2]). The EU legislation does not require the origin of the additive to be labelled.

The safety of E 120 was evaluated by the Scientific Committee for Food ([3]) and is currently being re-evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The re-evaluation shall be completed by 31 December 2015. It covers also the aspects of the health of children and possible allergic reactions to E 120.

If needed, the Commission will consider appropriate risk management measures based on the outcome of the EFSA's scientific re-evaluation.

([1]) OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 16.
([2]) OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.
([3]) Reports from the Scientific Committee for Food (14th series). Opinion expressed 1983. Food-science and techniques, 1984.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-007472/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 juin 2013)

Objet: Retards dans la révision de la directive sur les voyages à forfait

La directive 90/314/CEE du 13 juin 1990 sur les voyages à forfait réglemente depuis plus de 20 ans les droits et obligations des agences de voyages et des consommateurs ayant souscrit un voyage et un séjour.

Il est indéniable que le secteur du tourisme a connu une évolution considérable au cours de ces deux décennies et que, par ailleurs, plusieurs arrêts de la Cour de justice de l'UE ont précisé les responsabilités des organisateurs de voyages, la définition de la force majeure, les indemnités dues en cas de non-respect des engagements et, de manière générale, la protection des consommateurs.

La Commission a redit au fil des années son intention de réviser cette directive.

En 2008, elle s'est retranchée derrière une consultation pour repousser cette initiative et, depuis, elle réitère chaque année cette intention, qui reste sans suite.

La Commission a d'ailleurs fait savoir le 8 février 2013, en réponse aux demandes pressantes de révision émanant des organisations de consommateurs membres de son «comité consultatif européen des consommateurs», qu'il fallait d'abord faire une «balance between consumer and business interest».

Pourquoi la Commission n'a-t-elle pas respecté ses multiples promesses de révision de cette directive?

Pendant combien de mandats compte-t-elle repousser encore la révision de cette directive?

Quels sont les arguments du secteur touristique qui lui font craindre de prendre une initiative?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(25 juillet 2013)

La Commission convient que la directive 90/314/CEE du 13 juin 1990 concernant les voyages, vacances et circuits à forfait a établi des droits importants pour les consommateurs européens, mais que le marché du voyage a subi une profonde transformation ces vingt dernières années.

L'Honorable Parlementaire n'est pas sans savoir que la Commission a, en conséquence, mené une vaste consultation afin de proposer une révision de la directive qui réponde aux attentes légitimes des consommateurs et des entreprises.

Le 9 juillet 2013, la Commission a adopté une proposition de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative aux voyages à forfait et aux prestations de voyage assistées, modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 2006/2004 et la directive 2011/83/UE, et abrogeant la directive 90/314/CEE du Conseil.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007472/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Delays in revising the Package Travel Directive

For more than 20 years, Directive 90/314/EEC of 13 June 1990 on package travel, package holidays and package tours has governed the rights and duties of travel agencies and of package tourists.

Undeniably the tourism sector has changed a great deal over the last two decades, and a number of Court of Justice judgments have clarified the responsibilities of tour operators, the meaning of *force majeure*, the compensation payable for failure to honour commitments, and — in a general sense — issues of consumer protection.

Through the years, the Commission has repeatedly restated its intention to revise this directive.

In 2008 it used a consultation exercise as a pretext to reject such a revision. Since then it has mouthed its intention to revise the directive each year, which has not been acted on.

What is more, on 8 February 2013 the Commission responded to urgent calls for a revision from consumer organisations participating in its European Consumer Consultative Group by stating that, first and foremost, a balance had to be struck between consumer and business interests.

Why has the Commission failed to honour the numerous promises that it has made to revise this directive?

For how many terms of office does the Commission intend to keep putting off the revision of this directive?

What are the arguments being employed by the tourism industry which are making the Commission so scared to launch an initiative?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 July 2013)

The Commission agrees that Directive 90/314/EEC of 13 June 1990 on package travel, package holidays and package tours laid down important rights for European consumers, but that the travel market has changed considerably over the last two decades.

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Commission, therefore, carried out a thorough consultation in order to propose a revision that could meet the legitimate expectations of consumers and businesses.

On 9 July 2013, the Commission adopted a Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on package travel and assisted travel arrangements, amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2011/83/EU and repealing Council Directive 90/314/EEC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-007473/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Finanziamenti erogati dalla Commissione a infrastrutture sportive e turistiche in Polonia

Secondo notizie riportate dalla stampa, alcune città polacche hanno potuto beneficiare di finanziamenti europei per la costruzione o ristrutturazione di infrastrutture sportive o di accoglienza turistica nel periodo 2007-2013.

Può la Commissione comunicare la lista e i dettagli dei progetti finanziati dall'UE in particolare a Bydgoszcz, Breslavia, Danzica, Cracovia, Katowice e Lodz?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(1º agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha approvato i seguenti grandi progetti: «Forum nazionale della musica a Breslavia» (41 milioni di EUR); «Costruzione del teatro dell'opera a Bialystok fase 2» (30 milioni di EUR); «Centro regionale sportivo-per conferenze-attività ricreative a Lodz» (35 milioni di EUR); «Centro congressi» (Cracovia) (20 milioni di EUR); «Costruzione del museo della Slesia a Katowice» (48 milioni di EUR); «Costruzione del centro scientifico Copernico a Varsavia»: (46 milioni EUR); «Costruzione del centro europeo Solidarność a Danzica» (38 milioni di EUR) e «Costruzione di un edificio per l'Orchestra sinfonica nazionale della radio polacca a Katowice» (56 milioni di EUR).

Il grande progetto «Ristrutturazione e rilancio di EC1 a Lodz e suo adattamento a scopi culturali e artistici» è stato presentato ma non è stato ancora approvato.

Dal momento che gli Stati membri sono responsabili per l'attuazione delle azioni cofinanziate, l'elenco degli altri progetti cofinanziati dall'UE (al di sotto della soglia prevista per i grandi progetti) nelle città di Bydgoszcz, Breslavia, Danzica, Cracovia, Katowice e Lodz può essere ottenuto dalle competenti autorità di gestione.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007473/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Commission funding of sports and tourism facilities in Poland

According to press reports, certain Polish cities received EU funding for the construction or alteration of sports and tourism facilities in the period 2007-2013.

Can the Commission forward the list of projects funded by the EU, specifically in the cities of Bydgoszcz, Wroclaw, Gdansk, Krakow, Katowice and Lodz, and give details of these?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Commission has approved the following major projects: 'National Forum of Music in Wroclaw' (EUR 41 million); 'Construction of the opera house in Bialystok phase 2' (EUR 30 million); 'Regional sport-conference-recreational centre in Lodz' (EUR 35 million); 'Congress Centre' (Krakow) (EUR 20 million); 'Construction of the Silesian museum in Katowice' (EUR 48 million); 'Construction of the Science Center Kopernik in Warsaw': (EUR 46 million); 'Construction of the European Centre Solidarity in Gdansk' (EUR 38 million); and 'Construction of a venue for the Polish Radio National Symphony in Katowice' (EUR 56 million).

The 'Revitalisation of EC1 in Lodz and its adaptation for cultural and artistic purposes' major project has been submitted but is not yet approved.

As Member States are responsible for the implementation of co-financed actions, the list of other EU co-financed projects (below the threshold for major projects) in the cities of Bydgoszcz, Wroclaw, Gdansk, Krakow, Katowice and Lodz can be obtained from the relevant managing authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007474/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Energía eléctrica en España

En referencia a la respuesta a la pregunta E-002372/2013, el Sr. Oettinger, en nombre de la Comisión, contestó: «La normativa de la UE exige a los Estados miembros que protejan a los consumidores vulnerables y luchen contra la pobreza energética allí donde se constate. La Comisión está realizando un estudio para comprobar la incorporación de la normativa en el ordenamiento español.»

— ¿Ha acabado la Comisión el estudio para comprobar la incorporación de la normativa en el ordenamiento español?

— En caso afirmativo, ¿está satisfecha la Comisión con el resultado?

— En caso negativo, ¿cuándo tiene previsto la Comisión tener acabado este estudio?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de agosto de 2013)

Los servicios de la Comisión está finalizando actualmente la evaluación de la transposición al ordenamiento jurídico español de las Directivas del gas y la electricidad del tercer paquete legislativo para un mercado interior del gas y de la electricidad de la UE.

A este respecto se está prestando una especial atención a la adecuación de las medidas de protección del usuario, incluidas las medidas para los consumidores más vulnerables.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007474/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Electricity in Spain

Replying on behalf of the Commission to Question E-002372/2013, Mr Oettinger stated that 'EU legislation puts the requirement on Member States to protect vulnerable consumers and to address energy poverty where identified. The Commission is currently conducting a compliance check to verify the transposition of the legislation in Spain.'

— Has the Commission now completed the compliance check to verify the transposition of the legislation in Spain?

— If so, is the Commission satisfied with the result?

— If not, when does it expect to complete this check?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission services are currently finalising the assessment of the transposition of the Gas and Electricity Directives of the third package for an internal EU gas and electricity market into Spanish legislation.

Particular attention in this respect is being paid to the adequacy of the customer protection measures including the measures for the most vulnerable consumers.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007475/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) und Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(25. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Interessenkonflikt — Dänisches Institut für Menschenrechte

1. Die dänischen Regierungsstellen kürzten die finanzielle Unterstützung für das Dänische Institut für Menschenrechte, nachdem „Unregelmäßigkeiten" festgestellt wurden. Der zum Zeitpunkt des Vorfalls zuständige Direktor arbeitet nun für eine Agentur der EU. Die dänischen Behörden haben die finanziellen Mittel für das Institut gestrichen, während die EU-Agentur es weiterhin finanziell unterstützt.

(a) Hat die Kommission die Zahlungen der Agentur an das Institut überprüft?

(b) Wurden dabei Unregelmäßigkeiten festgestellt?

(c) Welche Konsequenzen wurden gezogen?

(d) Wurden finanzielle Mittel zurückgefordert? Falls ja, in welcher Höhe?

2. Mitglieder des Verwaltungsrates haben leitende Positionen in Organisationen inne, die Zuschüsse oder andere finanzielle Unterstützung von der fraglichen Agentur erhalten oder erhalten haben.

(a) Wie wird mit diesen Interessenkonflikten umgegangen?

(b) Waren die betreffenden Mitglieder an der Gewährung von finanziellen Mitteln für ihre Organisationen beteiligt?

3. Das Europäische Amt für Betrugsbekämpfung (European Anti-Fraud Office — OLAF) hat bereits Fälle untersucht, in die Mitarbeiter der Agenturen verwickelt waren, nachdem Anschuldigungen laut geworden waren, dass Dokumente zurückdatiert, Bedienstete gemobbt und geltende Reglungen für das Einstellungsverfahren von der Agentur nicht eingehalten wurden.

(a) Was ergaben diese Untersuchungen?

(b) Kann die Kommission dem Parlament die von OLAF ausgesprochenen Empfehlungen übermitteln?

(c) Falls keine Empfehlungen ausgesprochen wurden, kann die Kommission dem Parlament eine Begründung dafür liefern?

(d) Welche Maßnahmen wurden von der Agentur ergriffen, um Belästigungen, Mobbing und ähnlichem vorzubeugen?

(e) Wurden Maßnahmen ergriffen, um auf die Fälle von Belästigung von Mitarbeitern durch andere Bedienstete zu reagieren?

4. Laufen derzeit Gerichtsverfahren gegen diese Agentur? Wie viele? Worauf beziehen sie sich?

5. Wer trägt die Kosten für den Rechtsbeistand von Mitarbeitern der Agentur vor Gericht? In welchen Fällen?

6. Können die Kommission oder die Agentur Details zum Gedichtwettbewerb 2010 liefern? Wie viele Personen haben teilgenommen? Wie viel Geld wurde ausgegeben?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(15. Oktober 2013)

Die Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte (FRA) ist eine von der Kommission unabhängige Einrichtung der Union mit eigener Rechtspersönlichkeit ([1]). Die Kommission hat deshalb die Agentur aufgefordert, zu den Fragen 2, 3 d) und e), 4, 5 und 6 Stellung zu nehmen. Die Antwort wird den Damen Abgeordneten übermittelt, sobald sie eingetroffen ist.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 168/2007 des Rates zur Errichtung einer Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte, ABl. L 53 vom 22.2.2007, S. 53.

In Bezug auf die Fragen 1 und 3 a) bis c) zu den Untersuchungen und Empfehlungen des OLAF kann die Kommission den Damen Abgeordneten die vom OLAF mitgeteilten Informationen bereitstellen: Das OLAF untersuchte zwei Fälle (2007 und 2011), nachdem es die Agentur bzw. ihren Vorgänger betreffende Anschuldigungen erhalten hatte. In keinem der beiden Fälle ließ sich ein vorsätzliches missbräuchliches oder nicht ordnungsgemäßes Verhalten nachweisen. In vier anderen Fällen betreffend die Agentur (einer von 2010 und drei von 2013) beschloss das OLAF, keine Untersuchung einzuleiten, da die gelieferten Informationen hierfür als nicht ausreichend angesehen wurden.

Im Hinblick auf den Zugang zu den Empfehlungen des OLAF prüft die Kommission Anträge des Parlaments gemäß den Bedingungen der Rahmenvereinbarung zwischen der Kommission und dem Parlament.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007475/13
adresată Comisiei
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) şi Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(25 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Conflict de interese — Institutul danez pentru drepturile omului

1. Autoritățile daneze au redus fondurile alocate Institutului danez pentru drepturile omului (IDDO) în urma descoperirii unor „nereguli". Directorul în funcție la data producerii neregulilor lucrează în prezent pentru o agenție a UE. Autoritățile daneze au anulat sprijinul pe care îl acordau IDDO; agenția UE încă îi oferă finanțare.

(a) A evaluat Comisia tranzacțiile financiare dintre această agenție și IDDO?

(b) Au fost găsite nereguli?

(c) Ce măsuri s-au luat?

(d) Fondurile au fost recuperate? În caz afirmativ, în ce cuantum?

2. Membrii Consiliului de administrație conduc personalul unor organizații care primesc/au primit subvenții sau alte forme de sprijin financiar de la agenția în cauză.

(a) Cum sunt gestionate aceste conflicte de interese?

(b) Acești membri au fost implicați în procesul de acordare a fondurilor organizațiilor respective?

3. În trecut au existat cazuri anchetate de Oficiul European Antifraudă (OLAF) în care era implicat personalul unei agenții; ca răspuns la declarațiile potrivit cărora unele documente ar fi fost antedatate, personalul a fost atacat, iar agenția nu a respectat normele existente în materie de proceduri de recrutare.

(a) Care a fost rezultatul acestor anchete?

(b) Ar putea Comisia să prezinte Parlamentului recomandările emise de OLAF?

(c) În cazul în care nu au existat recomandări, ar putea Comisia prezenta Parlamentului o justificare?

(d) Ce măsuri au fost luate de către agenție pentru a împiedica hărțuirea, atacurile etc.?

(e) Au fost întreprinse acțiuni ca reacție la incidentele de hărțuire a unor angajați de către alți angajați?

4. Există acțiuni în instanță pendinte împotriva acestei agenții? Câte? Care este fondul acestor acțiuni?

5. Cine suportă costurile reprezentării juridice a personalului agenției în fața instanței? În care cazuri?

6. Ar putea Comisia sau agenția să prezinte detalii cu privire la concursul de poezie din 2010? Câte persoane au participat? Ce sumă s-a cheltuit?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(15 octombrie 2013)

Agenția pentru Drepturi Fundamentale a Uniunii Europene (FRA) este un organism al Uniunii cu personalitate juridică, independent de Comisie ([1]). Comisia a solicitat, așadar, FRA, să răspundă la întrebarea 2, la întrebarea 3 literele (d) și (e) și la întrebările 4, 5 și 6. Răspunsul respectiv va fi transmis distinselor deputate imediat ce va fi disponibil.

([1]) Regulamentul (CE) nr. 168/2007 al Consiliului privind înființarea Agenției pentru Drepturi Fundamentale a Uniunii Europene, JO L 53, 22.2.2007, p. 53.

În ceea ce privește întrebarea 1 și întrebarea 3 literele (a)-(c), referitoare la investigațiile și recomandările OLAF, Comisia poate furniza distinselor deputate informațiile comunicate de OLAF: OLAF a investigat două cazuri, unul în 2007 și altul în 2011, ca urmare a unor acuzații care i-au fost transmise cu privire la FRA sau la organismul care a precedat-o. În niciunul dintre cele două cazuri nu s-au găsit probe privind existența unor fraude sau nereguli deliberate. În alte patru cazuri referitoare la FRA (unul în 2010 și trei în 2013), OLAF a hotărât să nu deschidă nicio investigație, deoarece a considerat că informațiile furnizate erau insuficiente pentru a justifica acest lucru.

În ceea ce privește accesul la recomandările OLAF, Comisia va examina orice solicitare a Parlamentului în condițiile Acordului-cadru dintre Comisie și Parlament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007475/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE) and Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Conflict of interest — Danish Institute of Human Rights

1. The Danish Institute of Human Rights (DIHR) saw its funding cut by the Danish authorities after 'irregularities' had been found. The director in charge at the time the irregularities occurred is now working for an EU agency. The Danish authorities cancelled their support to the DIHR; the EU agency is still funding it.

(a) Has the Commission evaluated the financial transactions from this agency to the DIHR?

(b) Have irregularities been found?

(c) What action has been taken?

(d) Have funds been recovered? If so, what amount?

2. Management board members are leading staff of organisations that receive(d) grants or other financial support from the agency in question.

(a) How are these conflicts of interest managed?

(b) Have those members been involved in the process of granting funding to their organisations?

3. In the past there have been European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) cases involving agency staff in response to allegations that documents had been backdated, that staff had been mobbed and that the agency had not complied with existing rules on recruitment procedures.

(a) What was the result of these investigations?

(b) Could the Commission provide Parliament with the recommendations that OLAF issued?

(c) If there were no recommendations, could the Commission provide Parliament with a justification?

(d) What measures have been taken by the agency to prevent harassment, mobbing, etc.?

(e) Has any action been taken in response to incidents of harassment of staff members by other employees?

4. Are there any court cases pending against this agency? How many? What is the substance of these cases?

5. Who is bearing the costs of legal representation for staff of the agency before the courts? In which cases?

6. Could the Commission or the agency give details on the poem competition in 2010? How many people participated? How much money was spent?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(15 October 2013)

The European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) is a Union body with legal personality which is independent from the Commission ([1]). The Commission has therefore asked FRA to provide a response to questions 2, 3 d) and e), 4, 5 and 6. This response will be forwarded to the Honourable Members as soon as it is available.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) n° 168/2007 establishing a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights OJ L 53, 22.2.2007, p. 53.

As regards questions 1 and 3 a) to c) concerning OLAF investigations and recommendations, the Commission can provide the Honourable Member with the information communicated by OLAF: OLAF investigated two cases, one in 2007 and another in 2011, following allegations being sent to OLAF concerning FRA or its predecessor. Neither of the two cases revealed any evidence of intentional fraudulent or irregular behaviour. In four other cases concerning FRA (one in 2010 and three in 2013), OLAF decided not to open an investigation on the basis that the information provided was considered insufficient to justify the opening of an investigation.

As regards the access to OLAF's recommendations, the Commission will examine any request from the Parliament, under the conditions of the framework Agreement between the Commission and the Parliament.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007478/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Silenzio su Lampedusa

L'ultima operazione della Guardia di Finanza del 15 giugno ha permesso di salvare la vita a 274 persone, accolte nel Centro di Lampedusa. Le operazioni hanno coinvolto quattro guardiacoste d'altura, una nave della Marina militare e due navi civili. La struttura del Centro, danneggiata dall'incendio del 2011 appiccato dai migranti, funziona al 50 %. I prossimi arrivi saranno in esubero rispetto alla capacità d'accoglienza. Tuttavia Lampedusa è sconvolta non solo dai migranti vivi, ma anche da quelli morti annegati che affiorano dalle acque o che giungono a riva sospinti dalle onde. «Eletta a maggio, al 3 di novembre — dichiara il nuovo Sindaco — mi sono stati consegnati già 21 cadaveri di persone annegate. Per noi è un enorme fardello di dolore. Abbiamo dovuto chiedere aiuto ad altri comuni per poter dare una sepoltura dignitosa alle ultime 11 salme. Il nostro cimitero non ha più loculi disponibili. Ne faremo di nuovi, ma mi chiedo: quanto dovrà essere grande il cimitero della mia isola?» Del gruppo di 115, sabato scorso ne sono stati salvati 76. E gli altri? Forse affioreranno più tardi, forse sprofonderanno nel fondo del mare. «Sono indignata — dice il Sindaco — per l'assuefazione che sembra aver contagiato tutti, sono scandalizzata dal silenzio dell'Europa che ha appena ricevuto il Nobel della Pace e che tace di fronte ad una strage che ha i numeri di una vera e propria guerra».

L'unico motivo d'orgoglio è offerto dagli uomini dello Stato italiano, che salvano vite umane a 140 miglia da Lampedusa, mentre le imbarcazioni che distavano solo 30 miglia dai naufraghi hanno ignorato le loro richieste d'aiuto. Erano le velocissime motovedette regalate dall'Italia alla Libia, efficacemente utilizzate per sequestrare pescherecci italiani anche quando pescano in acque extraterritoriali.

1. Non crede che il silenzio della Commissione — spesso così prodiga di dichiarazioni su tanti argomenti ben meno importanti che queste quotidiane tragedia del mare — contribuisca a allontanare sempre più i cittadini dall'Europa? Quale risposta dare al nuovo sindaco donna?

2. Superata finalmente la barriera del silenzio, non potrebbe decidersi finalmente la Commissione a considerare quelle tragedie come tragedie di tutta l'Europa, e non solo di Lampedusa e dell'Italia che con il soccorso e l'accoglienza attribuiscono dignità di esseri umani a queste persone migranti?

3. Non pensa sia arrivato il momento per l'Europa di assumersi la responsabilità dei propri profughi e immigrati?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(14 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha espresso ripetutamente il suo profondo cordoglio per le tragiche perdite di vite umane in prossimità delle coste europee. È estremamente doloroso che ogni anno così tante persone muoiano in questo terribile modo. Le navi degli Stati membri che pattugliano il mare hanno l'obbligo di assistere le persone e le navi in difficoltà conducendole in un luogo in un luogo sicuro.

La Commissione presta sostegno agli Stati membri direttamente colpiti e promuove strumenti adeguati per porre rimedio alla situazione. In maggio il Consiglio e il Parlamento europeo hanno raggiunto un accordo politico sulla proposta della Commissione di istituire un sistema europeo di sorveglianza delle frontiere. Dal 2 dicembre 2013 gli Stati membri potranno quindi avere un'idea più chiara di ciò che accade in mare e intervenire più efficacemente, soprattutto quando è necessario proteggere e garantire la sicurezza delle vite dei migranti. Il 12 aprile 2013, la Commissione ha presentato una proposta di regolamento ([1]) contenente le norme che disciplinano le operazioni marittime coordinate da FRONTEX, tra cui l'intercettazione, la ricerca, il soccorso e lo sbarco. Inoltre, gli Stati membri ricevono un sostegno finanziario dai fondi comunitari e assistenza tramite FRONTEX e l'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo.

La Commissione ritiene importante garantire che i diritti fondamentali dei migranti siano rispettati, che i richiedenti protezione internazionale abbiano accesso alla procedura per l'esame delle domande di asilo e che le procedure di rimpatrio siano effettuate umanamente, in conformità della direttiva 2008/115/CE. A questo proposito, l'UE ha creato un sistema europeo comune di asilo e un'efficace politica di rimpatrio. La Commissione si avvale di tutti gli strumenti a sua disposizione per garantire che gli Stati membri rispettino pienamente i loro obblighi.

([1]) COM(2013) 197 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007478/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Silence on Lampedusa

The latest operation carried out by the Italian financial police on 15 June saved the lives of 274 people, now housed in the Lampedusa reception centre. The operation involved four coastguard vessels, one navy ship and two civilian vessels. The reception centre, which was damaged by the 2011 fire started by migrants, is operating at 50% capacity. Any further arrivals will exceed the centre's capacity. However, Lampedusa is troubled not only by living migrants, but also by the drowned ones whose bodies emerge from the water or are carried to shore by the waves. 'I was elected in May,' says the new Mayor, 'and by 3 November I had already been presented with 21 drowned corpses. This is an enormous burden of sorrow for us. We had to ask other municipalities for help in order to give a decent burial to the last 11 bodies. Our cemetery does not have any more spaces. We will create new spaces, but I ask myself: how big will my island's cemetery need to be?' Of the group of 115, 76 were saved last Saturday. What about the others? Maybe they will surface later, or maybe they will sink to the bottom of the sea. 'We are angry,' says the Mayor, 'that everyone seems to have become complacent about this situation. We are scandalised by the silence of the European Union, which was recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize but has nothing to say in the face of a slaughter that involves numbers on the scale of an actual war.'

The only cause for pride is offered by the Italian servicemen who saved lives 140 miles off the Lampedusa coast, while boats just 30 miles from the wrecks ignored their appeals for help. These were the super-fast patrol vessels given by Italy to Libya, which are effectively used to seize Italian fishing boats even when they are fishing in extraterritorial waters.

1. Do you not think that the silence of the Commission — which often has so much to say about matters far less important than these daily tragedies at sea — is helping to distance EU citizens even further from these events? What answers can be given to the new Mayor?

2. Now that the wall of silence is finally broken, could the Commission not agree at last to regard these deaths as tragedies that concern the whole of Europe, and not just Lampedusa and Italy, which are showing these migrants the human dignity they deserve by giving them aid and shelter?

3. Do you not think the time has come for the EU to accept responsibility for its refugees and migrants?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

The Commission has repeatedly expressed its deep sadness at the tragic loss of life happening close to European shores. It is deeply distressing that so many people lose their lives in this horrific way every year. In patrolling the seas, Member States' vessels are obliged to assist persons or vessels in distress and bring them to a place where their safety is no longer at risk.

The Commission is providing support to those Member States directly affected and is promoting adequate tools to address this situation. In May, the Council and the European Parliament reached political agreement on a proposal of the Commission to establish a European Border Surveillance System. This will allow Member States, as from 2 December 2013, to have a better picture of what is happening at sea, thus enabling them to intervene more effectively including in situations involving the protection and safety of lives of migrants. On 12 April 2013, the Commission presented a proposal for a regulation establishing rules for sea operations coordinated by Frontex which govern interception, search and rescue and disembarkation ([1]). In addition, Member States receive financial support from EU funds as well as assistance offered through Frontex and the European Asylum and Support Office (EASO).

The Commission considers it important to ensure that the fundamental rights of migrants are respected, that those seeking international protection are given access to an asylum examination procedure, and that any return procedures are carried out in a humane manner, in line with Directive 2008/115/EC. In this respect, the EU has created a Common European Asylum System and an effective return policy. The Commission uses all tools at its disposal to make sure that Member States fully respect their obligations.

([1]) COM(2013) 197 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007479/13
alla Commissione
Antonio Cancian (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD) e Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(25 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Rispetto delle norme in materia di aiuti di Stato negli investimenti infrastrutturali

A seguito della pronuncia della Corte di giustizia in merito alle cause riunite T-443/08 e T-455/08 (c.d. giurisprudenza Leipzig Halle), che ha confermato la valutazione della Commissione quanto alla qualifica delle misure previste dalla Germania a favore dell'aeroporto di Lipsia come aiuto di Stato, la DG Concorrenza ha elaborato un' «interpretazione autentica» della materia particolarmente estensiva.

In particolare, la DG sostiene che «nella misura in cui un'infrastruttura è destinata a essere sfruttata commercialmente, anche la sua costruzione costituisce un'attività economica», e perciò il progetto in questione dovrebbe essere sottoposto alla procedura prevista per verificarne la compatibilità con le regole che disciplinano gli aiuti di Stato. Tra le strutture che rientrano nella categoria come suscettibili di sfruttamento commerciale, la Commissione menziona, a titolo non esaustivo: porti, aeroporti, interporti, stadi, impianti di trattamento dei rifiuti e per la fornitura idrica, nonché infrastrutture per la ricerca e lo sviluppo, la produzione di energia e la diffusione della banda larga. Un tale approccio è stato confermato nei confronti dell'Italia, a partire dal 2011, con riferimento al centro (hub) portuale di Augusta e a molti altri progetti infrastrutturali, spesso parte dei Programmi Operativi Regionali cofinanziati dai fondi strutturali e già approvati con decisione della Commissione europea all'inizio del periodo di programmazione 2007-2013.

Questa interpretazione estensiva ha iniziato a essere applicata espressamente dalla Commissione all'inizio del 2012, e agli Stati membri sono state trasmesse nell'agosto 2012 specifiche linee guide: in tal modo sono stati bloccati finora numerosi progetti, in una procedura che congela ogni attività progettuale, in attesa che la DG Concorrenza conceda l'autorizzazione; esiste il rischio che avvenga un disimpegno automatico del cofinanziamento dai fondi strutturali.

Non ritiene la Commissione che il principio sia in contrasto con quelle che essa stessa ha qualificato come priorità strategiche della Strategia Europa 2020, e che sia stato applicato in modo da recare un danno notevole alla realizzazione di opere di pubblica utilità che potrebbero dare grande beneficio alla cittadinanza, in termini sociali ed economici?

Non ritiene la Commissione che gli effetti positivi dei finanziamenti pubblici alle infrastrutture, in termini di coesione, crescita e occupazione, rischino di essere vanificati da un eccessivo aumento degli oneri burocratici, dall'allungamento dei tempi e da tanta incertezza?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

La sentenza nella causa Leipzig-Halle ha confermato la giurisprudenza precedente e chiarito in modo approfondito la nozione di attività economica. Ne discende chiaramente che il finanziamento della costruzione di infrastrutture che possono essere sfruttate per offrire beni e/o servizi conferisce un vantaggio potenziale al beneficiario, ai sensi dell'articolo 107, paragrafo 1, del TFUE e, di conseguenza, potrebbe costituire un aiuto di Stato. Né la Commissione, né gli Stati membri, né i beneficiari dell'aiuto possono ignorare la sentenza. I regolamenti sui Fondi strutturali prevedono che tutte le operazioni cofinanziate debbano rispettare le norme sugli aiuti di Stato. Nei progetti infrastrutturali che comportano aiuti di Stato, tale aiuto deve essere notificato a norma dell'articolo 108, paragrafo 3, del TFUE, a meno che non sia esentato dall'obbligo di notifica, ad esempio ai sensi della decisione sui SIEG o del regolamento SIEG «de minimis».

A seguito della sentenza, la Commissione si è attivata e ha proceduto ad una prima serie di attività (orientamenti specifici, formazione, cooperazione con gli Stati membri) volte a sensibilizzare e ad aiutare gli Stati membri ad adottare un'impostazione proattiva per assicurare che i finanziamenti dei loro progetti infrastrutturali siano conformi alle norme in materia di aiuti di Stato, evitando nel contempo inutili ritardi nell'assorbimento dei fondi dell'Unione europea.

Inoltre, per ampliare il campo di applicazione delle misure di aiuto che possono beneficiare dell'esenzione per categoria, il nuovo regolamento del Consiglio, del 22 luglio 2013, che modifica il regolamento (CE) n. 994/98 ([1]) contempla ora anche gli aiuti per l'innovazione, le calamità naturali, la cultura, lo sport, alcune infrastrutture a banda larga e ad altre infrastrutture. Tale evoluzione ha fatto sì che la Commissione potesse includere le citate tipologie infrastrutturali nel campo di applicazione della proposta della Commissione di regolamento generale di esenzione per categoria (RGEC II) (attualmente in fase di consultazione: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_second_gber/index_en.html) che, se adottato, le escluderà dall'obbligo di notifica.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 994/98 del Consiglio, del 7 maggio 1998, sull'applicazione degli articoli 92 e 93 del trattato che istituisce la Comunità europea a determinate categorie di aiuti di Stato orizzontali («regolamento di abilitazione») (GU L 142 del 14.5.1998, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007479/13
to the Commission
Antonio Cancian (PPE), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (S&D), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD) and Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Compliance with rules on state aid for the financing of infrastructure projects

Following the Court of Justice ruling in the joined cases T-443/08 and T-455/08 (known as the Leipzig-Halle ruling), which confirmed the Commission's view that Germany's proposed measures in favour of Leipzig airport qualify as state aid, the DG Competition prepared a particularly broad 'authentic interpretation' of the issue.

Specifically, the DG rules that 'insofar as an infrastructure is intended to be exploited commercially, its construction also constitutes an economic activity,' and therefore the project in question should be subject to the established procedure for verifying its compliance with the rules on state aid. Among the structures classed as susceptible to commercial exploitation, the Commission mentions the following examples: ports, airports, transhipment facilities, sports stadiums, waste processing and water supply plants, as well as infrastructures for research and development, energy production and broadband services. Since 2011, this approach has been confirmed with regard to Italy in relation to the Augusta port hub and numerous other infrastructure projects, many of which form part of the Regional Operational Programmes co-financed by the Structural Funds and already approved by a Commission decision at the beginning of the 2007-2013 programming period.

The Commission started expressly applying this broad interpretation at the beginning of 2012, and specific guidelines were provided to the Member States in August 2012. To date, this has resulted in the blocking of numerous projects, in a procedure that freezes all planning activities until the DG Competition grants its approval. There is a risk that there may be an automatic de-commitment of co-financing from the Structural Funds.

Does the Commission not believe that this principle runs counter to its own declared priorities under the Europe 2020 strategy, and that it has been applied in such a way as to cause significant harm to the construction of public works that could provide major social and economic benefits for citizens?

Does it not believe that the positive effects of public funding for infrastructure projects, in terms of cohesion, growth and employment, are at risk of being wiped out by an excessive bureaucratic burden, the lengthening of timescales and enormous uncertainty?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Leipzig-Halle judgment confirmed earlier case law and clarified extensively the notion of economic activity. Thus it is clear that the financing of the construction of infrastructure which can be exploited to offer goods and/or services can grant an advantage to the beneficiary, within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU, and therefore could constitute state aid. Neither the Commission, nor Member States, nor aid beneficiaries can ignore the judgment. The Structural Funds regulations require that all co-financed operations respect state aid rules. Where infrastructure projects involve state aid, this aid has to be notified pursuant to Article 108(3) TFEU, unless it is exempted from notification, e.g. under the SGEI decision or SGEI *de minimis* regulation.

The Commission reacted to this judgment and undertook a first series of actions (specific guidance, training, cooperation with Member States) in order to raise awareness and help Member States to ensure in a proactive way that the funding of their infrastructure projects respects state aid rules, while avoiding unnecessary delays in the absorption of EU Funds.

Moreover, in order to broaden the scope of measures that can be block exempted, the new Council Regulation of 22 July 2013 amending Regulation No 994/98 ([1]) now also covers innovation, culture, natural disasters, sport, certain broadband infrastructure and other infrastructure. This has allowed the Commission to include such types of infrastructure aid in the scope of draft Commission Regulation (GBER II) (currently under public consultation: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_second_gber/index_en.html) and thus block-exempt them from notification.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 994/98 of 7 May 1998 on the application of Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty establishing the European Community to certain categories of horizontal state aid, OJ L 142 of 14.05.1998, p.1. ('Enabling Regulation').

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007480/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(25 juni 2013)

Betreft: Bloedpaspoort als bewijs voor dopinggebruik

Het oorspronkelijk doel van het bijhouden van een bloedpaspoort voor wielrenners was om op basis van schommelingen in de vastgestelde waarden, grondiger onderzoek te doen naar dopinggebruik via dopingtests. Maar sinds enkele jaren wordt het bloedpaspoort van sporters als direct of indirect bewijs voor dopinggebruik gebruikt. Ondertussen zijn er een reeks sporters die momenteel van dopinggebruik verdacht worden op grond van afwijkende waarden in hun bloedpaspoort. Onder meer de Belg Leif Hoste hangt een schorsing van twee jaar boven het hoofd op basis van abnormale schommelingen in zijn bloedwaarden. Hij legde echter nooit een positieve dopingtest af.

In de mededeling „Ontwikkeling van de Europese dimensie van de sport" (18.1.2011) heeft de Commissie benadrukt dat de antidopingregels en -praktijken aan het EU-recht moeten voldoen en dat zij grondrechten en beginselen zoals het respect voor het privé- en het gezinsleven, de bescherming van persoonsgegevens, het recht op een eerlijk proces en het vermoeden van onschuld moeten eerbiedigen. Daarom „moet elke beperking op de uitoefening van deze rechten en vrijheden wettelijk worden vastgelegd en de essentie van die rechten en het evenredigheidsbeginsel eerbiedigen."

Er heerst nog steeds onenigheid tussen dopingexperts of het bloedpaspoort een goede basis is om iemand te veroordelen voor het gebruik van verboden middelen.

1. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het inzetten van het bloedpaspoort als bewijs voor dopinggebruik?

2. Meent de Commissie dat het bloedpaspoort kan ingezet worden als bewijs voor dopinggebruik zonder de rechten van de beschuldigde tekort te doen?

3. Heeft de Commissie deze thematiek besproken met de lidstaten?

4. Meent de Commissie dat alle sporters die professioneel/semi-professioneel aan competities deelnemen een bloedpaspoort moeten hebben?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(27 augustus 2013)

De Commissie is zich er terdege van bewust dat de antidopinggemeenschap steeds vaker gebruikmaakt van indirect bewijs om dopinggebruik aan te tonen. De Commissie blijft wat deze kwestie betreft bij het standpunt dat zij heeft ingenomen in haar mededeling „Ontwikkeling van de Europese dimensie van de sport", die het geachte Parlementslid citeert. Zij is zich er tevens van bewust dat het biologisch paspoort voor sporters kan bijdragen tot de bescherming van de gezondheid van sporters, waarvoor een aanpak zou moeten worden ontwikkeld die gezonde omstandigheden voor sportbeoefening centraal stelt en niet een aanpak waarbij sancties vooropstaan.

Volgens het Wereldantidopingagentschap (WADA) is de grondgedachte achter het biologisch paspoort dat gespreid in de tijd bepaalde biologische parameters worden gecontroleerd, waardoor op indirecte wijze de gevolgen van dopinggebruik zichtbaar worden, en niet dat wordt getracht het dopingmiddel zelf op te sporen. Zoals het geachte Parlementslid terecht opmerkt, kan dit aanleiding geven tot bedenkingen wat de rechten van de verdediging betreft.

De Commissie is bezorgd over het feit dat schommelingen in de bloedwaarden tot sancties kunnen leiden, hoewel deze schommelingen verschillende onderliggende oorzaken kunnen hebben. Er moet worden betwijfeld of uitsluitend op het biologisch paspoort kan worden vertrouwd, zonder dat gebruik wordt gemaakt van andere vormen van bewijsmateriaal.

De Commissie heeft deze thematiek specifiek aan de orde gesteld bij de lidstaten, waarvan sommige heel wel beseffen dat het gebruik van het biologisch paspoort risico's meebrengt, onder meer wat de bescherming van gevoelige medische gegevens betreft. De Commissie acht het disproportioneel van alle sporters die professioneel/ semiprofessioneel aan competities deelnemen te verlangen dat zijn in het bezit zijn van een biologisch paspoort en dat zij op basis daarvan worden gecontroleerd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007480/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Blood passport as evidence of doping

The original purpose of keeping a blood passport for cyclists was to use fluctuations in the values measured to undertake a more thorough investigation into doping than by means of doping tests alone. But in recent years, athletes' blood passports have been used as direct or indirect evidence of doping. A considerable number of sportspersons are now suspected of doping because of deviations in the values in their blood passports. For example, the Belgian national Leif Hoste is in danger of being suspended for two years on the basis of abnormal fluctuations in his blood values. Yet he has never failed a doping test.

In the communication 'Developing the European dimension in sport' (18.1.2011), the Commission stressed that antidoping rules and practices must comply with EC law and respect fundamental rights and principles such as respect for private and family life, protection of personal data, the right to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence. Accordingly, 'any limitation on the exercise of these rights and freedoms must be provided for by law and respect the essence of those rights and the principle of proportionality.'

Doping experts are still not agreed whether the blood passport is a good basis for ruling that a person has used banned substances.

1. What view does the Commission take of the use of the blood passport to provide evidence of doping?

2. Does the Commission believe that the blood passport can be used to provide evidence of doping without infringing the rights of the suspect?

3. Has the Commission discussed this subject with the Member States?

4. Does the Commission consider that all sportspersons who take part in competitions professionally or semi-professionally should have a blood passport?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The Commission is well aware that the anti-doping community is increasingly using indirect evidence as a means of providing proof of doping. On this subject, the Commission maintains its position expresssed in its communication 'Developing the European dimension in sport' which the Honourable Member quotes. The Commission is equally aware that the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) has the potential to protect the health of athletes which would require developing an occupational health approach, rather than focusing on a sanctions-driven one.

According to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the rationale behind the ABP is the 'monitoring of selected biological parameters over time that will indirectly reveal the effects of doping rather than attempting to detect the doping substance itself'. As the Honorouble Member rightly points out, this could raise issues regarding the rights of the defendant.

The Commission is concerned that fluctations in blood values may lead to sanctions, whereas these fluctuations may have various root causes. Whether the ABP can be relied on exclusively, without recourse to other types of evidence, seems doubtful.

The Commission raised this subject specifically with Member States, some of which are well aware of the risks posed by the ABP. Such risks include protection of sensitive medical data. The Commission would consider it disproportionate to require all sportspersons taking part in competitions professionally or semi-professionally to have an ABP and be monitored accordingly.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007481/13
do Komisji
Tadeusz Zwiefka (PPE) oraz Jacek Protasiewicz (PPE)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Konsultacje dotyczące projektu rozporządzenia Komisji w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych, które zastąpi rozporządzenie Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008

Obecnie Komisja Europejska prowadzi drugą rundę konsultacji w sprawie projektu rozporządzenia KE w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych, które zastąpi wygasające z dniem 31 grudnia 2013 r. rozporządzenie Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r.

Projekt przewiduje, że rozporządzenie nie będzie mieć zastosowania do programów pomocowych, których planowane lub rzeczywiste roczne wydatki publiczne przekraczają 0.01 % produktu krajowego brutto (PKB) w danym państwie członkowskim w odniesieniu do poprzedniego roku kalendarzowego oraz w jakich planowany lub rzeczywisty budżet programu przekracza 100 mln euro.

Obecnie w Polsce w ramach pomocy publicznej na dofinansowanie wynagrodzeń dla osób niepełnosprawnych zatrudnionych przez MŚP przeznacza się ok. 3 mld złotych. Nowe przepisy utrudnią i wydłużą w czasie procedury uzyskania zezwolenia na korzystanie z pomocy publicznej w tym obszarze, nakładając na MŚP dodatkowe obowiązki i obciążenia administracyjne.

1. Czy Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę, że zastosowanie proponowanego przedziału kwotowego na pomoc publiczną w formie subsydiów płacowych na zatrudnianie pracowników niepełnosprawnych może oznaczać znaczący spadek poziomu zatrudnienia wśród tej grupy osób w Polsce?

2. Uzależnienie poziomu pomocy od PKB, który różni się znacząco między państwami członkowskimi, będzie dyskryminowało mniejsze i słabiej rozwinięte państwa Unii. Czy Komisja zamierza podjąć środki, które będą tej dyskryminacji przeciwdziałać?

3. Czy i w jaki sposób Komisja odniesie się do negatywnych głosów wobec tych konkretnych zapisów, które pojawią się na różnych etapach konsultacji?

4. Jeśli pojawi się znaczący sprzeciw wobec proponowanych zmian, czy Komisja jest skłonna odstąpić od kwestionowanych zapisów lub zaproponować nowe konstruktywne rozwiązanie?

5. Czy przesłane komentarze w ramach konsultacji będą upublicznione?

6. Czy Komisja rozważa obecnie zmianę propozycji w taki sposób, który umożliwiłby kontynuowanie subsydiowania zatrudnienia osób niepełnosprawnych na obecnym poziomie?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007492/13
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zmiana rozporządzenia Komisji w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych (GBER), a sytuacja zatrudnienia osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce

W ostatnim czasie Komisja Europejska zaproponowała projekt rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych (GBER), który ma zastąpić dotychczasowe rozporządzenie (WE) nr 800/2008. Zgodnie z tym projektem roczne limity kwotowe dotyczące programów pomocowych, niewymagających notyfikacji, będą wynosiły 0,01 % produktu krajowego brutto lub kwotę wynoszącą równowartość 100 mln euro.

W Polsce roczne wydatki Państwowego Funduszu Rehabilitacji Osób Niepełnosprawnych wynoszą ponad 750 mln euro i dotyczą wsparcia ponad 18 000 firm zatrudniających osoby niepełnosprawne i ok. 240 000 osób zatrudnionych.

Wejście w życie powyższego rozporządzenia w zaproponowanym kształcie doprowadzi do konieczności likwidacji systemu wspierania zatrudnienia osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce i będzie jednoznaczne z utratą miejsc pracy przez osoby niepełnosprawne.

1. Czy Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę z opisanych powyżej konsekwencji zaproponowanej zmiany rozporządzenia (WE) nr 800/2008 dla osób niepełnosprawnych zatrudnionych w Polsce?

2. Czy Komisja podejmie próby modyfikacji zaproponowanej zmiany rozporządzenia?

3. Jakie kroki może podjąć Komisja, aby zapobiec sytuacji, w której poszkodowane zostaną osoby niepełnosprawne?

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007850/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 lipca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Planowane limity pomocy publicznej

Planowane wprowadzenie limitów udzielania przez państwa członkowskie pomocy publicznej wywołało ogromne zaniepokojenie osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce. Jedną z form takiej pomocy są bowiem dopłaty do wynagrodzeń pracowników z niepełnosprawnością, w chwili obecnej szacowane łącznie na ponad 3 mld złotych w skali roku. W efekcie zmian pomoc ta ograniczy się do kwoty ok. 150 mln zł. Proponowane ograniczenia w praktyce uniemożliwią więc pracodawcom zatrudnianie osób niepełnosprawnych. Zaistniała zatem realna groźba masowych zwolnień w tej grupie społecznej, co w obliczu wyjątkowej sytuacji życiowej niepełnosprawnych oraz wysokiego bezrobocia znacząco pogorszy sytuację wielu rodzin.

W nawiązaniu do powyższego zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź na następujące kwestie:

1. Czy proponowane zmiany zaczną obowiązywać z dniem 1 stycznia 2014 r., czy też możliwe jest ich odroczenie?

2. Czy postulowane zmiany były konsultowane z pełnomocnikiem rządu RP ds. osób niepełnosprawnych, celem uzyskania porozumienia i jak Komisja ustosunkowuje się do jego obecnej negatywnej opinii odnośnie nowych przepisów?

3. Czy, uwzględniając stanowisko organizacji osób niepełnosprawnych oraz masowe protesty w przedmiotowej sprawie, Komisja rozważy korektę proponowanych zmian, w sposób taki, aby umożliwiały one krajom skuteczne realizowanie pomocy dla pracowników z niepełnosprawnością? Ewentualnie, czy możliwe jest zastosowanie specjalnych przepisów w odniesieniu do Polski?

Wspólna odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(20 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja rozumie wyzwania związane z rynkiem pracy, z którymi zmagają się niepełnosprawni pracownicy.

Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę, że wprowadzenie proponowanego progu zgłaszania bardzo dużych programów do projektu ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych (GBER) może spowodować konieczność zgłaszania niektórych polskich programów na rzecz pomocy w zatrudnianiu osób niepełnosprawnych.

Taki obowiązek zgłoszenia oznacza tylko, że Komisja będzie musiała zostać poinformowana, zanim takie programy będą wdrażane, nie oznacza to jednak, że wsparcie państwa dla pracowników niepełnosprawnych będzie zabronione. W rzeczywistości, podejmując decyzję w sprawie zgodności programów z rynkiem wewnętrznym, Komisja w pełni uwzględni ich korzystne skutki w zakresie promowania zatrudniania osób niepełnosprawnych.

Proszę również zwrócić uwagę, że obecna wersja projektu ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych, w tym jego przepisów odnoszących się do pomocy dla pracowników niepełnosprawnych, nie jest jeszcze wersją ostateczną. W ramach przeprowadzonych konsultacji społecznych Komisja otrzymała uwagi od wielu obywateli i organizacji reprezentujących osoby niepełnosprawne, jak również od władz polskich. Komisja przeprowadzi analizę otrzymanych informacji i rozważy, w jaki sposób najlepiej odnieść się do wspomnianych uwag.

Zmieniony wniosek dotyczący ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych zostanie opublikowany przed końcem roku i będzie ponownie podlegać konsultacjom publicznym. Osoby niepełnosprawne, organizacje reprezentujące ich interesy i administracje krajowe będą mogły uważnie śledzić rozwój sytuacji i wyrażać swoje opinie na temat zmienionych przepisów projektu ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007481/13
to the Commission
Tadeusz Zwiefka (PPE) and Jacek Protasiewicz (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Consultations on the Commission's draft General Block Exemption Regulation intended to replace Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008

The European Commission is currently conducting a second round of consultations on the Commission's draft General Block Exemption Regulation intended to replace Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008, which will cease to be valid on 31 December 2013.

According to this draft, the regulation will not apply to aid programmes involving planned or actual annual public spending of over 0.01% of gross domestic product (GDP) by the Member State in question in the previous calendar year, or those with a planned or actual programme budget exceeding EUR 100 million.

At present, around PLN 3 billion in state aid is used to subsidise wages for disabled persons employed by SMEs in Poland. The new regulations will complicate and prolong the procedures for granting state aid in this area, burdening SMEs with additional obligations and red tape.

1. Is the Commission aware that the proposed funding brackets for state aid paid out as wage subsidies for disabled employees may result in a significant drop in employment among this group in Poland?

2. There are significant differences in GDP between the Member States, which means that the smaller and less-developed among them would be discriminated against if the level of aid was made dependent on GDP. Does the Commission plan to take any steps to prevent such discrimination?

3. Will the Commission respond to criticism levelled at these specific provisions of the draft at the various stages of the consultation, and if so, how?

4. If there is significant opposition to the proposed amendments, is the Commission open to the idea of withdrawing the contentious provisions or proposing a new and constructive solution?

5. Will the comments submitted during the consultation be made public?

6. Is the Commission currently considering amending the proposal in order to make it possible for the employment of disabled persons to continue to be subsidised at the present level?

Question for written answer E-007492/13
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Amendments to the Commission's General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) and the situation as regards the employment of disabled persons in Poland

The Commission recently tabled a draft General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) to replace the current Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008. According to the draft, the annual funding limits for aid programmes exempt from the notification procedure will be 0.01% of gross domestic product, or EUR 100 million.

In Poland, annual spending under the State Fund for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons amounts to over EUR 750 million, providing support for over 18 000 companies which employ disabled persons and approximately 240 000 employees.

The entry into force of the regulation in its proposed form will mean that the system for supporting the employment of disabled persons in Poland will need to be abolished and will equate to job losses for disabled persons.

1. Is the Commission aware of the aforementioned consequences of the proposed amendments to Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 for disabled persons employed in Poland?

2. Will the Commission attempt to modify the proposed amendments to the regulation?

3. What steps can the Commission take to prevent disabled persons being adversely affected?

Question for written answer E-007850/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(2 July 2013)

Subject: Planned limits to public aid

The planned introduction of limits to the level of public aid provided by Member States has caused great concern in Poland among people with disabilities. This is because one form of this aid is the supplements made to the pay of employees who have a disability, currently estimated to amount to in excess of PLN 3 billion per year. As a result of the changes, this aid will be limited to a sum of around PLN 150 million. In practice, the proposed restrictions will therefore prevent employers from giving work to people who have a disability. A real threat of mass redundancies has therefore arisen in this social group, and the exceptionally difficult personal situations facing people with disabilities, together with the problem of high unemployment, mean the circumstances of many families will deteriorate.

I should therefore like to ask the Commission:

1. Will the proposed changes take effect from 1 January 2014, or is it possible that their introduction will be postponed?

2. Were the proposed changes discussed with the Polish Government's Plenipotentiary for Disabled People to try to reach agreement on this matter, and how does the Commission respond to the negative opinion he has now expressed regarding the new rules?

3. In view of the position of organisations representing disabled people and the mass protests which have taken place in connection with this matter, will the Commission consider correcting the proposed changes to enable Member States to provide effective help to working people who have a disability? Would it perhaps be possible to apply special rules to Poland?

Joint answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission understands the challenges faced by disabled workers on the job market.

The Commission is aware that the introduction of a proposed threshold for notification of very large schemes into the draft General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) might trigger the necessity to notify certain Polish schemes for employment aid for disabled people.

Such a notification obligation, however, only means that the Commission would need to be informed before such schemes are implemented, not that State support for disabled workers would necessarily be prohibited. In fact, when deciding on their compatibility with the internal market, the Commission would fully consider the beneficial effects of such schemes for promoting the employment of disabled persons.

Please also note that the draft GBER, including its provisions relating to the aid for disabled workers, is not yet final. The Commission has received feedback in the framework of the public consultation from numerous citizens and organisations representing disabled persons as well as from the Polish authorities. It will analyse this feedback and will consider how best to address those comments.

The revised GBER proposal will be published before the end of the year and will again be subject to public consultation. Disabled persons, organisations representing their interests and national administrations will be able to follow these developments closely and will be able to express their opinions on the revised provisions of the draft GBER.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007482/13
à Comissão
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(25 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Acessulfame K

Em Portugal, de acordo com o Regulamento (CE) n.° 1333/2008 relativo aos aditivos alimentares, bem como com o Regulamento (UE) n.° 1129/2011 que estabelece uma lista da União de aditivos e edulcorantes, o acessulfame K está autorizado para determinados produtos, mas não para bolachas.

Vários produtos com acessulfame de potássio, um adoçante 200 vezes superior à sacarose cujos efeitos para a saúde têm sido alvo de estudos contraditórios, com alguns a falarem de substância potencialmente cancerígena, estão à venda nas prateleiras de produtos dietéticos e são distribuídos por pelo menos uma conhecida marca espanhola e outra portuguesa.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Possui algum estudo que demonstre que o acessulfame K seja uma substância potencialmente cancerígena?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(5 de agosto de 2013)

A Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta dada à pergunta escrita E-007367/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007482/13
to the Commission
Nuno Melo (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Acesulfame K

Acesulfame K is authorised for certain products in Portugal in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 on food additives and Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011 establishing a Union list of food additives and sweeteners, although it is not authorised for biscuits.

Acesulfame potassium is a sweetener 200 times sweeter than sucrose whose health effects have been the subject of contradictory studies, with some reports claiming that it may be carcinogenic. A number of products containing acesulfame K can be found on the diet food shelves, marketed by at least one well-known Spanish brand and a Portuguese brand.

Does the Commission have any studies showing that acesulfame K is potentially carcinogenic?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-007367/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007483/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Marco energías renovables

Las metas actuales sobre energías renovables que caducan en 2020, pretenden reducir en un 20 % las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero, conseguir que el 20 % del consumo energético proceda de las renovables y aumentar la eficiencia energética en esa misma proporción.

Para alcanzar dichas metas es necesario fijar un marco sobre el que se debe basar el sector a nivel europeo, ¿podría comunicar la Comisión para cuándo va a realizar dicho marco?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de agosto de 2013)

El objetivo del 20 % de energías renovables se fijó, junto con otros dos objetivos destinados a lograr una reducción del 20 % de las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero y un 20 % de aumento de la eficiencia energética, como parte del marco energético y climático para 2020. Para alcanzar el objetivo del 20 % de energías renovables, se adoptó en 2009 una Directiva relativa al fomento del uso de energía procedente de fuentes renovables ([1]), entre otras medidas para lograr los objetivos establecidos. Aunque deja a los Estados miembros la principal responsabilidad en el diseño de los regímenes de ayudas para las energías renovables, la Comisión está a punto de finalizar sus orientaciones para los Estados miembros en relación con el diseño y la reforma de los regímenes de ayudas con objeto de hacerlos más compatibles con el mercado interior de la energía. Asimismo, la Comisión está revisando las actuales Directrices comunitarias sobre ayudas estatales en favor del medio ambiente ([2]), aplicables a los regímenes de ayuda a las energías renovables.

La Comisión ya ha empezado a elaborar propuestas para un nuevo marco, para el período hasta 2030.

([1]) DO L 140 de 5.6.2009.
([2]) DO C 82 de 1.4.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007483/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Renewable energy framework

The current renewable energy goals, which expire in 2020, are aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20%, ensuring that 20% of energy consumption comes from renewable energy, and achieving a 20% increase in energy efficiency.

In order to achieve these goals, a framework for the sector must be established at European level. Could the Commission indicate when it is going to establish such a framework?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 August 2013)

The 20% renewable energy target was established, alongside with two other targets aiming at a 20% reduction in GHG emissions and a 20% increase in energy efficiency, as part of the 2020 Energy and Climate Framework. To achieve the 20% renewable energy goal, a directive on the promotion of renewable energy ([1]) was adopted in 2009, among other measures to reach the set targets. While it leaves the main responsibility for designing support schemes for renewable energy with Member States, the Commission is in the process of finalising guidance for Member States on how to design and reform support schemes with a view to making them more compatible with the internal energy market. Likewise, the Commission is revising the current state aid guidelines applicable to renewable energy support schemes ([2]).

The Commission is currently in the process of drawing up proposals for a new framework for the period until 2030.

([1]) OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.
([2]) OJ C 82, 1.4.2008.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007484/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Energías renovables

El último informe que publica Eurostat sobre el consumo de energías renovables indica que la energía solar, térmica, fotovoltaica, hidráulica, eólica, geotérmica, biomasa y las bombas de calor ocupan un lugar cada vez mayor en el *mix* energético en las empresas y en los hogares europeos.

El informe demuestra que pasó de suponer un 7,9 % del total de la energía consumida en 2004 a un 12,1 % en 2010, hasta llegar a un 13 % en 2013.

Por países, los que se sitúan a la cabeza del ranking por su gran consumo son Suecia, con un 46,8 %, Letonia, con un 33,1 %, Finlandia, con un 31,8 % y Austria, con un 30,9 %.

En contraposición, los Estados miembros que menos recurrieron a las energías renovables fueron Malta (0,4 %), Luxemburgo (2,9 %), Reino Unido (3,8 %), Bélgica (4,1 %) y Holanda (4,3 %).

Existe una clara diferencia entre los países de la Unión que consumen energías renovables. Dada la importancia que tienen en la actualidad este tipo de energías, ¿tiene la Comisión en mente algún tipo de medida que ayude a impulsar a estos Estados miembros en el consumo de energías renovales?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de agosto de 2013)

La Directiva de Energías Renovables ([1]) establece objetivos vinculantes para cada Estado miembro, de manera que la UE pueda alcanzar, en 2020 como muy tarde, su objetivo del 20 % para la cuota global de esas energías.

Entre las obligaciones de notificación que el artículo 22, apartado 1, impone a los Estados miembros, está la de presentar a la Comisión cada dos años un informe sobre los progresos registrados en el fomento y la utilización de la energía procedente de fuentes renovables. La Comisión, por su parte, también publica cada dos años informes bienales basados en los de los Estados miembros. El más reciente se publicó el 27 de marzo de 2013 ([2]). A partir de esos informes, la Comisión evalúa los avances realizados y, si no son significativos, puede tomar medidas legales contra los Estados miembros de que se trate.

Los Estados miembros, además de tener que cumplir unas obligaciones legales, pueden también obtener ayuda financiera de la UE; en particular, en el período de programación 2007-2013 de la política de cohesión de la UE se han asignado aproximadamente 4 500 millones de euros al fomento de las energías renovables.

Para el período 2014-2020, la Comisión mantiene su compromiso de apoyar el desarrollo de energías renovables rentables en el marco de Horizonte 2020 y de la política de cohesión para 2014-2020, en virtud de la cual los Estados miembros deberán asignar un porcentaje mínimo de los fondos recibidos a la transición hacia una economía hipocarbónica, incluida la energía renovable. Los importes exactos aún no se han decidido.

([1]) Directiva 2009/28/CE (DO L 140 de 5.6.2009, p. 16).
([2]) COM(2013) 175.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007484/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Renewable energy

The latest report published by Eurostat on renewable energy consumption indicates that solar, thermal, photovoltaic, wind, and geothermal energy, along with hydropower, biomass and heat pumps, account for an increasingly large share of the energy mix consumed by European businesses and homes.

The report shows that renewable energy consumption rose from 7.9% of total energy consumption in 2004 to 12.1% in 2010 and 13% in 2013.

The highest-ranking countries in terms of renewable energy consumption are Sweden, at 46.8%, Latvia, at 33.1%, Finland, at 31.8%, and Austria, at 30.9%.

In contrast, the Member States making the least use of renewable energy were Malta (0.4%), Luxembourg (2.9%), the United Kingdom (3.8%), Belgium (4.1%), and the Netherlands (4.3%).

There is a clear difference among the EU countries that consume renewable energy. Given the importance of this kind of energy in the present day, does the Commission have any measures in mind that would help to encourage these Member States to consume renewable energy?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Renewable Energy Directive ([1]) establishes binding national renewable energy targets for each Member State in such a way as to allow the EU to reach its overall binding 20% renewable energy target by 2020.

As part of their reporting obligations under Article 22(1) of this directive, Member States every two years report to the Commission on the progress achieved in deployment of renewable energy. The Commission, for its part, also publishes its biennial Renewable energy progress reports. The most recent report was published by the Commission on 27 March 2013 ([2]). On the basis of these reports the Commission assesses the progress made and can take legal measures if Member States fail to make significant progress.

In addition to the legal obligations that Member States have, they can also draw on financial support of the EU, in particular in the 2007-2013 programming period of EU cohesion policy about EUR 4.5 billion have been allocated to renewable energy.

For the period 2014-2020 the Commission remains committed to supporting the development of cost-effective renewable energy under Horizon 2020 as well as under the 2014-2020 cohesion policy under which Member States will have to allocate a minimum share of their funding to the switch to a low-carbon economy, including renewable energy. The exact amounts remain to be decided.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC, OJ L 140.
([2]) COM(2013) 175.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007485/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Cambio climático

La Agencia Europa de Medio Ambiente (AEMA) presentó el 29 de abril un informe que recoge cuál debe ser la estrategia que debe guiar la actuación de la UE para hacer frente a las acometidas del cambio climático.

El estudio demuestra que la mitad de los 32 miembros que forman parte de la AEMA —los veintisiete más Islandia, Liechtenstein, Noruega, Suiza y Turquía— ya han adoptado a escala nacional planes de actuación para luchar contra las alteraciones que está acarreando este fenómeno. Sin embargo, los autores del informe señalan que, pese a los progresos cosechados, estos países «todavía tienen mucho trabajo por hacer».

Entre los principales riesgos destacan temperaturas más altas, una disminución de las precipitaciones en las regiones del sur, mientras que el norte de Europa experimentará un repunte de las lluvias.

El estudio recomienda a las autoridades nacionales que adopten una «estrategia multisectorial» que tenga presente los diferentes componentes que entran en juego.

Además de la recomendación de la AEMA a nivel nacional, ¿la Comisión va a realizar alguna actuación a nivel europeo para intentar evitar los «riesgos y peligros» ligados a la mutación del sistema climático?

Respuesta de la Sra. Hedegaard en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de agosto de 2013)

El 16 de abril de 2013, la Comisión Europea adoptó la estrategia de la UE sobre la adaptación al cambio climático ([1]). La estrategia tiene como objetivo conseguir una Europa más resistente al cambio climático. A través de un planteamiento coherente y de una mayor coordinación, la estrategia va a reforzar a todos los niveles de gobernanza la capacidad de responder a los efectos del cambio climático, centrándose en tres objetivos clave:

— Fomentar la actuación de los Estados miembros: la Comisión anima a todos los Estados miembros a que adopten estrategias globales de adaptación (actualmente, 15 Estados miembros cuentan con sendas estrategias) y aportará fondos para ayudarles a reforzar su capacidad de adaptación y a emprender actuaciones. También apoyará la adaptación de las ciudades mediante el lanzamiento de un compromiso voluntario basado en la iniciativa «Pacto entre Alcaldes».

— Toma de decisiones con mayor conocimiento de causa: la Comisión seguirá colaborando con los Estados miembros y las partes interesadas para subsanar las deficiencias en el conocimiento de la adaptación al cambio climático. La Plataforma Europea de Adaptación al Clima (Climate-ADAPT) se convertirá en la «ventanilla única» para la información sobre adaptación en Europa.

— Actuaciones de la UE para la reducción del impacto del cambio climático en sectores vulnerables clave: la Comisión colaborará para facilitar la reducción del impacto del cambio climático de la política agrícola común (PAC), la política de cohesión y la política pesquera común (PPC), conseguir una mayor resistencia de las infraestructuras europeas y fomentar el uso de los seguros contra las catástrofes naturales y antropogénicas.

La Comisión está colaborando estrechamente con la Agencia Europa de Medio Ambiente (AEMA) para apoyar y fomentar medidas de adaptación en todo el territorio de la UE. El informe de la AEMA fue presentado el día en que se puso en marcha oficialmente la estrategia de la UE sobre la adaptación al cambio climático ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation/what/documentation_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0069/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007485/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Climate change

On 29 April, the European Environment Agency (EEA) presented a report discussing the strategy that should guide the EU's action when tackling the onslaught of climate change.

The study shows that half of the EEA's 32 members — the 27 EU Member States plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey — have already adopted action plans at national level to combat the damage caused by climate change. However, the authors of the report state that in spite of the progress that has been made, these countries 'still have much work to be done'.

Among the main risks, the report points to higher temperatures and a decrease in precipitation in southern regions, while northern Europe will see an increase in rainfall.

The study recommends that national authorities adopt a 'multi-sectoral strategy' that takes into account the various factors at play.

In addition to the EEA's recommendation at national level, will the Commission take any action at European level to attempt to avoid the 'risks and vulnerabilities' linked to climate change?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

On 16 April 2013, the European Commission adopted the EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change ([1]). The strategy aims to make Europe more climate-resilient. By taking a coherent approach and providing for improved coordination, it will enhance the preparedness and capacity of all governance levels to respond to the impacts of climate change. The EU Adaptation Strategy focuses on three key objectives:

— Promoting action by Member States: The Commission encourages all Member States to adopt comprehensive adaptation strategies (currently 15 have strategies) and will provide funding to help them build up their adaptation capacities and take action. It will also support adaptation in cities by launching a voluntary commitment based on the Covenant of Mayors initiative.

— Better informed decision-making: the Commission will further work with Member States and stakeholders in addressing gaps in knowledge about adaptation. The European climate adaptation platform (Climate-ADAPT) will be further developed as the 'one-stop shop' for adaptation information in Europe.

— 'Climate-proofing' EU action in vulnerable sectors: the Commission will work on facilitating the climate-proofing of the common agricultural policy (CAP), the Cohesion Policy and the common fisheries policy (CFP), on ensuring that Europe's infrastructure is made more resilient, and on promoting the use of insurance against natural and man-made disasters.

The Commission is working in close collaboration with the European Environment Agency (EEA) to support and promote adaptation action across the EU territory. The EEA report on adaptation was presented the day of the official launch of the EU Adaptation Strategy ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation/what/documentation_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/0069/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007486/13
a la Comisión
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Energía eólica

La crisis financiera está afectando a muchos sectores, entre ellos a la energía eólica.

El año pasado, los nuevos parques eólicos en Europa generaron una energía extra de 12,744 megavatios. Pero la crisis económica y financiera está teniendo un «impacto negativo» en el desarrollo del sector, por lo que las industrias europeas están explorando nuevos mercados en el exterior.

El sector español es uno de los grandes damnificados. En 2012 la potencia generada cayó hasta los 1,112 megavatios, y el estudio constata que «no hay perspectivas de recuperación en un futuro próximo».

¿Qué medidas va a tomar la Comisión para evitar que las industrias europeas se tengan que marchar a terceros países?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión no tiene previsto tomar medidas concretas para evitar que las industrias europeas exploren nuevos mercados. La Comisión está tomando medidas para fomentar las inversiones en energías renovables en la EU de forma sostenible. Los detalles sobre la situación en España figuran en la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta parlamentaria E-001623/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007486/13
to the Commission
Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Wind power

The financial crisis is affecting many sectors, including wind power.

Last year, new wind farms in Europe generated 12 744 megawatts of extra energy. However, the economic and financial crisis is having a 'negative impact' on the sector's development and, as a result, European industries are exploring new markets abroad.

The Spanish wind power sector is one of the main victims. In 2012, the power generated by Spanish wind farms fell to 1 112 megawatts, and a study states that 'there are no prospects of recovery in the near future'.

What measures is the Commission going to take in order to keep European industries from having to go to third countries?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission does not foresee to take specific actions to prevent European industries from exploring new markets. The Commission is undertaking action to promote investments in renewables in the EU in a sustainable manner. Details on the situation in Spain can be found in the Commission's reply to the EP Question E-001623/2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007487/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(25 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Περιορισμοί στη χρήση των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην Τουρκία

Μετά τις πρόσφατες διαδηλώσεις που έλαβαν χώρα στην Τουρκία με εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες πολίτες να διαμαρτύρονται για τον αυξανόμενο αυταρχισμό της κυβέρνησης ακολούθησε μια προκλητική δήλωση από τον κ. Γκιουλέρ, τον Τούρκο Υπουργό Εσωτερικών, ο οποίος ισχυρίστηκε ότι: «Διεξάγουμε έρευνα σχετικά με αυτούς που προκαλούν το κοινό μέσω διασποράς ψευδών ειδήσεων και τους οδηγούν σε πράξεις που θα απειλούσαν την ασφάλεια για τη ζωή και την ιδιοκτησία, μέσω της χρήσης του Twitter, του Facebook και άλλων εργαλείων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης». Σημειώνεται ότι κατά τη διάρκεια των διαδηλώσεων περισσότερα από 25 άτομα συνελήφθησαν ως ύποπτοι για πρόκληση εξέγερσης χρησιμοποιώντας τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης.

Λίγους μήνες νωρίτερα σε διακεκριμένο Τούρκο μουσικό επεβλήθη από τουρκικό δικαστήριο ποινή φυλάκισης με αναστολή για την ανάρτηση βλάσφημων-μηνυμάτων στο Twitter (κάποια από τα εν λόγω μηνύματα ήταν στίχοι του Πέρση φιλόσοφου του 11ου αιώνα Ομάρ Καγιάμ).

Το 2012 η Τουρκία κατέλαβε την 148η θέση ανάμεσα σε 169 χώρες στον Ετήσιο Κατάλογο για την Ελευθερία του Τύπου παγκοσμίως *των Δημοσιογράφων χωρίς Σύνορα*. Μετά από τις πρόσφατες διαμαρτυρίες γινόμαστε μάρτυρες μιας προσπάθειας περιορισμού της ελεύθερης χρήσης των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης, τα οποία, σύμφωνα με τον Τούρκο πρωθυπουργό, αποτελούν «ταραχοποιό στοιχείο στις κοινωνίες λόγω των ψευδών που διασπείρουν, τα οποία μπορούν να οδηγήσουν αθώους ανθρώπους σε βίαιες πράξεις».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς απαντά η Επιτροπή σε αυτές τις δηλώσεις της τουρκικής κυβέρνησης;

2. Είναι ενήμερη η Επιτροπή για τους νέους περιορισμούς που επέβαλλε η τουρκική κυβέρνηση στην ελευθερία του λόγου μέσω της χρήσης των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

3. Θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι αυτές οι απαγορεύσεις έρχονται σε αντίθεση με τα κριτήρια ένταξης σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα των πολιτών στην ελευθερία έκφρασης καθώς και του πλουραλισμού των μέσων ενημέρωσης;

4. Τι μέτρα σκοπεύει να λάβει η Επιτροπή προκειμένου να προστατέψει τα πολιτικά δικαιώματα στην Τουρκία καθώς και την ελευθερία έκφρασης;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Η ελευθερία και ο πλουραλισμός των μέσων ενημέρωσης αποτελούν θεμελιώδη πτυχή της δημοκρατίας και πρέπει να κατοχυρώνονται σύμφωνα με την Ευρωπαϊκή Σύμβαση για την Προάσπιση των Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου και των Θεμελιωδών Ελευθεριών (ΕΣΔΑ) και τη νομολογία του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου των Δικαιωμάτων του Ανθρώπου (ΕΔΔΑ). Η Επιτροπή έχει αναλάβει ισχυρή δέσμευση για την ελευθερία της έκφρασης και την προώθηση ενός ελεύθερου και ανοιχτού Διαδικτύου: Τα οικουμενικά ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα πρέπει να γίνονται σεβαστά στο Διαδίκτυο, όπως ακριβώς και εκτός αυτού. Ως εκ τούτου, η Επιτροπή έχει επανειλημμένα τονίσει ότι στην Τουρκία χρειάζονται λιγότεροι και όχι περισσότεροι περιορισμοί στα μέσα ενημέρωσης. Τυχόν μέτρα για τον περιορισμό της πρόσβασης σε μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για τους τελικούς χρήστες θα πρέπει να είναι δεόντως αιτιολογημένα και να εγκρίνονται μόνο εφόσον είναι κατάλληλα, αναλογικά και απαραίτητα και συμφωνούν με τις υφιστάμενες δημοκρατικές εγγυήσεις και τα δικαιώματα του ανθρώπου.

Επιπλέον, ο Επίτροπος που είναι αρμόδιος για το ψηφιακό θεματολόγιο έχει συγκροτήσει ανεξάρτητη ομάδα υψηλού επιπέδου για την ελευθερία και την πολυφωνία των μέσων ενημέρωσης. Μετά την παρουσίαση της έκθεσης από την εν λόγω ομάδα, η Επιτροπή δρομολόγησε δύο δημόσιες διαβουλεύσεις, μία σχετικά με τις συστάσεις της ομάδας και μία ειδικά για την ανεξαρτησία των εθνικών ρυθμιστικών αρχών του οπτικοακουστικού τομέα. Οι συστάσεις 9 και 10 αφορούν την προώθηση των ευρωπαϊκών αξιών πέρα από τα σύνορα της ΕΕ. Τα αποτελέσματα των διαβουλεύσεων θα ληφθούν υπόψη σε κάθε απόφαση σχετικά με τις πιθανές μεταγενέστερες ενέργειες εντός των ορίων των αρμοδιοτήτων της ΕΕ.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007954/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 luglio 2013)

Oggetto: La Turchia attacca i social media

Il 26 giugno 2013, varie fonti di stampa hanno riferito che la Turchia aveva chiesto al social media Twitter di istituire un ufficio di rappresentanza nel paese al fine di consentire al governo di poter controllare il sito con maggior forza. Ha accusato l'azienda di aver contribuito a suscitare le recenti proteste di Istanbul e della capitale Ankara.

Il ministro turco dei trasporti e della comunicazione, sig. Binali Yildirim, ha affermato che se Twitter non avesse mantenuto una presenza nel paese, il governo turco non sarebbe stato in grado di raggiungere in breve tempo i funzionari dell'azienda con l'ordine di eliminare contenuti o di effettuare richieste relative ai dati degli utenti. Yildirim ha affermato : «Quando abbiamo bisogno di informazioni, vogliamo vedere qualcuno in Turchia che possa fornircele. […] Abbiamo bisogno di un interlocutore cui rivolgere le nostre proteste e che possa rimediare agli eventuali errori.»

Il Primo ministro turco, sig. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, ha descritto Twitter come una «piaga» che diffonde menzogne circa il governo. In precedenza, la Turchia aveva inibito il sito YouTube di proprietà di Google per due anni poiché conteneva materiale ritenuto offensivo per il fondatore della Repubblica turca, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

Nel 2013, l'UE ha stanziato 902,9 milioni di euro per l'assistenza finanziaria a favore della Turchia. Questa si concentra su settori quali lo stato di diritto e le riforme fondamentali del potere giudiziario, soprattutto per quanto riguarda i diritti fondamentali, nonché sulla società civile e le pari opportunità.

1. Qual è la posizione della Commissione per quanto riguarda le notizie che indicano che il governo turco sta chiedendo una maggiore sorveglianza sui siti di social media come Twitter?

2. Quali provvedimenti ha adottato l'Unione europea per sostenere la promozione della libertà di parola e la riduzione della censura in Turchia?

3. Qual è l'impatto sui negoziati di adesione della Turchia all'Unione europea, alla luce della decisione del paese di esercitare un maggiore controllo sui social media e altre forme analoghe di comunicazione?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 settembre 2013)

La libertà e il pluralismo dei mezzi di informazione, un aspetto fondamentale della democrazia, devono essere garantiti, conformemente alla Convenzione europea dei diritti umani e alla giurisprudenza della Corte europea dei diritti umani. La Commissione difende attivamente la libertà di espressione e promuove un Internet libero e aperto: i diritti umani universali devono applicarsi sia in rete che nella vita quotidiana. Pertanto, la Commissione ha coerentemente sottolineato che in Turchia le restrizioni sui mezzi di informazione devono diminuire invece di aumentare. Le regolamentazioni che restringono l'accesso ai social media per gli utenti finali devono essere debitamente motivate e adottate esclusivamente se sono adeguate, proporzionate, necessarie e conformi alle salvaguardie democratiche esistenti e ai diritti umani.

Inoltre, la commissaria responsabile dell'Agenda digitale ha istituito un gruppo indipendente di alto livello sulla libertà e il pluralismo dei media. A seguito della pubblicazione della relazione del gruppo, la Commissione ha organizzato due consultazioni pubbliche, la prima sulle raccomandazioni del gruppo e la seconda specificamente sull'indipendenza delle autorità nazionali di regolamentazione del settore audiovisivo. Le raccomandazioni 9 e 10 riguardano la promozione dei valori europei al di là dei confini dell'UE. Le decisioni su eventuali azioni successive nei limiti delle competenze dell'UE terranno conto dei risultati delle consultazioni.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007689/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(28 juni 2013)

Betreft: Turkije wil Twitter aan banden leggen

Premier Erdoğan van Turkije noemt het sociaal medium Twitter een „plaag". Hij zei dat het medium zou worden gebruikt om leugens over de Turkse regering te verspreiden en daarmee de onrusten in het land zou aanwakkeren.

De Turkse regering heeft Twitter verzocht in het land een „vertegenwoordiging" van het sociale medium op te zetten, zodat Turkije „grip" kan krijgen op wat op Twitter wordt geplaatst resp. zodat Turkije het sociale medium kan censureren bij protesten tegen de regering. Turkije wil „onwelgevallige" informatie van Twitter kunnen verwijderen en gegevens van gebruikers kunnen opvragen. Turkije zegt dat berichten die in het land op Twitter worden geplaatst in overeenstemming met de Turkse wet moeten zijn.

1. Is het de Commissie bekend dat de Turkse regering Twitter aan banden wil leggen ([1])? Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie dit?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de Turkse regering met het aan banden leggen van Twitter de pijnlijke waarheid t.g.v. haar eigen tekortkomingen wil verdoezelen en daarmee juist haar ware, repressieve karakter toont? Zo neen, hoe interpreteert de Commissie de Turkse houding in dezen dan wel?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het inperken van de toegang tot en het gebruik van internet — in dit geval het aan banden leggen van Twitter — volstrekt in strijd is met de vrijheid van meningsuiting?

4. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het dat Turkije — vooral wat betreft de vrijheid van meningsuiting, expressie en pers — almaar verder afglijdt? Is de Commissie ertoe bereid zich hier luid en duidelijk tegen uit te spreken en daarbij de conclusie te trekken dat Turkije nooit tot de EU dient toe te treden?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(5 september 2013)

Overeenkomstig het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens (EVRM) en de jurisprudentie van het Europees Hof voor de rechten van de mens (EHRM) moeten mediavrijheid en -pluralisme gewaarborgd worden als een fundamenteel aspect van democratie. De Commissie zet zich krachtig in voor de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de bevordering van een vrij en open internet: de universele rechten van de mens moeten zowel online als offline gelden. Daarom heeft de Commissie herhaaldelijk benadrukt dat er eerder minder dan meer beperkingen op de media nodig zijn in Turkije. Regelingen die de toegang tot sociale media voor eindgebruikers beperken, moeten naar behoren gestaafd worden en slechts goedgekeurd worden wanneer ze passend, evenredig en noodzakelijk zijn en in overeenstemming zijn met democratische waarborgen en de rechten van de mens.

Bovendien heeft de voor de Digitale Agenda verantwoordelijke commissaris de onafhankelijke groep op hoog niveau voor mediavrijheid en -pluralisme ingesteld. Na de presentatie van het verslag van deze groep heeft de Commissie twee openbare raadplegingen gehouden, één over de aanbevelingen van de groep en één specifiek over de onafhankelijkheid van nationale audiovisuele regelgevende instanties. De aanbevelingen 9 en 10 hebben betrekking op de bevordering van Europese waarden buiten de grenzen van de EU. Bij elke beslissing over een mogelijke follow-up binnen de grenzen van de bevoegdheden van de EU zal rekening worden gehouden met de reacties op de raadplegingen.

([1]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/net-us-turkey-protests-twitter-idUSBRE95P0XC20130626

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007487/13
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Restrictions on use of social media in Turkey

The recent protests in Turkey, in which hundreds of thousands of citizens protested about the increasing authoritarianism of the government, were followed by an unsettling statement by Mr Güler, the Turkish Minister, who claimed: 'We have a study on those who provoke the public via manipulations with false news and lead them to actions that would threaten the security of life and property by using Twitter, Facebook or other tools of social media'. It should be noted that during the protests more than 25 people were detained on suspicion of stirring up insurrection on social media.

A few months ago, a renowned Turkish musician was given a suspended prison sentence for posting tweets deemed blasphemous by a Turkish court (some of which were verses by the eleventh-century Persian philosopher Omar Khayyam).

In 2012, Turkey was ranked 148th out of 169 countries in the Annual Worldwide Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders. Following the recent protests, we are witnessing an attempt to restrict the free use of social media, which according to the Turkish Prime Minister is 'a troublemaker in societies because of the lies they spread around that can lead to violent acts from innocent people'.

In view of this:

1. How does the Commission respond to these statements by the Turkish government?

2. Is the Commission aware of any new restrictions imposed by the Turkish government on freedom of speech across all uses of social media?

3. Does the Commission believe that these prohibitions contradict the accession criteria regarding citizens' right to freedom of expression and media pluralism?

4. What steps does the Commission intend to take in order to protect civil rights and freedom of expression in Turkey?

Question for written answer E-007689/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(28 June 2013)

Subject: Turkey's desire to bring Twitter under control

Prime Minister Erdoğan of Turkey calls the social medium Twitter a 'scourge'. He has said that the medium is being used to disseminate lies about the Turkish Government, thereby fomenting unrest in the country.

The Turkish Government has asked Twitter to establish a 'representative office' for the social medium in the country so that Turkey can get a 'grip' on what is placed on Twitter, i.e. so that Turkey can censor the social medium when there are anti-government protests. Turkey wishes to be able to remove unwelcome information from Twitter and to demand data concerning users. Turkey says that messages placed on Twitter in the country must accord with Turkish law.

1. Is the Commission aware that the Turkish Government wishes to bring Twitter under its control ([1])? What view does the Commission take of this?

2. Does the Commission agree that, by bringing Twitter under control, the Turkish Government seeks to conceal the painful truth about its own shortcomings but in this way is — on the contrary — revealing its true, repressive character? If not, how does the Commission interpret Turkey's attitude in this context?

([1]) http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/26/net-us-turkey-protests-twitter-idUSBRE95P0XC20130626

3. Does the Commission agree that restricting access to, and use of, the Internet — in this case by restricting the use of Twitter — is completely contrary to the principle of freedom of expression?

4. What view does the Commission take of the fact that Turkey — particularly as regards freedom of expression and of the press — is going from bad to worse? Will the Commission speak out loud and clear against this and draw the conclusion that Turkey should never accede to the EU?

Question for written answer E-007954/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(3 July 2013)

Subject: Turkey targets social media

On 26 June 2013, various news sources reported that Turkey had asked the social media website Twitter to set up a representative office in the country, which could give the government a tighter rein over the site. It has accused the company of helping to stir up recent protests in Istanbul and the capital Ankara.

Turkey's Minister for Transport and Communication Binali Yildirim said that if Twitter did not maintain a presence in the country, the Turkish government would not be able to quickly reach company officials with orders to take down content or make requests for user data. Yildirim said: 'When information is requested, we want to see someone in Turkey who can provide this. […] There needs to be an interlocutor we can put our grievance to and who can correct an error if there is one.'

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has described Twitter as a 'scourge' and has suggested that the site spreads lies about the government. Previously, Turkey banned Google-owned YouTube for two years, as it was hosting material deemed offensive to the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

In 2013, the EU allocated EUR 902.9 million to Turkey in financial assistance. This focuses on areas such as the rule of law and key reforms of the judiciary, especially regarding fundamental rights. It also focuses on civil society and gender equality.

1. What is the position of the Commission regarding reports that the Turkish government is demanding greater oversight of social media websites such as Twitter?

2. What steps has the EU taken to support the promotion of free speech and the curtailment of censorship in Turkey?

3. What, if any, is the impact on Turkish accession negotiations to the EU, in light of the country's decision to exert greater control over social media and other similar forms of communication?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

Being a fundamental aspect of a democracy, media freedom and pluralism need to be guaranteed, in line with the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). The Commission is strongly committed to freedom of expression and promoting a free and open Internet: universal human rights must apply online as they do offline. Therefore, the Commission has consistently emphasised that fewer, rather than more restrictions on media are needed in Turkey. Any regulations restricting access to social media for end-users should be duly substantiated and only adopted if appropriate, proportionate, necessary and in conformity with existing democratic safeguards and human rights.

Moreover, the Commissioner responsible for the Digital Agenda set up the independent High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism. Following the presentation of the report by this group, the Commission launched two public consultations, one on the recommendations of the group and one specifically on the independence of national audiovisual regulatory authorities. Recommendations 9 and 10 concern the promotion of European values beyond EU borders. Any decision on possible follow-up actions within the limits of the competences of the EU will take account of the responses to the consultations.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007488/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Rosyjska policja siłą eksmitowała ruch „Za prawa człowieka"

W nocy z 21 na 22 czerwca siły specjalne policji OMON wzięły szturmem biuro niezależnego ruchu „Za prawa człowieka" w Moskwie. Wszystkich pracowników wyrzucono na ulicę, w wyniku czego co najmniej siedem osób doznało obrażeń. Poturbowany został m.in. lider tej jednej z najbardziej zasłużonych organizacji pozarządowych w Rosji, 72-letni Lew Ponomariow, którego zepchnięto ze schodów. Całą akcję filmowała prokremlowska telewizja NTV, która wraz z funkcjonariuszami policji i lokalnymi urzędnikami wkroczyła do biura organizacji.

Pragnę podkreślić, że ruch „Za prawa człowieka" od 15 lat wynajmował biuro od stołecznego departamentu majątku miejskiego, który uznał, że umowa najmu wygasła, nie dostarczył jednak wcześniej wypowiedzenia i do ostatniej chwili przyjmował opłatę.

Warto przypomnieć, że podobna sytuacja miała miejsce w Woroneżu, gdzie w ubiegłym miesiącu aktywiści Domu Praw Człowieka otrzymali powiadomienie od lokalnych władz z żądaniem opuszczenia lokalu.

Obrońcy praw człowieka podkreślają, że sytuacja rosyjskiego społeczeństwa obywatelskiego jest obecnie najgorsza w całej postsowieckiej historii Federacji Rosyjskiej. W całym kraju trwają rewizje, które paraliżują działalność NGOsów, szereg działaczy otrzymało kary grzywny za to, że nie zarejestrowali oni swoich organizacji jako „zagranicznych agentów". Teraz rosyjskie władze sięgają po kolejny środek – starają się eksmitować organizacje pozarządowe i stosują wobec działaczy przemoc.

W związku z tym, pragnę zapytać, czy Komisja ma zamiar podjąć interwencję w sprawie brutalnego i, jak twierdzą obrońcy praw człowieka, bezprawnego przejęcia przez rosyjskie władze biura organizacji „Za prawa człowieka" i wyrazić zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec prześladowania przedstawicieli społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w Rosji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(20 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca zdaje sobie sprawę z sytuacji ruchu „Za prawa człowieka" i słyszała o brutalnej eksmisji jego członków z ich biur, która miała miejsce w dniach 21-22 czerwca. Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych, w tym delegatura UE, utrzymuje regularne kontakty z ruchem oraz z rosyjskim społeczeństwem obywatelskim, zwłaszcza w kontekście konsultacji UE-Rosja w zakresie praw człowieka, co pozwala na lepsze ukierunkowanie wysiłków UE w tej dziedzinie.

W dniu 17 maja UE i Rosja przeprowadziły 17. rundę wzajemnych dwustronnych konsultacji na temat praw człowieka. UE wyraziła swoje obawy dotyczące ogólnej sytuacji społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w Rosji, w szczególności braku jasności, co do pojęcia „działalności politycznej", jak również środków stosowanych w celu nałożenia na organizacje pozarządowe obowiązku rejestracji w charakterze „zagranicznych agentów". Unia Europejska wyraziła także na forum OBWE i Rady Europy swój niepokój dotyczący prawa o „zagranicznych agentach" i ostatnich procesów sądowych, oraz zwróciła się z prośbą o udzielenie dalszych wyjaśnień.

UE będzie uważnie śledzić rozwój wydarzeń i będzie nadal wzywać władze rosyjskie do wdrażania przepisów w zgodzie z międzynarodowymi zobowiązaniami Rosji. Szef delegatury UE w Federacji Rosyjskiej poinformował również w kontaktach wzajemnych władze rosyjskie o poważnych obawach UE i będzie śledził rosyjską propozycję dotyczącą przedłożenia ministerstwu sprawiedliwości pytań w sprawie wdrażania tej ustawy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007488/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Violent eviction of the 'For Human Rights' movement by the Russian police

During the night of 21-22 June, OMON special police forces stormed the offices of the independent 'For Human Rights' movement in Moscow. Everyone working there was thrown out onto the street, resulting in injuries to at least seven people. Victims of the assault included the leader of the movement, which is among the most respected non-governmental organisations in Russia, 72 year old Lev Ponomaryov, who was thrown down the stairs. The entire operation was filmed by the pro-Kremlin television channel NTV, representatives of which entered the organisation's offices together with police officers and local officials.

I would like to make it clear that the 'For Human Rights' movement had rented the offices for the past 15 years from the city's property department, which has claimed that the lease had expired, but which had not given any advance notice of this, and which had been accepting rental payments until shortly before the eviction.

It is worth noting that similar events have taken place in Voronezh, where activists from the Human Rights House were told by the local authorities last month that they needed to vacate their premises.

Human rights defenders have stressed that the situation facing Russian civil society is currently the worst it has been in the entire post-Soviet history of the Russian Federation. Inspections are being carried out throughout the country which are paralysing the work of NGOs, and a number of activists have been fined for not having registered their organisations as 'foreign agents'. Now, the Russian authorities have found another weapon to use, by attempting to evict non-governmental organisations and by using violence against activists.

I would therefore like to ask whether the Commission intends to intervene in the brutal occupation by the Russian authorities of the offices of the organisation 'For Human Rights', which human rights defenders claim was unlawful, and to express its strong opposition to the persecution of representatives of civil society in Russia?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the situation of the organisation 'For Human Rights' and the brutal eviction from their offices on 21-22 June. Regular contacts are maintained by the EEAS, including by the EU Delegation, and with Russian civil society, notably in the context of the EU-Russia Human Rights consultations, which allow to better target EU's efforts.

On 17 May, the EU and Russia conducted the 17th round of their biannual referred consultations. The EU expressed its concerns on the overall situation of civil society in Russia, in particular the lack of clarity of the concept of 'political activity' as well as the criteria applied to force an NGO to register as 'foreign agent'. The EU has also raised its concerns in the OSCE and the Council of Europe regarding the law on 'foreign agents' and the recent trials, and asked for further clarifications..

The EU will follow closely the developments and will continue to call on the Russian authorities to put its legislation in line with Russia's international commitments. The Head of the EU Delegation to the Russian Federation has also conveyed the EU's strong concerns to the Russian authorities in bilateral contacts and will follow up to the Russian proposal to put forward questions to the Ministry of Justice on the implementation of that law.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007489/13
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Propozycje zmian w ordynacji podatkowej w Polsce

Polskie Ministerstwo Finansów proponuje wprowadzenie do ordynacji podatkowej zapisów umożliwiających nieskrępowany wgląd organów finansowych w rachunki pieniężne obywateli. Zgodnie z wymową opracowywanych przepisów instytucje takie jak banki czy towarzystwa ubezpieczeniowe zostałyby zobligowane do przedstawiania urzędom skarbowym informacji dotyczących stanu rachunków, operacji na rachunkach, a także zaciąganych przez klientów zobowiązaniach finansowych. Zdaniem przedstawicieli sektora bankowego oraz ekspertów ekonomicznych rozwiązanie to oznaczało będzie de facto likwidację tajemnicy bankowej.

Wobec powyższego zwracam się z zapytaniem, czy Komisja została poinformowana o pracach związanych z nowelizacją ordynacji podatkowej w Polsce, oraz czy ewentualne wprowadzenie proponowanych rozwiązań podatkowych nie pozostanie w konflikcie z prawem wspólnotowym (ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem przepisów w zakresie ochrony konsumentów)?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(5 września 2013 r.)

Artykuł 8 Karty praw podstawowych gwarantuje osobom prawo do ochrony ich danych osobowych. Dyrektywa 95/46/WE ([1]) w sprawie ochrony danych osobowych stanowi, że dane mogą być gromadzone tylko w uczciwych, określonych, jednoznacznych i uzasadnionych celach i nie mogą być przetwarzane w sposób niezgodny z tymi celami.

Artykuł 13 dyrektywy w sprawie ochrony danych osobowych pozwala państwom członkowskim na ograniczenie zakresu pewnych praw i obowiązków określonych w tej dyrektywie, kiedy ograniczenie takie stanowi środek konieczny dla zabezpieczenia m.in. ważnego interesu finansowego państwa członkowskiego, łącznie z kwestiami podatkowymi [art. 13 ust. 1 lit. e)], bądź funkcji kontrolnych, inspekcyjnych i regulacyjnych związanych z wykonywaniem władzy publicznej w przypadkach, kiedy w grę wchodzi wspomniany interes finansowy [art. 13 ust. 1 lit. f)]. Ograniczenia takie można wprowadzić jedynie, jeśli spełniają one kryteria określone w dyrektywie 95/46/WE oraz w art. 52 ust. 1 Karty praw podstawowych zgodnie z wykładnią Trybunału Sprawiedliwości UE.

Bez uszczerbku dla uprawnień Komisji jako strażnika traktatów monitorowanie opracowywania środków krajowych wdrażających dyrektywę 95/46/WE, a także stosowania tych środków, należy do uprawnień krajowych organów nadzorczych w dziedzinie ochrony danych. Artykuł 28 ust. 2 dyrektywy w sprawie ochrony danych osobowych wprowadza obowiązek konsultowania się z krajowymi organami ochrony danych przy opracowywaniu środków administracyjnych dotyczących ochrony danych osobowych w państwach członkowskich.

([1]) Dyrektywa 95/46/WE Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady z dnia 24 października 1995 r. w sprawie ochrony osób fizycznych w zakresie przetwarzania danych osobowych i swobodnego przepływu tych danych, Dz.U. L 281 z 23.11.1995, s. 31-50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007489/13
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Proposed amendments to Poland's tax code

The Polish Ministry of Finance is proposing that new provisions be included in the tax code that would allow the financial authorities to have unrestricted access to data concerning the financial accounts of members of the public. Under these draft rules, institutions such as banks and insurance companies would have to submit information on the status of accounts, on account transactions and on financial commitments taken on by customers to the tax authorities. According to representatives of the banking sector and economic experts, this measure would *de facto* mean the end of banking secrecy.

Has the Commission been kept up to date on preparations to update Poland's tax code, and would the introduction of the aforementioned provisions not be inconsistent with EC law — in particular, with consumer protection law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights (the Charter) guarantees the right of individuals to the protection of their personal data. Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) on the protection of personal data (the Data Protection Directive) stipulates that personal data must be collected for fair, specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and cannot be further processed in a way incompatible with those purposes.

Article 13 of the Data Protection Directive gives the Member States the possibility to restrict certain rights and obligations laid down in that directive, when such a restriction constitutes a necessary measure to safeguard *inter alia* an important financial interest of a Member State, including taxation matters [Article 13(1)(e)] or a monitoring, inspection or regulatory function connected with the exercise of official authority when such a financial interest is at stake [Article 13(1)(f)]. These restrictions can only be adopted if they meet the criteria set out in Directive 95/46/EC and in Article 52(1) of the Charter as interpreted by the Court of Justice of the EU.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, it is the national data protection supervisory authorities which are competent to monitor the drawing up of national measures implementing Directive 95/46/EC as well as the application of such implementing measures. Under Article 28(2) of the Data Protection Directive the national data protection authorities need to be consulted when measures relating to the protection of personal data are drawn up in the Member States.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31-50.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007490/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Niedoreprezentowanie pracowników z Polski w ONZ

Wśród ok. 40 tysięcy pracowników instytucji powiązanych z Organizacją Narodów Zjednoczonych, zaledwie 71 osób to przedstawiciele Polski. Spośród innych krajów Wspólnoty, przykładowo znacznie mniejsza pod względem potencjału ludnościowego Szwecja dysponuje dwukrotnie większą liczbą pracowników w ONZ, natomiast z porównywalnej Hiszpanii wywodzi się ponad czterystu zatrudnionych w oenzetowskich agendach. W celu zwiększenia udziału osób z krajów niedoreprezentowanych planowana jest m.in. realizacja programów rekrutacyjnych dla młodych absolwentów uniwersytetów.

W oparciu o powyższe zwracam się z prośba o odpowiedź:

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel monitoruje stan zatrudnienia obywateli krajów członkowskich w instytucjach ONZ?

2. Czy możliwe jest zaangażowanie Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel na forum ONZ celem wsparcia niedoreprezentowanych państw UE dążących do zwiększenia liczby swoich pracowników w tej organizacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(20 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca nie zajmuje się kwestiami związanymi z personelem ONZ. Nie wchodzi to w zakres jej obowiązków.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007490/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — under-representation of Polish citizens among UN employees

Of the approximately 40 000 employees of institutions linked to the United Nations, only 71 come from Poland. Looking to other EU Member States as examples, twice as many UN employees come from Sweden even though it has a much smaller population, and over 400 employees of UN bodies come from Spain, which is of a comparable size. There are plans to implement measures such as recruitment programmes for young university graduates in order to increase the number of employees from countries which are under-represented.

In connection with the above, I should like to ask the following:

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative monitor the number of employees of UN institutions from each Member State?

2. Would it be possible for the Vice-President/High Representative to take action at UN level to support under-represented EU Member States which are endeavouring to increase the number of people from their country employed by the organisation?

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

The HR/VP is not involved in UN staffing issues. It is not part of her mandate.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007491/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Fala demonstracji w Brazylii

W kilku największych brazylijskich miastach, również w stolicy kraju, doszło do masowych demonstracji przeciwko biedzie i korupcji. Protesty przerodziły się w starcia z siłami porządkowymi. Dokonano również ataku na siedzibę władz miejskich w Sao Paolo. W efekcie tych wydarzeń rząd zapowiedział wprowadzenie wojsk na ulice miast, celem zapewnienia porządku. Tymczasem Brazylijczycy protestują również przeciwko wysokim kosztom organizacji przyszłorocznych piłkarskich mistrzostw świata, co implikuje możliwość wystąpienia podobnej sytuacji podczas samego turnieju.

Wobec powyższego proszę o informacje w następujących kwestiach:

1. Czy ESDZ monitoruje bieżącą sytuację w Brazylii pod kątem zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa przebywających w tym kraju europejskich obywateli? Jest to szczególnie istotne również z uwagi na odbywający się właśnie turniej piłkarski FIFA „Puchar Konfederacji".

2. Czy europejska dyplomacja podejmuje współpracę z brazylijskimi władzami w zakresie zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa w okresie przyszłorocznego turnieju piłkarskiego?

3. Czy w obliczu ewentualnych zagrożeń bezpieczeństwa publicznego ESDZ rozważa opublikowanie stosownych zaleceń dla obywateli Wspólnoty planujących uczestnictwo w brazylijskim mundialu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(1 października 2013 r.)

1. UE przygląda się rozwojowi sytuacji w Brazylii. Obserwujemy również i oceniamy środki proponowane i przyjmowane przez władze Brazylii w celu zagwarantowania bezpieczeństwa publicznego.

2. Dyplomaci UE śledzą działania związane ze zbliżającymi się mistrzostwami świata w piłce nożnej w 2014 r. Organizacja tego wydarzenia leży jednak całkowicie w gestii Międzynarodowej Federacji Piłki Nożnej (FIFA) oraz rządu Brazylii.

3. O wydaniu i przekazaniu porad i odpowiednich wskazówek dla podróżnych decydują wyłącznie państwa członkowskie UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007491/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Wave of protests in Brazil

Large-scale demonstrations against poverty and corruption have broken out in some of Brazil's largest cities, including the capital city. The protests have degenerated into confrontations with the forces of law and order. An attack was also carried out on the headquarters of São Paulo's city authorities. In response to these events, the Brazilian Government has brought the military onto the streets of the cities in order to restore order. Brazilians are also protesting against the high cost of organising the 2014 FIFA World Cup, which suggests that similar events could occur during the tournament itself.

1. Is the EEAS monitoring developments in Brazil with a view to ensuring the security ofEU visitors? This is of vital importance given that the FIFA Confederations Cup is alsobeing held there at present.

2. Are EU diplomats cooperating with the Brazilian Government with a view to ensuringsecurity for the 2014 World Cup?

3. Given the risk of possible threats to public safety, is the EEAS considering thepublication of appropriate guidelines for EU citizens planning to attend the World Cup inBrazil?

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

1. The EU is monitoring recent developments in Brazil. We are also observing and assessing the measures proposed and adopted by the Brazilian authorities to guarantee public security.

2. EU diplomats follow the activites related to the upcoming Worldcup soccer event in 2014. The organsiation of this event, however, is entirely in the hands of the FIFA together with the Brazilian government.

3. Travel advice and related guidelines are entirely decided and communicated by the Member States of the EU.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007493/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Udział obywateli państw unijnych w wojnie syryjskiej

Oblicza się, że około 700 obywateli Unii Europejskiej bierze udział w wojnie domowej w Syrii. Pojechało tam m.in. co najmniej kilkudziesięciu Belgów, w tym 22 dżihadystów z Antwerpii. Rekrutacją oraz szkoleniem zajmuje się organizacja Shariat4Brussels. Według analityków rekruci z Europy dołączają przed wszystkim do skrajnych ugrupowań islamskich. Na filmach widać, jak osoby mówiące po flamandzku bestialsko mordują jeńców oraz ludność cywilną.

1. Czy Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel wie o wysyłaniu obywateli unijnych do walki w Syrii? Czy oficjalnie potępia tego rodzaju praktyki?

2. Jakie działania podjęto w celu powstrzymania tego rodzaju zaangażowania państw UE w wojnę w Syrii?

3. Jakie środki zamierza podjąć Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby monitorować i zapobiegać rekrutacji młodych ludzi przez skrajne ugrupowania islamskie w Europie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(28 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca jest w pełni świadoma faktu, że obywatele UE dołączają do grup zbrojnych w Syrii. Kwestia ta została omówiona przez ministrów spraw zagranicznych na majowym posiedzeniu Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych. Koordynator UE ds. Zwalczania Terroryzmu Gilles de Kerckhove przedstawił Komitetowi Politycznemu i Bezpieczeństwa sprawozdanie na ten temat. Było ono przedmiotem dyskusji na posiedzeniu Rady ds. Wymiaru Sprawiedliwości i Spraw Wewnętrznych. Służby Komisji oraz Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych opracowują konkretne zalecenia w tej sprawie.

W zaleceniach wzywa się między innymi do lepszej koordynacji między państwami członkowskimi UE w zakresie kontrolowania sytuacji oraz znalezienia sposobów na zaangażowanie potencjalnych rekrutów w pomoc Syrii w inny sposób. Służby Komisji, Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych oraz Rada kontynuują prace nad właściwym sformułowaniem licznych zaleceń.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007493/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — EU citizens participating in Syrian Civil War

It is estimated that some 700 EU citizens are participating in the Syrian Civil War. Those who have left for Syria include several dozen Belgians — among them 22 jihadists from Antwerp. They are being recruited and trained by the 'Shariat4Brussels' organisation. According to analysts, European recruits tend to join the more extreme Islamic factions. Footage exists that shows a group of people speaking in Flemish as they brutally murder prisoners of war and civilians.

1. Is the VP/HR aware that EU citizens are being sent to fight in Syria? Does she officially condemn such practices?

2. What steps have been taken to put a stop to this sort of EU involvement in the Syrian conflict?

3. What steps does the VP/HR intend to take in order to monitor and prevent the recruitment of young people by extremist Islamic groups in Europe?

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

The HR/VP is very well aware of the fact that EU citizens join armed groups in Syria. The issue was discussed by foreign affairs ministers in May at the Foreign Affairs Council. The EU counter-terrorism coordinator, Mr G. de Kerckhove has presented a paper on the issue to the Political and Security Committee. The paper was then discussed at the Justice and Home Affairs Council. The services in the Commission and the EEAS are working on specific recommendations in this matter.

Among others, the recommendations call for improved coordination among EU MS on monitoring the situation and ways to involve potential recruits in alternative ways to assist Syrians in need. The recommendations are numerous and the work on their proper elaboration will continue by the Commission services, the EEAS, and the Council.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007494/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) oraz Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(25 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wsparcie dla organizacji broniących praw chrześcijan oraz walczących o zachowanie podstaw kulturowych Unii Europejskiej

W wielu debatach Parlament Europejskie omawiał tragiczną sytuacje chrześcijan oraz potępił coraz większe ataki na wiarę, również w Europie. Wielu posłów podkreślało potrzebę ochrony chrześcijańskich podstaw cywilizacji europejskiej, odwołując się do myśli ojców Wspólnoty Europejskiej.

1. Czy Komisja wspiera finansowo organizacje zajmujące się ochroną chrześcijan w Europie oraz na świecie? Prosimy o listę organizacji, które otrzymały unijne środki w latach 2007/2013.

2. Z jakich programów finansowych mogą korzystać organizacje zajmujące się ochroną i pomocą dla prześladowanych chrześcijan, oraz ochroną i umacnianiem chrześcijańskich podstaw Europy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(26 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja Europejska wielokrotnie potępiała wszelkie formy i przejawy rasizmu i ksenofobii, niezgodne z głównymi wartościami, na których opiera się Unia. Artykuł 21 Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej wyraźnie zakazuje wszelkiej dyskryminacji ze względu na religię.

Program „Prawa podstawowe i obywatelstwo” ([1]) zapewnia wsparcie finansowe na rzecz dialogu międzywyznaniowego, a w szczególności na rzecz projektów skierowanych przeciwko przestępstwom z nienawiści i przeciwko nawoływaniu do nienawiści. Projekty te mogą być prowadzane na rzecz każdej religii – UE nie posiada specjalnego programu ukierunkowanego na promowanie jednej konkretnej religii.

Szanowni Posłowie mogą znaleźć informacje na temat projektów finansowanych w ramach programu „Prawa podstawowe i obywatelstwo” w latach 2007-2013 na stronie internetowej Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Sprawiedliwości Komisji Europejskiej pod adresem:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants/programmes/fundamental-citizenship/index_en.htm.

Należy zauważyć, że w praktyce dotąd nie odnotowano przedłożenia propozycji finansowania projektów dotyczących ochrony chrześcijan.

W przypadkach dotyczących praw podstawowych do finansowania w ramach programu „Prawa podstawowe i obywatelstwo” kwalifikują się zarówno prywatne, jak i publiczne organizacje i instytucje, niezależnie od religii ofiar.

([1]) Decyzja Rady z dnia 19 kwietnia 2007 r. ustanawiająca na lata 2007-2013 program szczegółowy „Prawa podstawowe i obywatelstwo” jako część programu ogólnego „Prawa podstawowe i sprawiedliwość”. Dz.U. L 110 z 27.4.2007, Dz.U. L 4M z 8.1.2008, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32007D0252:pl:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007494/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) and Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(25 June 2013)

Subject: Support for organisations defending Christians' rights and fighting to preserve the EU's cultural foundations

In many debates, Parliament has described the tragic situation facing Christians and condemned increasing attacks on the faith, even in Europe. Many MEPs have referred to the ideas of the founding fathers of the European Community in order to stress the need to protect the Christian foundations of European civilisation

1. Is the Commission providing financial support to organisations which defend Christians in Europe and worldwide? Please provide a list of the organisations which have received EU funding in the 2007-2013 period.

2. From what financial programmes may organisations which defend and assist persecuted Christians and protect and strengthen Europe's Christian foundations benefit?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

The European Commission has repeatedly condemned all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, as they are incompatible with the principal values the EU is founded on. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union explicitly prohibits any discrimination on grounds of religion.

The 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship' Programme ([1]) provides financial support for interfaith dialogue and in particular, for projects against hate crime and hate speech. These projects can be carried out to support any religion and the EU does not have any programme specifically geared towards promoting any one particular religion.

The Honourable Members may find information about projects funded under the 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship' Programme in 2007-2013 on the website of the European Commission Directorate-General Justice at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants/programmes/fundamental-citizenship/index_en.htm.

It should be noted that in practice, there have been so far no funding proposals submitted on projects defending Christians.

Both private and public organisations and institutions are eligible for funding through the 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship' Programme in cases where fundamental rights are concerned, regardless of the religion of the victims.

([1]) Council Decision of 19 April 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the specific programme Fundamental rights and citizenship as part of the General programme Fundamental Rights and Justice. OJ L 110, 27.4.2007, OJ L 4M, 8.1.2008. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32007D0252:en:NOT

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub P-007495/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(26 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: Numru ta' emerġenza 116 għall-persuni bi problemi emozzjonali urġenti

Fl-2007, il-Kummissjoni nediet inizjattiva li tirrikjedi lill-Istati Membri jimplimentaw *hotlines* u linji ta' għajnuna (*helplines*) telefoniċi mingħajr ħlas għal servizzi ta' valur soċjali. Dawn is-servizzi telefoniċi b'xejn għandhom sensiela ta' numri b'sitt figuri li jibdew bin-numru 116, li wieħed minnhom hu n-numru 116 123 għal persuni li jkollhom bżonn ta' appoġġ emozzjonali.

Ir-rapport ta' implimentazzjoni riċenti, ippubblikat mill-Kummissjoni fis-6 ta' Mejju 2013, wera li kien hemm xi progress fl-implimentazzjoni ta' dawn in-numri fl-Istati Membri. Madankollu, dan l-istess rapport wera li ma tantx teżisti kuxjenza fost il-pubbliku ġenerali dwar dawn il-linji ta' għajnuna.

Fil-fatt, l-aħħar stħarriġ dwar dan (fl-2011) wera li 13 % biss taċ-ċittadini Ewropej kienu semgħu bin-numri tal-116, u m'hemm l-ebda raġuni biex nassumu li dan il-perċentwal żdied f'dawn l-aħħar snin.

Il-persuni li jkollhom problemi emozzjonali akuti m'humiex megħjuna b'numru b'sitt figuri. L-iskop tal-*hotlines* ta' emerġenza hu li jservu ta' rifuġju faċilment aċċessibbli u immedjat f'każ ta' bżonn. Ir-Riżoluzzjoni Nru 2010/2274(INI) tal-Parlament Ewropew, adottata fil-5 ta' Lulju 2011, stiednet lill-Kummissjoni teżamina l-fattibilità ta' servizz ta' numru 116 futur li jkun simili għas-servizz tan-numru 112, għaċ-ċittadini li jkollhom problemi emozzjonali, li jkunu qed ibatu minn depressjoni jew problemi oħra ta' saħħa mentali.

1. Fid-dawl ta' dan, x'inhu l-livell ta' kuxjenza pubblika li l-Kummissjoni tqis li jkun suffiċjenti biex jiġi indikat li l-implimentazzjoni ta' din l-inizjattiva kienet ta' suċċess?

2. X'azzjoni qed tikkunsidra li tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex tqajjem il-kuxjenza pubblika b'ritmu aktar mgħaġġel dwar in-numri li jeżistu għal persuni bi problemi soċjali u/jew emozzjonali? X'miżuri speċifiċi qed tipproponi li tieħu biex dan l-għan jinkiseb, u x'qafas ta' żmien qed tikkunsidra għal dan?

3. Il-Kummissjoni taqbel li l-implimentazzjoni ta' numru ta' emerġenza sempliċi, għall-Ewropa kollha, u bi tliet figuri — 116 — tkun miżura aktar xierqa mill-inizjattivi meħuda s'issa għal persuni bi problemi emozzjonali urġenti jew li jkunu qed ibatu b'depressjoni jew problemi oħra ta' saħħa mentali? X'inhi l-fehma tal-Kummissjoni dwar il-fattibilità li jinħoloq *hotline* ta' emerġenza ta' dan it-tip?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Lulju 2013)

Il-kwistjoni tal-għarfien pubbliku dwar in-numru armonizzat 116 123 għal-linji ta' appoġġ emozzjonali hija marbuta mill-qrib mal-kwistjoni tad-disponibbiltà tas-servizz, billi kampanja ta' pubbliċità tista' tkun effettiva biss meta n-numru jsir disponibbli fi Stat Membru. In-numru ġie assenjat f'16-il Stat Membru ([1]) u qiegħed jitħaddem f'għaxra minnhom ([2]). Minflok ma jiġi ffissat livell speċifiku ta' għarfien pubbliku biex tiġi ġġudikata l-implimentazzjoni b'suċċess tal-inizjattiva, huwa iktar importanti li wieħed jiżgura li s-servizz ikompli jsir disponibbli f'aktar Stati Membri tal-UE, u li s-servizz jiġi appoġġat permezz ta' miżuri ta' pubbliċità.

Id-Direttiva dwar is-Servizz Universali ([3]) tirrikjedi lill-Istati Membri li jinkoraġixxu l-għoti tas-servizzi 116 fit-territorju tagħhom, inkluż is-servizzi mogħtija bin-numru 116 123, Tpoġġi wkol ir-responsabbiltà f'idejn l-Istati Membri biex jiżguraw li ċ-ċittadini jkunu infurmati sewwa dwar dawn is-servizzi. Il-Kummissjoni qed issegwi l-implimentazzjoni bir-reqqa, u qed tinkludi fil-proċess mhux biss lill-awtoritajiet nazzjonali, iżda wkoll il-fornituri tas-servizz 116, sabiex ikun hemm skambju tal-aħjar prassi u l-Istati Membri jiġu megħjuna fil-proċess tal-implimentazzjoni. Bħala parti mill-kampanja ta' pubbliċità tagħha, il-Kummissjoni nediet websajt ġdida għall-116 sabiex iżżid l-għarfien dwar is-servizzi 116 ([4]).

Il-Kummissjoni ma taħsibx li s-suġġeriment dwar l-introduzzjoni ta' numru bi tliet ċifri (116) għal-linji ta' appoġġ emozzjonali hija fattibbli, partikolarment minħabba l-fatt li dan l-arranġament iwassal biex in-numri 116 l-oħra kollha ma jibqgħux aċċessibbli għal servizzi ta' valur soċjali bħal, pereżempju, il-hotline għat-tfal mitlufin 116000.

([1]) L-Awstrija, Ċipru, ir-Repubblika Ċeka, il-Ġermanja, il-Greċja, l-Ungerija, l-Irlanda, il-Litwanja, il-Lussemburgu, Malta, il-Pajjiżi l-Baxxi, il-Polonja, ir-Rumanija, l-Isvezja, is-Slovenja u r-Renju Unit..

([2]) L-Awstrija, il-Ġermanja, il-Greċja, l-Ungerija, il-Litwanja, Malta, is-Slovenja, il-Polonja, l-Isvezja u r-Renju Unit.

([3]) Ara l-Artikolu 27a (1,3) tad-Direttiva 2002/22/KE dwar servizz universali u d-drittijiet tal-utenti li jirrelataw ma' networks u servizzi ta' komunikazzjonijiet elettroniċi.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/116-helplines, imnedija f'April 2012

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007495/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: 116 emergency number for people in urgent emotional distress

In 2007, the Commission launched an initiative requiring Member States to implement free of charge telephone hotlines and helplines for services of social value. These free telephone services have a six-digit number range starting with 116, and one of them is the 116 123 number for people in need of emotional support.

The recent implementation report, published by the Commission on 6 May 2013, showed that there is slight progress in implementing these numbers in the Member States. The same report, however, shows that there is scant awareness among the general public of these helplines.

In fact, the latest survey on this, dating from 2011, showed that only 13% of European citizens had heard of the 116 numbers, and there is no reason to assume that this has increased over the past few years.

People in acute emotional distress are not helped by a number comprising six digits. The purpose of emergency hotlines is that they form an easily accessible and immediate refuge in case of need. Resolution 2010/2274(INI) of the European Parliament, adopted on 5 July 2011, called on the Commission to examine the feasibility of a future 116 service, similar to the 112 service, for citizens in emotional distress or suffering from depression or other mental health problems.

1. In light of the above, what level of public awareness does the Commission consider would be sufficient to indicate that the implementation of this initiative had been successful?

2. What action is the Commission considering taking to raise public awareness of the existing numbers for people in social and/or emotional distress more quickly, and what specific measures, and within what time frames, does the Commission propose to achieve this goal?

3. Does the Commission agree that implementing a simple, Europe-wide, three-digit emergency number — 116 — is a more appropriate measure for people in urgent emotional distress or suffering from depression or other mental health problems than the initiatives taken so far? What is the Commission's view on the feasibility of creating such an emergency hotline?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The issue of public awareness of the 116 123 harmonised number for emotional support helplines is closely linked to the issue of availability of the service, as an awareness campaign can only be effective when the number becomes operational in a Member State. The number has been assigned in 16 Member States ([1]) and made operational in ten of those Member States ([2]). Rather than setting a specific level of public awareness to indicate successful implantation of the initiative, it is more important to continue to ensure further availability of the service across the EU Member States, and to support the service via adequate awareness raising measures.

The Universal Service Directive ([3]) requires Member States to encourage the provision of the 116 services within their territory, including the services provided over number 116 123. It also places the responsibility on Member States to ensure that citizens are adequately informed of these services. The Commission is carefully monitoring the implementation, engaging in the process not only the national authorities but also the national 116 service providers, in order to promote an exchange of best practices and to assist the Member States in the implementation process. As a part of its own awareness raising campaign, the Commission launched a new 116 website to boost awareness of 116 services ([4]).

The Commission does not consider the suggestion to introduce a three-digit number (116) for emotional support helplines feasible, not least because such an arrangement would render all other 116 numbers inaccessible to services of social value including, for example, the 116 000 missing children hotline.

([1]) Austria, Cyprus, Czech Repbulic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.
([2]) Austria, Germany, Greece, Hungary, LIthuania, Malta, Slovenia, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.
([3]) See Article 27a (1,3) of the Directive 2002/22/EC on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/116-helplines, launched in April 2012

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007496/13
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen der Kommission in Bezug auf die Schuldenkrise in den europäischen Mitgliedstaaten

Seit der weltweiten Finanzkrise von 2007 ist auch die Haushaltslage vieler europäischer Staaten in die Schieflage geraten. Die Staatsschuldenkrise im Euroraum ist eines der drängendsten Probleme, mit denen sich die Europäische Union konfrontiert sieht. Die Bekämpfung der Krise erfordert ein aktives Vorgehen und eine koordinierte Zusammenarbeit auf allen Ebenen. Die Europäische Kommission ist aufgrund ihrer weitreichenden Kompetenzen in besonderem Maße verpflichtet, die bestehenden Probleme aktiv anzugehen und gezielte Maßnahmen zu ergreifen. Die Überwindung der Krise muss für alle Beteiligten das primäre Ziel sein, da in letzter Konsequenz nahezu alle Bereiche des täglichen Lebens von ihr nachhaltig und negativ beeinflusst werden. Mit Sicherheit hat auch die Europäische Kommission zur Bewältigung der enormen Aufgaben, die sich durch die Krise zusätzlich stellen, eine Schwerpunktsetzung in ihrer Arbeit vorgenommen, um zu garantieren, dass alle notwendigen Maßnahmen so schnell und effizient wie möglich umgesetzt werden können und die Staatsschuldenkrise kurzfristig abgefedert, mittelfristig bekämpft und langfristig ähnliche Krisen verhindert werden.

1. Wann wurde die Staatsschuldenproblematik der europäischen Mitgliedstaaten erstmals in Sitzungen der Kommission behandelt?

2. Hatte die Krise Auswirkung auf die Arbeitsweise der Kommission, und erfolgte eine Prioritätensetzung?

3. Wenn ja, welche Änderungen wurden vorgenommen?

4. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen hat die Kommission zur Bewältigung der Krise in Europa ergriffen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(6. August 2013)

Gemäß den Bestimmungen des Vertrages und den damit verbundenen abgeleiteten Rechtsvorschriften (Stabilitäts- und Wachstumspakt) beobachtet die Kommission die Schuldenentwicklung in den Mitgliedstaaten regelmäßig im Rahmen ihrer haushaltspolitischen Überwachung. In diesem Zusammenhang veröffentlicht sie auch regelmäßige makroökonomische Vorausschätzungen und Publikationen wie z. B. „Public Finances in EMU“ ([1]). Infolge der Krise wurde der Rahmen zur Überwachung der Entwicklung des Schuldenstands mit dem Inkrafttreten des „Sixpacks“ und des „Twopacks“ weiter verstärkt.

Die Kommission hat ihre Arbeitsmethoden zur Bewältigung der Krise angepasst. Dies umfasst auch eine bedeutende Aufstockung des mit der Länderüberwachung betrauten Personals seit Beginn der Krise sowie die Schaffung der Funktion eines Vizepräsidenten für Wirtschaft, Währung und den Euro im Oktober 2011.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007496/13
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Commission measures to tackle the debt crisis in the Member States

Since the worldwide financial crisis in 2007, many EU Member States have been struggling with budget deficits. The sovereign debt crisis in the eurozone is one of the most pressing problems facing the European Union. Tackling the crisis calls for an active approach and close cooperation at all levels. In view of its far-reaching powers, the onus is on the Commission in particular to take targeted measures to address the problems the EU now faces. Overcoming the crisis must be the top priority for everyone concerned, because in the final analysis its adverse impact is likely to be felt in almost every area of daily life for years to come. In an effort to cope with the daunting additional tasks imposed on it by the crisis, the Commission will certainly have attached priority to ensuring that all the measures required can be implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible, that in the short term the impact of the sovereign debt crisis can be cushioned, that in the medium term the crisis itself can be addressed, and that in the long term similar crises can be prevented.

1. When did the Commission first discuss the sovereign debt problem facing EU Member States?

2. Did the crisis have an impact on the Commission's working methods and prompt changes in its priorities?

3. If so, what were those changes?

4. What practical measures has the Commission taken to deal with the crisis in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

Under the Treaty provisions and related secondary legislation (the Stability and Growth Pact), the Commission has monitored debt developments in the Member States on a regular basis through its budgetary surveillance framework. In this context, the Commission also publishes regular macroeconomic forecasts and publications such as 'Public Finances in EMU' ([1]). As a result of the crisis, the framework for the surveillance of debt developments has been further stepped up following the entry into force of the 'Six-Pack' and 'Two-Pack'.

The Commission has adjusted its working methods in response to the crisis. This has included a significant reinforcement of the staff allocated to country surveillance since the outset of the crisis, and the creation of the post of Vice-President for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the euro in October 2011.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007497/13
an die Kommission
Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (ALDE)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Aktivitäten demokratiefeindlicher Parteien in der EU

Die Freiheit der EU-Bürger, dort ihren Lebensmittelpunkt wählen zu können, wo sie es möchten, gehört zu den wertvollsten EU-Rechten überhaupt. Die entsprechenden Vorschriften finden sich in den Artikeln 49 bis 55 AEUV. Im Januar 2013 hat nach verschiedenen Medienberichten eine rechtsextremistische, rassistische und fremdenfeindliche Partei, die im Herkunftsland (Griechenland) verbotene Symbole des Nationalsozialismus in abgewandelter, aber erkennbarer Form nutzt, ein Vertretungsbüro in Deutschland eröffnet.

Inwieweit sieht die Kommission einen Zielkonflikt zwischen der Niederlassungsfreiheit einerseits und der Menschenrechtscharta andererseits?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(11. September 2013)

Die Kommission verurteilt mit Nachdruck alle Erscheinungsformen von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit unabhängig von ihrer Urheberschaft, da sie mit den Werten und Grundsätzen der Europäischen Union unvereinbar sind.

Gemäß dem Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI ([1]) sind alle Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, vorsätzliche öffentliche Aufstachelung zu Gewalt oder Hass gegen eine nach den Kriterien der Rasse, Hautfarbe, Religion, Abstammung oder nationale oder ethnische Herkunft definierte Gruppe von Personen oder gegen ein Mitglied einer solchen Gruppe unter Strafe zu stellen. Ferner müssen die Mitgliedstaaten sicherstellen, dass auch juristische Personen für derartiges Verhalten haftbar sind. Die Kommission verfolgt aufmerksam, wie der Rahmenbeschluss umgesetzt und angewandt wird, und wird im Dezember 2013 einen diesbezüglichen Bericht vorlegen.

Was Ihre letzte Frage angeht, so kann der Schutz bestimmter Grundrechte sowohl laut dem Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union ([2]) als auch gemäß der Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs ([3]) eine gerechtfertigte Beschränkung der Niederlassungsfreiheit darstellen.

([1]) Rahmenbeschluss 2008/913/JI des Rates vom 28. November 2008 zur strafrechtlichen Bekämpfung bestimmter Formen und Ausdrucksweisen von Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit, ABl. L 328 vom 6.12.2008, S. 55-58.
([2]) Art. 52 AEUV.
([3]) Rechtssache C 36/02 Omega Slg. 2004, I-9609, Randnr. 35.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007497/13
to the Commission
Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (ALDE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Activities of anti-democratic parties in the EU

The freedom EU citizens enjoy to live and work wherever they want is one of the most valuable rights guaranteed by the EU. The relevant provisions are set out in Articles 49 to 55 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. According to media reports, in January 2013 an extreme right-wing, racist and xenophobic party which employs in its own country (Greece), in modified but still recognisable form, Nazi symbols banned in Germany opened an office in Germany.

Does the Commission see a contradiction between freedom of establishment, on the one hand, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, on the other?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 September 2013)

The Commission strongly condemns all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, regardless of whom they come from, as they are incompatible with the values and principles on which the European Union is founded.

Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA ([1]) obliges all Member States to make punishable the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred targeted against a group of people or a member of such ground defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent, or ethnic or national origin. Member States must ensure that also legal persons are liable for such conduct. The Commission is closely monitoring the transposition and implementation of the framework Decision and will publish a report in this regard in December 2013.

With regard to your final question, it has also to be noted that both the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([2]) and the case law of the Court of Justice ([3]) consider that the protection of certain fundamental rights can constitute a justified restriction on freedom of establishment.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, pp. 55-58.
([2]) Article 52 TFEU.
([3]) Case C-36/02 Omega [2004] ECR I-9609, paragraph 35.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007498/13
an die Kommission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2009/103/EG über die Kraftfahrzeug-Haftpflichtversicherung

Die Richtlinie 2009/103/EG schreibt für Personen- und Sachschäden in der EU, die im Rahmen der KFZ-Haftpflichtversicherung abgesichert sind, einheitliche Mindestdeckungssummen vor. Eine Übergangszeit für die Anpassung der Mindestdeckungssummen war bis Juni 2012 vorgesehen.

Bürger aus meiner Wahlregion haben darauf hingewiesen, dass diese Mindestdeckungssumme im Jahr 2013 bei verschiedenen spanischen Autovermietungen nicht garantiert wurde.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

— Wie ist nach Kenntnis der Kommission der Stand der Umsetzung der Richtlinie 2009/103/EG in den Mitgliedstaaten?

— Sind der Kommission weitere Beschwerden über zu niedrige Deckungssummen bekannt?

— Was hat die Kommission — sollte es hierbei Defizite geben — bisher unternommen, um eine schnelle Umsetzung der Richtlinie zu gewährleisten, und wie können nach Auffassung der Kommission die Rechte der europäischen Verbraucher gewahrt werden?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(27. August 2013)

Die Übergangszeit für Mindestdeckungssummen für Personen- und Sachschäden in der EU, auf die der Herr Abgeordnete verweist, wurde gemäß Artikel 2 der Richtlinie 2005/14/EG eingeführt, mit der u. a. die Richtlinie 84/5/EWG diesbezüglich geändert wurde. Nach dieser Vorschrift müssen die Mitgliedstaaten der Kommission zudem mitteilen, ob sie die Übergangszeit in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet vorsehen.

Im Jahr 2010 führte die Kommission eine Erhebung durch, in der die Mitgliedstaaten aufgefordert wurden, der Kommission mitzuteilen, ob sie im Rahmen ihrer Rechtsordnungen von der Möglichkeit der Einführung dieser Übergangszeit Gebrauch gemacht haben. Spanien teilte der Kommission mit, dass die Mindestdeckungssummen gemäß den nationalen Rechtsvorschriften höher seien als jene gemäß Artikel 9 der Richtlinie 2009/103/EG.

Ausgehend von den verfügbaren Informationen scheint es, dass das vom Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochene Problem der unzureichenden Deckungssummen bei einigen spanischen Autovermietungsfirmen eher eine innerstaatliche Angelegenheit als einen Verstoß gegen EU-Recht darstellt. Die zuständige spanische Behörde ist das Ministerio de Economía, Dirección General de Fondos de Seguros y Pensiones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007498/13
to the Commission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2009/103/EC relating to insurance against civil liability in respect of the use of motor vehicles

Directive 2009/103/EC provides uniform minimum amounts of cover in respect of personal injury and material damage in the EU covered by motor vehicle civil liability insurance. A transitional period for adjusting to the minimum amount of cover was provided until June 2012.

Some of my constituents have pointed out that a number of Spanish car hire companies have failed to provide this minimum cover in 2013.

In view of the above, will the Commission answer the following questions:

— What progress has been made in transposing Directive 2009/103/EC in the Member States?

— Is it aware of any further complaints about insurance cover levels that are too low?

— What has it done so far — assuming shortcomings have been detected — to ensure the swift transposition of the directive and how, in its opinion, can the rights of European consumers be safeguarded?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(27 August 2013)

The transitional period for minimum amounts of cover in respect of personal injury and material damage in the EU that the Honourable Member is referring to was introduced under Article 2 of Directive 2005/14/EC which amended, *inter alia*, Directive 84/5/EEC in that respect. Under this provision, the Member States were also required to notify the Commission on whether they would provide for the transitional period within their territory.

In 2010, the Commission conducted a survey in which Member States were requested to inform the Commission whether under their legal systems, they made use of the possibility to establish this transitional period. Spain informed the Commission that the minimum covers established in national law are higher than those required under Article 9 of Directive 2009/103/EC.

Based on the information available, it would therefore appear that the problem of insufficient cover by some Spanish car hire companies, as referred to by the Honourable Member, would be a national matter rather than lack of compliance with EC law. The responsible Spanish authority is the Ministerio de Economía, Dirección General de Seguros y Fondos de Pensiones.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007499/13
an die Kommission
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: AEROCEPTOR und CLOSEYE

Im Rahmen des Projekts AEROCEPTOR finanziert die EU-Kommission Forschungen zur Nutzung einer Helikopterdrohne — „Vertical Takeoff and Landing" (VTOL) — zum Einsatz gegen „Nicht kooperierende Fahrzeuge" (Kommissionsdokument E-001904/2013). Die Drohne soll Vorrichtungen zur elektromagnetischen Störung zur Blockierung der Motorelektronik befördern. Möglich wäre auch der Einsatz von Netzen, in denen sich Räder von Fahrzeugen oder Propeller von Booten verwickeln, sowie ein „Spezial-Polymerschaumstoff", der allmählich verhärtet und das Fahrzeug zum Halten bringt. Sofern dies nicht zielführend ist, könnten die Fahrzeuge mit „Durchstechen der Reifen" angehalten werden.

1. In welchen Vorhaben finanziert die Europäische Union Forschungen zu VTOL-Drohnen; welche Zielsetzung haben diese, und wer (Forschungseinrichtungen, Behörden, Agenturen, Rüstungsfirmen) ist mit welchen Aufgaben daran beteiligt?

2. Welche Drohnen welcher Hersteller werden in AEROCEPTOR und CLOSEYE eingesetzt; wer stellt diese zur Verfügung, und wie hoch werden die Kosten dafür eingeschätzt?

3. Welche Anlagen welcher Hersteller („Vorrichtungen zur elektromagnetischen Störung zur Blockierung der Motorelektronik", „Netze, in denen sich Räder von Fahrzeugen oder Propeller von Booten verwickeln", „Spezial-Polymerschaumstoff", „Durchstechen der Reifen" sowie sonstige Aufklärungstechnik) werden bei AEROCEPTOR und CLOSEYE getestet?

4. Wann und wo finden bzw. fanden Testflüge innerhalb von AEROCEPTOR und CLOSEYE statt?

5. Welche finanziellen EU-Mittel werden im aktuellen Forschungsrahmenprogramm aufgewendet, und welche Mittel sind im MFR 2014 — 2020 für die Drohnenforschung vorgesehen; um welche Projekte handelt es sich dabei?

Antwort von Herrn Tajani im Namen der Kommission
(21. August 2013)

Die Kommission finanziert unter dem aktuellen 7. RP ([1]) keine Forschung zu Drohnen an sich. Die genannten Projekte betreffen innovative operationelle Konzepte zur Vereinfachung des Einsatzes von ferngesteuerten Luftfahrtsystemen (RPAS) für zivile Zwecke (bzw. deren Validierung).

Was die geplanten Tests bei Aerospace und Closeye angeht, so setzt Aerospace den unbemannten Helikopter Yamaha Rmax bei seinen Tests ein- ein kommerzielles RPAS, das bereits einem der Mitglieder des Konsortiums gehört. Die damit zusammenhängenden Kosten werden auf 200 000 EUR geschätzt. Closeye hat die Plattform, die für die Experimente mit der Meeresüberwachung benutzt werden soll, noch nicht ausgewählt. Der Einsatz von RPAS könnte in Erwägung gezogen werden.

Bisher hat Aerospace noch keine Nutzlast getestet. Die Tests werden davon abhängig sein, ob diese Technik geeignet ist, Fahrzeuge wirksam und sicher zum Halten zu bringen und alle Anforderungen zu erfüllen, die sich aus zuvor durchgeführten Untersuchungen der sicherheitsrelevanten, ethischen und juristischen Aspekte ergaben. Dies wird in den nächsten Projektabschnitten bewertet werden. Closeye plant Tests von Überwachungstechnik.

Aerospace beabsichtigt, im Sommer 2015 Testflüge durchzuführen, und zwar entweder in INTA- Einrichtungen (Spanien) oder in ONERA-Einrichtungen (Frankreich). Closeye plant Tests für 2015. Der (die) genaue(n) Testort(e) ist (sind) noch nicht festgelegt.

Derzeit sind im MFR 2014-2020 keine Mittel für RPAS vorgesehen. Projekte, bei denen es um RPAS und ihre Nutzlasten geht, können an den Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Rahmen von Horizont 2020 teilnehmen; hierbei sind die Regeln und die einschlägigen thematischen Komponenten zu berücksichtigen, wie es bereits im 7. RP der Fall ist. Dies geschieht auf der Ebene der Jahresarbeitsprogramme. Darüber hinaus arbeitet die Kommission derzeit an einem Fahrplan für die Nutzung des zivilen Luftraums durch RPAS. Diese Arbeiten könnten dazu führen, dass ein Teil der Technologien entwickelt wird, die nötig sind, damit zivile RPAS den Flugsicherheitsanforderungen entsprechen.

([1]) 7. Forschungsrahmenprogramm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007499/13
to the Commission
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Aeroceptor and Closeye

Under the Aeroceptor project, the Commission is funding research on the use of VTOL helicopter drones for use against 'non-cooperative vehicles' (Commission's answer to my Question E-001904/2013). The drone would carry devices emitting electromagnetic interference to jam engine electronics. Other possibilities are the use of tangle meshes and nets to stop vehicle wheels and boat propellers, and 'special foam polymers' that harden gradually, stopping the vehicle. If this does not work, vehicles could be stopped by 'tyre puncturing devices'.

1. Under what projects is the European Union financing research on VTOL drones, what is the purpose of these projects and which research establishments, public authorities, agencies, arms manufacturers, etc. are involved in them in what capacity?

2. What drones, made by which manufacturers, are used in Aeroceptor and Closeye? Who provides them, and what are the estimated costs?

3. What devices, made by which manufacturers, (devices emitting 'electromagnetic interference to jam engine electronics', 'tangle meshes and nets to stop vehicle wheels and boat propellers', 'special foam polymers', 'tyre puncturing devices' and other intelligence technology) are being tested with Aeroceptor and Closeye?

4. When and where do test flights take place (or have they taken place) under the Aeroceptor and Closeye projects?

5. What EU funds are being spent under the current research framework programme, and what funds are earmarked in the 2014-2020 MFF, for research on drones? On which projects specifically?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

In the current FP7 ([1]), the Commission is not funding research on drones as such. The mentioned projects are looking at (the validation of) innovative operational concepts to facilitate the use of existing Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) for civil purposes.

As to the tests foreseen by Aeroceptor and Closeye, for the Aeroceptor tests the Yamaha Rmax — a commercial RPAS already owned by one of the consortium members — will be used. The estimated cost for this work is about EUR 200.000. Closeye has not yet chosen the platform to be used for the maritime surveillance experiments. The use of RPAS might be considered.

So far Aeroceptor has not tested any payload device. The testing will depend on the suitability of the devices to perform effective and safe detentions fulfilling all the requirements resulting from previous safety, ethical and legal analysis. This will be assessed in next stages of the project. Closeye intends to test surveillance equipment.

Aeroceptor intends to perform flight testing, either in INTA (Spain) or ONERA (France) facilities during summer 2015. Closeye intends to conduct testing activities in 2015. The specific testing place(s) are not yet defined.

There is currently no money earmarked for RPAS in the 2014-2020 MFF. Projects involving RPAS and their payloads can participate in calls for proposals under Horizon 2020, in line with its rules and under relevant thematic components, as it has been the case under the FP7. This is done at the level of the annual work programmes. Moreover, the Commission is working now on a roadmap for the insertion of RPAS into civil airspace. This work might result in the development of some of the technologies necessary for civil RPAS to meet flight safety requirements.

([1]) 7th Research Framework Programme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007500/13
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Spanish recognition of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

I note that the Commission has recently initiated an infringement procedure against Spain regarding public hospital refusals to recognise the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

I have received a letter from one of my constituents who has residence in Spain, pays her taxes in Spain and earns less than EUR 100 000 per year. She is therefore entitled not only to Spanish healthcare but also to the Spanish equivalent of the EHIC.

However, my constituent also informs me that Spain is ignoring this and refuses to issue an EHIC, forcing citizens and residents to attend a social security office in person to obtain a letter, valid for 90 days, which guarantees emergency healthcare cover in all EU countries and in Switzerland. This seems to me to be an inconvenient and costly bureaucratic measure that may be impossible for a person to take if his or her journey is a matter of urgency requiring travel the same or the next day.

Please can the Commission let me know its views on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 provides that an insured person, such as the Honourable Member's constituent, who is insured in one Member State, is entitled to medical care which becomes necessary during a stay in another Member State, having regard to the nature of the care and the expected length of stay. In application of that provision and according to the relevant Decisions of the Administrative Commission on Social Security, the EHIC must be provided by the institution insuring the person as proof of insurance in that State. The EHIC certifies entitlement to medical care during a stay abroad.

The Commission has no knowledge of the situation described by the Honourable Member. It will ask the Member State concerned for information and will inform the Honourable Member of its findings.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-007501/13
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(26 ta' Ġunju 2013)

Suġġett: It-tnaqqis tal-kummerċjalizzazzjoni tal-alkoħol fl-isports

Meta indirizzat is-Simpożju dwar il-Politika tal-Alkoħol Globali f'April li għadda fit-Turkija, Dr Margaret Chan, id-Direttur Ġenerali tal-Organizzazzjoni Dinjija tas-Saħħa (WHO), stqarret li r-riċerka wriet li politiki tal-alkoħol b'saħħithom qegħdin jaħdmu.

Skont l-Istrateġija Globali tad-WHO biex tnaqqas l-użu dannuż tal-alkoħol, it-tnaqqis tal-impatt tal-kummerċjalizzazzjoni, partikolarment fuq iż-żgħażagħ u l-adoloxxenti, huwa kunsiderazzjoni importanti fit-tnaqqis tal-użu dannuż tal-alkoħol. L-alkoħol huwa kkummerċjalizzat permezz ta' riklamar u tekniki ta' promozzjoni li dejjem qed isiru sofistikati, inkluża r-rabta ta' ditti tal-alkoħol ma' attivitajiet sportivi u kulturali. It-trażmissjoni ta' messaġġi ta' kummerċjalizzazzjoni tal-alkoħol bejn fruntieri u ġurisdizzjonijiet nazzjonali permezz ta' kanali bħat-televiżjoni bis-sattelita u l-internet, u permezz tal-isponserizzazzjoni tal-isports u l-avvenimenti kulturali, qed tirriżulta bħala ħassib serju f'ċerti pajjiżi. Għandu jitqies approċċ prekawzjonali li jipproteġi liż-żgħażagħ kontra dawn it-tekniki ta' kummerċjalizzazzjoni. B'mod partikolari, l-Istrateġija Globali tad-WHO tirrakkomanda r-restrizzjoni jew il-projbizzjoni tal-promozzjonijiet li huma marbuta mal-attivitajiet immirati lejn iż-żgħażagħ.

Dan huwa rifless aktar fil-Pjan ta' Azzjoni Ewropew tad-WHO biex inaqqas l-użu dannuż tal-alkoħol fil-perjodu 2012-2020, li f'Settembru 2011 ġie approvat mit-53 Stat Membru kollha tar-Reġjun Ewropew tad-WHO, li jinkludi l-Istati Membri kollha tal-UE.

1. Fid-dawl ta' dan, liema huma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni dwar ir-rabta u/jew il-kummerċjalizzazzjoni tal-prodotti tal-alkoħol matul, u/jew l-isponserizzazzjoni relatata mal-alkoħol ta', avvenimenti sportivi fl-UE?

2. Il-Kummissjoni, liema miżuri se tippreżenta, jekk ikun hemm, biex tiżgura li l-miri mħaddna mill-Istrateġija Globali u l-Pjan ta' Azzjoni Ewropew tad-WHO msemmija hawn fuq jinkisbu fil-prattika fi ħdan il-perjodi ta' żmien stabbiliti?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(14 ta' Awwissu 2013)

Il-ħarsien tat-tfal u ż-żgħażagħ huwa prijorità ewlenija tal-istrateġija tal-alkoħol tal-UE ([1]).

Fil-kuntest tal-Forum dwar l-Alkoħol u s-Saħħa, pjattaforma stabbilita sabiex ittejjeb l-azzjoni volontarja, ġew imsaħħa l-kodiċijiet tal-komunikazzjoni kummerċjali u bosta membri ddeċidew li ma jirriklamawx fil-media fejn il-minorenni jiffurmaw aktar minn 30 % tal-udjenza. Ċerti produtturi tal-alkoħol qed jestendu wkoll il-kodiċijiet ta' mġiba tagħhom għar-reklamar tal-alkoħol, għall-media diġitali, inkluża l-media soċjali.

Id-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi tal-Media Awdjoviżiva ([2]) tipprojbixxi komunikazzjonijiet kummerċjali awdjoviżivi għal xorb alkoħoliku mmirati speċifikament lejn il-minuri. Dan japplika għax-xandir u servizzi tal-media awdjoviżivi non-lineari. L-Istati Membri jridu jimplimentaw id-Direttiva b'mod konsistenti u f'konformità mal-liġi tal-Unjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea bħalissa qed tikkunsidra li tniedi studju dwar l-esponiment tal-minuri għar-reklamar tal-alkoħol fir-rigward tat-televiżjoni u l-media onlajn.

Għal aktar informazzjoni l-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għat-tweġiba tagħha għall-Mistoqsija bil-Miktub e-004189/13 ([3]).

([1]) Komunikazzjoni tal-24 ta' Ottubru 2006, Strateġija tal-UE li tappoġġa lill-Istati Membri għat-tnaqqis ta' ħsara relatata mal-alkoħol (COM(2006) 625 final).
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/mt/com/2006/com2006_0625mt01.pdf

([2]) Id-Direttiva 2010/13/UE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-10 ta' Marzu 2010, dwar il-koordinazzjoni ta' ċerti dispożizzjonijiet stabbiliti bil-liġi, b'regolament jew b'azzjoni amministrattiva fi Stati Membri dwar il-forniment ta' servizzi tal-media awdjoviżiva (Id-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi tal-Media Awdjoviżiva) (ĠU L 95/1, 15.04.2010).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007501/13
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Reducing the marketing of alcohol in sports

Addressing the Global Alcohol Policy Symposium in Turkey last April, Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO), stated that research has shown that strong alcohol policies work.

The WHO's Global Strategy to reduce harmful use of alcohol states that reducing the impact of marketing, particularly on young people and adolescents, is an important consideration in reducing the harmful use of alcohol. Alcohol is marketed using increasingly sophisticated advertising and promotion techniques, including linking alcohol brands to sports and cultural activities. The transmission of alcohol marketing messages across national borders and jurisdictions through channels such as satellite television and the Internet, and via the sponsorship of sports and cultural events, is emerging as a serious concern in some countries. A precautionary approach to protecting young people against these marketing techniques should be considered. In particular, the WHO Global Strategy recommends the restriction or banning of promotions in connection with activities targeting young people.

This is further reflected in the WHO's European Action Plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol in the period 2012-2020, which in September 2011 was endorsed by all 53 member states of the WHO European Region, which includes all EU Member States.

1. In view of the above, what are the Commission's views on the linking of and/or marketing of alcoholic products during, and/or the alcohol-related sponsorship of, sports events within the EU?

2. What measures, if any, will the Commission be putting forward to ensure that the targets embraced by the WHO's abovementioned Global Strategy and European Action Plan are achieved in practice within the time-frames set?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(14 August 2013)

Protecting children and young people is a key priority of the EU alcohol strategy ([1]).

In the context of the Alcohol and Health Forum, a platform set up to enhance voluntary action, codes of commercial communication have been strengthened and several members have moved towards not advertising in media where minors make up over 30% of the audience. Some alcohol producers are also extending their codes of conduct for alcohol advertising to digital media, including social media.

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive ([2]) prohibits audiovisual commercial communications for alcoholic beverages aimed specifically at minors. This applies to broadcasting and nonlinear audiovisual media services. Member States have to implement the directive in a consistent manner and in conformity with Union law.

The European Commission is currently considering the launch a study on exposure of minors to alcohol advertising with regard to television and online media.

For further information the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to the Written Question E-004189/13 ([3]).

([1]) Communication of 24 October 2006, An EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm (COM(2006) 625 final). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0625en01.pdf

([2]) 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) (OJ L 95/1, 15.04.2010)

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007502/13
to the Commission
Derek Roland Clark (EFD)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Competition and Innovation Programme, large-scale pilot project

You will be aware that in 2007, in accordance with the rules of the Competition and Innovation Programme, the Commission issued a call for proposals for a large-scale pilot project to demonstrate a possible solution for the management of electronic identities.

— Please provide details of the total spend to date of the STORK and STORK 2 projects.

— Please provide details of the total spend of the wider e-SENS programme.

— Please provide details of the beneficiaries of the above spending, including supplier names and total annual contract values per supplier.

— Given that we are now some six years down the road, I would like evidence showing at what point the projects within the e-SENS programme will be fully deployed and in productive use.

Answer given by Vice-President Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The STORK Pilot was selected for funding and started in June 2008 within the ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), with an EU contribution of EUR 11.441.775. It finished in December 2011. STORK 2 was selected for funding and started in April 2012, with a maximum foreseen EU contribution of EUR 8.762.953. Nineteen countries were participating in STORK, and 19 countries are also represented in the STORK2 consortium. The complete list of beneficiaries can be found at www.eid-stork.eu and www.eid-stork2.eu.

The e-SENS project (http://www.esens.eu) is a new Large Scale Pilot selected for funding under the CIP ICT PSP. Figures about the project will be publicly available once the grant agreement is signed (under finalisation). The project has started working in April 2013 at its own risk. e-SENS aims to consolidate the results of the previous Large Scale Pilots, including STORK and STORK 2, and to develop an infrastructure for cross-border public services delivery in support of the Digital Single Market.

An important contribution of the STORK project is to the proposed Regulation of the Commission, currently under negotiation in the Parliament and the Council, for a cross-border recognition of eID in the Union. E-SENS, along the other large scale pilots launched under the CIP programme (STORK, STORK2), will providing a building blocks needed for an open digital market in Europe. The proposed Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), aims to finance the deployment of operation of these infrastructures.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007503/13
do Komisji
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE)
(26 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ogólne rozporządzenie w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych – pomoc państwa

W wyniku kryzysu gospodarczego i rosnącego bezrobocia w całej Unii pracownicy w gorszej sytuacji, a w szczególności pracownicy niepełnosprawni, są najbardziej narażeni na ryzyko zwolnień oraz praktycznie na wykluczenia z rynku pracy. W wielu państwach członkowskich UE jedynym skutecznym sposobem zagwarantowania sprawiedliwego udziału w rynku pracy osób niepełnosprawnych są państwowe systemy wsparcia obejmujące pomoc państwa, które dotychczas były uznawane za zgodne z regułami rynku wewnętrznego zgodnie z rozporządzeniem Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 8 sierpnia 2008 r.

Projekt rozporządzenia określającego pewne kategorie pomocy zgodne z regułami rynku wewnętrznego przy stosowaniu art. 107 i 108 TFUE (ogólne rozporządzenie w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych) zmieniającego rozporządzenie Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 dotyczące między innymi pomocy państwa w rekrutacji i zatrudnianiu niepełnosprawnych pracowników, proponuje w art. 1 ust. 2 lit. a), aby wyłączyć z zakresu jego stosowania systemy pomocy państwa, dla których planowane lub faktycznie poniesione roczne wydatki publiczne przekraczają 0,01 % krajowego PKB. Może to być równoznaczne z uznaniem za niekompatybilne z ogólnym rozporządzeniem w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych pewnych systemów pomocy publicznej, z których korzystają osoby niepełnosprawne, takich jak polski PFRON (Państwowy Fundusz Rehabilitacji Osób Niepełnosprawnych).

W związku z powyższym kieruję do Komisji następujące pytania:

— Biorąc pod uwagę wyniki konsultacji w sprawie przeglądu ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych, które kończą się w dniu 28 czerwca 2013 r., czy Komisja zamierza mimo wszystko utrzymać proponowany pułap dla pomocy państwa niewymagającej powiadamiania jeśli chodzi o systemy mające na celu ułatwienie zatrudnienia osób niepełnosprawnych?

— Czy Komisja nie uważa, że, w szczególności teraz, gdy trwa kryzys gospodarczy i mamy do czynienia z rosnącym bezrobociem, takie zmiany zasad dotyczących zatrudnienia niepełnosprawnych pracowników, jako obywateli w szczególnie niekorzystnym położeniu, mogą mieć niewspółmiernie negatywne skutki i być sprzeczne z uzasadnionymi oczekiwaniami, jakie osoby niepełnosprawne mogą mieć jeśli chodzi o politykę ich dotyczącą?

— Ponadto czy Komisja może przedstawić skrótowo informacje dotyczące pomocy państwa zgodnej z zasadami rynku wewnętrznego zgodnie z art. 42 rozporządzenia Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008 z dnia 6 sierpnia 2008 r., w związku z którą Komisja otrzymała powiadomienie zgodnie z wymogiem przejrzystości zawartym w art. 9 wspomnianego rozporządzenia?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(18 września 2013 r.)

Komisja rozumie wyzwania, z którymi zmagają się niepełnosprawni pracownicy na rynku pracy.

Komisja zdaje sobie też sprawę, że wprowadzenie proponowanego progu powodującego obowiązek zgłoszenia bardzo dużych programów do projektu GBER ([1]) może spowodować konieczność zgłaszania niektórych dużych polskich programów na rzecz pomocy w zatrudnianiu osób niepełnosprawnych.

Taki obowiązek zgłoszenia nie oznacza, że wsparcie państwa dla pracowników niepełnosprawnych jako takie jest zabronione, ale jedynie, że takie programy muszą być zgłaszane Komisji, która analizuje je w świetle przepisów dotyczących pomocy państwa, zanim programy te zostaną wdrożone. Podejmując decyzję w sprawie zgodności programów z rynkiem wewnętrznym, Komisja w pełni uwzględni ich korzystne skutki w zakresie promowania zatrudniania osób niepełnosprawnych.

([1]) Ogólne rozporządzenie w sprawie wyłączeń grupowych.

Proszę również zwrócić uwagę, że obecna wersja projektu GBER, w tym jego przepisów dotyczących pomocy dla pracowników niepełnosprawnych, nie jest jeszcze wersją ostateczną. W ramach przeprowadzonych konsultacji społecznych Komisja otrzymała uwagi od wielu obywateli i organizacji reprezentujących osoby niepełnosprawne, jak również od władz polskich. Komisja przeprowadzi analizę otrzymanych informacji i rozważy, w jaki sposób najlepiej odnieść się do wspomnianych uwag.

Zmieniony wniosek zostanie opublikowany przed końcem roku i ponownie będzie przedmiotem konsultacji publicznych. Osoby niepełnosprawne, organizacje reprezentujące ich interesy i administracje krajowe będą mogły śledzić rozwój sytuacji i wyrazić swoje zdanie na temat zmienionych przepisów.

Jeżeli chodzi o dane dotyczące pomocy zgodnej z rynkiem wewnętrznym na mocy art. 42 rozporządzenia Komisji (WE) nr 800/2008, Komisja gromadzi informacje dotyczące przyznawanej pomocy państwa z podziałem na cele horyzontalne, jednak bez podziału na poszczególne artykuły lub instrumenty. W tym kontekście w 2011 r. 89,2 % środków, których ogólnym głównym celem była pomoc w zakresie zatrudnienia, było objętych GBER.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007503/13
to the Commission
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) — state aid

As a result of the economic crisis and rising unemployment throughout the Union, vulnerable employees, and disabled workers in particular, face the highest risk of becoming redundant and being effectively excluded from the job market. In many EU Member States the only effective means of ensuring fair job market participation of disabled people is through state support schemes involving state aid, which so far have been considered compatible with the internal market pursuant to Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008.

The Draft Regulation declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 TFEU (General Block Exemption Regulation), amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008, which concerns *inter alia* state aid for recruitment and employment of disabled workers, proposes in its Article 1(2)(a) excluding from its scope state aid schemes for which the planned or effective yearly public expenditure exceeds 0.01% of national GDP. This could be tantamount to declaring incompatible with GBER some state aid schemes that benefit disabled people, such as the Polish PFRON (State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons).

In the light of the above, I ask the Commission the following:

— Given the results of the GBER review consultation which ends on 28 June 2013, does the Commission nevertheless intend to maintain the proposed cap on notification exempted state aid with regard to schemes oriented to facilitating employment of disabled people?

— Does the Commission not consider that, particularly in times of economic crisis and rising unemployment, such changes to the rules concerning employment of disabled workers, as particularly vulnerable members of our society, can have disproportionally negative effects and run counter to legitimate expectations that disabled people might have with regard to policies in their regard?

— Finally, can the Commission provide summary information concerning state aid compatible with the internal market pursuant to Article 42 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008, on which the Commission has received notice in line with the transparency requirement of Article 9 of that regulation?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(18 September 2013)

The Commission understands the challenges faced by disabled workers on the job market.

The Commission is aware that the introduction of a proposed threshold for notification of very large schemes into the draft GBER ([1]) might trigger the need to notify certain large Polish schemes for employment aid for disabled people.

Such an obligation does not mean that State support for disabled workers is per se prohibited, but only that such schemes must be notified to the Commission for examination under the state aid rules before they can be implemented. When deciding on their compatibility, the Commission would fully consider the beneficial effects of such schemes for promoting employment of disabled persons.

Please also note that the draft GBER, including its provisions relating to aid for disabled workers, is not yet final. The Commission has received feedback in the context of the public consultation from citizens and organisations representing disabled persons as well as from the Polish authorities. It will analyse this and consider how best to address those comments.

The revised proposal will be published before the end of the year and will again be subject to public consultation. Disabled persons, organisations representing their interests and national administrations will be able to follow these developments and to express their opinions on the revised provisions.

As regards data on aid compatible with the internal market under Article 42 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008, the Commission collects information on state aid granted by horizontal objective, not by individual articles of single instruments. In this context, 89.2% of measures with the overall primary objective 'employment aid' were covered by the GBER in 2011.

([1]) General Block Exemption Regulation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007504/13
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Bus fares in Malta

Further to the Commission's answer to Question E-008264/2012 in November 2012, I have been informed that cheap bus fares in Malta are still only applicable to Maltese citizens.

I am told that some Arriva buses in Malta are advertising travel for only EUR 1.50 a day. However, I am informed that short-term residents and tourists have to pay EUR 2.60 a day. Despite this, I am informed there is a lower rate, but this price only allows travel anywhere for 2 hours and it takes longer than this to get anywhere and back on the island.

Can the Commission provide an update as to the contact it has had with the Maltese authorities and whether the Maltese bus fare scheme is compatible with EC law?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

Further to its reply to Question E-008264/2012 of November 2012 ([1]), the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that it initiated on 25 January 2013 infringement proceedings against Malta in the form of a letter of formal notice. This letter stated that the differential bus fares for residents and non-residents could constitute indirect discrimination based on nationality. The Maltese authorities replied on 15 March 2013 and the Commission is in the process of assessing the Maltese reply.

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

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-007505/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(26. junij 2013)

Zadeva: Enakost med spoloma in pravice žensk v Namibiji

Čeprav je Namibija vzpostavila pravni okvir za obravnavo različnih oblik diskriminacije na podlagi spola, neučinkovito izvajanje še vedno preprečuje namibijskim ženskam, da bi v celoti uživale svoje pravice.

Nižji ekonomski status žensk in pomanjkanje ekonomske samostojnosti sta dejavnika odvisnosti v odnosih in povečujeta izpostavljenost žensk revščini, socialni izključenosti in socialni šibkosti. Socialno-ekonomska neenakost žensk je tudi vzrok razširjenosti nasilja na podlagi spola v Namibiji, ki povzroča hudo in neprestano zaskrbljenost glede človekovih pravic.

— Kako si Komisija prizadeva, da bi izboljšala položaj žensk, ki trpijo zaradi občutne marginalizacije v Namibiji?

— Kaj bo Komisija storila, da bi povečala udeležbo žensk na trgu dela in tako spodbudila njihovo ekonomsko neodvisnost?

Odgovor visoke predstavnice Unije in podpredsednice Komisije Catherine Ashton v imenu Komisije
(9. avgust 2013)

Delegacija EU in več držav članic dejavno sodeluje v nacionalni projektni skupini za enakost spolov, ki je bila ustanovljena za izvajanje nacionalne politike za enakost spolov. O operacionalizaciji tega okvira so v začetku julija 2013 v okviru rednega političnega dialoga razpravljali vodje misij EU in ministrica za enakost spolov. Poleg tega je delegacija EU leta 2012 skupaj z ministrstvom za enakost spolov, civilno družbo in razvojnimi partnerji organizirala delavnico, namenjeno vzpostavitvi političnega dialoga o enakosti spolov in krepitvi vloge žensk. To je bila prva tovrstna delavnica in je bila zelo dobro obiskana.

Februarja 2013 je delegacija EU v diplomatski demarši o pripravah in ozaveščanju za 57. sejo komisije za status žensk pri Generalni skupščini Združenih narodov poudarila pomen zagotavljanja enakosti spolov kot temeljne pravice in predpogoja za razvoj in socialno kohezijo.

Prav tako Evropska unija zagotavlja finančno podporo za programe sodelovanja, namenjene ozaveščanju o enakosti spolov, odpravljanju diskriminacije na podlagi spola ter upoštevanju vidika spolov v nacionalnih politikah.

Med drugim to zajema ukrepe za ozaveščanje poslancev glede učinka javnih politik na vprašanja enakosti spolov. Pomoč se namenja tudi projektom civilne družbe, ki vključujejo lokalne skupnosti in obravnavajo seksistično nasilje, norme in vedenje na podlagi spola, med drugim tudi ukrepe za spodbujanje žensk, da bi uveljavljale svoje pravice in prijavljale kršitve svojih pravic.

Kar zadeva udeležbo žensk na trgu dela, je program EU za zmanjšanje revščine na podeželju namenjen spodbujanju ekonomske neodvisnosti žensk. To problematiko bo srednjeročno obravnaval sektor za poklicno izobraževanje in usposabljanje v okviru 11. ERS ([1]).

Kljub obsežnemu ukrepanju EU pa uveljavljanje enakosti spolov v Namibiji ostaja težavno in vsakršen napredek bo zgolj postopen.

([1]) Evropski razvojni sklad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007505/13
to the Commission
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Gender equality and women's rights in Namibia

Although Namibia has put in place a legal framework to address the various forms of gender-based discrimination, ineffective implementation still prevents Namibian women from fully enjoying their rights.

Women's lower economic status and lack of economic autonomy create relationships of dependence and increase their vulnerability to poverty, social exclusion and disempowerment. The socioeconomic inequality of women is also the root of widespread gender-based violence in Namibia which is a grave and persisting human rights concern.

— What is the Commission doing in order to improve the situation of women experiencing significant marginalisation in Namibia?

— What will the Commission do to increase women's participation in the labour market and thus encourage their economic independence?

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

The EU Delegation and several Member States actively participate in the National Gender Task Force which is set up to implement the National Gender Policy. The operationalisation of this framework was discussed earlier during July 2013 with EU Heads of Mission and the Minister of Gender, as part of an ongoing political dialogue. Moreover, the EU Delegation in 2012 facilitated a workshop with the Ministry of Gender Equality, civil society and development partners to foster policy dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment, the first of its kind and which was well attended.

In February 2013, the EU Delegation delivered a Demarche on the preparations and outreach for the 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, recalling the importance of gender equality as a fundamental right and an imperative for development and social cohesion.

The EU is also providing financial support to cooperation programmes that raise gender awareness, address gender-based discrimination and ensure that gender is mainstreamed in wider polices.

These include interventions aimed at increasing MPs awareness and knowledge of the gender impact of public policies. Support is also channeled to civil society grassroots projects targeting local communities that cover gender violence, gender based norms and behaviour, including actions to encourage women to claim their rights and report violations.

In relation to women's participation in the labour market, the EU rural poverty reduction programme encouraged women's economic independence. This will in the medium term also be addressed under the 11th EDF ([1]) sector of vocational education and training.

Despite the EU's important actions, gender issues will remain a challenge in Namibia and any progress will be gradual.

([1]) European Development Fund.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007506/13
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: New Europe House to be opened in Zagreb on 1 July 2013

Can the Commission please provide the following details regarding the new Europe House to be opened in Zagreb on 1 July 2013:

— Did the Commission buy the premises at the Ban Centar or is it leased? In either case, can the Commission provide details of the purchase or rental costs?

— Will the EU Delegation close completely on 30 June 2013? Or are there any outstanding staffing obligations or rental on property (including property rented by and/or on behalf of officials and contract agents), including any charges related to the early termination of any leases/rental agreements?

— How many local staff will be transferring from the delegation to the representation? Can the Commission justify staff transfers given the difference between the roles of a delegation and a representation?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

On the day of accession, the EU Delegation in Croatia ceased its functions and a 'Europe House' hosting a Commission Representation and a European Parliament Information office opened.

This arrangement maximises the space for both EU institutions to welcome citizens and ensures the cost efficiency of the offices. The new Representation premises at the Ban Centar in Zagreb are leased. They were chosen after a full market research and were procured at market rates. The results of the EC procurements such as this are published annually ([1]).

The former Delegation premises continue to be in use on a temporary basis to house Commission staff engaged in post-accession monitoring ([2]).

The EU Delegation, over and above its monitoring and reporting tasks, was responsible for the implementation of pre-accession programmes, whilst the EC Representation has an important information and communication function.

The recruitment procedure was based on open and transparent selection procedures ([3]). Priority was given to the staff already working in the Delegation according to the principle of duty of care ([4]). From the 18 staff recruited in the Representation, 16 were identified among the staff working in the Delegation ([5]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_fr.htm
([2]) For no longer than 18 months.
([3]) The selection procedures started at the beginning of 2013.
([4]) This principle was confirmed by the Court.
([5]) The Head of the Representation and another administrative function (Head of Administration) were filled by external candidates.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007507/13
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE) et Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(26 juin 2013)

Objet: Allergènes potentiels de parfumerie

Suite à l'avis du Comité scientifique de sécurité des consommateurs (SCCS/1459/11) publié en juillet 2012, la Commission européenne a récemment publié ses propositions de mesures visant à renforcer la protection des consommateurs contre les effets négatifs potentiels provoqués par les allergènes de parfumerie. Ces mesures ambitieuses comprennent l'adoption d'une méthodologie quantitative d'évaluation des risques (QRA) pour les matières premières de parfumerie, basée sur l'exposition des consommateurs aux différents produits finis, les niveaux d'utilisation étant fixés pour éviter l'apparition d'allergies. Plusieurs options sont proposées pour assurer une information adéquate des consommateurs et, ainsi, permettre à la population concernée d'éviter les allergènes de parfumerie. Si les propositions de la Commission semblent à la fois justes, réalisables et proportionnées (au regard de leur bénéfice pour la santé publique par rapport à leurs impacts économiques), une attention particulière doit néanmoins être accordée à la charge opérationnelle et administrative incombant à l'industrie européenne de la parfumerie, qui compte huit des dix leaders mondiaux en parfumerie fine et un grand nombre de PME, notamment dans le secteur des ingrédients naturels. De nombreux efforts sont nécessaires du côté de l'industrie pour financer les méthodes d'analyse et les procédés visant à informer leurs partenaires dans la chaîne de valeur de la présence d'allergènes dans leurs compositions, ainsi que les consommateurs. Un délai réaliste doit donc être fixé pour qu'elle puisse se conformer aux nouvelles dispositions.

— Le délai de deux ans proposé par la Commission n'est-il pas sous-évalué compte tenu du nombre considérable de produits à couvrir et de la complexité liée aux propriétés spécifiques des matériaux olfactifs et des substances naturelles en particulier?

— Quel cadre juridique sera mis en place pour assurer une mise en œuvre transparente et efficace de la méthodologie quantitative d'évaluation des risques (QRA)?

— Comment la Commission compte-t-elle s'assurer que les efforts demandés aux industriels européens sont contrebalancés par des efforts identiques au niveau mondial afin de garantir une concurrence loyale pour nos entreprises?

— Envisage-t-elle d'encourager l'établissement de protocoles, méthodologies et critères agréés au niveau international afin de faire progresser la connaissance sur les allergènes et d'assurer une application uniforme des normes?

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(8 août 2013)

La Commission a récemment examiné avec les parties concernées un premier document de travail sur les fragrances allergisantes, dans lequel sont proposées des mesures destinées à assurer une information adéquate des consommateurs et la protection de ces derniers, ainsi que d'autres travaux scientifiques. Le délai d'application proposé pour les mesures d'information, qui ont pour but de permettre aux consommateurs sensibilisés d'éviter les produits qu'ils ne tolèrent pas, était en effet de deux ans après leur adoption. Au cours de cet examen, les experts des États membres et les représentants du secteur ont expliqué à quel point il serait difficile de respecter les obligations futures dans un tel délai. La Commission étudie donc actuellement la possibilité de revoir ce délai d'application.

En ce qui concerne la deuxième question, des travaux sont en cours pour peaufiner la méthode quantitative d'évaluation des risques, laquelle devrait être validée ultérieurement par le Centre commun de recherche de la Commission européenne. Les données obtenues seront transmises au Comité scientifique pour la sécurité des consommateurs (CSSC) pour que celui-ci les évalue; les conclusions de ce comité serviront ensuite de base à l'élaboration de futures mesures réglementaires. L'objectif est de définir des limites de concentration pour les fragrances allergisantes, et ce pour différentes catégories de produits cosmétiques, de manière à éviter l'induction de la sensibilisation.

Pour ce qui est des troisième et quatrième questions, il convient de mentionner que les règles futures s'appliqueront de la même manière aux produits fabriqués dans l'Union et à ceux importés dans celle-ci. En outre, des travaux ont récemment été entamés dans le cadre de la Coopération internationale relative à la réglementation des produits cosmétiques (ICCR) afin de répertorier les approches réglementaires appliquées par les différentes juridictions pour prévenir les risques que présentent les produits cosmétiques allergisants.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007507/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE) and Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Potential allergens in perfume

Following the publication of an opinion (SCCS/1459/11) by the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety in July 2012, the Commission recently put forward a set of measures intended to enhance consumer protection against any harm that might be caused by allergens in perfume. The ambitious measures include adopting a quantitative risk assessment (QRA) methodology for raw materials used in the manufacture of perfume. This would entail exposing consumers to different finished products, with use levels being fixed in such a way as to avoid the occurrence of allergies. A number of options have been proposed concerning the provision of information to consumers so as enable them to avoid allergens in perfumes. While the Commission's proposals appear fair, achievable and proportionate (in terms of their public health benefits compared to their cost), careful consideration needs to be given to the operational and administrative burden that they would place on Europe's perfume industry, which includes eight of the world's top-10 manufacturers of high-quality perfumes and a large number of SMEs, particularly in the natural ingredients sector. Finding the necessary funding for the analysis methods and for procedures to notify partners along the value chain and consumers of the presence of allergens in perfumes will be a major effort for the perfume industry. A realistic time frame therefore needs to be set so that the industry can adjust to the new provisions.

— Is the two-year time frame put forward by the Commission not inadequate, particularly in view of the large number of products involved and the complex properties of natural and fragrance-producing substances?

— What legal framework will be put in place to ensure that the QRA methodology is implemented in a transparent and effective manner?

— How will the Commission ensure that the efforts European manufacturers are being asked to make are matched by similar efforts elsewhere in the world, so that our companies may enjoy a level playing field?

— Does the Commission intend to push for the introduction of internationally agreed protocols, methodologies and criteria, in order to promote a better understanding of allergens and ensure that the rules are applied in a uniform manner?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission has recently discussed with stakeholders a first working document on fragrance allergens, proposing measures for adequate consumer information and consumer protection, along with further scientific work. The proposed application period for consumer information measures, which are aimed to allow sensitised consumers to avoid the products that they cannot tolerate, was indeed two years after their adoption. During the discussions, Member States experts and industry explained the difficulty to meet the future obligations in such a period. The Commission is therefore currently considering the possibility to revise this application period.

Concerning the second question, work is being carried out to refine the Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) method, which should be subsequently validated by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre. The data obtained would be submitted to the Scientific Committee on Consumers Safety (SCCS) for an evaluation, whose conclusions would then be the basis for future regulatory measures. The aim is to define concentration limits for fragrance allergens, for different categories of cosmetics, so as to avoid the induction of sensitisation.

In relation to the third and fourth questions, it should be mentioned that the future rules will equally apply to products manufactured in the EU and imported into the EU. In addition, work has recently started in the framework of the International Cooperation on Cosmetic Regulation (ICCR) to compile an inventory of regulatory approaches across jurisdictions to address the risks posed by allergens in cosmetics.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007508/13
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(26 juin 2013)

Objet: Suivi du traitement des eaux résiduaires à Prague

La Commission européenne indique, dans une réponse écrite en date du 13 juin 2013 (E-004909/2013), qu'elle a l'intention de contacter les autorités tchèques au sujet de la situation concernant la station d'épuration des eaux urbaines résiduaires de Prague dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la directive sur le traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires.

La Commission pourrait-elle apporter des précisions quant aux modalités de son action? Quand et de quelle façon compte-t-elle contacter les autorités tchèques à ce sujet?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(13 août 2013)

Comme mentionné dans le 7e rapport sur la mise en œuvre de la directive relative au traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires ([1]), à Prague, 99,2 % de la charge polluante ont été traités, mais les résultats pour le traitement tertiaire (élimination de l'azote) n'étaient pas conformes.

La Commission confirme son intention de contacter les autorités tchèques au sujet de la situation concernant le traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires dans cette ville.

([1]) COM(2013)574.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007508/13
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of waste-water treatment in Prague

In its written answer (E-004909/2013) of 13 June 2013, the Commission said that it intended to contact the Czech authorities with regard to the situation in the Prague urban waste-water treatment plant in the context of the implementation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

What specific action is the Commission taking in this matter? When and how will it contact the Czech authorities?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

As mentioned in the 7th Report on the Implementation of the UWWTD ([1]), in Prague, 99.2% of the pollution load was treated, but results were not compliant for tertiary treatment (N removal).

The Commission confirms its intention to contact the Czech authorities as regards the situation of the treatment of urban waste water in this city.

([1]) COM(2013)574.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007509/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Inceneritore di Montale, provincia di Pistoia: ulteriori informazioni circa la possibile violazione delle norme a tutela della salute e dell'ambiente

Premesso che nella risposta all'interrogazione E-004101/2013 dell'11 giugno 2013, relativa alla possibile messa in discarica illegale di ceneri provenienti dall'inceneritore di Montale, la Commissione affermava di voler contattare le Autorità italiane competenti per ottenere maggiori informazioni anche in merito all'applicazione della Direttiva VIA da parte della Regione Toscana. Considerato inoltre che la stessa Commissione avrebbe verificato eventuali danni ambientali e conseguentemente avrebbe accertato le azioni di riparazione intraprese ai sensi della direttiva 2004/35/CE sulla responsabilità ambientale.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

— Quali informazioni ha ricevuto dalla Regione Toscana e quali misure intende adottare nei confronti della stessa?

— Quali danni ambientali dovuti all'inceneritore sono stati eventualmente accertati e quali azioni di riparazione sono state intraprese dalle Autorità locali?

— Un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(28 agosto 2013)

La Commissione ha chiesto allo Stato membro interessato ulteriori informazioni sui punti sollevati. Non appena le avrà ricevute e analizzate, risponderà all'onorevole deputato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007509/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Incinerator at Montale (Province of Pistoia): further information on the possible violation of health and environmental protection rules

In its answer to question E-004101/2013 of 11 June 2013 on the possible illegal landfilling of ash from the incinerator in Montale, the Commission stated that it intended to contact the competent Italian authorities in order to obtain information on matters including the application of the EIA Directive by the Tuscany Region. The Commission was also meant to inquire as to whether any environmental damage had been caused and hence to establish whether remedial action had been taken in accordance with Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability.

— Can the Commission say what information it has received from the Tuscany Region and what action it intends to take in its regard?

— Can it say what environmental damage, if any, has been discovered as a result of the incinerator operations and what remedial action has been taken by the local authorities?

— Can it provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

The Commission has asked the Member State concerned for further information on the points raised. Once it will have received and analysed this information, it will revert to the Honourable Member.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007510/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Tutela del patrimonio artistico in Siria

Il perdurare degli scontri tra le truppe fedeli ad Assad e gli insorti in Siria sta mettendo gravemente a rischio il patrimonio storico e artistico di codesto paese. Mentre il 97 % dei 10mila siti di interesse storicoartistico risulta esposto alle incursioni militari e paramilitari, il paese viene depredato delle propria vestigia. Tavolette cuneiformi, statue romane, monete bizantine alimentano un fiorente traffico sul mercato nero dove vengono scambiate con armi, al prezzo di 4200 dollari per un AK47 (il famigerato kalashnikov) o 4500 per una carabina M4. Lo scorso febbraio l'Unesco ha denunciato che tali traffici stanno sfigurando il Paese anche più delle operazioni militari in sé.

La Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza di tale mercato nero?

2. Non ritiene che solleverà la propria voce, affiancando quella dell'ONU, in occasione del vertice internazionale Ginevra2 sulla Siria?

3. Non ritiene di dover agire, anche attraverso la propria Alto Rappresentante per la Politica estera, per sollecitare la creazione di zone franche sotto tutela internazionale, intorno alle aree di tutela del patrimonio storicoartistico in cui possano trovare rifugio e protezione anche le popolazioni civili?

4. Non ritiene di poter far leva sulla tutela del suddetto patrimonio sia per sensibilizzare maggiormente l'opinione pubblica internazionale sul massacro in atto sia per spingere verso una tregua tra le fazioni armate in lotta?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza di quanto riferito dall'onorevole deputato e dei danni devastanti subiti dal patrimonio culturale siriano. L'UE ha deplorato energicamente questa situazione, da ultimo in occasione del Consiglio Affari esteri del 18 febbraio 2013 durante il quale ha ricordato le precedenti conclusioni del Consiglio e ha espresso sgomento «per il crescente deterioramento della situazione in Siria e per l'inaccettabile livello di violenza che continuano a causare sofferenze a milioni di cittadini siriani e che portano alla distruzione delle infrastrutture e del patrimonio culturale».

L'UE sarà rappresentata alla prevista conferenza di Ginevra sulla Siria (Ginevra II), sempre che abbia effettivamente luogo.

La creazione di una «zona sicura» richiede un'adeguata protezione, eventualmente attraverso un intervento militare in loco, previa autorizzazione del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite (CSNU). Si stanno valutando altri modi per garantire la sicurezza umanitaria, tra cui la proposta di una risoluzione del CSNU che inviti a non ostacolare l'erogazione di aiuti umanitari alle persone più bisognose e che esorti tutte le parti in conflitto a rispettare il diritto internazionale in materia di diritti umani e il diritto umanitario internazionale. L'UE ha appoggiato tutti gli appelli a cessare le ostilità e promuoverà tutte le misure atte a contribuire a una soluzione politica del conflitto, in particolare l'organizzazione della conferenza di Ginevra sulla Siria (Ginevra II) proposta da Stati Uniti, Russia e ONU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007510/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Protection of Syria's artistic heritage

The continuing clashes between President Bashar al-Assad's troops and the rebels in Syria are putting the country's historical and artistic heritage at serious risk. Ninety-seven per cent of the 10 000 sites of historical and artistic interest are exposed to the military and paramilitary strikes, with the result that the country is being stripped of its relics. Cuneiform tablets, Roman statues and Byzantine coins sustain a thriving black-market trade in which these items are exchanged for weapons: an AK-47 (the notorious Kalashnikov rifle) costs USD 4 200 and an M4 carbine, USD 4 500. In February 2013 Unesco claimed that this illegal trade was damaging the country even more than the military operations.

1. Is the Commission aware of this black market?

2. Does it not believe that it should speak out, alongside the UN, at the Geneva II international conference on Syria?

3. Does it not believe that it should take action, including through its High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to call for the creation of internationally protected free zones around the historical and artistic heritage conservation areas, in which civilian populations can also seek refuge and protection?

4. Does it not believe that it can use the protection of this heritage in order to raise public awareness worldwide of the massacre taking place and to press for a ceasefire between the opposing armed factions?

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

The Commission is well aware of the reports quoted in the Honourable Member's question and of the disastrous damage being inflicted on Syria's cultural heritage. The EU has strongly condemned this situation, most recently in the Foreign Affairs Council of 18 February 2013 when it recalled its previous conclusions and expressed its condemnation of 'the increasingly deteriorating situation in Syria and the unacceptable levels of violence, which continue to cause suffering to millions of Syrians and destruction of infrastructure and cultural heritage.'

The EU will be represented at the planned Geneva Conference on Syria (Geneva II), should the conference take place.

Establishing a 'safe zone' would require appropriate protection, possibly through a military intervention on the ground, for which the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) will need to give authorisation. Other means to ensure humanitarian safety are being considered. Among them is a proposal of a humanitarian UNSC resolution calling on unfettered humanitarian access to the neediest and for the observance of the international human rights and humanitarian law by all sides in the conflict. The EU has supported all calls for ceasefire and will promote all measures that will contribute to the successful political settlement of the conflict, notably through convening the Geneva Conference on Syria (Geneva II) as proposed by the US, Russia and the UN.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007511/13
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(26 juni 2013)

Betreft: Controle op subsidieverlening, met name in Egypte

De afgelopen maanden is veel geld toegezegd aan Egypte vanuit de EU, deels via de Commissie, deels via de Raad (de heer Van Rompuy). De Europese Rekenkamer heeft daarbij onlangs aangetekend dat het volstrekt onduidelijk is wat er met het gegeven geld gebeurt. Samen met collega Laurence Stassen stelde ik hierover reeds meerdere keren vragen. Hierbij aanvullende vragen inzake de algemene procedure inzake financiële steunverlening.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoeveel EU-ambtenaren in functie zijn met de specifieke taak van toezicht op (controle van) de correcte en efficiënte besteding van EU-subsidiegelden?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe deze functionarissen uitsplitst zijn naar nationaliteit/lidstaat?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoe de wervings- en selectieprocedure voor deze specifieke functionarissen verloopt?

4. Kan de Commissie aangeven hoeveel EU-controleurs op dit moment in Egypte actief zijn? Hoeveel daarvan zijn afkomstig uit Nederland?

5. Wat is de procedure van verslaglegging rondom de besteding van de fondsen/subsidies/leningen? Aan wie rapporteren deze controleurs? Wat gebeurt er als fraude wordt geconstateerd, of onregelmatigheden?

6. Wie controleren de werkzaamheden van deze controleurs?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(3 september 2013)

Het EU-personeel dat zich bezighoudt met de samenwerking in Egypte, is met name verantwoordelijk voor het algemene beheer van de projectcyclus en zij passen de goedgekeurde financiële circuits van de EU strikt toe. De controlesectie voor financiële contracten in de delegatie van de EU in Egypte telt 16 posten voor Europees en niet-Europees personeel, en daarbij is een specifieke taakbeheerder financiële controle.

De ambtenaren die voor de EU in de delegatie in Caïro werkzaam zijn, komen uit diverse lidstaten.

EU-ambtenaren worden aangeworven via vergelijkende onderzoeken die door EPSO ([1]) worden georganiseerd. Zoals wordt gespecificeerd in artikel 27 van het Statuut, dient de aanwerving erop gericht te zijn de medewerking te verzekeren van ambtenaren die uit een oogpunt van bekwaamheid, prestatievermogen en onkreukbaarheid aan de hoogste eisen voldoen en die uit de onderdanen van de lidstaten van de Unie zijn aangeworven met inachtneming van een zo breed mogelijke aardrijkskundige spreiding.

De EU maakt gebruik van een risicogebaseerde auditstrategie die wordt vertaald in een omvattende en formeel goedgekeurde methode voor auditplanning.

Audits worden niet uitgevoerd door personeel van de Commissie, maar door professionele externe auditbedrijven. De controleurs brengen rechtstreeks verslag uit bij de Commissie op basis van een auditverslagmodel dat bij de taakomschrijving is gevoegd.

Indien er fraude en/of onregelmatigheden worden vastgesteld, of er daarvan een vermoeden bestaat, moeten de controleurs de Commissie daarvan onmiddellijk op de hoogte stellen. De Commissie stelt dan overeenkomstig haar interne voorschriften het Europees Bureau voor fraudebestrijding (OLAF) daarvan in kennis.

Op de werkzaamheden van de externe controleurs wordt toezicht uitgeoefend door de taakbeheerder financiële controle in de EU-delegatie. Deze taakbeheerders krijgen hiervoor een speciale opleiding. Zij beschikken bovendien over specifieke richtsnoeren via internet voor taakbeheer inzake audits en worden technisch bijgestaan door de audit- en controle-eenheid van directoraat-generaal EuropeAid Ontwikkeling en Samenwerking (DEVCO).

([1]) Europees Bureau voor Personeelsselectie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007511/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Monitoring of the use of subsidies, particularly in Egypt

In recent months, much money has been pledged for Egypt from the EU, partly via the Commission, partly via the Council (Mr Van Rompuy). The Court of Auditors of the EU recently noted that it was completely unclear what was being done with the funding provided. Together with my colleague Laurence Stassen, I have already asked several questions about this. I now wish to put some supplementary questions about the general procedure relating to the provision of financial support.

1. Can the Commission indicate how many EU officials are in post with the specific task of monitoring/auditing the correct and efficient use of EU subsidies?

2. Can the Commission give a breakdown of these officials by nationality/Member State?

3. Can the Commission describe the recruitment and selection procedure for these officials?

4. Can the Commission indicate how many EU auditors are currently working in Egypt? How many of them come from the Netherlands?

5. What is the procedure for reporting on the use made of the funds/subsidies/loans? To whom do these auditors report? What happens if fraud or irregularities are found to have occurred?

6. Who monitors the work of these auditors?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

The EU staff dealing with the cooperation in Egypt is notably responsible for the overall project cycle management and they strictly apply the approved EU financial circuits. The 'Finance Contracts Audit section' in the EU Delegation in Egypt includes 16 posts for European and non-European staff, of which, a dedicated audit task manager.

Officials working for the EU in the delegation in Cairo come from various Member States.

EU officials are appointed through open competitions organised by EPSO ([1]). As specified in Article 27 of the Staff Regulations, these competitions aim at securing the services of officials with the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity, recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States.

The EU uses a risk-based audit strategy which is reflected in a comprehensive and formally adopted audit planning methodology.

Audits are not carried out by Commission staff but by professional external audit firms. The auditors report directly to the Commission on the basis of an audit report template provided with the terms of reference.

If fraud and/or irregularities are discovered or suspected, the auditors must inform the Commission immediately. The Commission will then inform the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in accordance with its its internal rules.

The work of the external auditors is monitored by the Audit Task Manager in the EU Delegation. For this purpose, audit task managers receive targeted training. Moreover, specific web based guidance for audit task management is at their disposal as well as the technical support of the EuropeAid Development and Cooperation Directorate General (DEVCO) audit and control unit.

([1]) European Personnel Selection Office.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007512/13
aan de Raad
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(26 juni 2013)

Betreft: Raad wil nieuw hoofdstuk openen in onderhandelingen Turkije

Op 25 juni 2013 deelt de Raad het volgende mede: „The Council agrees to open Chapter 22 and underscores that the Inter-Governmental Conference with Turkey will take place after the presentation of the Commission's annual progress report and following a discussion of the GAC which will confirm the common position of the Council for the opening of Chapter 22 and determine the date for the accession conference ([1])."

1. Op basis waarvan is de Raad thans van mening dat een nieuw hoofdstuk in de onderhandelingen geopend zou moeten worden — na lange tijd van moeizaam onderhandelen t.g.v. de Turkse onwil om zich werkelijk aan de EU aan te passen, na het stilleggen van de onderhandelingen door Turkije ten tijde van het Cypriotische EU-voorzitterschap én na het repressieve optreden van de regering-Erdoğan resp. het excessieve politiegeweld bij de recente betogingen in Turkije? Impliceert de Raad met het openen van een nieuw hoofdstuk dat hij de vele misstanden in Turkije voor lief neemt? Zo ja, hoe is dat mogelijk? Zo neen, welke positieve verwachtingen heeft de Raad dan van het openen van een nieuw hoofdstuk?

2. Waarom „beloont" de Raad Turkije voor 's lands verwerpelijke houding tegenover de EU én tegenover de Turkse bevolking? Deelt de Raad de mening dat dit respectloos is tegenover de slachtoffers en gewonden die t.g.v. het excessieve politiegeweld zijn gevallen?

3. Premier Erdoğan slaat alle kritiek n.a.v. het excessieve politiegeweld, dat in opdracht van hem plaatsvindt, volledig in de wind; ook de kritiek vanuit de EU neemt hij niet serieus ([2]). Deelt de Raad de mening dat dit enerzijds getuigt van misplaatste arrogantie en anderzijds aangeeft dat Turkije nooit tot de EU kan toetreden? Deelt de Raad dan ook de conclusie dat Turkije niet Europees is, niet Europees wil zijn en dus ook in geen 100 000 jaar Europees zal worden? Zo ja, is de Raad er ertoe bereid géén nieuw hoofdstuk in de onderhandelingen te openen, maar ervoor te zorgen dat deze onderhandelingen definitief en volledig worden stopgezet? Zo neen, op basis waarvan impliceert de Raad dat Turkije dan wél zal „europeaniseren"?

Antwoord
(16 september 2013)

In zijn conclusies van 11 december 2012 heeft de Raad herhaald dat een samenhangende uitvoering van de hernieuwde consensus inzake de uitbreiding, die is gebaseerd op een consolidatie van de verbintenissen, het hanteren van eerlijke en consistente voorwaarden en betere communicatie, alsmede het vermogen van de EU om nieuwe leden op te nemen, de grondslag blijft vormen van het optreden van de Unie in alle fasen van het uitbreidingsproces, waarbij elk land op zijn eigen merites wordt beoordeeld.

Het tempo van de onderhandelingen blijft derhalve met name afhangen van de vorderingen van Turkije bij het bereiken van de ijkpunten voor opening en sluiting van de onderhandelingen en bij het voldoen aan de eisen van de Associatieraad en het onderhandelingskader, waaronder de uitvoering van het toetredingspartnerschap.

Zoals het geachte Parlementslid opmerkt, heeft de Raad op 25 juni 2013 besloten Hoofdstuk 22 (Regionaal beleid en coördinatie van structurele middelen) te openen, waarbij is benadrukt dat de intergouvernementele conferentie met Turkije zal plaatsvinden nadat de Commissie haar jaarlijkse voortgangsverslag zal hebben gepresenteerd en de Raad (Algemene Zaken) een debat zal hebben gevoerd ter bevestiging van het gemeenschappelijk standpunt van de Raad voor de opening van het Hoofdstuk en ter vaststelling van de datum voor de Toetredingsconferentie.

Het algemene standpunt van de EU met betrekking tot de eerbiediging en de onderschrijving van de grondbeginselen van democratie en mensenrechten, met name de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de mediavrijheid, is zeer duidelijk. Als kandidaat-lidstaat moet Turkije voldoen aan de politieke criteria van Kopenhagen, waaronder de stabiliteit van de instellingen die de rechtsstaat en de mensenrechten waarborgen. In de hierboven bedoelde conclusies van de Raad van 11december 2012 staan deze en andere belangrijke gebieden waarop verdere inspanningen van Turkije worden verwacht, vermeld.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/137597.pdf
([2]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22817460.

De verklaringen van de hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor buitenlandse zaken en veiligheidsbeleid en van Commissielid Stefan Füle, die zijn afgelegd naar aanleiding van wat er recentelijk in Turkije is gebeurd rond het Gezipark, zijn in dit verband relevant.

Nauw toezicht op en evaluatie van de ter plaatse in Turkije geboekte vooruitgang zal ook in de toekomst plaatsvinden overeenkomstig het onderhandelingskader en het toetredingspartnerschap. Deze vorderingen zullen richting geven aan het onderhandelingsproces.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007512/13
to the Council
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Council's intention to open a new chapter in the negotiations with Turkey

On 25 June 2013, the Council made the following statement: 'The Council agrees to open Chapter 22 and underscores that the Inter-Governmental Conference with Turkey will take place after the presentation of the Commission's annual progress report and following a discussion of the GAC which will confirm the common position of the Council for the opening of Chapter 22 and determine the date for the accession conference.' ([1])

1. On what basis does the Council now consider that a new chapter should be opened in the negotiations, after a long period of difficult negotiations due to Turkey's unwillingness to genuinely bring itself into line with the EU, after Turkey put the negotiations on ice during Cyprus's Presidency of the EU and after the repressive action by the Erdoğan government and the excessive police violence during the recent demonstrations in Turkey? In opening a new chapter, does the Council mean to imply that it accepts the numerous abuses in Turkey? If so, how is that possible? If not, what positive expectations does the Council have of the opening of a new chapter?

2. Why is the Council 'rewarding' Turkey for the country's reprehensible attitude towards the EU and towards its own people? Does the Council agree that this displays a lack of respect towards those killed or injured as a result of the excessive police violence?

3. Prime Minister Erdoğan brushes aside all criticisms of the excessive police violence which is taking place on his instructions; he also does not take the EU's criticisms seriously ([2]). Does the Council agree that this on the one hand displays misplaced arrogance and on the other hand indicates that Turkey can never accede to the EU? Does the Council therefore agree with the conclusion that Turkey is not European, does not wish to be European and therefore will not become European even within the next 100 000 years? If so, will the Council refrain from opening a new chapter in the negotiations and instead ensure that these negotiations are definitively and completely terminated? If not, on what basis does the Council imply that Turkey will become 'Europeanised'?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

In its conclusions of 11 December 2012, the Council reaffirmed that coherent implementation of the renewed consensus on enlargement, which is based on consolidation of commitments, fair and rigorous conditionality, better communication and the EU's capacity to integrate new members, continues to form the basis for EU action at all stages of the enlargement process, with each candidate country being assessed on its own merits.

The pace of negotiations therefore continues to depend in particular on Turkey's progress in addressing opening and closing benchmarks, as well as the requirements of the Association Council and the Negotiating Framework, including the implementation of the Accession Partnership.

As stated by the Honourable Member, the Council on 25 June 2013 agreed to open Chapter 22 — Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments — underscoring the fact that the Inter-Governmental Conference with Turkey would take place after the presentation of the Commission's annual progress report and following a discussion by the Council (General Affairs), which would confirm the common position of the Council for the opening of the Chapter and determine the date for the Accession Conference.

The general position of the EU regarding the respect for and commitment to the basic principles of democracy and human rights, including freedom of expression and freedom of the media, is very clear. As a candidate country, Turkey has to meet the Copenhagen political criteria, including the stability of institutions guaranteeing the rule of law and human rights. These, and other important areas where further efforts are expected by Turkey, are set out in the abovementioned Council conclusions of 11 December 2012.

The statements by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, and by Commissioner Stefan Füle, issued in response to the recent events in Turkey linked to Gezi Park, are relevant in this regard.

Close monitoring and evaluation of Turkey's progress on the ground will continue in accordance with the Negotiating Framework and the Accession Partnership. This progress will guide progress in the negotiating process.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/137597.pdf
([2]) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22817460

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007514/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/2/UE — inclusão de miclobutanil

A Diretiva 2011/2/UE da Comissão, de 7 de janeiro de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir o miclobutanil enquanto substância ativa e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007515/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/4/UE — inclusão de cicloxidime

A Diretiva 2011/4/UE da Comissão, de 20 de janeiro de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa cicloxidime e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007516/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/5/UE — inclusão de himexazol

A Diretiva 2011/5/UE da Comissão, de 20 de janeiro de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa himexazol e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007517/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/9/UE — inclusão de dodina

A Diretiva 2011/9/UE da Comissão, de 1 de fevereiro de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a substância ativa dodina e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007518/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/19/UE — inclusão de tau-fluvalinato

A Diretiva 2011/19/UE da Comissão, de 2 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa tau-fluvalinato e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007519/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/20/UE — inclusão de fenoxicarbe

A Diretiva 2011/20/UE da Comissão, de 2 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa fenoxicarbe e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007520/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/21/UE — inclusão de cletodime

A Diretiva 2011/21/UE da Comissão, de 2 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa cletodime e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007521/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/25/UE -- inclusão de bupirimato

A Diretiva 2011/25/UE da Comissão, de 3 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a substância ativa bupirimato e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007522/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/26/UE — inclusão de dietofencarbe

A Diretiva 2011/26/UE da Comissão, de 3 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a substância ativa dietofencarbe e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007524/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/29/UE — inclusão de etridiazol

A Diretiva 2011/29/UE da Comissão, de 7 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a substância ativa etridiazol e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007525/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/30/UE — inclusão de óxido de fenebutaestanho

A Diretiva 2011/30/UE da Comissão, de 7 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa óxido de fenebutaestanho e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007526/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/33/UE — inclusão de 1-decanol

A Diretiva 2011/33/UE da Comissão, de 8 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a substância ativa 1-decanol e alterou a Decisão 2008/941/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007527/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/34/UE — inclusão de flurocloridona

A Diretiva 2011/34/UE da Comissão, de 8 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa flurocloridona e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007528/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/39/UE — inclusão de fenazaquina

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/39/UE da Comissão, de 11 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a fenazaquina como substância ativa e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007529/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/40/UE — inclusão de sintofena

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/40/UE da Comissão, de 11 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a sintofena como substância ativa e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007530/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/41/UE — inclusão de ditianão

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/41/UE da Comissão, de 11 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa ditianão e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007531/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/42/UE — inclusão de flutriafol

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/42/UE da Comissão, de 11 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir o flutriafol como substância ativa e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007532/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/43/UE — inclusão de calda sulfo-cálcica

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/43/UE da Comissão, de 13 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho a fim de incluir a calda sulfo-cálcica como substância ativa e alterou a Decisão 2008/941/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007545/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/32/UE — inclusão de isoxabena

A Diretiva 2011/32/UE da Comissão, de 8 de março de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa isoxabena e alterou a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007598/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/44/UE — azadiractina

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/44/UE da Comissão, de 13 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho, a fim de incluir a azadiractina como substância ativa, e a Decisão 2008/941/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007599/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/45/UE — diclofope

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/45/UE da Comissão, de 13 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho, a fim de incluir o diclofope como substância ativa, e a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007600/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/46/UE — hexitiazox

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/46/UE da Comissão, de 14 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho, a fim de incluir o hexitiazox como substância ativa, e a Decisão 2008/934/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007601/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva de Execução 2011/47/UE — sulfato de alumínio

A Diretiva de Execução 2011/47/UE da Comissão, de 15 de abril de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 91/414/CEE do Conselho, a fim de incluir o sulfato de alumínio como substância ativa, e a Decisão 2008/941/CE da Comissão.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007605/13
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 de junho de 2013)

Assunto: Diretiva 2011/69/UE — imidaclopride

A Diretiva 2011/69/UE da Comissão, de 1 de julho de 2011, alterou a Diretiva 98/8/CE do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho com o objetivo de incluir a substância ativa imidaclopride no anexo I da mesma.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

— Que Estados-Membros ainda não transpuseram esta diretiva?

— Que avaliação faz das alterações introduzidas pela diretiva?

Resposta conjunta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(6 de agosto de 2013)

A Bélgica, a Dinamarca, a Croácia, França, Chipre, a Finlândia e a Suécia ainda não notificaram a Comissão da transposição da Diretiva 2011/2/UE ([1]).

A Bélgica, a Croácia, França, os Países Baixos, a Finlândia e a Suécia ainda não notificaram a Comissão da transposição da Diretiva 2011/4/UE ([2]).

A Dinamarca, a Croácia, França, os Países Baixos, a Finlândia e a Suécia ainda não notificaram a Comissão da transposição das Diretivas 2011/5/UE ([3]).e 2011/9/UE ([4])

A Dinamarca, a Croácia, França, os Países Baixos, a Roménia, a Finlândia e a Suécia ainda não notificaram a Comissão da transposição das Diretivas 2011/19/UE ([5]), 2011/20/UE ([6]), 2011/21/UE, ([7]) 2011/25/UE ([8]), 2011/26/UE ([9]), 2011/29/UE ([10]), 2011/30/UE ([11]), 2011/32/UE ([12]), 2011/33/UE ([13]) e 2011/34/UE ([14]).

A Bélgica, a Dinamarca, a Croácia, França, os Países Baixos, a Roménia, a Finlândia e a Suécia ainda não notificaram a Comissão da transposição das Diretivas 2011/39/UE ([15]), 2011/40/UE ([16]), 2011/41/UE ([17]), 2011/42/UE ([18]), 2011/43/UE ([19]), 2011/44/UE ([20]), 2011/45/UE ([21]), 2011/46/UE ([22]), 2011/47/UE ([23]) e 2011/69/UE ([24]).

Os Estados-Membros não enumerados em cada um dos casos supramencionados já notificaram a transposição das diretivas e a avaliação da Comissão confirma essas declarações. No entanto, o facto de haver uma referência às normas nacionais não implica necessariamente que estas medidas sejam consideradas completas e conformes.

Cada uma das diretivas supramencionadas diz respeito à aprovação na UE da substância ativa em causa, mediante a sua inclusão no anexo I da Diretiva 91/414/CEE ([25]).

As referências a todas as medidas de transposição nacional notificadas relativamente a todas as diretivas da UE são publicadas na base de dados EUR-Lex.

([1]) JO L 5 de 8.1.2011, p. 7.
([2]) JO L 18 de 21.1.2011, p. 30.
([3]) JO L 18 de 21.1.2011, p. 34.
([4]) JO L 28 de 2.2.2011, p. 36.
([5]) JO L 58 de 3.3.2011, p. 41.
([6]) JO L 58 de 3.3.2011, p. 45.
([7]) JO L 58 de 3.3.2011, p. 49.
([8]) JO L 59 de 4.3.2011, p. 32.
([9]) JO L 59 de 4.3.2011, p. 37.
([10]) JO L 61 de 8.3.2011, p. 9.
([11]) JO L 61 de 8.3.2011, p. 14.
([12]) JO L 62 de 9.3.2011, p. 19.
([13]) JO L 62 de 9.3.2011, p. 23.
([14]) JO L 62 de 9.3.2011, p. 27.
([15]) JO L 97 de 12.4.2011, p. 30.
([16]) JO L 97 de 12.4.2011, p. 34.
([17]) JO L 97 de 12.4.2011, p. 38.
([18]) JO L 97 de 12.4.2011, p. 42.
([19]) JO L 100 de 14.4.2011, p. 39.
([20]) JO L 100 de 14.4.2011, p. 43.
([21]) JO L 100 de 14.4.2011, p. 47.
([22]) JO L 101 de 15.4.2011, p. 20.
([23]) JO L 102 de 16.4.2011, p. 24.
([24]) JO L 175 de 2.7.2011, p. 24.
([25]) JO L 230 de 19.8.1991, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007514/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/2/EU — inclusion of myclobutanil

Commission Directive 2011/2/EU of 7 January 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance myclobutanil and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007515/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/4/EU — inclusion of cycloxydim

Commission Directive 2011/4/EU of 20 January 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance cycloxydim and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007516/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/5/EU — inclusion of hymexazol

Commission Directive 2011/5/EU of 20 January 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance hymexazol and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007517/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/9/EU — inclusion of dodine

Commission Directive 2011/9/EU of 1 February 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance dodine and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007518/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/19/EU — inclusion of tau-fluvalinate

Commission Directive 2011/19/EU of 2 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance tau-fluvalinate and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007519/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/20/EU — inclusion of fenoxycarb

Commission Directive 2011/20/EU of 2 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance fenoxycarb and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007520/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/21/EU — inclusion of clethodim

Commission Directive 2011/21/EU of 2 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance clethodim and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007521/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/25/EU — inclusion of bupirimate

Commission Directive 2011/25/EU of 3 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substances bupirimate and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007522/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/26/EU — inclusion of diethofencarb

Commission Directive 2011/26/EU of 3 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance diethofencarb and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007524/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/29/EU — inclusion of etridiazole

Commission Directive 2011/29/EU of 7 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance etridiazole and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its is view of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007525/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/30/EU — inclusion of fenbutatin oxide

Commission Directive 2011/30/EU of 7 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance fenbutatin oxide and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007526/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/33/EU — inclusion of 1-decanol

Commission Directive 2011/33/EU of 8 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance 1-decanol and amended Decision 2008/941/EC.

Can the Commission state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007527/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/34/EU — inclusion of flurochloridone

Commission Directive 2011/34/EU of 8 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance flurochloridone and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its is view of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007528/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/39/EU — inclusion of fenazaquin

Commission implementing Directive 2011/39/EU of 11 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include fenazaquin as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007529/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/40/EU — inclusion of sintofen

Commission implementing Directive 2011/40/EU of 11 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include sintofen as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007530/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/41/EU — inclusion of dithianon

Commission implementing Directive 2011/41/EU of 11 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance dithianon and amended Commission Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007531/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/42/EU — inclusion of flutriafol

Commission implementing Directive 2011/42/EU of 11 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include flutriafol as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007532/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/43/EU — inclusion of lime sulphur

Commission implementing Directive 2011/43/EU of 13 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include lime sulphur as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/941/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007545/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/32/EU — inclusion of isoxaben

Commission Directive 2011/32/EU of 8 March 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include the active substance isoxaben and amended Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007598/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/44/EU — azadirachtin

Commission implementing Directive 2011/44/EU of 13 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include azadirachtin as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/941/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007599/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/45/EU — diclofop

Commission implementing Directive 2011/45/EU of 13 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include diclofop as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its is view of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007600/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/46/EU — hexythiazox

Commission implementing Directive 2011/46/EU of 14 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include hexythiazox as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/934/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007601/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Implementing Directive 2011/47/EU — aluminium sulphate

Commission implementing Directive 2011/47/EU of 15 April 2011 amended Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include aluminium sulphate as an active substance and amended Commission Decision 2008/941/EC.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Question for written answer E-007605/13
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Directive 2011/69/EU — imidacloprid

Commission Directive 2011/69/EU of 1 July 2011 amended Directive 98/8/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council to include the active substance imidacloprid in its Annex I.

Can the Commission therefore state:

— Which Member States have not yet transposed this directive?

— What its view is of the amendments introduced by the directive?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

Belgium, Denmark, Croatia, France, Cyprus, Finland and Sweden have not notified to the Commission the transposition of Directive 2011/2/EU ([1]).

Belgium, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden have not notified to the Commission the transposition of Directive 2011/4/EU ([2]).

Denmark, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden have not notified to the Commission the transposition of Directives 2011/5/EU ([3]) and 2011/9/EU ([4]).

Denmark, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Romania, Finland and Sweden have not notified to the Commission the transposition of Directives 2011/19/EU ([5]), 2011/20/EU ([6]), 2011/21/EU, ([7]) 2011/25/EU ([8]), 2011/26/EU ([9]), 2011/29/EU ([10]), 2011/30/EU ([11]), 2011/32/EU ([12]), 2011/33/EU ([13]) and 2011/34/EU ([14]).

Belgium, Denmark, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Romania, Finland and Sweden have not notified to the Commission the transposition of Directives 2011/39/EU ([15]), 2011/40/EU ([16]), 2011/41/EU ([17]), 2011/42/EU ([18]), 2011/43/EU ([19]), 2011/44/EU ([20]), 2011/45/EU ([21]), 2011/46/EU ([22]), 2011/47/EU ([23]) and 2011/69/EU ([24]).

The Member States not listed in each of the cases mentioned above have notified the transposition of the directives and the Commission's assessment confirms these declarations. However, the fact that there is a reference to national rules does not necessarily mean that these measures are either comprehensive or in conformity.

Each of the abovementioned Directives concerns the EU approval of the relevant active substance, by including it in Annex I to Directive 91/414/EEC ([25]).

References to all communicated national transposition measures of all EU Directives are published in the Eur-Lex database.

([1]) OJ L 5, 8.1.2011, p. 7.
([2]) OJ L 18, 21.1.2011, p. 30.
([3]) OJ L 18, 21.1.2011, p. 34.
([4]) OJ L 28, 2.2.2011, p. 36.
([5]) OJ L 58, 3.3.2011, p. 41.
([6]) OJ L 58, 3.3.2011, p. 45.
([7]) OJ L 58, 3.3.2011, p. 49.
([8]) OJ L 59, 4.3.2011, p. 32.
([9]) OJ L 59, 4.3.2011, p. 37.
([10]) OJ L 61, 8.3.2011, p. 9.
([11]) OJ L 61, 8.3.2011, p. 14.
([12]) OJ L 62, 9.3.2011, p. 19.
([13]) OJ L 62, 9.3.2011, p. 23.
([14]) OJ L 62, 9.3.2011, p. 27.
([15]) OJ L 97, 12.4.2011, p. 30.
([16]) OJ L 97, 12.4.2011, p. 34.
([17]) OJ L 97, 12.4.2011, p. 38.
([18]) OJ L 97, 12.4.2011, p. 42.
([19]) OJ L 100, 14.4.2011, p. 39.
([20]) OJ L 100, 14.4.2011, p. 43.
([21]) OJ L 100, 14.4.2011, p. 47.
([22]) OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 20.
([23]) OJ L 102, 16.4.2011, p. 24.
([24]) OJ L 175, 2.7.2011, p. 24.
([25]) OJ L 230, 19.8.1991, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007523/13
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: The need for an EU 'conflict mineral' law akin to the US Dodd-Frank Act

As the Commission is aware, the USA introduced legislation in 2010 called the Dodd-Frank Act, whose Section 1502 deals with US companies having to provide evidence regarding traceability and provenance of minerals from designated conflict zones, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and its neighbours, in order to prove that the financial payments made are not funding armed militias who may be carrying out atrocities or other crimes against humanity. Section 1504 of the same Act deals with transparency of payments for the extractive industries, obliging US companies to report payments made by them to third-country governments in order to prevent allegations of corruption or malfeasance in public life.

The EU has already introduced legislation to similar Section 1504, and has, moreover, launched a consultation with relevant stakeholders on the need to legislate for something akin to Section 1502 regarding traceability and provenance of the supply chain of minerals such as gold, tin, tantalum and tungsten, in line with OECD guidelines on good conduct in this 'conflict mineral' area. The Commission was responsible for the acclaimed Kimberley process in 2003, which was successful in reducing trade in West African so-called 'blood diamonds', and can draw on this experience to extend this principle to other minerals.

The authorities in the DRC would appear to welcome EU legislation in this area, but some of the multinational mining houses have concerns about the regulatory burden involved, and there is always the danger that these types of measure will simply divert supplies of these essential elements to alternative jurisdictions such as, in the case of gold to Burundi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and on to India, thus bypassing the regulations.

Can the Commission give any indication regarding its thinking in this area?

Does the Commission believe that the US Dodd-Frank Act has been useful in reducing funding to irregular armed groups in conflict areas such as the DRC? What impact assessment is it undertaking with regard to introducing similar measures in the EU?

Does the Commission plan to promote the idea that these measures, to be effective, must be global and adopted by all the G8 or G20 countries to avoid creating opportunities for bypassing the rules?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

In June 2013, the G8 leaders expressed its commitment to increase transparency in extractives and recalled that minerals should be sourced legitimately — not plundered from conflict zones. The Commission fully supports this commitment and is willing to promote the responsible sourcing agenda with other mineral producing and consuming countries.

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the roadmap entitled 'A comprehensive EU supply chain initiative for responsible sourcing of minerals originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas' ([1]). This document registers preliminary indications about the Commission's thinking which will be considered in the forthcoming impact assessment report the Commission is preparing for the abovementioned initiative.

In this context, the results of the public consultation, which closed on 26 June 2013, will be instrumental in shaping the Commission's position, which will include an assessment of the impact of the U.S. Dodd-Frank Act. The analysis of these results is currently underway.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/2013_trade_019_conflict_minerals_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007533/13
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Revisión por parte de la Comisión de la legislación hipotecaria española

Según la información aparecida en distintos medios de comunicación, la Comisión Europea habría remitido recientemente una carta al Gobierno español mostrando su preocupación ante la aprobación del Decreto-Ley 6/2013, de 9 de abril, de medidas para asegurar el cumplimiento de la Función Social de la Vivienda en Andalucía. Siempre según lo publicado por la prensa, la misiva se centraría en los efectos potenciales sobre la seguridad jurídica y la estabilidad financiera.

De ser ciertas estas informaciones, la preocupación de la Comisión Europea por el mencionado Decreto-Ley contrastaría claramente con el silencio y la pasividad que ha mantenido respecto de la legislación y prácticas en el mercado financiero español. La sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea que, el pasado 14 de marzo, en el asunto C-415/11 declaró la normativa española no conforme con el derecho comunitario se adoptó a instancia de un recurso prejudicial.

Teniendo en cuenta las recomendaciones sobre el mercado hipotecario y la protección de los deudores hipotecarios que tanto el Fondo Monetario Internacional ([1]) como el Banco Central Europeo ([2]) han hecho recientemente, ¿ha examinado o va a examinar la Comisión el mercado hipotecario español, a fin de que se adopten iniciativas que, evitando el sobreendeudamiento personal y asegurando el cumplimiento de la función social de la vivienda, contribuyan a la estabilidad financiera?

¿Considera la Comisión que puede conseguirse la estabilidad financiera a costa de la estabilidad social?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión ha examinado ampliamente la legislación y las prácticas del mercado financiero español, en particular en el contexto del programa sobre el sector financiero español que comenzó en julio de 2012. La Comisión es consciente de que España ha modificado su legislación sobre los procedimientos de ejecución hipotecaria, entre otras cosas para ajustarse a la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea en el asunto C-415/11.

La Comisión comparte la opinión de que redundaría en beneficio de España llevar a cabo una revisión más general de su marco de insolvencia tanto para las familias como para las empresas. Cualquier revisión de este tipo, así como cualquier medida intermedia de carácter más específico deberán buscar el equilibrio adecuado entre la preocupación por las dificultades sociales de las familias más vulnerables y la necesidad de preservar la estabilidad financiera en España, que generará mejores condiciones de financiación, crecimiento y empleo.

([1]) IMF 2013 Article IV Consultation with Spain — Concluding Statement of the Mission, 18 de junio de 2013.
([2]) Dictamen del Banco Central Europeo de 22 de mayo de 2013 sobre protección de los deudores hipotecarios.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007533/13
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Review by the Commission of Spanish mortgage legislation

According to various media sources, the Commission recently sent a letter to the Spanish Government expressing its concern at the adoption of Decree Law No 6/2013 of 9 April 2013 on measures to ensure fulfilment of the social role of housing in Andalucía. The press reports also claim that the letter focuses on the potential impact on legal certainty and financial stability.

If this information is correct, the Commission's concern at the aforementioned Decree Law would contrast sharply with the fact it has said and done nothing with respect to legislation and practices in the Spanish financial market. The judgment adopted by the Court of Justice of the European Union on 14 March 2013 in the Case C-415/11, following a reference for a preliminary ruling, found that Spanish law did not conform to Community law.

Bearing in mind the recommendations recently made both by the International Monetary Fund ([1]) and by the European Central Bank ([2]) on the mortgage market and protection of mortgage debtors, has the Commission assessed, or will it assess, the Spanish mortgage market with a view to adopting initiatives that contribute to financial stability by preventing personal over-indebtedness and ensuring that housing fulfils a social role?

Does the Commission feel that financial stability can be achieved at the cost of social stability?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

The Commission has extensively dealt with legislation and practices in the Spanish financial market, in particular in the context of the Spanish financial-sector programme, which started in July 2012. The Commission is aware that Spain has amended its legislation on mortgage enforcement proceedings *inter alia* to bring it in conformity with the ruling of the European Court of Justice in Case C-415/11.

The Commission shares the view that Spain would benefit from a more comprehensive review of its insolvency framework for households and for enterprises. Any such review and any intermediate measures with a more targeted focus should properly balance the concerns for the social hardship of most vulnerable households with those for preserving financial stability in Spain, which is conducive for better financing conditions, growth and jobs.

([1]) IMF 2013 — Article IV Consultation with Spain — Concluding Statement of the Mission, 18 June 2013.
([2]) Opinion of the European Central Bank of 22 May 2013 on the protection of mortgage debtors.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007534/13
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Aplicación en España del Impuesto Especial sobre Determinados Medios de Transporte (IEDMT)

La Ley española de Impuestos Especiales (Ley 38/1992), que regula el Impuesto Especial sobre Determinados Medios de Transporte (IEDMT), grava con este impuesto las embarcaciones de más de 15 metros de otros Estados de la UE destinadas al arrendamiento (chárter náutico) y que operan en aguas jurisdiccionales españolas, aunque ya hayan cumplido todos los requisitos de abanderamiento y matriculación en sus respectivos Estados.

En la respuesta a la pregunta E-003314/2013, la Comisión remitía a su vez a la respuesta con fecha 29 de abril que a su vez responde a la pregunta E-011079/2012. En la respuesta la Comisión cita el procedimiento de infracción 2010/2104 (Fiscalidad aplicable en España a un medio de transporte alquilado en un Estado miembro distinto de España).

Vista la respuesta de las autoridades españoles al dictamen motivado enviado por la Comisión, ¿podría aclarar la Comisión qué plazos hay fijados actualmente en este asunto para garantizar que la legislación nacional se ajuste al Derecho de la UE, con arreglo a la interpretación del Tribunal de Justicia de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de julio de 2013)

Las conversaciones con las autoridades españolas sobre este tema siguen en curso. En cualquier caso, la Comisión considera probable que, a la vista de la actitud positiva de dichas autoridades, se alcance en breve una solución que garantice la compatibilidad de las normas españolas con el Derecho de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007534/13
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Application in Spain of the Special Tax on Certain Means of Transport (IEDMT)

Under the Spanish Special Taxes Act (Act 38/1992), which covers the Special Tax on Certain Means of Transport (IEDMT), that tax is applicable to vessels over 15 metres in length from other Member States intended for leasing (boat charters) in Spanish territorial waters, even when all the flagging and registration requirements have been fulfilled in the respective home states.

In its answer to Question E-003314/2013, the Commission referred back, on 29 April, to its answer relating in turn to Question E-011079/2012. In that answer, the Commission made reference to infringement procedure 2010/2104 (taxation in Spain of means of transport leased in Member States other than Spain).

In view of the response by the Spanish authorities to the Commission's reasoned opinion, can the Commission state what the time limits now are for bringing Spanish law into line with EC law, in accordance with the interpretation of the EU Court of Justice, in this matter?

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

Discussions with the Spanish authorities on this issue are still ongoing. In any event the Commission, in view of the positive attitude of the Spanish authorities, thinks it likely that a solution ensuring compatibility of the Spanish rules with EC law will be reached in the short term.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007535/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Plan de la Cuenca del Río Ebro

Según declaraciones del Gobierno del Reino de España referentes a la cuenca del río Ebro, «Los cálculos de la Comisión para la Sostenibilidad de les Terres del Ebre —formada, entre otros, por la Generalitat de Catalunya, organizaciones territoriales como Ayuntamientos o Consells Comarcals, grupos ecologistas o la Cuenca Hidrográfica de Ebro— están fuera de toda lógica», en referencia a la posibilidad de modificar la propuesta presentada por el Gobierno español que consta en el Plan Hidrográfico del Ebro. Según el mismo Gobierno, no piensa modificar el caudal ecológico que consta en el Plan Hidrológico del Ebro.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de dicho plan de cuenca presentado por el Gobierno español?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que dicho plan de cuenca presentado por el Gobierno español se sustenta por el rigor científico que requiere la Comisión?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007536/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Caudal ecológico en el tramo final del Río Ebro

El plan de la cuenca del Río Ebro presentado por el Gobierno español a principios del año 2013 prevé un caudal ecológico mínimo en el tramo final del Ebro cifrado ligeramente por encima de los 106 metros cúbicos por segundo. Según estimaciones del Govern de Catalunya basados en informes científicos, este, de llevarse a cabo, sería absolutamente insuficiente. Dicho plan de la cuenca ha recibido alegaciones por parte de la Generalitat de Catalunya, entidades y asociaciones.

A la luz de lo anterior,

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que dichos caudales ecológicos se adaptan a criterios científicos?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que un plan de cuenca, aparte de basarse en criterios científicos, debería tener consenso entre el territorio, las administraciones locales y la sociedad civil?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(8 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita 5461/2013 sobre el mismo asunto.

La Comisión conoce el Plan Hidrológico del Ebro y evaluará su conformidad con la Directiva Marco del Agua (2000/60/CE ([1])) y, en particular, con sus artículos 4 y 13 y con su anexo V, una vez el Plan haya sido aprobado y comunicado.

([1]) DO L 327 de 22.12.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007535/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Ebro River basin plan

Referring to the possibility of amending the terms of its proposed Ebro Basin Hydrographical Plan, the Spanish Government said that the calculations presented by the Committee for the Sustainability of the Terres del Ebre — which includes the Catalan Government, regional organisations such as town and county councils, environmental groups and the Ebro Hydrographical Basin — are 'completely illogical'. The Government has also said that it has no intention of modifying the environmental flow described in its Ebro Basin Hydrological Plan.

In light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of this hydrological plan being proposed by the Spanish Government?

2. Does the Commission believe that the plan for the Ebro basin presented by the Spanish Government meets the Commission's requirement that it be based on sound scientific evidence?

Question for written answer E-007536/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Environmental flow in the final stretch of the Ebro River

The Ebro river basin plan, which was presented by the Spanish Government at the beginning of 2013, provides for a minimum environmental flow in the final stretch of the Ebro River of just over 106 cubic metres per second. According to calculations made by the Catalan regional government on the basis of scientific studies, if this plan were acted on the volume proposed would be totally inadequate. The river basin plan has been challenged by the Catalan government, and by other bodies and associations.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission believe that these environmental flows meet scientific criteria?

2. Does the Commission believe that a river basin management plan should, apart from being based on scientific criteria, have the consensus of the region, its local administrations and civil society?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to written question 5461/2013 on the same subject.

The Commission is aware of the Ebro plan and will assess its compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC ([1])), in particular with Articles 4, 13 and Annex V, once it is adopted and reported.

([1]) OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007537/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Nueva reserva de la biosfera de la Unesco. Tramo final del río Ebro

Les Terres del Ebre, y por lo tanto el tramo final del río Ebro, han sido declaradas en 2013 por la Unesco como nueva reserva de la bioesfera ([1]).

Teniendo en cuenta la red Natura 2000 y la gran importancia de garantizar la preservación del hábitat del tramo final del río Ebro, ¿cree la Comisión que con el plan de cuenca para el río Ebro presentado a principios del año 2013 por el Gobierno español se podrá preservar con total garantía la nueva reserva de biosfera declarada por la Unesco?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de septiembre de 2013)

La declaración por la Unesco de Les Terres del Ebre como nueva reserva de la biosfera no tiene implicaciones jurídicas en el marco de la legislación de la UE.

Por lo que se refiere al Plan Hidrológico de la Cuenca del Ebro, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-5461/2013 ([2]). El Plan debe ser compatible con los requisitos de conservación de los tipos de hábitats y especies que motivaron la inclusión del lugar «Delta del Ebro» en la red Natura 2000 con arreglo a la Directiva 1992/43/CEE ([3]) («Directiva de Hábitats»). Si llegan a la Comisión pruebas de lo contrario, adoptará las medidas oportunas para garantizar la correcta aplicación de la legislación de la UE.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/medio-ambiente/20130528/54374465636/terres-de-l-ebre-nueva-reserva-biosfera-unesco.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) DO L 206 de 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007537/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: New Unesco biosphere reserve: final reaches of the River Ebro

In 2013 Unesco listed the Terres del Ebre, which includes the delta and watershed of the River Ebro, as a new biosphere reserve ([1]).

Bearing in mind the Natura 2000 network and the importance of safeguarding the preservation of the habitat of the final reaches of the Ebro River, does the Commission believe that it will possible to fully guarantee the preservation of the new Unesco-declared biosphere reserve under the terms of the Plan for the Ebro river basin presented by the Spanish Government at the beginning of 2013?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The classification of the area of 'Terres del Ebre' as a new biosphere reserve has been approved by Unesco, with no legal implications under EU legislation.

Concerning the Ebro River Basin Management Plan, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-5461/2013 ([2]). This plan must be compatible with the conservation requirements of the habitat types and species for which the Natura 2000 site 'Delta de l'Ebre' was established under Directive 1992/43/EEC ([3]) ('Habitats Directive'). If the Commission were to receive evidence of the contrary, it would act to ensure the correct implementation of EU legislation.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/medio-ambiente/20130528/54374465636/terres-de-l-ebre-nueva-reserva-biosfera-unesco.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) OJ L 206 , 22.07.1992.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007538/13
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Exigencias de responsabilidad a la Comisión por el fracaso de la estrategia económica

Las últimas previsiones de la Comisión, tras cinco años de crisis, son negativas por sexto cuatrimestre consecutivo en la EU. El crecimiento del desempleo ha sido mayor del esperado y la Zona Euro es la única zona económica del mundo donde el desempleo continúa aumentando. A su vez, las divergencias sociales y de empleo entre Estados han aumentado pasando de 3,5 puntos en el año 2000, a 10 puntos en 2012. Todo ello pone en evidencia que la estrategia económica puesta en práctica por la Comisión desde 2010 ha estado plagada de errores. En primer lugar, el Comisario Rehn ha defendido los riesgos de un endeudamiento público excesivo para el crecimiento económico citando el modelo de Kenneth y Rogoff basado en datos incorrectos. Como consecuencia de lo anterior, se puso en marcha una política fiscal contractiva desproporcionada (superior a la dictada por el propio Pacto de Estabilidad y crecimiento reforzado por el Six Pack) y excesivamente rápida empleando modelos econométricos que infravaloraban las consecuencias de la política fiscal contractiva sobre el crecimiento económico y el empleo. Debido a ello, los errores han sido de enormes dimensiones, siendo Grecia el caso más dramático, ya que si bien la Comisión predijo una caída del PIB del 3,5 % entre 2010 y 2013, la contracción efectiva fue del de 21 %. Por último, el análisis de la crisis caso por caso, ha llevado a la Comisión a ignorar las externalidades negativas que las políticas fiscales contractivas sincronizadas están teniendo entre los distintos Estados miembros, lo que ha llevado a un crecimiento débil generalizado.

Por todo ello, ¿cómo explica la Comisión su persistencia en las mismas recetas económicas? ¿Cómo explica que los países que han sufrido los mayores ajustes hayan tenido las mayores recesiones, y sin embargo hayan aumentado su deuda pública en términos del PIB?

¿Cuáles son los costes estimados en términos de empleos perdidos, desigualdades sociales, pérdidas de oportunidades de inversión y deterioro del capital humano producido como consecuencia de sus políticas?

¿No piensa la Comisión que las reformas plantadas en sus recomendaciones por país pueden tener los mismos efectos contractivos que los de la consolidación fiscal? ¿No piensa la Comisión, que la crisis de liquidez podría dar lugar a una crisis mas importante de solvencia?

En definitiva, ¿qué grado de responsabilidad cree que tiene el Colegio de Comisarios y, en concreto, el Comisario de Economía en el fracaso de la estrategia seguida ante las graves consecuencias sociales y económicas de sus políticas?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de agosto de 2013)

Las prioridades de la Comisión para que la UE supere la actual crisis económica y retome una senda sostenible de crecimiento y generación de empleo se establecen en el Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento presentado en noviembre del pasado año.

La economía europea se está reequilibrando y la combinación de políticas de la UE se centra en el crecimiento sostenible y la creación de empleo. En varios Estados miembros, la prolongada recesión es una recesión de balance al final de un ciclo de crédito muy largo. No se retornará plenamente al crecimiento económico hasta que la deuda, tanto pública como privada, haya sido abonada en el conjunto de la economía. En la última década, la enorme expansión económica y los desequilibrios han generado una asignación muy ineficiente de los recursos. Europa se enfrenta también a profundos desafíos estructurales a más largo plazo. El reequilibrio económico y los cambios estructurales necesarios se ven dificultados por la debilidad del sector bancario y las profundas distorsiones en el canal crediticio.

Abordar los problemas estructurales, la erosión de la competitividad económica y el desempleo y las consecuencias sociales de la crisis constituyen el núcleo de las recomendaciones específicas por país formuladas por la Comisión el 29 de mayo de 2013 y aprobadas por el Consejo el 9 de julio de 2013. Los indicadores económicos ofrecen señales positivas y se espera que en el segundo semestre de este año se retome gradualmente la senda del crecimiento en Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007538/13
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: How far is the Commission responsible for the failure of the economic strategy?

Five years into the crisis and the Commission's economic forecasts for the EU are negative for the sixth quarter running. Unemployment has increased more than expected, and the eurozone is now the only economic area in the world where unemployment is continuing to rise. At the same time social disparities and the employment gap between Member States have widened from 3.5 points in 2000 to 10 points in 2012. All this is evidence of the many flaws in the economic strategy which the Commission has been implementing since 2010. Commissioner Rehn has argued, on the basis of the Kenneth and Rogoff model, which used incorrect data, that the prospect of economic growth makes up for the risks inherent in running up excessive public debt. As a result a hasty and overly one-sided contractionary fiscal policy was implemented (i.e. more stringent than that envisaged in the Stability and Growth Pact reinforced by the Six-Pack) using econometric models which downplayed the consequences of contractionary fiscal policy on economic growth and employment. This has had massive repercussions, most of all for Greece, where the Commission had forecast a 3.5% reduction in GDP between 2010 and 2013, but which actually saw its economy shrink by 21%. In assessing the impact of the crisis on a case-by-case basis, the Commission has been blind to the negative externalities of synchronised contractionary fiscal policies in the Member States, in the form of low rates of growth throughout the Union.

Can the Commission say why it is continuing to pursue the same economic strategy? How does it explain the fact that the countries which have undergone the biggest adjustments have experienced the biggest recessions and have seen their public debt increase as a proportion of GDP?

What is the estimated cost of its policies in terms of job losses, social inequalities, lost investment opportunities and erosion of human capital?

Does it not think that the reforms contained in its country-specific recommendations could have the same contractionary effects as fiscal consolidation? Does it not agree that the liquidity crisis could lead to a more serious crisis, i.e. one of solvency?

Given that its policies have had serious social and economic consequences, how responsible would the Commission say the College of Commissioners, and in particular the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, are for the strategy's failure?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

The Commission's priorities for the EU in dealing with the current economic crisis and returning to sustainable growth and jobs are laid down in its Annual Growth Survey presented November last year.

The rebalancing of the European economy is underway and the EU's policy mix is focused on sustainable growth and job creation. The protracted recession is, in a number of Member States, a balance sheet recession at the end of a very long credit cycle. Economic growth will not fully resume before debt — both public and private — has been paid down in the overall economy. The boom and the imbalances have brought a massive misallocation of resources in the last decade. Europe also faces profound longer-term structural challenges. The necessary economic rebalancing and structural changes are hindered by the vulnerabilities in the banking sector and by the deep distortions in the credit channel.

Tackling structural problems, the erosion of economic competitiveness and the unemployment and social consequences of the crisis are at the core of the country specific recommendations put forward by the Commission on 29 May 2013 and adopted by the Council on 9 July 2013. Economic indicators are sending positive signals and growth in Europe is expected to pick up gradually in the second half of this year.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007540/13
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Verhalten europäischer Unternehmen in der Welt

Jüngst sind Besorgnisse laut geworden über das Verhalten europäischer Unternehmen in vielen Ländern der Welt, insbesondere in Bezug auf Verletzungen grundlegender Menschenrechte, wie beispielsweise der in der ILO Konvention 87 und 98 verankerten Rechte auf Versammlungsfreiheit und das Recht auf Tarifverhandlungen.

Der Internationale Gewerkschaftsverband UNI und der internationale Zusammenschluss der Gewerkschaften der Verkehrsbeschäftigten ITF haben Berichte veröffentlicht, wonach die Deutsche Post DHL (DP-DHL) in einer Reihe von Ländern auf der ganzen Welt systematisch die Rechte von Arbeitnehmern verletzt. DP-DHL hat kürzlich 36 Arbeitnehmer entlassen, die versucht haben, in der DHL-Lieferkette in der Türkei eine gewerkschaftliche Vertretung zu organisieren. Die türkischen Gerichte haben in allen 12 Fällen zugunsten der Arbeitnehmer entschieden und in den letzten vier Fällen speziell darauf hingewiesen, dass die Entlassung der Arbeitnehmer allein aufgrund ihrer gewerkschaftlichen Tätigkeiten unrechtmäßig gewesen sei.

UNI und ITF haben sich wegen Verletzung der OECD-Leitlinien für Multinationale Unternehmen durch die DP-DHL bei der deutschen Regierung beschwert. Mit Bezug auf obenstehende Darstellung wird die Kommission um Beantwortung folgender Fragen ersucht:

— Stimmt die Kommission zu, dass die Missachtung der wichtigsten internationalen Menschenrechtsbestimmungen und Arbeitsstandards durch europäische Unternehmen, alle europäischen Unternehmen und Institutionen in Misskredit bringt?

— In wie weit überwacht die Kommission das Verhalten von europäischen Unternehmen außerhalb Europas, insbesondere, wenn gewisse Unternehmen bereits dafür bekannt sind, dass sie zentrale internationale Menschenrechte und Rechtsstandards verletzen?

— Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission gegen europäische Unternehmen wie die DP-DHL ergreifen, die systematisch die Menschenrechte von Arbeitnehmern in vielen Ländern rund um die Welt verletzen?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(23. August 2013)

Die Kommission fördert die Ratifizierung und wirksame Umsetzung der grundlegenden Übereinkommen der IAO durch ein breites Spektrum von Maßnahmen und arbeitet eng mit der IAO zusammen, die für die Überwachung arbeitsrechtlicher Mindeststandards und die Beratung in diesem Bereich zuständig ist. Halten Unternehmen sich nicht an die arbeitsrechtlichen Mindestnormen, so gereicht dies nach Dafürhalten der Kommission ihren Beschäftigten, den Gesellschaften, in denen sie tätig sind, ihrer Reputation und der Nachhaltigkeit der Produktion zum Nachteil. Außerdem können die nationalen Gerichte das Verhalten solcher Unternehmen für rechtswidrig erklären, wie dies offenbar in dem angesprochenen Fall geschehen ist.

Die Kommission fördert die soziale Verantwortung der Unternehmen ([1]). Sie ermutigt die europäischen Unternehmen, die international anerkannten Grundsätze und Leitlinien zu befolgen, wie etwa die OECD-Leitsätze für multinationale Unternehmen ([2]), die Trilaterale Grundsatzerklärung der IAO zu multinationalen Unternehmen und zur Sozialpolitik und die Leitprinzipien der Vereinten Nationen für Unternehmen und Menschenrechte ([3]). Sie hat Legislativvorschläge unterbreitet, die darauf abstellen, die Offenlegung nicht-finanzieller Informationen zu verbessern, die Bestimmungen für die Vergabe öffentlicher Aufträge zu überarbeiten und den Investmentfonds und Finanzinstituten zur Auflage zu machen, über die von ihnen angewendeten Kriterien für eine ethische und verantwortungsvolle Investitionstätigkeit Aufschluss zu geben.

([1]) CSR — Corporate Social Responsibility.
([2]) Diese sehen nationale Kontaktstellen vor, die bei der Umsetzung der Leitsätze, der Bearbeitung von Beschwerden und Vermittlungsverfahren Unterstützung bieten.
([3]) KOM(2011)681 endg.

Die Kommission erwartet von allen europäischen Unternehmen, dass sie ihrer Verantwortung gerecht werden und die Menschenrechte und die nationalen Rechtsvorschriften einhalten, auch bei der Umsetzung arbeitsrechtlicher Mindeststandards. Es obliegt den zuständigen nationalen Behörden, u. a. den Gerichten, für eine ordnungsgemäße und wirksame Anwendung der nationalen Gesetze zu sorgen, wobei in jedem Einzelfall den besonderen Gegebenheiten Rechnung zu tragen ist. Die Kommission ist nicht befugt, das Verhalten von Unternehmen, die ihren Sitz in der EU haben, in Drittländern zu überwachen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007540/13
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Behaviour of European companies around the world

Recently, concerns have been raised about the behaviour of European companies in many countries around the world, particularly in regard to violations of fundamental human rights such as the rights contained in International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions 87 and 98 concerning freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

The global union federations UNI Global Union and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) have published reports alleging that Deutsche Post DHL (DP-DHL) systematically violates workers' rights in a number of countries throughout the world. DP-DHL recently dismissed 36 workers who were trying to organise a union at DHL Supply Chain in Turkey. The Turkish courts have ruled in favour of the workers in all 12 cases that have been heard and in the last four cases the courts specifically stated that workers were illegally dismissed solely as a result of their union activities.

UNI and ITF have filed a case with the German Government alleging that Deutsche Post DHL has violated the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. With regard to the aforementioned, I would like to ask the following questions:

— Does the Commission agree that European companies failing to observe core international human rights and labour standards bring all European companies and institutions into disrepute?

— To what extent does the Commission monitor the behaviour of European companies outside Europe, particularly where those companies are known to be violating core international and European human rights standards?

— What action will the Commission take with European companies like Deutsche Post DHL which systematically violate the human rights of workers in many countries around the world?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2013)

The Commission promotes the ratification and effective implementation of ILO fundamental Conventions through a wide range of policies and closely cooperate with the ILO, responsible for monitoring and advice on core labour standards. The Commission considers that any company failing to respect core labour standards is not only undesirable for its workers, the societies in which it operates, its own reputation, and sustainable production but may be ruled by national courts as illegal, as it appears in the case referred to.

The Commission promotes CSR ([1]). It encourages EU companies to adhere to internationally recognised principles and guidelines, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises ([2]) , the ILO Tripartite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, and the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights ([3]). It has made legislative proposals to enhance non-financial disclosure, revise public procurement rules, and require investment funds and financial institutions to inform about ethical or responsible investment criteria they apply.

The Commission expects all European enterprises to meet the corporate responsibility to respect human rights and to comply with national law, including when it implements core labour standards. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that domestic law is correctly and effectively applied, having regard to the specific circumstances of each individual case. The Commission does not have a mandate to monitor the behaviour of EU-based companies in third countries.

([1]) Corporate Social Responsibility.
([2]) which provide for National Contact Points assisting in implementation, complaint and mediation mechanisms.
([3]) COM(2011) 681 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007541/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione di un progetto finalizzato al reinserimento sociale e alla sensibilizzazione dell'opinione pubblica

«Liberi Dentro» è un progetto di un'associazione senza scopo di lucro che ha come obiettivo quello di creare, di concerto con le Istituzioni, un polo di supporto, sviluppo e creazione di strutture volte al pieno inserimento o reinserimento di detenuti o ex detenuti, di persone svantaggiate e di ragazze madri, nel mondo del lavoro.

L'idea di base è quella di utilizzare la forza lavoro, attualmente in stato di detenzione, semilibertà o comunque di indigenza, per lo svolgimento di servizi, a costo zero, all'interno della pubblica amministrazione. In particolare, la vasta gamma di servizi prevede attività quali ad esempio: ecologia, pulizia e salvaguardia del verde pubblico; trasporto disabili e anziani; servizi di ristrutturazione e manutenzione dell'edilizia civile ed industriale; gestione di eventi, spazi ricreativi e impianti sportivi e molto altro ancora.

Tali servizi verranno gestiti da società cooperative costituite dai detenuti stessi, con l'ausilio tecnico di tutors selezionati e verranno anche affiancate da consorzi impegnati già da tempo nell'erogazione di servizi e impegnati nello sviluppo di programmi finalizzati alla riduzione dell'impatto ambientale della propria attività.

Inoltre, tale progetto avrà anche lo scopo di avviare degli studi nell'ambito della comunicazione aziendale, al fine di avviare campagne di sensibilizzazione dell'opinione pubblica su temi riguardanti la detenzione e il reinserimento sociale.

Ciò premesso, e in considerazione anche delle situazioni di disagio, di sofferenza e di rischio che la pesante realtà di sovraffollamento carcerario comporta (in Italia nei 206 penitenziari italiani ci sono circa 66mila detenuti contro una capienza regolamentare di 47mila), può la Commissione fa sapere:

1. Se esistono finanziamenti finalizzati alla realizzazione di siffatto progetto. E quali sono i programmi di finanziamento previsti soprattutto nella futura programmazione finanziaria 2014-2020?

2. Se esistono progetti simili finanziati con i fondi comunitari? In caso affermativo, quali?

3. Un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(13 agosto 2013)

Il FSE può intervenire per favorire l'accesso di categorie svantaggiate, compresi detenuti o ex detenuti, al mercato del lavoro e il loro inserimento attivo nello stesso. Ciò dovrebbe proseguire nel periodo 2014-2020. Il nuovo regolamento sul FSE è in corso di negoziazione da parte dei colegislatori, mentre i documenti di programmazione (accordi di partenariato e programmi operativi) sono attualmente oggetto di discussione a livello informale con gli Stati membri.

Anche in Italia sono già stati realizzati vari progetti mediante l'adozione di numerosi programmi, fornendo così aiuti particolari, quali una formazione specifica o altre misure di accompagnamento ([1]).

Il FSE non interviene a sostegno di una politica del lavoro passiva e non fornisce alcun supporto in tema di integrazione salariale o di prestazioni sociali.

Il progetto descritto dall'onorevole parlamentare potrebbe essere finanziato dal FSE se combinato con una formazione mirata e con altre attività volte ad agevolare la futura integrazione dei detenuti nel mercato del lavoro, ad esempio mediante il conferimento di qualifiche professionali.

Per ulteriori informazioni circa le possibilità e le modalità di finanziamento di tale progetto, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a contattare gli organi amministrativi nazionali o regionali responsabili del relativo programma ([2]). In linea con il principio di gestione condivisa applicato all'amministrazione della politica di coesione, la Commissione non interviene nella selezione, nel monitoraggio e nella valutazione dei progetti.

([1]) http://opencoesione.gov.it/
([2]) http://europalavoro.lavoro.gov.it/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007541/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for the implementation of a social reintegration and public awareness-raising project

'Liberi Dentro' (Free Inside) is a project conceived by a non-profit association whose aim is to create, in cooperation with the institutions, a focal point for creating, supporting and developing facilities aimed at fully integrating or reintegrating prisoners or former prisoners, disadvantaged individuals and single mothers into the labour market.

The basic idea is to use the workforce that is currently in prison, in semi-liberty or otherwise on a low income, to provide services, free of charge, within the public administration. In particular, the wide range of services include activities such as environmental protection, cleaning and conservation of public parks; transport assistance for the elderly and disabled; renovating and maintaining civil and industrial buildings; managing events, recreational areas and sports facilities; and many more besides.

These services will be managed by cooperatives formed by the prisoners themselves, with the technical support of selected tutors and with the help of associations that have already been providing services for a long time and which are committed to developing programmes to reduce the environmental impact of their business.

Moreover, another aim of the project will be to carry out studies in the field of business communication, in order to launch campaigns to raise public awareness of detention and social reintegration issues.

In view of the above and of the uncomfortable, distressing and dangerous situations created by the harsh reality of prison overcrowding (Italy's 206 prisons house approximately 66 000 inmates but have an official capacity of 47 000), can the Commission:

1. say whether any funding is available to carry out this project, and what funding programmes are envisaged in particular in the future financial framework 2014-2020;

2. say whether any similar projects are financed by EU funds, and if so, which ones;

3. provide an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The ESF can intervene to support the access and the active integration of disadvantaged groups, including inmates or former inmates, in the labour market. This should continue in the 2014-2020 period. The new ESF regulation is being negotiated by the co-legislators while programming documents (Partnership Agreements and operational programmes) are currently being discussed at informal level with Member States.

Different projects have already been implemented through several programmes, providing specific support such as specific training or other accompanying measures, including in Italy ([1]).

The ESF does not intervene to support passive labour policy and does not provide support to integrate salary or social benefits.

The project described by the Honourable Member could be financed through the ESF if this is combined with targeted training and other activities aiming at facilitating the future integration of inmates into the labour market, for instance through the provision of professional qualifications.

For further information about the possibility and modality of funding of this project, the Commission suggests the Honourable Member to contact the national or regional administration in charge of the relevant programme ([2]). In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, the Commission does not intervene in the selection, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

([1]) http://opencoesione.gov.it/
([2]) http://europalavoro.lavoro.gov.it/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007542/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Informazioni circa l'utilizzo dei finanziamenti comunitari del periodo 2007-2013: Regione Toscana e città di Livorno

Nell'ambito del quadro finanziario dell'Unione europea 2007-2013 sono stati inseriti numerosi programmi volti alla promozione e sviluppo delle aree urbane. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

— Lo stato di utilizzo da parte della Regione Toscana dei fondi dell'Unione e le relative tempistiche da rispettare al fine di evitare possibili disimpegni di spesa.

— A quali fondi il Comune di Livorno potrebbe accedere, tramite le autorità incaricate della gestione dei progetti, per opere relative alla ristrutturazione ed ammodernamento urbano, sicurezza urbana e attività culturali e imprenditoriali.

— Se il Comune di Livorno ha già beneficiato di fondi gestiti dalle autorità incaricate della gestione dei progetti, e in caso affermativo per quali importi e obiettivi.

— Un elenco dei bandi e progetti promossi dalle autorità incaricate della gestione dei progetti lanciati dall'inizio della programmazione (2007-2013) aperti alle amministrazioni comunali della Toscana.

— Una valutazione/quadro delle città della Toscana più virtuose in termini di programmazione e utilizzo dei fondi comunitari (diretti ed indiretti).

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(7 agosto 2013)

Particolari sull'utilizzazione dei fondi della politica di coesione dell'UE nella regione Toscana possono essere consultati sul sito web http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/ dove sono reperibili anche le informazioni sull'impiego dei fondi a livello comunale e di progetto, dal momento che queste informazioni non sono disponibili per la Commissione. Conformemente al principio della gestione concorrente vigente per l'attuazione della politica di coesione, solo i grandi progetti il cui costo totale supera i 50 milioni di euro sono esaminati e approvati dalla Commissione. Gli Stati membri sono responsabili per la selezione e l'attuazione di tutti gli altri progetti.

Per i progetti gestiti direttamente dalla Commissione, suggeriamo all'onorevole parlamentare di consultare il sistema di trasparenza finanziaria al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm.

In base alle disposizioni dell'UE, per il periodo 2007-2013 la spesa è ammissibile sino al 31 dicembre 2015. La Commissione disimpegna automaticamente gli importi non utilizzati per pagamento al termine del secondo anno che segue quello dell'impegno nell'ambito del programma. Non vi è stato alcun disimpegno automatico per la Toscana nel periodo di programmazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007542/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Information on the use of EU funds during the period 2007-2013: Tuscany Region and the city of Livorno

The EU financial framework for the period 2007-2013 includes a number of programmes for promoting and developing urban areas.

— Can the Commission provide details on the use of EU funds by the Tuscany Region and the relevant deadlines that must be met in order to avoid any possible decommitment of funds?

— Can it indicate which funds the municipality of Livorno could access, through the managing authorities, for projects relating to urban restructuring and modernisation, urban security, and cultural and business activities?

— Can it say whether the municipality of Livorno has already received funds managed by the managing authorities, and if so, how much has it received and why?

— Can it list the calls and projects promoted by the authorities responsible for managing projects launched since the start of the programming period (2007-2013) that are open to Tuscany's municipal authorities?

— Can it provide an assessment/overview of Tuscany's best-performing cities in terms of the programming and use of EU funds (both direct and indirect)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

Details on the use of EU cohesion policy funds in the Tuscany region are available on the website http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/ which can also be consulted for information on the use of funds at municipality and project level, since this information is not available to the Commission. In line with the shared management principle used for the implementation of cohesion policy, only major projects whose total cost exceeds EUR 50 million are examined and approved by the Commission. Member States are responsible for selecting and implementing all other projects.

For projects managed directly by the Commission, the Commission suggests the Honourable Member to consult the Financial Transparency System at: http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm

According to EU provisions, for the 2007-2013 period, expenditure shall be eligible until 31 December 2015. The Commission automatically decommits any amount not used for payment the second year following the year of budget commitment under the programme. No automatic decommitment has occurred for Tuscany in the current period.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007543/13
alla Commissione
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Frutta e verdura per i bambini prima del loro arrivo tra i banchi di scuola

Molti bambini italiani non conoscono l'esistenza della frutta e della verdura se non una volta arrivati tra i banchi della scuola. A Napoli è stato lanciato due anni fa il progetto «Impariamo a mangiare» organizzato dalla Federazione italiana dei medici pediatri contro l'obesità infantile che, proprio in Campania, ha ancora il più alto tasso di casi in Italia.

Stando a quanto riferito dalle maestre, i bambini che hanno partecipato all'iniziativa la chiamano «la pappa verde» o la «pappa colorata», proprio perché i genitori non hanno mai neppure provato a insegnare ai propri figli a consumare questo alimento.

A prescindere dal fatto che sia stata o meno una ricerca circoscritta a una città italiana, purtroppo questo dato ci mette dinanzi a una triste verità: l'arrendevolezza di molti genitori nell'insegnare ai figli a mangiare sano. I dati di oggi sono scoraggianti, ma con l'impegno di tutti ed in particolare della Commissione europea, qualcosa può cambiare.

La Commissione europea assegna per ogni anno scolastico risorse comunitarie per la distribuzione di frutta e verdura nelle scuole (programma introdotto dal regolamento (CE) n. 1234/2007). Tuttavia non esiste nessun programma/iniziativa a livello europeo per permettere ai bambini di imparare a mangiare la frutta e la verdura prima del loro arrivo tra i banchi di scuola.

Pertanto, chiedo alla Commissione europea di valutare la possibilità di sostenere il progetto «Impariamo a mangiare» per un corretto messaggio nutrizionale coinvolgendo genitori, bambini e pediatri di famiglia al fine di migliorare le abitudini alimentari dei bambini prima del loro arrivo tra i banchi di scuola.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(31 luglio 2013)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza del progetto specifico citato dall'onorevole deputato.

La Commissione affronta tuttavia il problema dell'obesità infantile e dello sviluppo di sane abitudini alimentari fin dalla prima infanzia attraverso, tra gli altri strumenti, il programma «Frutta nelle scuole». Tale programma, che rappresenta un'importante iniziativa a livello di UE rivolta agli alunni di età compresa tra 1 e 18 anni, ha finora interessato 8,1 milioni di bambini e ragazzi.

Nel campo dell'alimentazione esistono inoltre tre progetti pilota rivolti ai bambini. I primi due progetti, intesi ad aumentare il consumo di frutta e verdura fresche presso le comunità locali in cui il reddito delle famiglie sia inferiore al 50 % della media dell'UE-27, rimarranno in vigore rispettivamente fino alla fine del 2014 e del 2015. Il terzo progetto, che avrà inizio nel 2014, sarà incentrato sulla promozione di un'alimentazione sana per madri e bambini. I risultati dovrebbero essere disponibili nel 2016.

L'attuale programma dell'UE per la salute finanzia progetti ed azioni per il periodo 2008-2013. La Commissione ha inoltre adottato una proposta legislativa relativa al terzo programma pluriennale per la salute (2014-2020). Le parti interessate avranno la possibilità di presentare domande di finanziamento. Le relative informazioni sono disponibili sul sito dell'Agenzia esecutiva per la salute e i consumatori ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007543/13
to the Commission
Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Fruit and vegetables for children before they first start school

Many Italian children do not know what fruit and vegetables are until they first start school. The 'Let's learn to eat' project to prevent child obesity was launched in Naples two years ago and is run by the Italian Federation for Paediatricians. Campania is still the region with the highest rate of child obesity in Italy.

According to their teachers, children who have taken part in the project call it 'the green mush' or 'the coloured mush', precisely because their parents have hardly ever tried to teach their children to eat this food.

Irrespective of whether or not this research may have been limited to one Italian city, it does unfortunately highlight a sad truth: that many parents are too easy-going when it comes to teaching their children to eat healthily. Current data are disheartening but if everyone, and in particular the Commission, makes an effort, something may change.

The Commission sets aside Community funds every school year for the distribution of fruit and vegetables in schools (programme introduced by Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007). However, there is no programme/initiative at EU level that enables children to learn to eat fruit and vegetables before they first start school.

I ask the Commission, therefore, to assess the possibility of supporting the 'Let's learn to eat' project which sends out a message to parents, children and family paediatricians on proper nutrition, in order to improve children's eating habits before they start school.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

The Commission is not aware of the specific project mentioned by the Honourable Member.

However, the Commission addresses the concerns raised in terms of childhood obesity and developing healthy eating habits at an early age, among others, through the School Fruit Scheme. The scheme in an important EU-wide initiative targeting schoolchildren aged 1 to 18, and thus far 8.1 million children have benefited from the scheme.

Additionally, three pilot projects in the area of nutrition are targeting children: the first two projects aim to increase consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in local communities where the household income is below 50% of the EU-27 average and will run respectively up to end 2014 and end 2015 and the third pilot project will start in 2014, which focuses on the promotion of healthy diets targeting mothers and children and results should be available in 2016.

The current EU Health Programme funds projects and actions from 2008 to 2013. Furthermore, the Commission has adopted a legislative proposal for the third multi-annual Health Programme (2014-2020). Interested parties will have the possibility to submit applications for funding. Relevant information is available from the webpage of the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/index.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007544/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(26 juni 2013)

Betreft: Wijziging duur nachtvluchten

Volgens berichtgeving in De Telegraaf van 25 juni 2013 werkt de EU momenteel aan een voorstel betreffende de verlenging van de duur van nachtvluchten met twee piloten ([1]). In de huidige situatie duurt een nachtvlucht met twee piloten 10 uur; de Europese Commissie zou dat volgens de berichtgeving willen verhogen naar 12,5 uur.

Volgens verkeerspiloten — die zich hierbij mede baseren op wetenschappelijke studies — is dat zeer onverstandig, omdat hierdoor de kans op oververmoeidheid en concentratieverlies toeneemt. Dit zou vervolgens volgens de VNV kunnen leiden tot levensgevaarlijke situaties.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „Piloten slaan alarm over EU-voorstel — Gevaar in de cockpit? ”

2. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de bevindingen van dr. Alexander Gundel inzake Flight Time Limitation (FTL) ([2]), de ETSC ([3]), en opinies zoals die van de ECA ([4])? Wat vindt de Commissie van deze bevindingen?

3. Is de Commissie bereid het onzalige plan van verruiming van de duur van nachtvluchten met twee piloten onmiddellijk van tafel te vegen? Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord van dhr. Kallas namens de Commissie
(20 augustus 2013)

1 en 3. De Commissie is bekend met het bericht waar het geachte Parlementslid naar verwijst. De Commissie wenst te verduidelijken dat zij niet van plan is de duur van nachtvluchten te verlengen tot 12.30 uur, maar te beperken van 11.45 uur tot 11 uur of minder. De Commissie heeft hierover al nadere informatie verstrekt in haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag P-007959/2013.

2. De Commissie is op de hoogte van het standpunt van Dr. Alexander Gundel, de ETSC en de ECA. De Commissie is van oordeel dat hun aanbevelingen voor wijzigingen van de regels niet zijn onderbouwd door operationele aanwijzingen van veiligheidsrisico's die volgens hen met de regels verbonden zouden zijn, noch worden gesteund door de meerderheid van de belanghebbenden.

([1]) https://telegraaf-i.telegraaf.nl/telegraaf/_main_/2013/06/25/001/
([2]) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMdI6zXEQZc
([3]) http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_position_FTL.pdf
([4]) https://www.eurocockpit.be/stories/20130618/eu-parliament-weighs-in-on-flight-time-limitations-debate

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007544/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Altering the maximum duration of night flights

According to a report in *De Telegraaf* of 25 June 2013, the EU is currently working on a proposal to extend the maximum duration of night flights with two pilots ([1]). As things stand, a night flight with two pilots can last up to 10 hours; it is reported that the Commission wishes to raise the limit to 12.5 hours.

According to airline pilots — basing their views partly on research — this would be very unwise, as it would increase the likelihood of fatigue and loss of concentration. According to the VNV, it could then lead to life-threatening situations.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report 'Piloten slaan alarm over EU-voorstel — Gevaar in de cockpit' [Pilots warn against EU proposal — Danger in the cockpit]?1

2. Is the Commission aware of the findings of Dr Alexander Gundel concerning Flight Time Limitation (FTL) ([2]), the ETSC ([3]), and opinions such as that of the ECA ([4])? What view does the Commission take of these findings?

3. Will the Commission immediately abandon the disastrous plan to extend the maximum duration of night flights with two pilots? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

1 and 3. The Commission is aware of the report mentioned by the Honourable Member. The Commission would like to clarify that it does not intend to raise the limit of night flights to 12.30 hours but to decrease it from 11.45 to 11 hours or less. Further information has been provided by the Commission in its answer to Written Question P-007959/2013.

2. The Commission is aware of the position expressed by Dr Alexander Gundel, the ETSC and ECA. The Commission considers that their recommendations for amendments to the rules are neither supported by operational evidence of any safety risk that they attribute to the rules envisaged by the Commission nor by the majority of stakeholders.

([1]) https://telegraaf-i.telegraaf.nl/telegraaf/_main_/2013/06/25/001/
([2]) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMdI6zXEQZc
([3]) http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_position_FTL.pdf
([4]) https://www.eurocockpit.be/stories/20130618/eu-parliament-weighs-in-on-flight-time-limitations-debate

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007546/13
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Exceso de emisiones contaminantes en los vehículos ligeros

Varias asociaciones de consumidores y usuarios europeas —OCU (España), Altroconsumo (Italia), Consumentenbond (Holanda), DECO (Portugal), Test-Achats (Bélgica) y UFC-Que Chosir (Francia)— han realizado análisis de las emisiones de gases, en especial, de dióxido de carbono (CO_2) de diferentes marcas de vehículos. Del resultado que acaban de publicar resulta que la concentración real de esos gases contaminantes es muy superior al anunciado por las empresas fabricantes (entre un 17 % y un 45 % más), cosa que incrementa, como es fácil advertir, el gasto en combustible. Estos datos corroboran los estudios ya realizados por el Consejo Internacional para el Transporte Limpio (ICCT).

Coincide esta noticia con el reciente acuerdo de compromiso en las instituciones europeas de hacer cumplir normas más estrictas sobre las emisiones de CO_2 de los vehículos nuevos a partir de 2020.

Mientras transcurren esos siete años, y existiendo ya unos límites en el Reglamento (CE) n° 443/2009, de 23 de abril de 2009, por el que se establecen normas de comportamiento en materia de emisiones de los turismos nuevos como parte del enfoque integrado de la Comunidad para reducir las emisiones de CO_2 de los vehículos ligeros,

pregunto a la Comisión:

¿Ha iniciado algún procedimiento de investigación sobre la efectiva aplicación y cumplimiento del citado Reglamento?

Respuesta de la Sra. Hedegaard en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión controla el cumplimiento por parte de los fabricantes de las disposiciones del Reglamento (CE) n° 443/2009, que establece objetivos en materia de emisiones de CO_2 aplicables a los turismos nuevos. Los informes de control han sido publicados en su página web:
http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/vehicles/cars/documentation_en.htm

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de que, según algunas fuentes de información, existen divergencias cada vez mayores entre las emisiones de CO_2 y el consumo de combustible medidos con los métodos de ensayo oficiales y los obtenidos en condiciones reales de conducción. También ha llevado a cabo su propio estudio acerca de las razones de estos hechos, que figura en la siguiente dirección de Internet:
http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/vehicles/cars/docs/report_2012_en.pdf

La Comisión está colaborando con la Comisión Económica de las Naciones Unidas para Europa con el fin de desarrollar un procedimiento mundial de ensayo de vehículos ligeros (*World Light Duty Test Procedure* — WLTP) que permita lograr un ciclo de ensayos más representativo. A la hora de poner en aplicación dicho procedimiento en la EU, la Comisión se propone reducir al mínimo la flexibilidad autorizada en los ensayos, a fin de conseguir resultados mas realistas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007546/13
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Excess pollutant emissions from light-duty vehicles

The published findings of a number of European consumer associations such as 'OCU' (Spain), 'Altroconsumo' (Italy), 'Consumentenbond' (The Netherlands), 'DECO' (Portugal), 'Test-Achats' (Belgium) and 'UFC-Que Choisir' (France) reveal that actual concentrations of gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2) in exhaust emissions are substantially (between 17% and 45%) higher than those advertised by manufacturers. Clearly this also means increased fuel consumption. This data is corroborated by studies already carried out by the International Council for Clean Transport (ICCT).

These findings coincide with a recent EU compromise agreement on compliance by new vehicles with stricter CO_2 emission standards from 2020.

Regarding the seven-year interim period, a number of limits have already been laid down in Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 of 23 April 2009 setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars as part of the Community's integrated approach to reduce CO_2 emissions from light-duty vehicles.

In view of this:

Has the Commission done anything to monitor the effective implementation of the regulation and compliance with its provisions?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 August 2013)

The Commission monitors the compliance of manufacturers with Regulation (EC) 443/2009 setting CO_2 emission targets for new passenger cars. Monitoring reports are published on its website at:
http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/vehicles/cars/documentation_en.htm

The Commission is aware of a number of sources of information pointing at increasing divergence between CO_2 emissions and fuel consumption as measured in official test procedures and those obtained in real world driving. It has also carried out its own study into the reasons underlying this which can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/vehicles/cars/docs/report_2012_en.pdf

The Commission is working with UNECE to finalise the development of the World Light Duty Test Procedure (WLTP) which is intended to have a more representative test cycle. In its implementation in the EU the Commission would aim to minimise the flexibility available during the tests so as to ensure more realistic results.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007548/13
a la Comisión
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE), Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL) y Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Cierre de TK Galmed

El pasado 8 de febrero recibimos la noticia del cierre de TK Galmed, planta de galvanizado situada en Sagunto, de la multinacional Thyssenkrupp. Los argumentos utilizados por la dirección del grupo nos plantean numerosas preguntas ya que se trata de una empresa rentable, que cuenta con resultados positivos en los últimos años. El cierre de esta planta constituiría una deslocalización no justificable por motivos económicos.

La Comisión acaba de aprobar un plan de acción para el acero que ayudará al sector a hacer frente a los retos actuales y a sentar las bases de la futura competitividad. En el plan de acción prevé medidas específicas para apoyar el empleo en el sector.

Para evitar casos como el de Galmed ¿qué medidas propone la Comisión en relación con la revisión de los instrumentos de defensa del tejido productivo de la UE para evitar la deslocalización de empresas?

Estamos hablando de personas y de puestos de trabajo, pero también del impacto económico sobre regiones enteras. Debemos ser conscientes de la relevancia de la situación y debemos lograr una solución europea. Para ello ¿podría la Comisión precisar qué medidas va a adoptar para establecer mecanismos de defensa del empleo para evitar que empresas rentables paralicen o desvíen sus producciones desplazándolas a otros países?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de agosto de 2013)

La industria europea del acero está sufriendo simultáneamente los efectos de una demanda baja y una sobrecapacidad a escala mundial, al tiempo que tiene que hacer frente a unos precios de la energía elevados y a la necesidad de realizar inversiones para ajustarse a las exigencias de la economía verde fabricando productos innovadores de una manera sostenible.

Actualmente, la demanda de acero en Europa es un 27 % inferior con respecto a antes a la crisis. El empleo en el sector se redujo un 10 % entre 2007 y 2011. A pesar de ello, la UE sigue siendo el segundo mayor productor de acero del mundo, con una producción superior a los 177 millones de toneladas de acero anuales, que representa el 11 % de la producción mundial, y da empleo a más de 360 000 personas. Aunque la mayor parte de la política de empleo es competencia de los Estados miembros, la Comisión ofrece orientación y apoyo para ayudar a los sectores de actividad a adaptarse al cambio y a las personas a permanecer en el mercado de trabajo.

La Comisión Europea presentó un plan de acción para la industria europea del acero ([1]), que ayudará a este sector a hacer frente a los retos de hoy en día y a sentar las bases de la futura competitividad, fomentando la innovación, generando crecimiento y creando empleo.

El plan de acción, entre otras cosas, identifica los siguientes ámbitos prioritarios de actuación:

— Garantizar el establecimiento del marco reglamentario adecuado.

— Abordar las necesidades en materia de aptitudes y facilitar la reestructuración.

— Impulsar la demanda de acero.

— Mejorar el acceso a mercados extranjeros y garantizar la igualdad de condiciones, a fin de apoyar las exportaciones de acero de la UE, combatir las prácticas desleales y asegurar el acceso a las materias primas esenciales.

— Garantizar unos costes de la energía asequibles.

— Garantizar una política climática que estimule la competitividad.

— Impulsar la innovación.

([1]) COM(2013) 407.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007548/13
to the Commission
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D), Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE), Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE), Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE), Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL) and Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Closure of TK GALMED plant

On 8 February 2013, we learned of the forthcoming closure of the Sagunto TK GALMED galvanising plant belonging to the Thyssenkrupp multinational company. The reasons given by the plant management raise a number of questions, given that it is a profitable undertaking, having turned in a healthy balance sheet over the last few years, and its closure would mean relocation, something which cannot be justified on financial grounds.

The Commission has recently adopted a programme of action containing specific measures to promote employment in the steel sector in a bid to meet current challenges and establish the foundations for future competitiveness.

With a view to preventing further closures, what changes are being envisaged by the Commission to the instruments designed to protect the EU's manufacturing sector and avoid relocations?

This concerns not only individuals and their jobs but also the economic implications for entire regions. We must be aware of the gravity of the situation and seek a solution at European level. With this in mind, could the Commission say what measures it will adopt with a view to protecting jobs and ensuring that profitable undertakings do not cease manufacturing or relocate to other countries?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2013)

The European steel industry finds itself hit by the simultaneous effects of low demand and worldwide overcapacity whilst at the same time being confronted with high energy prices and investment needs to adjust to the green economy by producing innovative products in a sustainable manner.

Steel demand in Europe is currently 27% below the pre-crisis level. Employment in the sector fell by 10% from 2007 to 2011. Despite this, the EU is still the second largest producer of steel in the world, with an output of over 177 million tonnes of steel a year, accounting for 11% of the global output and employing over 360 000 people. While most of employment policy is within Member States' competence, the Commission offers policy guidance and support so as to help sectors adapt to change and people to remain in the labour market.

The Commission put forward an action plan ([1]) for the European steel industry to help this sector confront today's challenges and lay the foundations for future competitiveness by fostering innovation, creating growth and jobs.

The action plan, *inter alia*, identifies the following priorities for action:

— ensuring the right regulatory framework is put in place;

— addressing skills needs and easing restructuring;

— boosting demand for steel;

— improving access to foreign markets and ensuring a level playing field so as to support EU steel exports, fight unfair practices and ensure access to vital raw materials;

— ensuring affordable energy costs;

— ensuring a Climate policy that boosts competitiveness;

— boosting innovation.

([1]) COM(2013) 407.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007549/13
an die Kommission
Matthias Groote (S&D) und Barbara Weiler (S&D)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Harmonisierung hygienischer Anforderungen an Materialien im Kontakt mit Trinkwasser

Die hygienischen Anforderungen an Materialien im Kontakt mit Trinkwasser sind in Artikel 10 der EG-Trinkwasserrichtlinie (Richtlinie 98/83/EG) festgelegt. Die allgemeine Formulierung mit Verweis auf die EWG-Bauproduktenrichtlinie (Richtlinie 89/106/EWG) hat jedoch in der bisherigen Praxis zahlreiche Fragen offen gelassen. Es entsteht eine Regelungslücke, u. a. im Hinblick auf ungeregelte Produkte wie bspw. Duschschläuche. Damit verfehlt die Trinkwasserrichtlinie den Anspruch, der an ein horizontal geltendes europäisches Regelwerk gestellt werden muss: die Beschreibung von Anforderungen, die für *alle* Materialien im Kontakt mit Trinkwasser gelten sollten.

Es besteht das Defizit, dass ein regulatorischer Rahmen für die Anwendung einheitlicher Prüfverfahren, einheitlicher hygienischer Anforderungen und harmonisierter Prüfwerte, insbesondere für organische Materialien, fehlt. Vorschläge in dieser Richtung, wie sie von der EAS-Regulators Group eingebracht wurden, sind nicht weiterverfolgt worden.

Konsequenzen dieser gesetzgeberischen Unzulänglichkeit sind Behinderungen für den grenzüberschreitenden Warenverkehr, höhere Kosten, Mängel beim Gesundheits- und Verbraucherschutz sowie nationale Alleingänge.

Welche Maßnahmen und Initiativen plant die Kommission, um diese Regelungslücke zu schließen? Beabsichtigt sie, die freiwillige Harmonisierung, die von Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und den Niederlanden vorangetrieben wurde, als Grundlage für ein harmonisiertes europäisches System zu nutzen? Wie sieht der Zeitrahmen einer möglichen Initiative aus?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(7. August 2013)

Der Kommission ist bewusst, wie wichtig die Festlegung hygienischer Anforderungen an Materialen ist, die mit Trinkwasser in Kontakt kommen.

Die Kommission verfolgt die gemäß Anhang I der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 305/2011 zur Festlegung harmonisierter Bedingungen für die Vermarktung von Bauprodukten ([1]) durchgeführten Arbeiten des Europäischen Komitees für Normung (CEN) zur Ausarbeitung harmonisierter Normen für nationale (notifizierte) Regelungssysteme, die mit Prüfverfahren für Bauprodukte im Kontakt mit Trinkwasser vorgehen. Die Ausarbeitung dieser Normen wird voraussichtlich bald abgeschlossen sein.

Die Kommission verfolgt zudem die von den fünf ([2]) Mitgliedstaaten eingeleiteten Maßnahmen. Zum gegenwärtigen Zeitpunkt erachtet die Kommission die Entwicklung weiterer Initiativen nicht für erforderlich, jedoch beabsichtigt sie, auf der Grundlage der in diesem Bereich erzielten Fortschritte geeignete Maßnahmen zu ergreifen.

([1]) ABl. L 88 vom 4.4.2011.
([2]) Vereinigtes Königreich, Deutschland, Frankreich, Niederlande und Portugal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007549/13
to the Commission
Matthias Groote (S&D) and Barbara Weiler (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Harmonisation of hygiene standards for materials in contact with drinking water

The hygiene standards for materials in contact with drinking water are laid down in Article 10 of the Drinking Water Directive (Directive 98/83/EC). In practice, however, the general wording with a reference to the Construction Product Directive (Directive 89/106/EEC) has left a series of questions open. There is a loophole regarding unregulated products such as shower hoses. As a result, the Drinking Water Directive falls short of the demands made on a horizontal European law: to set out standards that apply to all materials in contact with drinking water.

A problem arises in that there is no regulatory framework for the implementation of uniform test procedures, uniform hygiene standards and harmonised screening values, in particular for organic materials. Corresponding proposals such as those made by the EAS regulatory group have not been followed up.

These regulatory shortcomings are resulting in obstacles for the cross-border movement of goods, higher costs, deficiencies in relation to health and consumer protection and unilateral measures at national level.

What action and initiatives will the Commission take to close these regulatory loopholes? Will it use the voluntary harmonisation pursued by Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands as a basis for a harmonised European system? What would be the timescale for a possible initiative?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The Commission recognises the importance of setting hygiene standards for materials that come in contact with water.

The Commission is following the work of the European Standardisation Organisation (CEN) under Regulation (EU) 305/2011 ([1]) on Construction Products (Annex I), on harmonised standards covering national (notified) regulatory practices and containing test methods for construction products in contact with drinking water. These standards are expected to be finalised soon.

The Commission is also following the initiatives undertaken by the five ([2]) Member States. At this moment the Commission does not consider it necessary to develop further initiatives but will consider taking appropriate action based on progress made.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.
([2]) UK, Germany, France, the Netherlands and Portugal.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007550/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(26 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Κλείσιμο νοσοκομείου «Παναγία» και πώληση κτιρίων 5 σχολείων στη Θεσσαλονίκη

Το ελληνικό Ταμείο Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) έχει ανακοινώσει λίστα 28 κτιρίων προς πώληση σε ιδιώτες και ταυτόχρονη μίσθωσή τους από το ελληνικό δημόσιο που θα καταβάλει μίσθωμα στους νέους ιδιώτες ιδιοκτήτες των κτιρίων αυτών. Με την υπ' αριθμό 234/24.4.2013 της Διυπουργικής Επιτροπής Αναδιαρθρώσεων και Αποκρατικοποιήσεων (ΦΕΚ 1020/25.4.13, τ.Β') μεταβιβάστηκε στην κυριότητα του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ προς αξιοποίηση ακίνητη έκταση που περιλαμβάνει μεταξύ άλλων 5 σχολεία.

Την ίδια στιγμή, δημοσιεύματα του τύπου κάνουν λόγο για κλείσιμο του νοσοκομείου «Παναγία» στη Θεσσαλονίκη εξαιτίας κυρίως του γεγονότος ότι το κτίριο στο οποίο στεγάζεται το νοσοκομείο δεν είναι ιδιόκτητο. Δεδομένου ότι το ίδιο ζήτημα είναι πιθανό ότι θα ανακύψει με όλα τα προς ιδιωτικοποίηση κτίρια που χρησιμοποιούν δημόσιες υπηρεσίες, όπως π.χ. σχολικές μονάδες, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάγεται στην έννοια της σύμπραξης δημόσιου και ιδιωτικού τομέα η πώληση δημόσιων κτιρίων που έχουν ήδη κατασκευαστεί είτε με χρήματα του ελληνικού δημοσίου είτε με ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους;

2. Έχουν τηρηθεί οι διατάξεις του ευρωπαϊκού δικαίου δημοσίων συμβάσεων και συμβάσεων παραχώρησης σε σχέση με την πώληση σε ιδιώτες των 28 κτιρίων;

3. Είναι ενήμερη για τη μεταβίβαση της κυριότητας των κτιρίων 5 σχολείων στη Θεσσαλονίκη στο ΤΑΙΠΕΔ με σκοπό την πώλησή τους σε ιδιώτες;

4. Ως μέλος της Τρόικας, πιστεύει ότι νοσοκομεία, σχολεία και άλλες δημόσιες υπηρεσίες που είναι εγκατεστημένες σε μη ιδιόκτητα κτίρια, θα πρέπει να συγχωνεύονται ή να σταματούν τη λειτουργία τους;

5. Είναι υπέρ της ιδιωτικοποίησης δημοσίων κτιρίων σχολείων και νοσοκομείων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2013)

Τα ακίνητα της Ελλάδας αποτελούν ένα σημαντικό περιουσιακό στοιχείο της χώρας. Η καλύτερη διαχείρισή τους θα μπορούσε να βελτιώσει τις οικονομίες κλίμακας και την αποτελεσματικότητα και να οδηγήσει σε μείωση των τιμών της αγοράς. Οι συναλλαγές για τις ιδιωτικοποιήσεις δημόσιων κτιρίων είναι οργανωμένες ως άμεσες πωλήσεις χωρίς ΣΔΙΤ. Για έργα υποδομής ή παραγωγικές δραστηριότητες που χρηματοδοτούνται από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και τα ταμεία συνοχής της ΕΕ, οι μεταβολές στο καθεστώς ιδιοκτησίας θα πρέπει να λαμβάνουν υπόψη τις απαιτήσεις περί διάρκειας του άρθρου 57 του κανονισμού του Συμβουλίου (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006.

Οι αποφάσεις σχετικά με πωλήσεις μεριδίων ή οι πράξεις μεταβίβασης της πλήρους ιδιοκτησίας διέπονται από το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ, σύμφωνα με το οποίο τα κράτη μέλη είναι ελεύθερα να αποφασίζουν σχετικά με το καθεστώς των δικαιωμάτων ιδιοκτησίας. Σύμφωνα με την απόφαση του Δικαστηρίου της ΕΕ στην υπόθεση C-244/11 (Επιτροπή κατά Ελλάδας, σκέψεις 15 και 16), η διάταξη αυτή δεν εξαιρεί τα καθεστώτα ιδιοκτησίας των κρατών μελών από τους θεμελιώδεις κανόνες της Συνθήκης ΕΕ, όπως το δικαίωμα της εγκατάστασης και της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας των κεφαλαίων (άρθρα 49 και 63 της ΣΛΕΕ). Ωστόσο, η έκβαση της διαδικασίας πώλησης μπορεί να υπόκειται σε ενωσιακό και εθνικό κανονιστικό έλεγχο όταν αυτό προβλέπεται από την ενωσιακή ή την εθνική νομοθεσία.

Οι κανόνες της ΕΕ για τις δημόσιες συμβάσεις δεν ισχύουν για την πώληση περιουσίας από αναθέτουσα αρχή, εκτός εάν αυτό έχει ως αποτέλεσμα ανάθεση δημόσιας σύμβασης ή παραχώρηση.

Η Επιτροπή δεν είναι ενήμερη σχετικά με τη μεταβίβαση της ιδιοκτησίας πέντε σχολικών κτιρίων στη Θεσσαλονίκη στο ΤΑΙΠΕΔ. Το καθεστώς ιδιοκτησίας ενός κτιρίου δεν αποτελεί από μόνο του εύλογο κριτήριο για τη συγχώνευση ή το κλείσιμο σχολείων, νοσοκομείων και άλλων υπηρεσιών προκειμένου να εξασφαλιστεί η καλύτερη χρήση του δημόσιου χρήματος. Επιπλέον, τα κτίρια των δημόσιων σχολείων και νοσοκομείων δεν περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποιήσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007550/13
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Closure of the 'Panagia' hospital and the sale of five school buildings in Thessaloniki

The Hellenic Republic Assets Development Fund (TAIPED) has announced a list of 28 buildings that will be offered for sale to private individuals and the simultaneous leasing of these buildings to the Greek State, which will pay rent to their new private owners. Order No 234/24.4.2013 by the Inter-Ministerial Restructuring and Privatisation Committee (Government Gazette 1020/25.4.13, vol. 2) has transferred an area of real estate that includes five schools to the ownership of TAIPED for exploitation.

Furthermore, press reports have mentioned the closure of the 'Panagia' hospital in Thessaloniki, mainly due to the fact that the building housing the hospital is not owned by it. Given that the same issue is likely to arise with all the buildings earmarked for privatisation used by public services such as schools, will the Commission say:

1. Does the sale of public buildings already constructed either with Greek public money or EU funds count as a public-private partnership project?

2. Does the sale to private individuals of the 28 buildings comply with the provisions of European law on public procurement and concessions?

3. Is it aware of the transfer of ownership of five school buildings in Thessaloniki to TAIPED with the intention of selling them to private individuals?

4. As a member of the Troika, does it believe that hospitals, schools and other public services that are located in buildings they do not own should merge or cease to function?

5. Is it in favour of the privatisation of public school and hospital buildings?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

Real estate is an important asset in Greece. Better management could boost scale economies and efficiency and lower market prices. The transactions for the privatisations of public buildings are organised as direct sales without PPP. For infrastructure or productive activity financed by EU Structural and Cohesion Funds, changes in ownership should take into account the durability requirements of Article 57 of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

Decisions on the share sales or the full ownership transaction sales are governed by Article 345 TFEU, according to which Member States are free to decide on the system of property ownership rights. In line with the EU Court of Justice decision Case C-244/11 (Commission versus Greece, paragraphs 15 and 16), this provision does not exempt the Member States' systems of property ownership from the fundamental rules of the EU Treaty, such as the right of establishment and the free movement of capital (Articles 49 and 63 TFEU). However, the outcome of the sales process can be subject to EU and national regulatory scrutiny if this is foreseen by EU or national legislation.

EU Public Procurement rules do not apply to the sale of property by contracting authority, unless it results in an award of a public contract or a concession.

The Commission is not aware of the transfer of ownership of five school buildings in Thessaloniki to TAIPED. The ownership status of a building per se is not a meaningful criterion to merge or close schools, hospitals and other services in order to ensure better use of public money. Furthermore, public schools and hospital buildings are not included in the privatisation program.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007551/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Espropri forzati di massa contro le minoranze etniche. Il caso dello Sri Lanka

Il Comitato dei Cittadini di Mannar, a nord est dell'isola di Sri Lanka, ha denunciato una serie di espropri forzati compiuti dalle autorità locali ai danni dei cittadini del distretto,

Considerando che, dal 1983 al 2009, lo Sri Lanka é stato teatro di una guerra civile tra l'amministrazione centrale e la minoranza rappresentata dalle «Tigri Tamil», il cui obiettivo é la creazione di uno stato indipendente nella parte settentrionale dell'isola;

Osservando inoltre che negli ultimi mesi la situazione é andata incontro a un rapido deterioramento e che le espropriazioni, prive di autorizzazione giudiziaria, vengono condotte quasi esclusivamente ai danni della minoranza tamil, nonostante le denunce sporte anche da parte di organizzazioni non governative;

Evidenziando poi i numerosi episodi di interferenza, da parte dell'esercito, nel normale svolgimento delle conferenze interreligiose indette nel Paese per risolvere pacificamente le ostilità;

Sottolineando infine come gli espropri violino l'art. 7 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, a titolo del quale: «Ogni individuo ha diritto al rispetto della propria vita privata e familiare, del proprio domicilio e delle proprie comunicazioni»;

Si chiede alla Commissione:

— se sia in possesso di nuove informazioni su quanto avvenuto sull'isola;

— quali strumenti intenda adottare per richiamare l'attenzione delle autorità locali, affinché nel Paese sia garantito il normale svolgimento della vita civile.

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

L'Unione europea segue attentamente le relazioni tra le comunità etniche nello Sri Lanka ed è pronta a promuovere le iniziative del governo dello Sri Lanka per portare avanti il programma di riconciliazione, anche in merito a questioni quali la responsabilità dei fatti avvenuti durante il conflitto, il ruolo delle forze armate nel Nord e nell'Est del paese, nonché a garantire il sostentamento dei civili Tamil.

La comunità internazionale, compresa l'UE, ha sollecitato il governo dello Sri Lanka in occasione di incontri successivi del Consiglio per i diritti umani delle Nazioni Unite a compiere progressi nell'attuazione delle raccomandazioni costruttive del *Sri Lanka's own Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission report* (rapporto della commissione dello Sri Lanka sulle lezioni apprese e la riconciliazione). L'UE intende continuare ad affrontare le questioni nel corso dei contatti con le autorità dello Sri Lanka.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007551/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Large-scale compulsory expropriation affecting ethnic minorities: events in Sri Lanka

The citizens' committee of Mannar, at the north eastern end of the island of Sri Lanka, has reported a series of compulsory expropriations by the local authorities affecting citizens in the district.

Between 1983 and 2009, there was a civil war in Sri Lanka between the central government and the minority represented by the Tamil Tigers, whose aim is to create an independent state in the northern part of the island.

In recent months, the situation has rapidly worsened and expropriations are being carried out, without legal authority, almost exclusively at the expense of the Tamil minority, despite complaints also made by non-governmental organisations.

There are many instances of interference by the army in the normal conduct of inter-religious conferences convened in the country to achieve a peaceful resolution to the hostilities.

Finally, the expropriations contravene Article 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, under which: '[e]veryone has the right to respect for his or her private and family life, home and communications'.

— Does the Commission have any new information on what has happened on the island, and

— what steps does it intend to take to draw the attention of local authorities to the need to guarantee normal civilian life in the country?

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

The EU is following closely the relations between the ethnic communities in Sri Lanka and stands ready to support actions by the Sri Lankan Government to advance the agenda for reconciliation, including on issues such as accountability for the events which took place during the conflict, the role of the armed forces in the north and east of the country and ensuring the livelihoods of Tamil civilians.

The international community, including the EU, has urged the Government of Sri Lanka at successive meetings of the UN Human Rights Council to make progress in implementing the constructive recommendations of Sri Lanka's own Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission report. The EU intends to continue raising these matters in the course of its contacts with the Sri Lankan authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007552/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Scontri tra sunniti e sciiti in Egitto

Alla fine di giugno un corteo di circa tremila estremisti sunniti ha linciato 4 musulmani sciiti, accusati di fare opera di proselitismo nella striscia di Gaza.

Considerando che almeno tre milioni di persone appartengono alla fede sciita e che, con l'ascesa al potere dei Fratelli Musulmani, le violenze contro le altre minoranze religiose, sia sciita sia cristiana, sono in netto aumento, denunciato anche dalle organizzazioni non governative presenti sul territorio;

osservando inoltre che i leader salafiti hanno più volte lanciato intimidazioni agli sciiti, intervenendo con atti di pestaggio di fronte ai quali i testimoni raccontano l'inerzia delle forze di polizia;

rilevando infine il rischio di una nuova guerra civile in Egitto, scatenata dalle prossime manifestazioni di dissenso organizzate dall'opposizione al fine di ottenere la destituzione del presidente in carica Morsi;

potrebbe la Commissione chiarire:

— se è a conoscenza di questi avvenimenti; e

— come intenda far fronte a eventuali scontri che potrebbero nuovamente verificarsi nel contesto politico egiziano?

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

L'Unione europea è perfettamente consapevole degli eventi ai quali l'onorevole deputato si riferisce. L'UE, in particolare alla luce dei recenti sviluppi intervenuti nel paese, sta monitorando la situazione in loco in stretto contatto e attraverso il dialogo con le principali parti interessate al fine di adottare le misure necessarie e appropriate. A tale riguardo, il 14 luglio l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha rilasciato una dichiarazione a nome dell'Unione europea ([1]) in cui si sollecita un dialogo concreto e di vasta portata all'interno del paese che includa tutte le forze politiche che si impegnano a rispettare i principi democratici. È importante tenere conto del fatto che la base per l'impegno dell'UE in Egitto è la nuova politica europea di vicinato adottata nel 2011, secondo la quale l'impegno dell'UE è strettamente subordinato al rispetto dei diritti fondamentali e dei valori, per il principio *more for more* (maggiori aiuti a fronte di un maggiore impegno).

Va ricordato infine che l'Unione europea segue con attenzione la situazione in loco nell'ambito del dialogo con le principali parti interessate al fine di adottare le misure del caso, in particolare nelle circostanze attuali, in funzione del contesto politico. L'UE rimane inequivocabilmente impegnata a sostenere le aspirazioni del popolo egiziano verso la democrazia e una *governance* inclusiva.

([1]) http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/egypt/press_corner/all_news/news/2013/20130714_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007552/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Clashes between Sunnis and Shias in Egypt

At the end of June, four Shia Muslims were lynched during a demonstration by around 3 000 Sunni extremists who accused them of proselytism in the Gaza Strip.

The Shia faith has at least three million adherents. With the rise to power of the Muslim Brotherhood, there has been a marked increase in violence targeting other religious minorities, both Shias and Christians. This has also been condemned by non-governmental organisations in the country.

Salafist leaders have repeatedly instigated attacks on Shias, subjecting them to beatings while, according to witness reports, the police stand by and do nothing.

There is a danger that future demonstrations organised by the opposition with the aim of removing President Morsi from office could spark off civil war in Egypt.

Is the Commission aware of these events?

How will it react to any further politically inspired clashes in Egypt?

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

The EU is well aware of the mentioned events. The EU, especially in light of the recent developments in the country, is monitoring the situation on the ground in close contact and dialogue with key stake holders in order to take the necessary and appropriate measures. In this respect, the HR/VP on 14 July issued a declaration on behalf of the EU ([1]) calling for a broad-based and substantial dialogue within the country, inclusive of all those political forces committed to democratic principles. It is important to bear in mind that the basis for the EU engagement in Egypt is the renewed EU Neighbourhood Policy adopted in 2011 according to which the EU engagement is strictly linked to the respect of fundamental rights and values, the so-called more-for-more principle.

Finally, the EU is continuously monitoring the situation on the ground in dialogue with key stakeholders in order to take the appropriate measures, particularly under the present circumstances, according to the political context. The EU remains unequivocally committed to supporting the Egyptian people in their aspirations to democracy and inclusive governance.

([1]) http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/egypt/press_corner/all_news/news/2013/20130714_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007553/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Attivista vietnamita in sciopero della fame contro le condizioni carcerarie

Dopo la conclusione dello sciopero della fame intrapreso dal dissidente Cu Huy Ha Vu, anche un altro attivista cattolico ha scelto di attuare la stessa forma di protesta nel suo paese, il Vietnam. Tran Minh Nhat, questo il suo nome, ha deciso di far conoscere così al mondo le violazioni dei diritti umani che colpiscono i detenuti nelle carceri nazionali.

Considerando che Nhat, detenuto in prigione a causa della sua militanza nel partito Viet tan, dichiarato illegale dal governo centrale, accusa le autorità di mantenerlo in condizioni di vita disumane e di rifiutargli la lettura di libri cristiani;

evidenziando inoltre come la sua condanna sia stata denunciata alla stampa internazionale sia dalle ONG sia dai blogger vietnamiti, e in particolare da quegli studenti di fede cristiana che da anni denunciano discriminazioni ai danni delle minoranze;

osservando infine che, nel caso precedente, Cu Huy Ha Vu ha dovuto rifiutare il cibo per 25 giorni di seguito, prima di ottenere qualche concessione dal governo centrale — tra cui il riesame della sua denuncia di abusi subiti nell'istituto penitenziario dove sconta la pena;

Può la Commissione chiarire:

— se è a conoscenza degli ultimi sviluppi della vicenda; e

— se e come vuole intervenire a tutela della libertà di espressione e di credo in Vietnam?

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

L'UE segue attentamente il caso di Tran Minh Nhat, che figura sull'elenco dell'UE delle persone a rischio. In base alle ultime informazioni, il 30 giugno 2013 Tran Minh Nhat ha posto fine allo sciopero della fame e la sua famiglia ha ricevuto l'autorizzazione a visitarlo il 1° luglio 2013.

L'UE affronta le questioni riguardanti i diritti umani in riunioni periodiche con il governo vietnamita. Diverse iniziative sono state condotte in materia. La libertà di espressione e la libertà di religione o di credo sono state al centro della seconda sessione del dialogo rafforzato UE-Vietnam sui diritti umani dell'ottobre 2013, occasione in cui l'UE ha ribadito le proprie preoccupazioni, affrontando casi specifici e incoraggiando il Vietnam a impegnarsi nuovamente con il relatore speciale dell'ONU per la libertà di religione. La terza sessione del dialogo, programmata per settembre 2013, offrirà un'ulteriore occasione per affrontare questi temi con le autorità vietnamite.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007553/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Vietnamese activist on hunger strike against prison conditions

Following the end of the hunger strike by dissident Cu Huy Ha Vu, another Catholic activist has chosen to make the same kind of protest in his country, Vietnam. His name is Tran Minh Nhat and he has chosen this way to make the world aware of the human rights violations suffered by those held in the country's prisons.

Mr Nhat was imprisoned because of his militancy in the Viet Tan party, which was declared illegal by central government. He accuses the authorities of holding him in inhumane conditions and refusing to allow him to read Christian reading material.

He states that his conviction has been condemned in the international press by both non-governmental organisations and Vietnamese bloggers, particularly by Christian students, who have for many years been claiming that minorities are discriminated against.

In the previous case, Cu Huy Ha Vu had to refuse food for 25 consecutive days before obtaining some concessions from central government, including a re-examination of his complaint regarding abuses suffered in the prison institution where he is serving his sentence.

— Can the Commission clarify whether it is aware of the latest developments in this situation, and

— if and how it intends to intervene to protect freedom of expression and belief in Vietnam?

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

The EU has been following closely of the case of Mr Tran Minh Nhat, who is on the EU's list of Persons of Concern. According to recent information, he ended his hunger strike on 30 June 2013 and his family was authorised to visit him on 1 July 2013.

The EU raises human rights concerns in regular meetings with the Vietnamese Government. Demarches on human rights have been carried out repeatedly. Freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief were key elements of the 2nd session of the enhanced EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue held in October 2013, where the EU reiterated its concerns, addressed specific cases and encouraged Vietnam to re-engage with the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion. The third session of the dialogue, tentatively scheduled to take place in September 2013, will be a further occasion to discuss these issues with the Vietnamese Government.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007554/13
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Traffico di donne verso la Cina dai paesi limitrofi

L'ultima relazione sul traffico di esseri umani presentata dal governo americano evidenzia un business crescente nella schiavitù femminile diretta verso la Cina e proveniente dai paesi limitrofi, soprattutto da Myanmar, Vietnam, Corea del Nord, Laos e Mongolia.

Considerando che, secondo tale relazione, il governo cinese non prenderebbe alcuna misura di contrasto al fenomeno, favorendo anzi — con il suo vuoto normativo — un futuro aumento del traffico di esseri umani verso l'interno del paese;

constatando inoltre che circa 40 milioni di uomini cinesi adulti sono ormai nell'impossibilità di trovare una moglie cinese poiché, a causa della politica del figlio unico introdotta negli anni Settanta, nel paese nascono 117 maschi ogni 100 femmine;

rilevando infine che anche l'organizzazione Women's Rights without Frontiers (Wrwf) ha di recente scritto sia al presidente USA Obama, sia al capo di Stato cinese Xi Jinping, chiedendo di porre termine alla tratta delle schiave e alle atrocità connesse;

Può la Commissione chiarire:

— se è a conoscenza dei fatti riportati e se può fornire ulteriori dati al riguardo; e

— quali misure intende intraprendere, a livello internazionale, affinché si ponga fine alla tratta delle schiave?

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

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza del fenomeno della tratta delle donne in Cina e condivide la preoccupazione dell'onorevole deputato.

Il SEAE esorta continuamente la Cina — nell'ambito del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani e in altre sedi appropriate — ad allineare le sue politiche con le convenzioni internazionali pertinenti di cui la Cina è firmataria. Le nostre discussioni con il governo cinese sul tema della tratta di esseri umani sono iniziate nel 2001 in occasione delle consultazioni ad alto livello sulla lotta contro la migrazione irregolare e la tratta di esseri umani. Al 15° vertice UE-Cina, l'Unione e i suoi interlocutori cinesi hanno deciso di istituire un nuovo meccanismo, il dialogo ad alto livello UE-Cina su migrazione e mobilità, che consentirà di trattare anche questioni sensibili e immediate, come la migrazione irregolare. Il primo ciclo del dialogo si svolgerà in autunno.

La lotta contro la tratta di esseri umani è un tema prioritario per l'Unione e i suoi Stati membri. A giugno 2012 la Commissione ha adottato la strategia dell'UE per l'eradicazione della tratta di esseri umani 2012-2016, che comprende circa 40 azioni riguardanti i diversi aspetti della tratta di esseri umani. Nel 2009 il Consiglio Giustizia e affari interni ha adottato un documento mirato all'azione sul rafforzamento della cooperazione esterna nella lotta contro la tratta di esseri umani. La Cina figura tra i paesi e le regioni prioritari elencati nel documento, il cui obiettivo principale è rafforzare la cooperazione e il partenariato con i paesi e le regioni in questione. La Commissione finanzia attualmente un progetto con la Cina nell'ambito del programma tematico su migrazione e asilo, in cui rientrano diversi aspetti della tratta di esseri umani. ([1])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?path=EU%20Projects/DCI_MIGR_2010_229_653

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007554/13
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Trafficking of women to China from neighbouring countries

According to the US Government's latest Trafficking in Persons Report, the trafficking into China of women from neighbouring countries, in particular Myanmar, Vietnam, North Korea, Laos and Mongolia, is a growing business.

According to the report, the Chinese Government has made no efforts to combat the problem, and is instead encouraging — through the gaps in its law — a future increase in inbound human trafficking into the country.

Moreover, some 40 million Chinese men are today unable to find a Chinese bride because the one-child policy introduced in the 1970s means that 117 boys are born for every 100 girls in China.

Lastly, the organisation Women's Rights Without Frontiers (WRWF) also recently wrote to US President Barack Obama and to Chinese President Xi Jinping to call for an end to human trafficking and other related atrocities.

— Can the Commission clarify whether it is aware of the facts reported and whether it can provide further information in this regard?

— Can it clarify what measures it intends to take at international level to ensure an end to human trafficking?

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

The HR/VP is aware of trafficking of women to China and shares the Honourable Member's concern.

The EEAS continuously urges China — at the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue and in other appropriate fora — to bring its policies in line with relevant international covenants to which China is a signatory. We started discussing the issue of human trafficking with the Chinese government in 2001 in the framework of High Level Consultations on fighting irregular migration and trafficking in human beings. At the 15th EU-China Summit, the EU and its Chinese interlocutors agreed to launch a successor mechanism, the EU-China High Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility, which will also address sensitive and immediate issues such as irregular migration. The first round of this dialogue is due to take place in autumn this year.

Addressing trafficking in human beings is a priority area for the EU and its Member States. The Commission adopted in June 2012 the EU Strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings 2012-2016 that includes around 40 actions addressing the different aspects of trafficking in human beings. The Justice and Home Affairs Council adopted in 2009 the Action Oriented Paper on strengthening external cooperation on actions against trafficking in human beings. This includes China on the list of priority countries and regions, with the main aim to strengthen cooperation and partnership with these countries and regions. The Commission funds an ongoing project with China from the Thematic Programme for Migration and Asylum that includes different aspects of trafficking in human beings. ([1])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?path=EU%20Projects/DCI_MIGR_2010_229_653

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007556/13
aan de Commissie
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE) en Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(26 juni 2013)

Betreft: Nederlandse Kentekenplaten

Volgens de Nederlandse wet- en regelgeving moet een Nederlandse kentekenplaat gemaakt zijn van aluminium en moet het kenteken in reliëf in de plaat gestanst zijn. Bovendien is de productie, uitgifte en inname van kentekenplaten gereguleerd in het administratieve systeem GAIK. GAIK is een open systeem, dat open staat voor alle gecertificeerde commerciële bedrijven en producenten uit de gehele EU, zodat consumenten een vrije keuze hebben waar ze hun eigen kentekenplaten willen kopen.

In verschillende EU-landen mogen kentekens geproduceerd en gebruikt worden die of een metalen, of een kunststoffen ondergrond kunnen hebben; bovendien worden de kentekens daar digitaal elektronisch geprint (in tegenstelling tot gestanst). Deze kentekenplaten zijn toegelaten en gecertificeerd in meerdere lidstaten maar worden desondanks niet toegelaten op de Nederlandse markt. Nederland beroept zich daarbij zuiver en alleen op technische en fysieke gronden.

Een Nederlandse distributeur wil in dit onderhavige geval overgaan tot het importeren vanuit het Verenigd Koninkrijk van componenten, bedrijfsmiddelen en halffabricaten van deze niet-gestanste kentekenplaten. Belangrijk om te vermelden is dat de uiteindelijke (eind)productie, het printen en bevestigen van de kentekens op de kentekenplaat en de afgifte in Nederland binnen de regels van GAIK zal gebeuren door reeds bestaande erkende gecertificeerde Nederlandse bedrijven.

Volgens artikel 36 van het Verdrag mogen er alleen beperkingen worden opgelegd voor de invoer van producten uit hoofde van bescherming van de openbare zedelijkheid, de openbare orde, de openbare veiligheid, de gezondheid en het leven van personen, dieren of planten, het nationaal artistiek historisch en archeologisch bezit of uit hoofde van bescherming van de industriële en commerciële eigendom.

Is de Commissie van mening dat kentekenplaten vallen onder artikel 36 van het Verdrag? Zo ja, op welk gebied? Zo nee, moet Nederland daarom dan volgens artikel 34 van het Verdrag deze kentekenplaten gewoon toestaan op hun markt?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(26 augustus 2013)

Artikel 34 VWEU verbiedt kwantitatieve invoerbeperkingen en alle maatregelen van gelijke werking tussen de lidstaten. Onder deze verdragsbepaling vallen alle vormen van invoer, zolang de waren op geld waardeerbaar zijn en het voorwerp van handelstransacties kunnen vormen ([1]).

Overeenkomstig het Verdrag van Wenen van 1968 inzake het wegverkeer ([2]) bevestigen het inschrijvingsbewijs en de kentekenplaat dat een voertuig is ingeschreven en dat de bevoegde autoriteit van het desbetreffende land een inschrijvingsnummer heeft toegekend. Zowel het inschrijvingsbewijs als de kentekenplaten die op grond van een administratief besluit worden afgegeven, zijn essentiële voorwaarden voor de erkenning van de inschrijving van een voertuig in het internationale wegverkeer.

Uit een kentekenplaat van een auto blijkt niet alleen dat de auto is ingeschreven in de lidstaat die de kentekenplaat heeft afgegeven; dankzij de kentekenplaat kan ook worden vastgesteld om welke auto het gaat. In veel landen bevatten kentekenplaten extra informatie in verband met belastingen of speciale technische kenmerken. Via de kentekenplaat kan het verband worden gelegd tussen de auto en zijn eigenaar of houder.

De Commissie is dan ook van mening dat materiaal dat voor de productie van kentekenplaten wordt gebruikt (zoals metaal of plastic) het voorwerp van een handelstransactie kan vormen, maar dat afgewerkte kentekenplaten met een uniek nummer waaruit blijkt om welke specifieke auto het gaat, officiële documenten zijn die niet kunnen worden beschouwd als goederen in het licht van artikel 34 VWEU. De Nederlandse bepalingen inzake technische en veiligheidsnormen voor afgewerkte autokentekenplaten wat het materiaal betreft waarvan deze moeten worden gemaakt, vormen bijgevolg geen invoerbeperking in de zin van artikel 34 VWEU.

([1]) Zie de arresten van het Hof van Justitie in Zaak 7/68 Commissie/Italië [1968] Jurispr. 617, 626 en Zaak C-97/98 Jägerskiöld [1999] Jurispr. I-7319, punt 30.

([2]) Verdrag van Wenen inzake het wegverkeer van 8 november 1968.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007556/13
to the Commission
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE) and Corien Wortmann-Kool (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Dutch vehicle registration plates

Under Dutch law, a Dutch vehicle registration plate must be made of aluminium, and the registration mark must be stamped into the plate in relief. Moreover, the production, issuing and return of registration plates are regulated in the administrative system GAIK. GAIK is an open system, open to all certified businesses and producers throughout the EU, so that consumers have a free choice as to where to buy their own registration plates.

In various EU Member States, registration plates may be produced and used which are made of either metal or plastic; moreover, the registration mark is printed on them digitally, electronically (rather than being stamped into them). Such registration plates are permitted and certified in a number of Member States but nonetheless are not permitted on the Dutch market. The Netherlands justifies this purely on technical and physical grounds.

One Dutch distributor wishes to start importing from the United Kingdom components, producer goods and semi-finished products for production of these non-stamped registration plates. It is important to note that the ultimate (end) production of the registration plate, the printing and attachment of the registration mark on it and the issuing of the registration plate in the Netherlands will comply with the rules of the GAIK system and be performed by existing Dutch businesses which are already recognised and certified.

Pursuant to Article 36 of the Treaty, restrictions may only be imposed on the importation of products on grounds of public morality, public policy, public security, the protection of health and life of humans, animals or plants, the protection of national treasures possessing artistic, historic or archaeological value or the protection of industrial and commercial property.

Does the Commission consider that registration plates fall under Article 36 of the Treaty? If so, in which field? If not, must the Netherlands therefore simply permit the use of these registration plates on its market pursuant to Article 34 of the Treaty?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

Article 34 TFEU, which prohibits quantitative restrictions on imports and all measures having equivalent effect, between Member States, covers all types of imports of products, so long as the products can be valued in money and are capable of forming the subject of commercial transactions ([1]).

Under the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic ([2]), the registration certificate and registration plate constitute confirmation that a vehicle has been registered and that a registration number has been issued by the competent authority of the particular country concerned. Both the registration certificate and the registration plates issued on the basis of an administrative decision represent essential conditions for the recognition of the registration of a vehicle in international road traffic.

Car registration plates not only show that the car has been registered in the Member State that issued the plate, they also allow for the identification of the car. In many countries, car registration plates contain further information related to tax or to technical specificities and they make it possible to link the car to its owner or keeper.

Therefore the Commission takes the view that while the materials used for the production of registration plates (e.g. metal or plastic) could form the object of a commercial transaction, finished registration plates that bear a unique number and identify a specific car are official documents that cannot be considered as goods in the light of Art. 34 TFEU. Thus, the Dutch provisions on technical and safety standards for finished car registration plates relating to the material they should be made of do not constitute a restriction on imports within the meaning of Art. 34 TFEU.

([1]) See judgments of the Court of Justice in Case 7/68 Commission v Italy [1968] ECR 617, 626 and Case C-97/98 Jägerskiöld [1999] ECR I-7319, paragraph 30.

([2]) Vienna Convention on Road Traffic of 8 November 1968.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-007557/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποίηση των εταιριών ύδατος της Ελλάδας

Ο Επίτροπος κ. Barnier, σε δήλωσή του (21/6/2013), εκδήλωσε την προθυμία του να προχωρήσει στην «απομάκρυνση του νερού από το πεδίο εφαρμογής της οδηγίας για τις συμβάσεις παραχώρησης», προκειμένου να πείσει τους πολίτες ότι, «το νερό δεν είναι προς ιδιωτικοποίηση».

Ταυτόχρονα, όμως, η Επιτροπή, μέσω της Τρόικα, έχει επιβάλει στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση την πώληση των δύο μεγαλύτερων δημόσιων επιχειρήσεων ύδρευσης και αποχέτευσης στην Ελλάδα, της ΕΥΔΑΠ και της ΕΥΑΘ. Με τον τρόπο αυτό, προχωρά ουσιαστικά στην ιδιωτικοποίηση του τομέα ύδατος, ερχόμενη σε πλήρη αντίθεση με τις διαβεβαιώσεις του κ. Barnier, με το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ περί ουδετερότητας στο καθεστώς ιδιοκτησίας, με διάφορα ψηφίσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, αλλά κυρίως με την επιθυμία των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών, όπως εκφράστηκε και από τις 1,5 εκατομμύρια υπογραφές που συλλέχθηκαν κατά τη διάρκεια της πρωτοβουλίας right2water.

Με δεδομένο επίσης ότι οι δύο αυτές επιχειρήσεις είναι κερδοφόρες και έχουν από μόνες τους τη δυνατότητα εκσυγχρονισμού του δικτύου τους όσο και των παρεχόμενων υπηρεσιών, χωρίς την ανάγκη προσφυγής σε ιδιωτικά κεφάλαια, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Θα ήταν θετική σε ενδεχόμενο αίτημα από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για εξαίρεση των εταιριών ύδρευσης από το γενικό ξεπούλημα των δημοσίων επιχειρήσεων που πραγματοποιείται αυτή τη στιγμή στην Ελλάδα;

Αν ναι, υπό ποιες προϋποθέσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(1 Αυγούστου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη δηλώσει ότι δεν έχει πολιτική που να υποχρεώνει τα κράτη μέλη να ιδιωτικοποιούν τις υπηρεσίες ύδρευσης. Η Επιτροπή αναγνωρίζει ότι το νερό είναι δημόσιο αγαθό που έχει ζωτική σημασία για τους πολίτες και ότι η διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων αποτελεί ευθύνη των κρατών μελών, και γι αυτόν το λόγο έχει πάρει ουδέτερη θέση επί του θέματος της δημόσιας ή της ιδιωτικής ιδιοκτησίας των υδάτινων πόρων, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 345 της ΣΛΕΕ. Η Επιτροπή έχει ήδη ανακοινώσει ότι θα αποσύρει το νερό από το πεδίο εφαρμογής της οδηγίας για τις συμβάσεις παραχώρησης και θα συνεχίσει να παρακολουθεί από κοντά την κατάσταση σε αυτόν τον ευαίσθητο τομέα.

Η επιλογή για το ποιες, σε ποιο βαθμό και με ποια σειρά θα πρέπει να ιδιωτικοποιηθούν οι δημόσιες επιχειρήσεις ή τα δημόσια περιουσιακά στοιχεία αποτελεί αποκλειστική ευθύνη των κρατών μελών, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των διάφορων δυσκολιών που αντιμετωπίζουν και των στόχων που έχουν καθορίσει. Στην ΕΕ υπάρχει ένα ευρύ φάσμα δημόσιων και ιδιωτικών ιδιοκτησιακών καθεστώτων όσον αφορά τις εταιρίες ύδρευσης. Τόσο στα δημόσια όσο και στα ιδιωτικά καθεστώτα διαπιστώνονται περιπτώσεις με προβλήματα αλλά και περιπτώσεις που θεωρούνται επιτυχημένες. Η Επιτροπή εντούτοις θεωρεί ότι η ίδρυση μιας ρυθμιστικής αρχής και μια αγορά που λειτουργεί κατά τρόπο εύρυθμο αποτελούν τις απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις για την εγγύηση της επιτυχίας αυτών των καθεστώτων με στόχο την προστασία των συμφερόντων των καταναλωτών και την διατήρηση της ποιότητας του περιβάλλοντος.

Τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία που περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποίησης για τις χώρες του προγράμματος είναι το αποτέλεσμα των αποφάσεων των εθνικών αρχών και μόνον. Οι συζητήσεις στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος προσαρμογής επικεντρώνονται στις γενικές ανάγκες χρηματοδότησης του προγράμματος, περιλαμβανομένων των εσόδων ιδιωτικοποίησης από την πώληση κρατικών περιουσιακών στοιχείων σε επενδυτές, αλλά η κατάρτιση του προγράμματος ιδιωτικοποιήσεων και η επιλογή των περιουσιακών στοιχείων, αποτελεί αποκλειστική ευθύνη των οικείων κρατών μελών.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007557/13
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Privatisation of water companies in Greece

The statement by Commissioner Barnier of 21 June 2013 on the exclusion of water from the Concessions Directive was intended to reassure the public that there were no plans to privatise water.

At the same time, however, the Commission, from within the Troika, has called on the Greek Government to sell off its two largest water and sewerage utilities in Greece, the Athens (EYDAP) and Thessaloniki (EYATH) utilities, effectively privatising water, notwithstanding Mr Barnier's assertions and the provisions of Article 345 TFEU stating that the Treaties shall in no way prejudice the rules in the Member States governing the system of property ownership. Indeed, such a move flies in the face of a number of European Parliament resolutions and, more to the point, the express wishes of European citizens as reflected by the 1500 signatures gathered in support of the right2water initiative.

Given that the two utilities are showing a profit and are in a position to modernise their supply networks and services independently and without the need for private capital injections, would the Commission be favourably inclined to a request from the Greek Government that water utilities be exempted from the current wave of privatisations in Greece and, if so, under what conditions?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Commission has already stated that it does not have a policy of forcing Member States (MS) to privatise water services. The Commission recognises that water is a public good which is vital to citizens and that the management of water resources is a matter for MS, and therefore has a neutral position on the public or private ownership of water resources, in accordance with Article 345 of the TFEU. The Commission has already announced that it will remove water from the scope of the concessions directive and will continue to monitor the situation in this sensitive sector closely.

The choice of what, how far and in which sequence public assets or companies should be privatised remains entirely with the MS, taking into account the various constraints they face and objectives they set for themselves. EU-wide experience offers a variety of different public or private property models for water utilities. In both public and private models, there are cases of problematic outcomes, but also success stories. However, the Commission considers that the creation of a regulatory authority and an appropriate market functioning environment are crucial prerequisites for guaranteeing the success of any of these models to protect consumers' interests and maintain environmental values.

The assets included in the privatisation program for program countries are the exclusive result of the national authorities' decision. Discussions in the context of the adjustment programme are focusing on the overall program financing needs, including privatisation receipts resulting from the sales of state-owned assets to investors, but the design of the privatisation program and the choice of assets remain entirely with the MS concerned.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-007558/13
do Komisji
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(26 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie projektu nowego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych (GBER)

W związku z proponowanym przez Komisję ograniczaniem wysokości kwoty pomocy na jeden program pomocowy wyłączającej obowiązek notyfikacji takiej pomocy (art. 1 ust. 2 lit. a projektu rozporządzenia) oraz uwzględniając przewidywany negatywny wpływ tego zapisu na zatrudnienie osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce i liczne wątpliwości dotyczące jego wpływu na przeciwdziałanie naruszeniu konkurencji, pytam czy Komisja mogłaby rozważyć odstąpienie od tego zapisu lub zaproponować inne rozwiązania?

W odniesieniu do pomocy szkoleniowej, proszę o odpowiedź na pytanie, dlaczego została obniżona maksymalna kwota pomocy na szkolenia z 80 % do 70 %? Jednocześnie apeluję do Komisji o pozostawienie maksymalnej intensywności pomocy na poziomie 80 % w przypadku szkoleń dla osób niepełnosprawnych. Podkreślam, iż podnoszenie kwalifikacji pracowników efektywnie wpłynęło zarówno na innowacyjność, jak i ogólną konkurencyjność przedsiębiorstw. Obniżenie dotychczasowego poziomu pomocy grozi perturbacjami na rynku pracy.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Joaquina Almunię w imieniu Komisji
(22 lipca 2013 r.)

Komisja jest zaangażowana w obronę praw niepełnosprawnych pracowników.

Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę, że wprowadzenie do ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych proponowanego progu powodującego obowiązek zgłoszenia bardzo dużych programów może spowodować konieczność notyfikacji niektórych polskich programów w zakresie pomocy na zatrudnienie osób niepełnosprawnych. Proponowany próg oraz, ogólnie rzecz biorąc, cały projekt ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych to wniosek ustawodawczy, który Komisja chce przetestować w drodze konsultacji publicznych oraz dyskusji z państwami członkowskimi.

Komisja otrzymała uwagi na temat projektu ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych od wielu obywateli oraz organizacji reprezentujących osoby niepełnosprawne, a także od polskich władz. Komisja przeanalizuje te uwagi i rozważy, jak najlepiej zająć się poruszonymi kwestiami dla dobra osób niepełnosprawnych.

Komisja podkreśla, że projekt ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych przewiduje zmniejszenie intensywności pomocy szkoleniowej o 10 % jedynie w przypadku szkoleń ogólnych, natomiast w przypadku szkoleń specjalistycznych podstawowa intensywność pomocy została podwojona. Proponowane ograniczenie intensywności pomocy szkoleniowej zostało wprowadzone jako przeciwwaga dla zniesienia rozróżnienia pomiędzy szkoleniami specjalistycznymi i ogólnymi w projekcie ogólnego rozporządzenia w sprawie wyłączeń blokowych, co powinno znacznie uprościć przestrzeganie przepisów tego rozporządzenia w przypadku środków pomocy szkoleniowej.

W każdym razie należy zaznaczyć, że Komisja obecnie analizuje uwagi i dokumentacje dotyczące projektu przepisów w sprawie pomocy szkoleniowej, otrzymane w wyniku konsultacji publicznych oraz na posiedzeniu z państwami członkowskimi. Komisja rozważy najlepszy sposób rozwiązania problemów, na które zwrócono uwagę.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007558/13
to the Commission
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: New draft General block exemption Regulation (GBER)

In view of the Commission's proposal to limit the quota for aid that would be exempted from the duty of notification under one aid programme (Article 1(2) (a) of the draft regulation), and given this provision's anticipated negative impact on the employment of disabled persons in Poland, as well as the numerous concerns raised regarding its effect on countering competition violations, is the Commission willing to consider abandoning this provision or proposing a different solution?

Why was the maximum quota for training aid reduced from 80% to 70%? I call on the Commission to retain maximum aid intensity at 80% in respect of training for disabled persons. I would stress that improving workers' qualifications has had a major effect on innovation and on the general competitiveness of businesses. Lowering current aid levels carries with it the risk of causing disruption on the labour market.

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(22 July 2013)

The Commission is committed to defending the rights of the disabled workers.

It is aware that the introduction into the new General block exemption Regulation of a proposed threshold for notification of very large schemes might trigger the necessity to notify certain Polish schemes for employment aid for disabled persons. However, this threshold, and more in general, the whole draft GBER, is a proposal which the Commission wants to test through public consultation and in discussions with the Member States.

The Commission has received feedback on the draft GBER from numerous citizens and disabled people's organisations as well as from the Polish authorities. It will analyse this feedback now and will consider how best to address the comments to the benefit of disabled persons.

The Commission stresses that draft GBER provides for a reduction of training aid intensity by 10% only for general training, while for specific training it doubles the basic aid intensity. The proposed limitation of the training aid intensity was introduced to counter-balance the abolition of the distinction between specific and general training in the draft GBER, which should significantly simplify compliance with the GBER for training aid measures.

This said, it should be noted that the Commission is currently analysing the feedback and evidence on the draft provision concerning training aid received from the public consultation and at the meeting with the Member States. It will now consider how best to address the concerns expressed.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007559/13
an die Kommission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzierung von Käfighaltung und Kastenhaltung von Schweinen in EU Drittstaaten

Medienberichten zufolge finanziert die Europäische Union über Mittel der Weltbank und der EBRD in Drittstaaten wie z. B. China, der Ukraine oder der Türkei die Käfighaltung und Kastenhaltungssysteme für Schweine, die nicht der EU- Norm entsprechen.

1. Weiß die Kommission, ob die Kastenstandhaltung von Schweinen, die nicht der EU-Norm entsprechen, in Drittstaaten durch finanzielle Mittel der Europäischen Union finanziert wird?

2. Weiß die Kommission, ob die Käfighaltung von Hühnern in Drittstaaten durch finanzielle Mittel der Europäischen Union finanziert wird?

3. Sollten sich diese Berichte als wahr erweisen, was gedenkt die Europäische Kommission dagegen zu unternehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(20. August 2013)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass mehrere Tierschutzorganisationen im Mai 2013 einen Bericht über internationale Finanzinstitutionen, Exportkreditversicherer und das Wohlergehen landwirtschaftlicher Nutztiere veröffentlicht haben ([1]). Vor diesem Hintergrund prüft die Kommission, wie diese Fragen am besten mit anderen Einrichtungen, darunter der Europäischen Bank für Wiederaufbau und Entwicklung (EBWE), diskutiert werden können.

Die EBWE ist keine Einrichtung der EU, aber Regeln und Grundsätze der Europäischen Union setzen im Allgemeinen die Standards für Maßnahmen der EBWE, und in vielen Strategien und Leitlinien der Bank wird direkt auf die politischen und rechtlichen Vorgaben der EU verwiesen. In Ländern außerhalb der EU bemüht sich die EBWE darum, dass ihre Projekte EU-Anforderungen genügen oder ihnen zumindest nahekommen, aber nicht alle Kunden der Bank in den Ländern, in denen die EBWE tätig ist, sind von Anfang an in der Lage, diese Anforderungen zu erfüllen.

In den letzten zehn Jahren hat die EBWE in ihrem geographischen Tätigkeitsbereich zehn Investitionsprojekte in der Viehwirtschaft finanziert. Zwei davon betrafen Schweinefarmen, zwei Eierproduktionsbetriebe und eines eine Anlage für die Eier- und Geflügelproduktion. In allen Fällen sorgte die Beteiligung der Bank dafür, dass ein größerer Teil der Produktion die EU-Standards erfüllte, als dies ohne EBWE-Finanzierung der Fall gewesen wäre.

Gegenwärtig enthalten die Umwelt- und Sozialgrundsätze oder die damit verknüpften Leistungsanforderungen der EBWE keinen ausdrücklichen Hinweis auf den Tierschutz. Die Bank achtet jedoch darauf, dass bei Projekten, die Tiere betreffen, eine Prüfung anhand der EU-Tierschutzanforderungen erfolgt.

([1]) http://www.hsi.org/assets/pdfs/ifi_report_agribusiness.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007559/13
to the Commission
Jörg Leichtfried (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Funding of pig rearing in crates and stalls in non-EU countries

According to media reports the European Union is financing — via funds from the World Bank and the EBRD — the rearing of pigs in crates and stalls which do not meet EU standards in third countries such as China, Ukraine and Turkey.

1. Does the Commission know whether the rearing of pigs in third countries in enclosed stalls which do not meet EU standards is being financed from EU funds?

2. Does the Commission know whether the battery rearing of chickens in third countries is being financed from EU funds?

3. If these reports prove to be true, what action does the Commission propose to take? .

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission is aware that in May 2013 animal welfare organisations published a report on international finance institutions, export credit agencies and farm animal welfare ([1]). In this context, the Commission is considering how best to discuss these issues with other bodies, including with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

The EBRD is not an EU body, but EU rules and principles generally set the standard for EBRD interventions, and many of the Bank's policies make direct reference to the EU policy framework and *acquis*. In non-EU countries, the EBRD endeavours to get their projects to meet or approximate to EU requirements, but not all of the Bank's clients in the countries of operations are able to do so from the outset.

Over the past 10 years, the EBRD has financed 10 capex projects for livestock farming in its region of operations. These include 2 pig farms, 2 egg production facilities and 1 egg production and live bird handling facility. In all cases, Bank involvement ensured that a greater proportion of production achieved compliance with EU standards than would have been the case without EBRD financing.

There is currently no explicit reference to animal welfare in the EBRD's Environment and Social Policy (ESP) or the associated Performance Requirements. The Bank does nevertheless look to review projects involving animals against applicable EU requirements for animal welfare.

([1]) http://www.hsi.org/assets/pdfs/ifi_report_agribusiness.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007560/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Auswirkungen eines Verhandlungsstopps auf IPA-Gelder

Die Verhandlungen mit Reykjavík liegen solange auf Eis, bis sich das isländische Volk in einem Referendum nicht ausdrücklich für die Fortführung der Beitrittsverhandlungen ausspricht. Die EU-Kommission hat in diesem Zusammenhang bereits angekündigt, nicht ewig warten zu wollen. Diesbezüglich müsse auch über die weitere Verwendung der EU-Gelder aus dem Instrument für Heranführungshilfe IPA entschieden werden, mit der die EU Reformen in den beitrittswilligen Ländern durch finanzielle und technische Hilfe unterstützt.

1. In welchem Ausmaß hat Island bisher Vorbeitrittshilfen erhalten, und welcher Betrag ist für die Zukunft noch geplant?

2. Gibt es Pläne, auch im Falle eines Verhandlungsabbruchs mit der Türkei, der immer wahrscheinlicher wird, die nach wie vor laufenden Vorbeitrittshilfen einzustellen?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(13. September 2013)

Der Gesamtbetrag der zugewiesenen Mittel für Island im Rahmen des Instruments für Heranführungshilfe I (IPA I) beläuft sich auf 43 Mio. EUR für den Zeitraum 2010-2013. Davon wurden für inzwischen abgeschlossene Projekte rund 4 Mio. EUR, für noch laufende Projekte rund 12 Mio. EUR bereitgestellt. Insgesamt rund 27 Mio. EUR wurden noch nicht vertraglich vergeben.

Die Kommission überprüft derzeit ihre finanzielle Unterstützung für Island im Rahmen von IPA I für den Zeitraum 2011-2013. In diesem Zusammenhang wurde beschlossen, bis zum Abschluss einer Bewertung der derzeitigen Lage keine neuen Verträge mehr zu unterzeichnen. Solange die isländische Regierung keine Entscheidung über die mögliche Fortsetzung der Beitrittsverhandlungen getroffen hat, werden keine weiteren Vorarbeiten im Hinblick auf IPA II für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 stattfinden.

Im Fall der Türkei liegt die Finanzierung durch das Instrument für Heranführungshilfe (IPA) sowohl im Interesse der EU als auch im Interesse der Türkei. IPA-finanzierte Projekte dienen zur Unterstützung der Bemühungen der Türkei um Anpassung an EU-Standards, beispielsweise durch Stärkung der demokratischen Institutionen und verbesserte Einhaltung von Menschenrechtsnormen. Die IPA-Hilfe für die Türkei ist daher von Vorteil für die eigene Stabilität und Sicherheit der EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007560/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Ending of negotiations and impact on IPA funding

Negotiations with Reykjavik have been suspended until such time as the people of Iceland give their explicit consent to the continuation of accession negotiations in a referendum. The Commission has already said that it does not intend to wait indefinitely. A decision also needs to be taken on the future use of EU funding from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), through which the EU grants technical and financial assistance to support reforms in countries wishing to join.

1. How much assistance has Iceland received to date, and how much assistance is it scheduled to receive in the future?

2. Are there any plans to end the continuing pre-accession assistance, also in the increasingly likely event of a breakdown in the negotiations with Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

The total allocated budget for Iceland under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance I (IPA I), amounts to EUR 43 million over the 2010-2013 period. Out of this budget, projects have been completed for a total of approximately EUR 4 million, and the budget for ongoing projects amounts to approximately EUR 12 million. A total of approximately EUR 27 million has not yet been contracted.

The Commission is currently reviewing its financial assistance to Iceland under IPA I for the 2011-2013 period. In this context, it has been decided not to sign any new contracts pending an assessment of the current situation. No further preparatory work in relation to IPA II for the period 2014-2020 will take place until such time as the Icelandic government has decided on the potential continuation of the accession negotiations.

In the case of Turkey, funding through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) is in the EU's, as well as in Turkey's interest. Projects funded through IPA are designed to support Turkey's efforts of alignment with EU standards, for example through strengthening democratic institutions and improving human rights standards. IPA support to Turkey is therefore beneficial for the EU's own stability and security.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007561/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Chinas Schattenbanken

Als „Schattenbanken" werden Firmen bezeichnet, die zwar Geld leihen, indes keine Bank im herkömmlichen Sinn sind. China scheint eine Vielzahl derartiger Schattenbanken zu haben. Ohne Aufsicht sollen 2012 Kredite in Höhe von 2,8 Billionen EUR geflossen sein. Seit langem warnen Finanzfachleute deshalb vor einer Kreditblase und riskanten Finanzprodukten, die — ähnlich wie bei der Lehman-Pleite 2008 in den USA — wie Schneeballsysteme zusammenbrechen könnten. Credit Suisse schätzt den Umfang der informellen Kreditvergabe im vergangenen Jahr auf umgerechnet 2,8 Billionen EUR oder 44 % der Wirtschaftsleistung Chinas.

Laut Ökonomen könnte die Blase schon durch wachsende Inflation platzen, wenn Zinserhöhungen notwendig werden. Anscheinend ist die chinesische Zentralbank nun bereit, den Sektor ausbluten zu lassen, was auch auf andere Branchen Auswirkungen hat. Nach Ankündigung der US-Notenbank Fed Mitte Juni, das Anleihenprogramm QE3 möglicherweise zurückzufahren, kam es nun in China bereits zu Liquiditätsengpässen.

Im Rahmen von Pekings Plänen, den Yuan zu einer weltweit akzeptierten Leit- und Reservewährung auszubauen, wurde dem Vernehmen nach zwischen London und China eine 25-Milliarden-Euro-Vereinbarung getroffen. Demnach kann die englische Notenbank nun Yuan im Tausch gegen andere Währungen in den Londoner Finanzmarkt pumpen, falls es dort zu Engpässen mit der chinesischen Währung kommen sollte. Naturgemäß könnte ein Finanzkollaps in der zweitgrößten Volkswirtschaft verheerende Folgen für die Weltkonjunktur haben.

1. Inwieweit hat nach Informationen der Kommission China EU-Staaten im Zusammenhang mit der Eurokrise finanziell unter die Arme gegriffen, so dass im Falle chinesischer Liquiditätsengpässe mit Auswirkungen gerade bei europäischen Pleitestaaten zu rechnen ist?

2. Kann die Kommission die erwähnte Vereinbarung bestätigen?

3. Falls ja, mit welchen Auswirkungen auf den Euro wird im Falle chinesischer Liquiditätsengpässe oder gar eines Finanzkollaps gerechnet?

4. Gibt es auf EU-Ebene (Notfall-)Pläne für ein derartiges Szenario?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(3. September 2013)

1. China verfügt im Rahmen der Verwaltung seiner Währungsreserven durch das Staatliche Chinesische Devisenamt (SAFE) über Beteiligungen an EU-Staatschulden. SAFE veröffentlicht keine Informationen über Beteiligungen an EU-Staatsschulden oder auf Euro lautende Finanzinstrumente.

Im Zusammenhang mit der 2012 vereinbarten Kapitalaufstockung des IWF um insgesamt 461,2 Mrd. USD sagte China 42 Mrd. USD zu. Diese Mittel stehen allen Mitgliedern des IWF zur Verfügung und sollen die weltweite finanzielle Brandmauer stärken.

2. Die Chinesische Volksbank (PBoC) hat im Juni 2013 eine bilaterale Swap-Vereinbarung mit der Bank of England in Höhe von 20 Mrd. GBP angekündigt. Genauere Informationen hierzu sind auf den Websites der Bank of England und der PBoC verfügbar.

3. Die jüngsten Liquiditätsprobleme auf dem chinesischen Interbankenmarkt hängen mit dem Inlandskreditwachstum (in Renminbi) und Maßnahmen zu Steuerung dieses Wachstums zusammen. Es gibt keinen direkten Zusammenhang mit der Verwaltung der chinesischen (auf andere Währungen lautenden) Fremdwährungsbestände oder der Auswirkung dieser Beteiligungen auf den Euro.

China hält bindende Kapitalverkehrskontrollen aufrecht, und ein inländischer Liquiditätsengpass würde begrenzte direkte Auswirkungen auf die weltweiten Anlagenmärkte haben. Die wichtigste Einflussnahmemöglichkeit bestünde in der Änderung der Erwartungen der Finanzmärkte in Bezug auf die weltweiten und regionalen Wachstumsaussichten. Die möglichen Auswirkungen auf den Euro sind ungewiss, und die Kommission gibt keine Kommentare zu spekulativen Szenarien ab.

4. Rund 10 % der EU-Exporte gehen nach China, ähnlich viele wie in die Schweiz, und deutlich weniger als in die USA (16 % der EU-Exporte). Eine Verlangsamung des chinesischen Wirtschaftswachstums würde daher negative Auswirkungen auf die EU-Exporte haben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007561/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: China's shadow banks

'Shadow banks' is the name given to firms which lend money but which are not banks in the traditional sense of the term. China seems to have a plethora of these shadow banks, and Crédit Suisse puts the scale of informal, unsupervised lending by them in 2012 at the equivalent of EUR 2.8 trillion, or 44% of China's GDP. For some time now financial experts have been warning about a credit bubble and about risky financial products which — as they did following the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy in the USA in 2008 — could collapse like pyramid schemes.

According to economists, should interest-rate increases become necessary rising inflation could already be enough to burst the bubble. The Chinese Central Bank is now apparently prepared to allow the sector to collapse slowly, which will have implications for other areas of the Chinese economy. Following the announcement made by the US Federal Reserve in mid-June that it may scale back its QE3 quantitative easing programme, China has already been experiencing liquidity problems.

In the context of Beijing's plans to develop the yuan into a reserve currency which is accepted worldwide, there are reports that an agreement worth EUR 25 billion has been concluded between London and China. Under the terms of that agreement, the Bank of England can now pump yuan into the London financial market, in exchange for other currencies, should the Chinese currency be in short supply there. Naturally enough, the collapse of the world's second-largest economy could have disastrous consequences for the world as a whole.

1. According to the information at the Commission's disposal, just how much financial support has China given to EU Member States in the context of the euro crisis, and could Chinese liquidity problems have implications for Europe's bankrupt States in particular?

2. Can the Commission confirm the existence of the agreement referred to above?

3. If so, what implications would Chinese liquidity problems or even a Chinese financial collapse have for the euro?

4. Have (emergency) plans been drawn up at EU level to deal with such a scenario?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 September 2013)

1. Chinese state holdings of EU sovereign debt are part of China's foreign reserve management activity, managed by the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE). SAFE does not publish information on holdings of EU sovereign debt, or euro-denominated financial instruments.

In the context of the overall increase in IMF resources of USD 461.2 billion that was agreed in 2012, China committed to pledge USD 42 billion. These resources will be available to the whole membership of the IMF to strengthen the global financial firewall.

2. The People's Bank of China (PBoC) announced a bilateral swap agreement with the Bank of England worth GBP 20 billion in June 2013. Details are available on the Bank of England and PBoC websites.

3. Recent liquidity problems in the Chinese inter-bank market are linked to domestic credit growth (in Renminbi) and policy measures aimed at controlling this growth. This has no direct connection with China's management of its official foreign exchange holdings (denominated in other currencies) or the impact of those holdings on the euro.

China maintains binding capital controls, and a domestic liquidity squeeze would have a limited direct effect on global asset markets. The main channel of influence would be through shifting expectations of financial markets concerning the outlook for global and regional economic growth. The possible impact on the euro is unclear and the Commission does not comment on speculative scenarios.

4. China absorbs around 10% of EU exports, similar to Switzerland, well behind the US (16% of EU exports). A slowdown in the Chinese economy would therefore have a negative impact on EU exports.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007562/13
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Gino Trematerra (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Franco Bonanini (NI), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), Tiziano Motti (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) e Alfredo Pallone (PPE)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Decreto Commissariale n. 156/2012 e presunta violazione della normativa comunitaria in materia di tutela della salute

Considerato che la Regione Campania, mediante decreto n. 156 del 31 dicembre 2012, pubblicato sul Bollettino ufficiale regionale n. 19 dell'8 aprile 2013, subordina la possibilità per i cittadini campani di accedere a determinate prestazioni sanitarie presso strutture o professionisti operanti in regioni confinanti con la Campania, alla previa acquisizione di un'autorizzazione dell'Azienda sanitaria locale di appartenenza;

Considerato che la citata disposizione appare in palese contrasto con l'art. 32 della Costituzione della Repubblica italiana, che riconosce la tutela della salute quale fondamentale diritto dell'individuo in oggetto, e con il principio di libertà di scelta riconosciuto come meritevole di tutela da parte della Corte costituzionale italiana con le sentenze nn. 416/1995 e 126/1994;

Considerati i cogenti principi comunitari, in materia di tutela della salute sanciti, dall'art. 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea a mente del quale: «ogni individuo ha il diritto di accedere alla prevenzione sanitaria e di ottenere cure mediche alle condizioni stabilite dalle legislazioni e prassi nazionali. Nella definizione e nell'attuazione di tutte le politiche ed attività dell'Unione è garantito un livello elevato di protezione della salute umana», dall'art. 152 del Trattato istitutivo della Ce secondo cui: «nella definizione e nell'attuazione di tutte le politiche ed attività della Comunità è garantito un livello elevato di protezione della salute umana», nonché dalla direttiva comunitaria n. 24 del 2011, la quale contempla norme volte ad agevolare l'accesso a un'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera sicura e di qualità, promuovendo al contempo la cooperazione tra gli Stati membri in materia;

Considerata l'importanza da sempre attribuita dal legislatore comunitario al tema della protezione della salute come peraltro si evince dall'art. 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, e come rimarcato dall'art. 152 del trattato istitutivo Ce, ove è previsto che nella definizione e nell'attuazione di tutte le politiche ed attività della comunità è garantito un livello elevato di protezione della salute umana;

Considerato che una simile misura protezionistica può creare un pericolosissimo precedente normativo al quale altre Regioni o Paesi potrebbero far riferimento in futuro in contrasto con l'articolo 114 TFUE il cui scopo é di migliorare il funzionamento del mercato interno e la libera circolazione di merci, persone e servizi

Non ritiene la Commissione che le restrizioni in materia di accesso alle prestazioni sanitarie di cui al decreto commissariale n. 156/2012 siano in palese contrasto tanto con la normativa nazionale quanto con quella comunitaria in tema di tutela della salute?

Non reputa la Commissione che siano necessarie misure volte a ripristinare lo «status quo» alterato dal decreto.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 agosto 2013)

L'articolo 168 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea stabilisce che «l'azione dell'Unione rispetta le responsabilità degli Stati membri per la definizione della loro politica sanitaria e per l'organizzazione e la fornitura di servizi sanitari e di assistenza medica. Le responsabilità degli Stati membri includono la gestione dei servizi sanitari e dell'assistenza medica e l'assegnazione delle risorse loro destinate».

L'UE ha quindi solo competenze limitate nel settore della fornitura dei servizi sanitari.

La direttiva 2011/24/UE ([1]) copre unicamente le situazioni nelle quali i pazienti chiedono il rimborso per l'assistenza sanitaria ricevuta in un altro Stato membro dell'UE sulla base del loro diritto all'assistenza sanitaria nello Stato membro di appartenenza.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/24/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 9 marzo 2011, concernente l'applicazione dei diritti dei pazienti relativi all'assistenza sanitaria transfrontaliera, GU L 88 del 4.4.2011, pag. 45.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007562/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Gino Trematerra (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Salvatore Iacolino (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Susy De Martini (ECR), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Franco Bonanini (NI), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), Tiziano Motti (PPE), Lara Comi (PPE) and Alfredo Pallone (PPE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Commissarial Decree No 156/2012 and alleged violation of EU health protection rules

Under Decree No 156 of 31 December 2012, published in the Official Journal of the Region of Campania No 19 of 8 April 2013, the people of Campania must obtain permission from their local health unit before accessing certain health services provided in facilities or by practitioners located in neighbouring regions.

This provision appears to be in blatant violation of Article 32 of the Italian Constitution, in which health protection is enshrined as a fundamental right of the individual concerned, and of the principle of freedom of choice, which the Italian Constitutional Court deemed worthy of protection in its judgments Nos 416/1995 and 126/1994.

The EU's legally binding health protection principles are laid down in Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which states that: 'Everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities'; in Article 152 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, in accordance with which 'a high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities'; and in Directive 2011/24/EU, which provides rules for facilitating access to safe and high-quality cross-border healthcare and promotes cooperation on healthcare between Member States.

The Community legislature has always attached importance to the issue of health protection, as shown by Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and by Article 152 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, which stipulates that a high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities.

Such a protectionist measure may set a very dangerous legal precedent to which other regions or countries could refer in the future in violation of Article 114 TFEU, which aims to improve the functioning of the internal market and the free movement of goods, persons and services.

Does the Commission not believe that the restrictions on access to health services referred to in Commissarial Decree No 156/2012 are in blatant violation of national and EU health protection rules?

Does it not believe that steps should be taken to restore the 'status quo' that existed before the changes introduced by the decree?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that 'Union action shall respect the responsibilities of the Member States for the definition of their health policy and for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care. The responsibilities of the Member States shall include the management of health services and medical care and the allocation of the resources assigned to them.'

Therefore, the EU has only limited competences to act in the area of provision of health services.

Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) relates only to situations where patients seek reimbursement for healthcare received in another EU Member State on the basis of their entitlements to healthcare in their own Member State.

([1]) Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007564/13
alla Commissione
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)
(26 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Gare per la distribuzione del gas

Il decreto legislativo 164/2000 e le relative norme di attuazione regolamentano in Italia il servizio della distribuzione di gas naturale. Questo servizio è affidato tramite gara ad una singola impresa, per un massimo di 12 anni, in un regime di monopolio legale territorialmente limitato. L'assegnazione delle concessioni è prevista mediante gara unica in ciascuno dei 177 ambiti territoriali minimi (ATEM).

Le disposizioni che regolano la materia sembrano essere particolarmente vessatorie per i comuni italiani e sono in palese violazione dell'ordinamento dell'UE dal momento che la possibilità per una impresa ivi stabilita di partecipare alla gara unica è fortemente limitata se non addirittura impossibile.

I comuni infatti non possono bandire la gara singolarmente né stabilire in autonomia canoni ed estensioni di rete. Essi perdono ogni potere sulla determinazione dei canoni concessori vengono scoraggiati dall'indire gare congiunte con ostacoli burocratici, procedure di gara farraginose e ingenti richieste di mezzi e garanzie finanziarie. Ciò risulta tanto più evidente se si pensa che ad oggi nessuna gara d'ambito è stata espletata e gli attuali gestori, le cui concessioni sono scadute, continuano a gestire il servizio in regime di proroga legale.

Gli operatori nel settore della distribuzione del gas sono scesi da 800 a circa 230. Si stima che ne resteranno una decina. Ulteriore riprova delle regole dell'UE sulla concorrenza è data dal fatto che le imprese ITALCOGIM — Francia e EON Germania hanno abbandonato il settore cedendo i propri *asset* e oggi in Italia resta solo un operatore spagnolo (GAS NATURAL).

In circa 120 dei 177 ATEM il gestore con posizione dominante è Italgas (gruppo Eni) ovvero Enel Rete Gas (gruppo F2i), operatori i cui capitali sono detenuti, tra gli altri, dalla Cassa Depositi e Prestiti ovverosia dallo Stato italiano.

Ha la Commissione europea avviato o intende avviare un'indagine conoscitiva volta a rilevare distorsioni della concorrenza nella UE nel settore della distribuzione di gas naturale e eventualmente quali misure intende prendere per evitare ulteriori violazioni del diritto dell'Unione?

Può riferire se e secondo quali modalità intende consultare le autorità governative italiane per ottenere chiarimenti sul ruolo della Cassa Depositi e Prestiti nella partecipazione al capitale delle società di distribuzione del gas naturale che mantengono in Italia una posizione dominante sul mercato del settore in parola?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

Il decreto legislativo 164/2000 e il decreto ministeriale 226/2011 stabiliscono norme concernenti l'avvio di procedure di gara per l'assegnazione del servizio di distribuzione del gas in Italia. In base a tali disposizioni, le procedure di gara devono essere organizzate a livello aggregato in 177 ambiti territoriali identificati a tale fine. Le norme UE in materia di appalti pubblici non fissano obblighi in relazione al livello ottimale da prevedere per la fornitura del servizio di distribuzione del gas. Di conseguenza, gli Stati membri possono organizzare le procedure di gara al livello territoriale che ritengono più opportuno.

Quanto al fatto che nessuna procedura di gara ha ancora avuto inizio, la Commissione osserva che il decreto-legge 21 giugno 2013 n. 69 contiene disposizioni che dovrebbero consentire alle autorità competenti di attivare le procedure nei prossimi mesi.

Riguardo alla possibile violazione della normativa dell'UE sulla concorrenza in merito alle procedure di gara per l'aggiudicazione della distribuzione di gas, la Commissione osserva che l'Autorità Garante della Concorrenza e del Mercato (AGCM) ha già avuto modo di esaminare i legami strutturali tra Italgas (Snam), Enel Rete Gas (F2i) e Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP) nell'ambito dell'indagine sull'operazione CDP-Snam ([1]). L'AGCM ha concluso che, nonostante i legami strutturali tra tali società possano agevolare comportamenti collusivi, dato l'obiettivo di CDP di massimizzare il valore della sua partecipazione finanziaria nel settore della distribuzione del gas, i possibili effetti di tale coordinamento sono neutralizzati dalle misure di governance adottate da CDP.

Alla luce di quanto precede, la Commissione non prevede per il momento di avviare un'ulteriore indagine sul settore del gas europeo a norma dell'articolo 17 del regolamento (CE) n. 1/2003.

([1]) C11695 — Cassa Depositi e Prestiti/Snam. Provvedimento n. 23824, dell'8 agosto 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007564/13
to the Commission
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Invitations to tender for gas distribution

Legislative Decree 164/2000 and its implementing provisions regulate natural gas distribution in Italy. This service is entrusted to a single undertaking by means of an invitation to tender for a maximum of 12 years, under a system of geographically limited legal monopolies. Concessions are supposed to be awarded by means of a single tender procedure in each of the 177 minimum geographical areas. The provisions governing the subject seem to be very oppressive for local authorities in Italy, and clearly breach the EU's legal order, in that the opportunities for an undertaking established in the EU to participate in the single tender procedure are severely restricted if not non-existent.

On the one hand, municipalities cannot individually issue invitations to tender, nor can they autonomously set charges or decide on extensions to the network. They lose any power to set charges for a concession, they are discouraged from issuing joint invitations to tender by means of bureaucratic obstacles, muddled tender procedures and demands for enormous resources and financial guarantees. This seems all the clearer if one considers that, to date, not a single area tender procedure has been completed, and the existing operators, whose concessions have lapsed, continue to manage the service on the basis of legal extensions.

The number of gas distribution operators has fallen from 800 to around 230. It is estimated that only about 10 will survive. Further evidence of failure to apply the EU's competition rules lies in the fact that the undertakings ITALCOGIM (France) and EON (Germany) have abandoned the sector, surrendering their assets. At present there is only one Spanish operator left in Italy (GAS NATURAL).

In approximately 120 of the 177 minimum geographical areas, the operator which is in a dominant position is Italgas (Eni group) or Enel Rete Gas (F2i group), operators whose capital is held, *inter alia*, by the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (Deposit and Loan Bank) — i.e. the Italian State.

Has the Commission arranged, or will it arrange, a survey to identify distortions of competition in the EU in the natural gas distribution sector? What measures might it take to prevent any further breaches of Community law?

Furthermore, will the Commission consult the Italian Government authorities, and if so how, to obtain a clarification of the role of the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti in participating in the capital of the natural gas distribution companies which have dominant positions on the relevant market?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Legislative Decree 164/2000 and Ministerial Decree 226/2011 lay down rules on the launch of tendering procedures for the award of the gas distribution service in Italy. According to these provisions, tendering procedures have to be organised at aggregated level in 177 geographical areas identified to that effect. EU public procurement rules do not set out obligations as to the optimal level for the provision of the gas distribution service. Hence, Member States can organise the tendering procedures according to the geographical level that they consider appropriate.

As to the fact that no tendering procedure has yet started, the Commission notes that Decree Law 69/2013 of 21 June 2013 contains provisions that should enable the competent authorities to launch the procedures in the coming months.

With regard to possible infringements of EU competition law in relation to the tendering procedures for the award of gas distribution, the Commission notes that the Italian Competition Authority ('ICA') has already examined the structural links between Italgas (Snam), Enel Rete Gas (F2i) and Cassa Depositi e Prestiti ('CDP') in the context of the investigation in the CDP/Snam operation ([1]). The ICA concluded that, despite the structural links between these companies could facilitate collusive behavior given CDP's objective of maximising the value of its stakes in the gas distribution sector, the possible effects of such coordination would be neutralized by the governance measures adopted by CDP.

In view of the foregoing, the Commission does not currently envisage launching another inquiry into the European gas sector pursuant to Article 17 of Regulation 1/2003.

([1]) C11695 — Cassa Depositi e Prestiti/Snam. Provvedimento n. 23824 of 8 August 2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007565/13
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(26 juni 2013)

Betreft: Overfacturatie voor toeristen in Turkije

Volgens Mediphone Assist, de reisbijstandsorganisatie van de Onafhankelijke Ziekenfondsen in België, hebben ziekenhuizen in Turkije in de zomervakantie van 2012 gemiddeld 32 % teveel aangerekend aan buitenlandse patiënten. Niet alleen worden blijkbaar teveel kosten aangerekend, maar worden toeristen vaak ook onnodig gehospitaliseerd.

Is de Commissie bekend met het probleem?

Welke stappen ondernam de Commissie, of overweegt ze te nemen, om het probleem aan te kaarten bij de Turkse regering?

Zijn zulke toestanden in overeenstemming met het acquis communautaire, dat kandidaatlidstaten geacht worden na te leven?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(9 september 2013)

De Commissie heeft nota genomen van de door het geachte Parlementslid verstrekte informatie dat buitenlandse patiënten (toeristen) in Turkije teveel zouden moeten betalen.

De prijzen van medische verrichtingen en de vergoeding daarvan vallen onder de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten. Aangezien Turkije geen lidstaat van de EU is, zou de Commissie daarnaast geen enkele basis hebben om hierin op te treden.

De Commissie werkt aan niet-discriminerende prijzen binnen de EU, met name via de richtlijn inzake grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg ([1]), die op 25 oktober 2013 in nationale wetgeving moet zijn omgezet.

Als kandidaat-lidstaat wordt van Turkije verwacht dat het op het moment van toetreding op alle beleidsterreinen voldoet aan het acquis. Dit geldt ook voor de kwesties die vallen onder de richtlijn inzake grensoverschrijdende gezondheidszorg.

([1]) PB L 88 van 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007565/13
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Over-charging of tourists in Turkey

According to Mediphone Assist — the organisation run by the independent health insurance funds in Belgium to help people travelling abroad — hospitals in Turkey on average charged foreign patients 32% too much during the 2012 summer holidays. Not only is overcharging evidently being practised, but tourists are often hospitalised unnecessarily.

Is the Commission aware of the problem?

What steps has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, to raise the problem with the Turkish Government?

Do such situations accord with the *acquis communautaire*, which candidate Member States are expected to respect?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

The Commission has taken note of the information provided by the Honourable Member that there would be overcharging of foreign patients (tourists) in Turkey.

Pricing and reimbursement of medical expenses comes under the competence of Member States. Moreover, considering that Turkey is not a Member State of the EU, the Commission would not have any basis to intervene.

The Commission is working to ensure that there is non-discriminatory pricing within the EU, particularly through the Cross-border Healthcare Directive ([1]) that is due to be transposed on 25 October 2013.

As a candidate country Turkey is expected to be in line with the *acquis* in all policy areas by the time of accession. This would also apply to issues covered by the Cross-border Healthcare Directive.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007566/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Proyecto Castor sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural

La posible entrada en funcionamiento del proyecto Castor de almacenamiento de gas natural, situado en el término municipal de Vinaroz (Castellón), limítrofe con Cataluña, supondrá importantes cargas económicas sobre el recibo del gas de los contribuyentes, triplicando la tarifa establecida. La propia Comisión Nacional de Energía ha señalado en su informe n° 40/2011, de 28 de diciembre de 2011, sobre la propuesta de orden por la que se establecen los peajes y cánones asociados y la retribución de las actividades reguladas del sector gasista para el año 2012, que la entrada en funcionamiento de Castor acentuará los costes del sistema.

Tal y como señala el informe *«Este hecho puede significar en el año 2012 la consolidación en el sector del gas natural de un déficit que se podría calificar de estructural, lo que constituye un motivo de especial preocupación para la estabilidad del sistema retributivo (…/…)». Por tanto, de mantenerse inalterada la retribución reconocida para 2012 para la determinación de los peajes, el desvío en el año 2012 entre los ingresos liquidables y los costes liquidables previstos aumentaría significativamente por encima del valor actual*.

Ante este «pelotazo económico» de las empresas accionistas, el Gobierno español suspendía su entrada en funcionamiento con la publicación del Real Decreto-ley 13/2012 de 30 de marzo, por el que se transponen directivas en materia de mercados interiores de electricidad y gas y en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas, y por el que se adoptan medidas para la corrección de las desviaciones por desajustes entre los costes e ingresos de los sectores eléctrico y gasista (BOE n° 78 de 31 de marzo de 2012), justificándolo por los déficits anuales que se siguen generando, la caída de la demanda, el incremento en la producción eléctrica a partir de fuentes renovables y la reducción de los precios de mercado por la delicada situación económica internacional que afectaría a corto plazo la compleja situación económica de las familias y las empresas.

¿Piensa la Comisión requerir al Gobierno de España que aporte la documentación necesaria para garantizar el cumplimiento de la directiva comunitaria en defensa de la competitividad y de la existencia de una contabilidad transparente?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007642/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Proyecto Castor, sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural

La puesta en servicio del proyecto Castor de almacenamiento de gas natural, situado en el término municipal de Vinaroz (Castellón), limítrofe con otros términos municipales de la Comunidad Autónoma de Catalunya, agravará los costes del sistema gasístico español.

La Comisión Nacional de la Energía, en su informe sobre el sector energético español (medidas para garantizar la sostenibilidad económico-financiera del sistema gasista), con fecha de 7 de marzo de 2012, señalaba que «en comparación con el sector eléctrico, en el sector del gas natural el problema del déficit es un problema reciente, hasta la fecha no había existido un problema de déficit relevante, esto es, los peajes y cánones habían sido suficientes para retribuir los costes regulados, compensándose unos años con otros. La aparición del déficit obedece a dos factores esenciales: de una parte al significativo crecimiento de los costes regulados por la puesta en servicio de un número importante de las infraestructuras previstas en las sucesivas planificaciones, y en particular, por la prevista puesta en servicio en 2012-2013 de instalaciones con un elevado volumen de inversión, tales como los Almacenamientos Subterráneos (AA.SS.) de Castor, …/…»

Y añadía además que «en la práctica las medidas a tomar han de resolver dos tipos diferenciados de problemas: uno inmediato de carácter más urgente: solventar el déficit creciente previsto para el periodo 2012-2016, como consecuencia de déficits pasados y de la remuneración de nuevas instalaciones a poner en servicio, en particular los AA.SS. de Castor, …/…». Por consiguiente, desde el propio organismo regulador se advertía ya del déficit que supone la puesta en servicio del proyecto de almacenamiento subterráneo Castor, pues se señalaba en dicho informe que «el impacto en los costes regulados para 2012 se estima en 230 millones de euros, y para 2013, en 378 millones de euros, cantidades que agravan la magnitud del déficit actual.»

¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para garantizar que, por parte de los órganos competentes y responsables del Gobierno de España, se haya exigido el cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria en materia de contratación en dicho proyecto? ¿Qué medidas piensa aplicar en caso de incumplimiento de las directivas comunitarias?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta conjunta a las preguntas escritas E-4004/2013 y E-4005/2013 ([1]), presentadas en su día por Su Señoría.

En lo tocante a los aspectos específicos del cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria sobre contratación pública y la Directiva en defensa de la competitividad y de la existencia de una contabilidad transparente, corresponde a las autoridades españolas competentes evaluar si el proyecto cumple las normas nacionales y europeas aplicables. Por otra parte, las ayudas financieras del Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI), de las que se beneficia el proyecto Castor, se conceden a condición de que se respete toda la normativa de la UE. El BEI supervisará la ejecución y la fase operativa del proyecto, lo cual garantizará un control permanente del cumplimiento de la normativa de la UE.

De incumplirse dicha normativa, la Comisión puede incoar un procedimiento de infracción contra el Estado miembro en cuestión. En estos momentos, a la Comisión no le consta que el proyecto Castor esté incumpliendo la normativa de la UE.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-004004&language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007566/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Castor Project: common rules for the internal market in natural gas

The possible start up of the Castor natural gas storage project, in the municipality of Vinaroz (province of Castellón), which borders with Catalonia, will significantly increase residents' gas bills by tripling the existing charge. The Spanish National Energy Commission itself pointed out in its report No 40/2011 of 28 December 2011 on the proposed order establishing rates, tariffs and payment for the regulated activities of the gas sector for 2012 that the entry into operation of the Castor project will make the system more expensive.

The report states that 'this may lead to the natural gas sector acquiring a deficit during 2012 which can be termed as structural, which is particularly worrying for the stability of the payment system…' Thus, if the 2012 set payment level is maintained unchanged for the purposes of determining charges, the disparity seen in 2012 between payable income and estimated payable costs would increase significantly to outstrip the current value.

To counter this financial coup by the shareholding companies, the Spanish Government suspended the project's entry into operation by issuing Royal Decree-Law 13/2012 of 30 March, transposing the directives relating to the internal electricity and gas markets and electronic communications and adopting measures to correct disparities caused by cost/income imbalances in the electricity and gas sectors (Official Gazette No 78, of 31 March 2012). It justified its action in light of constantly recurring annual deficits, the drop in demand, increased electricity production from renewable sources and the reduction in market prices due to the delicate state of the international economy and its short-term impact on the complex economic situation of families and businesses.

Does the Commission intend to insist that the Spanish Government provide the necessary documentation to guarantee compliance with the Community directive concerning the defence of competitiveness and transparent accounting?

Question for written answer E-007642/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Castor project and common rules for the internal natural gas market

The commissioning of the Castor natural gas storage project, situated in the municipality of Vinaroz (Castellón), which adjoins other municipalities in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, will increase the cost of the Spanish gas network.

In its report on the Spanish energy sector (measures to guarantee the economic and financial sustainability of the gas network), published on 7 March 2012, the National Energy Commission stated the following: 'Unlike in the electricity sector, in the natural gas sector the deficit problem is a new one, in that until recently the fees and levies charged were enough to meet the regulated costs, with a surplus in one year offsetting a deficit in another. The advent of a deficit is linked to two key factors: firstly, the significant increase in regulated costs in connection with the commissioning of a sizeable number of planned infrastructure items, in particular the scheduled commissioning in 2012-2013 of installations requiring a significant level of investment, such as the Castor underground storage units …'.

The report goes on to say that 'in practice measures are required to resolve two different types of problem: firstly, a short-term, more urgent problem, that of addressing the growing deficit forecast for the period 2012-2016, which stems from accumulated past deficits and from the need to meet the cost of new installations coming into service, in particular the Castor underground storage units …'. In other words, even in 2012 the sector's own regulator was already warning of the deficit which would be generated by the commissioning of the Castor project, stating in the report referred to above that 'the impact on regulated costs is put at EUR 230 million in 2012 and EUR 378 million in 2013, sums which will merely add to the current deficit'.

What action can the Commission take in order to determine whether the competent Spanish Government bodies insisted on compliance with the Community rules on public procurement in the context of the Castor project? What measures will it take should breaches of the relevant Community directives come to light?

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-4004/2013 and E-4005/2013 ([1]) by the Honourable Member.

Regarding the specific aspects of the compliance with the Community rules on public procurement and Directive concerning the defence of competitiveness and transparent accounting, it is for the Spanish competent authorities to assess the compliance of the project with the national and European rules applicable. In addition, the financial support by funds of the European Investment Bank (EIB), as it is the case of the Castor project, is granted on condition of the compliance with all EU legislation. The monitoring of the project by the EIB during the implementation and operation phase will ensure the continuous compliance-check of the EU legislation.

In the case of non-compliance with EU legislation, the Commission can initiate infringement proceedings against the Member State concerned. At this stage, the Commission is not aware of any breach to EU legislation by the Castor project.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-004004&language=EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007567/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Proyecto Castor sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural

El proyecto Castor de almacenamiento de gas natural, situado en el término municipal de Vinaroz (Castellón), limítrofe con Catalunya, ha provocado las quejas del propio sector energético español, de la Comisión Nacional de Energía y la alarma del conjunto de la ciudadanía, especialmente de los consumidores finales, pues dicho proyecto ha triplicado de forma alarmante los costes asociados al mismo pasando de 500 millones de euros a 1 500 millones de euros.

Este hecho pone en serio entredicho la justificación que inicialmente impulsó este proyecto, que era garantizar el suministro gasístico y supone un verdadero riesgo para el equilibrio económico-financiero del sector. Además, supone un abuso para los consumidores finales que deberán pagar el triple por el mismo servicio, a pesar de que se constata un claro descenso de la demanda a causa de la crisis económica mundial. Dicho proyecto ha sido recientemente paralizado por el propio Gobierno español mediante el Real Decreto-ley 13/2012, de 30 de marzo, por el que se transponen directivas en materia de mercados interiores de electricidad y gas y en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas, y por el que se adoptan medidas para la corrección de las desviaciones por desajustes entre los costes e ingresos de los sectores eléctrico y gasista (BOE nº 78, de 31 de marzo de 2012).

La Directiva 2009/73/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo de 13 de julio de 2009 sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior del gas natural por la que se deroga la Directiva 2003/55/CE, establece que *«Para garantizar la seguridad del suministro, es necesario supervisar el equilibrio entre la oferta y la demanda en los distintos Estados miembros (…/…). Esta supervisión debe llevarse a cabo con antelación suficiente para poder adoptar las medidas oportunas si peligra dicha seguridad. (…/…).»*

¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para garantizar la viabilidad económica del proyecto Castor y el equilibrio entre ingresos y costes después del incremento injustificado del proyecto? ¿Piensa adoptar algunas medidas de control al respecto para supervisar el equilibrio entre la oferta y la demanda?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(9 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión desearía remitir a Su Señoría a su respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-005050/2012, E-004004/2013 y E-004005/2013, especialmente en lo relativo al coste del proyecto.

Sobre el aspecto concreto de la supervisión del equilibrio entre la oferta y la demanda, el artículo 5 de la Directiva 2009/73/CE establece que esta obligación puede ser delegada por los Estados miembros a las autoridades reguladoras. En el caso de España, la Ley 3/2013 encomienda esta tarea a la autoridad reguladora, la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia; los artículos 7.26 y 7.35 de la citada Ley, en particular, establecen que la CNMC supervisará, entre otras cosas, la capacidad de los almacenamientos subterráneos y la calidad de la oferta y los servicios.

La Comisión seguirá de cerca el cumplimiento en España de las disposiciones contenidas en las directivas del tercer paquete del mercado interior de la energía, especialmente de aquellas relativas a la adecuación de la oferta, y examinará las medidas adoptadas o previstas por España para garantizar su cumplimiento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007567/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Castor project: common rules for the internal market in natural gas

The Castor natural gas storage project, located in the municipality of Vinaroz (province of Castellon and bordering Catalonia), has given rise to complaints from within the Spanish energy sector itself and from the Spanish National Energy Commission and concern on the part of the general population, particularly end consumers, since costs related to it have tripled alarmingly from EUR 500 million to EUR 1.5 billion.

This situation seriously undermines the initial justification for the project, which was to safeguard gas supply, and poses a real risk to the sector's economic and financial balance. Furthermore, it is unfair to final consumers, who will be forced to pay three times as much for the same service, in spite of the evident downturn in demand owing to the world economic crisis. The project has recently been halted by the Spanish Government, by means of Royal Decree-Law 13/2012 of 30 March, which transposes directives relating to the internal markets in gas and electricity and electronic communications and adopts measures to correct variations caused by cost/income imbalances in the electricity and gas sectors (Official Gazette No 78, 31 March 2012).

Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas and repealing Directive 2003/55/EC, states that 'in the interests of security of supply, the balance of supply and demand in individual Member States should be monitored (…). Such monitoring should be carried out sufficiently early to enable appropriate measures to be taken if security of supply is compromised'.

What mechanisms does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure the economic viability of the Castor project and that the cost/income balance is maintained after the unjustified increase in the cost of the project? Does it intend to take any supervisory measures to monitor the balance between supply and demand?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-005050/2012, E-004004/2013 and E-004005/2013, in particular on the issue of project cost.

On the specific aspect of monitoring the balance between supply and demand, this is an obligation set out in Article 5 of Directive 2009/73/EC that Member States may delegate to the regulatory authority. In the case of Spain Law 3/2013 attributes this task to the regulatory authority, in particular Article 7.26 and 7. 35 of Law 3/2013 establish that the CNMC (National Commission for Markets and Competition) will monitor, among other issues, the capacity of underground storages and assess the quality of supply and service.

The Commission will monitor closely the compliance in Spain with the provisions included in the Third Internal Energy Market directives, in particular those regarding the adequacy of supply and including the measures taken or envisaged by Spain to ensure it.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007568/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Índice IRPH

En 2011 Europa aconsejó a España que los tipos de interés IRPH Cajas, IRPH Bancos y CECA dejaran de ser publicados por el Banco de España debido a su poca transparencia. En octubre de 2011 se publica la Orden EHA/2899/2011, de 28 de octubre, de transparencia y protección al cliente de servicios bancarios, en la cual dejan de ser oficiales dichos tipos de interés (artículo 27) a partir del 28 de abril de 2012 para nuevas hipotecas y para las posteriores a esta fecha. En la disposición transitoria única se especifica que «La desaparición completa de los citados índices o tipos, con todos sus efectos, se producirá transcurrido un año de la entrada en vigor de la presente orden y su normativa de desarrollo, siempre que en ese plazo se hubiese establecido el correspondiente régimen de transición para los préstamos afectados». Por préstamos afectados se entienden aquellos que en sus escrituras no especifican ningún índice sustitutivo o que este sea alguno de los tipos de interés que desaparecen. Estos casos son minoritarios, ya que la gran mayoría de estas hipotecas tienen índices sustitutivos reflejados en los préstamos hipotecarios, pese a que se incluyen en el régimen de transición. El 29 de abril de 2013 se cumplió un año desde la entrada en vigor de la Orden Ministerial y el legislador aún no se ha pronunciado al respecto. Todo parece indicar que el gobierno quiere prorrogar la publicación del régimen de transición por un periodo indeterminado, según han dado a conocer TV3 y El Periódico de Aragón ([1]), entre otros medios. Sin embargo, ninguna fuente oficial ha publicado nada al respecto. Este retraso significa que el Banco de España seguirá publicando estos índices condenando a más de un millón de familias a seguir pagando unos tipos de interés que Europa reconoce como poco transparentes y que ya han desaparecido para los nuevos préstamos hipotecarios. Cabe destacar que el IRPH Cajas ha subido en los últimos tres meses un 0,5 % situándose en el 3,796 %, encareciendo de esta manera las hipotecas que se revisan con el índice del mes de marzo. ¡Toda una estafa!

¿Estaba informada la Comisión de esta situación? ¿Qué acciones se tomarán desde la Comisión para promover que España asuma las recomendaciones europeas en esta materia? ¿Cree que la actitud del Gobierno español y de las entidades bancarias vulnera entre otras, la Directiva 2005/29/CE y la Directiva 93/13/CE por tratarse de prácticas abusivas y desleales? En ese caso, ¿se sancionará a España por su vulneración de la normativa europea?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de septiembre de 2013)

A juzgar por la limitada información disponible, la Comisión no puede hacerse una opinión sobre la pregunta planteada por Su Señoría en el sentido de si la conducta del Gobierno español es abusiva. La legislación en materia de consumo se aplica a las operaciones entre empresas y consumidores y no a las iniciativas reguladoras de un Gobierno sobre los niveles de los tipos de interés.

Aunque existen algunas normas en el ámbito del crédito al consumo dirigidas a garantizar la transparencia de las condiciones aplicadas, la propuesta de Directiva relativa a los créditos hipotecarios todavía no se ha adoptado ([2]).

La Directiva 2005/29/CE, relativa a las prácticas comerciales desleales ([3]), es de carácter horizontal y abarca también las prácticas comerciales desleales en el ámbito de los servicios financieros. En virtud de la Directiva, los operadores económicos están obligados a facilitar a los consumidores en un acuerdo de préstamo información clara y adecuada sobre elementos fundamentales como los tipos de interés. La Directiva 93/13/CEE, sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con consumidores ([4]), dispone que las cláusulas contractuales que causen un desequilibrio significativo entre las Partes en detrimento del consumidor se considerarán abusivas y, como tales, no serán vinculantes. Esta Directiva puede ser aplicable al caso de los bancos que modifican cláusulas del contrato, tales como los tipos de interés, de forma unilateral sin una razón válida [letra j) del anexo]. Sin embargo, hay que recordar que, con arreglo al artículo 1, apartado 2, de esa Directiva las cláusulas contractuales que reflejen disposiciones legales o reglamentarias imperativas no están sometidas a las disposiciones de la Directiva.

Sin perjuicio de las competencias de la Comisión en su calidad de guardiana del Tratado, la responsabilidad principal de dar cumplimiento efectivo al Derecho de la UE recae en los Estados miembros.

([1]) www.irph.es

([2]) Propuesta de Directiva sobre los contratos de crédito para bienes inmuebles de uso residencial. La adopción de la Directiva está prevista este otoño.

([3]) Directiva 2005/29/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de mayo de 2005, relativa a las prácticas comerciales desleales de las empresas en sus relaciones con los consumidores en el mercado interior, que modifica la Directiva 84/450/CEE del Consejo, las Directivas 97/7/CE, 98/27/CE y 2002/65/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo y el Reglamento (CE) n° 2006/2004 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo («Directiva sobre prácticas comerciales desleales»).

([4]) Directiva 93/13/CEE del Consejo, de 5 de abril de 1993, sobre las cláusulas abusivas en los contratos celebrados con consumidores.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007568/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: IRPH interest rate

In 2011 the European Union said that there were transparency problems with Spain's IRPH Cajas, IRPH Bancos and CECA interest rates and that the Bank of Spain should stop publishing them. Under Order EHA/2899/2011 of 28 October 2011 on transparency and protection for banking services clients, the rates in question would no longer be applied (Article 27) to new mortgages or mortgages granted after 28 April 2012. The transitional provision states that these rates would be completely abolished one year after the entry into force of the order and its implementing rules, provided that the relevant transitional scheme for affected mortgages has been established in that period. The affected mortgages are understood to mean those for which no replacement rates are established in the deeds or where the replacement rate is one of the rates to be abolished. Only a few mortgages fall under this category, despite the fact that they are included in the transitional scheme, given that most of the mortgages have replacement rates specified in the loan agreements. The one--year period since the entry into force of the ministerial order expired on 29 April 2013, and the Spanish Parliament has still not stated its position. It would appear from media reports, by TV3 and the Periódico de Aragón newspaper ([1]) among others, that the government wishes to postpone the start of the transitional scheme indefinitely. However, there have been no official announcements to that effect. The delay means that the Bank of Spain will continue to publish the aforementioned rates and that more than a million families will be forced to continue paying rates which the EU deems to be insufficiently transparent and which are no longer used for new mortgages. It should be noted that the 0.5% increase in the IRPH Cajas rate over the last three months (it now stands at 3.796%) has made mortgages which are revised on the basis of the March rate more expensive. This amounts to fraud!

Was the Commission aware of this situation? What will it do to encourage Spain to follow European recommendations in this area? Does it think that the actions of the Spanish Government and the banks constitute abusive and unfair practices which violate Directive 2005/29/EC and Directive 93/13/EC? If so, will Spain face sanctions for breach of EC law?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 September 2013)

Based on the limited information available, the Commission cannot take any views on the issue, raised by the Honourable Member, as to whether the conduct of the Spanish Government is abusive. Consumer legislation applies to business to consumer transactions and it does not apply to the regulatory initiatives of a government concerning interest rates levels.

While there are some rules in the field of consumer credit aiming at ensuring the transparency of the conditions applied, the proposed Directive on mortgage credits has not been adopted yet ([2]).

Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices ([3]) is horizontal in nature and covers also unfair commercial practices in the fields of financial services. Under the directive traders must provide consumers with adequate and clear information on key elements such as the interest rates in a loan agreement. Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts ([4]) provides that a contract term causing a significant imbalance between the parties to the detriment of the consumer shall be regarded as unfair and as such shall not be binding. This directive may be applicable to the case of banks altering the terms of the contract, such as the interest rates, unilaterally without a valid reason (point (j) of the annex). However, it has to be noted that, under its Article 1(2), contractual terms which reflect mandatory statutory or regulatory provisions, are not subject to the provisions of this directive.

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty, the primary responsibility for effectively enforcing the EU legislation lies with Member States.

([1]) www.irph.es.
([2]) Proposal for a directive on credit agreements relating to residential property. The adoption of the directive is foreseen in autumn.
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC 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).
([4]) Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007569/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Directiva sobre productos del tabaco

En el marco de la Directiva 2001/37/CE sobre productos del tabaco la Comisión no ha incluido productos derivados del tabaco como los puritos y el tabaco de pipa en la prohibición de asociar al producto determinados sabores ligados a una idea de energía o vitalidad. De este modo, se percibe un incremento del consumo de dichos productos en la población juvenil y la no prohibición puede provocar que la tendencia siga al alza.

De la misma forma, tampoco se incluyen las advertencias sanitarias con imágenes en el empaquetado genérico exceptuando, además, al resto de productos del tabaco que no sean cigarrillos y de picadura de mayores advertencias sanitarias.

Finalmente, la Comisión introduce medidas para evitar el contrabando de tabaco, tales como el marcaje y seguimiento de las cajetillas, sin avanzar ningún procedimiento para la implementación de esta nueva previsión normativa.

¿Qué razones motivan las exclusiones de los productos mencionados? ¿Se replantea la Comisión la inclusión de los mismos? ¿Cree la Comisión que la población juvenil está a salvo del tabaquismo? ¿Qué razones motivan la no inclusión de imágenes en el empaquetado genérico tal y como han hecho países como Australia? ¿Cuáles son las medidas que plantea la Comisión para luchar contra el contrabando de tabaco?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de julio de 2013)

Las normas sobre control de los ingredientes y etiquetado que figuran en la propuesta de la Comisión para la revisión de la Directiva sobre productos del tabaco ([1]) se aplican en primer lugar a los cigarrillos y al tabaco para liar. Estas dos categorías, consideradas conjuntamente, representan casi el 96 % del total del mercado de productos del tabaco de la UE y son, asimismo, los productos del tabaco más populares, también entre los jóvenes. Inicialmente, otras categorías de productos, como los puros y el tabaco de pipa, están exentas de cumplir determinadas normas mientras no haya un cambio significativo de circunstancias. Se considerará que se da un cambio significativo de circunstancias si aumentan las ventas de estos productos o se observa que gozan de una mayor popularidad entre los jóvenes.

La propuesta de la Comisión no prevé un envasado genérico o liso a nivel de la UE pero permite a los Estados miembros introducir dicho tipo de envasado. Además, la propuesta establece la introducción obligatoria de grandes advertencias gráficas en ambos lados de los paquetes.

La propuesta de la Comisión contiene dos medidas principales destinadas a evitar la circulación de productos del tabaco ilegales en la EU: un sistema de seguimiento y rastreo basado en un identificador único de las unidades de envasado de productos del tabaco y una característica de seguridad. Ambas medidas servirán para proteger el comercio lícito, facilitar la supervisión del mercado y aumentar el grado de conciencia de los consumidores, así como su protección.

([1]) COM(2012) 0788.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007569/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Directive on tobacco products

The Commission has failed to include in Directive 2001/37/EC provisions governing cigarillos and pipe tobacco or prohibiting associations between certain flavours and the notion of energy or vitality. As a result, such products are becoming increasingly popular among younger consumers and failure to introduce such restrictions could further encourage this trend.

Furthermore, no provisions are included concerning pictorial health warnings on standardised packaging, thereby exempting tobacco products in addition to cigarillos and cut tobacco from more stringent health warning requirements.

Finally, the Commission fails to indicate how its proposed new measures, such as marking and tracking with a view to preventing tobacco smuggling, are to be implemented.

Why are the above products excluded? Is the Commission considering the inclusion thereof? Does the Commission believe that younger consumers are safe from nicotine addiction? Why has it not followed the example of countries such as Australia and included provisions regarding pictorial health warnings on standardised packaging? What measures is the Commission envisaging to combat tobacco smuggling?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The rules on ingredients control and labelling, contained in the Commission proposal for a revised Tobacco Products Directive ([1]), apply in the first place to cigarettes and roll-your-own. These two categories together cater for almost 96% of the total EU market for tobacco products and are thus the most popular tobacco products, including for young people. Other product categories such as cigars and pipe tobacco are initially exempted from certain rules, as long as there is no substantial change of circumstances. Such a change of circumstances is deemed to occur if the sales of these products increase or a higher prevalence in young people is observed.

The Commission proposal does not foresee plain packaging at EU level, but allows Member States to introduce plain packaging. In addition the proposal makes the introduction of large picture warnings on both sides of the packets mandatory.

The Commission proposal contains two main measures in order to prevent illicit tobacco products from circulating in the EU: a tracking and tracing system based on a unique identifier on unit packets of tobacco products and a security feature. Both measures will protect the legal trade, prevent illegal sales, and facilitate market surveillance and increase consumer awareness and protection.

([1]) COM(2012)0788.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007570/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Lucha en España contra los paraísos fiscales

La fiscalidad es la base de un buen gobierno y un elemento clave para el bienestar y la redistribución de la riqueza. Sin embargo, está siendo gravemente atacada por los paraísos fiscales que permiten a grandes empresas, así como a grandes fortunas, eludir sus responsabilidades a pagar por ello. Es el conjunto de los trabajadores, así como pequeñas y medianas empresas quienes asumen la mayoría de la carga fiscal. El problema es mucho mayor, ya que la opacidad y el secreto bancario como herramientas principales albergan las instalaciones para que personas o entidades puedan sortear sus obligaciones fiscales. Hasta ahora, es necesario conocer el nombre del defraudador, sus detalles bancarios y los motivos de sospecha para poder exigir datos a los paraísos fiscales, cosa que hace prácticamente imposible el intercambio de información.

El Parlamento Europeo ha llevado a cabo diversos informes y expresado claramente que los paraísos fiscales son un obstáculo insuperable para el desarrollo económico de los países usurpando la soberanía de otros países y creando incentivos para la delincuencia económica. (Resoluciones del Parlamento Europeo de 19 de febrero de 2004, de abril 2010 y de 8 de marzo de 2011). La Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 19 de abril de 2012, sobre la necesidad de adoptar medidas concretas para combatir el fraude y la evasión fiscales significó un paso en la lucha contra los paraísos fiscales. De esa Resolución se extrae claramente que la equidad fiscal, la transparencia y el intercambio de información son objetivos clave para reforzar la confianza de la ciudadanía.

Pese a las reacciones contundentes de otros países como Francia o Alemania ante filtraciones de datos o el panorama internacional, cada vez más contrario a los paraísos fiscales, España no se ha planteado posicionamientos claros y contundentes accediendo incluso a amnistiar a aquellos que durante años han usado los paraísos fiscales para su propio beneficio.

¿Cree la Comisión que España no es lo suficiente contundente en la normativa relativa a los paraísos fiscales, especialmente en los tratados con países como Andorra o para la tributación de las empresas y las grandes fortunas? ¿Qué recomendaciones hará a España para combatir los paraísos fiscales?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de agosto de 2013)

La Comisión coincide en la necesidad de reforzar nuestra respuesta colectiva en la lucha contra los paraísos fiscales para evitar la elusión de las normas fiscales dentro de la UE.

El 6 de diciembre de 2012, la Comisión presentó un plan de acción para intensificar la lucha contra el fraude y la evasión fiscales ([1]), junto con dos recomendaciones sobre la planificación fiscal agresiva y sobre las medidas encaminadas a fomentar la aplicación, por parte de terceros países, de normas mínimas de buena gobernanza en el ámbito fiscal ([2]). Las recomendaciones proponen medidas para su aplicación por los Estados miembros en relación con terceros países. Se trata de mejorar la eficacia de las actuaciones de los Estados miembros para proteger sus sistemas fiscales contra la erosión desleal de la base imponible, en consonancia con los principios de transparencia, intercambio de información y competencia leal en materia fiscal.

Estas medidas plantearán problemas a las personas que hayan acumulado depósitos no declarados. No obstante, compete a cada Estado miembro, incluida España, decidir cómo tratar tales casos, siempre que se observen las normas de la UE, en particular en el ámbito de los recursos propios basados en el IVA, la libre circulación de capitales y la no discriminación.

El único acuerdo fiscal celebrado entre España y Andorra se refiere al intercambio de información a partir del 14 de enero de 2010. Como Andorra no imponía impuestos sobre las ganancias hasta hace poco, el principal Estado beneficiario de ese Acuerdo es España. Se han anunciado posibles negociaciones sobre un acuerdo contra la doble imposición, pero las mismas no parecen haberse entablado.

No obstante, España se beneficia desde 2005 del Acuerdo sobre la fiscalidad de los rendimientos del ahorro celebrado entre la UE y Andorra ([3]). La Comisión ha entablado negociaciones con Andorra para mejorar este Acuerdo en consonancia con los progresos registrados en la cooperación fiscal a escala internacional y de la UE.

([1]) COM(2012) 722..
([2]) C (2012) 8806; C (2012) 8805.
([3]) DO L 359 de 4.12.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007570/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Spanish efforts to combat tax havens

Taxation is the basis for good governance and fundamental to the welfare of society and wealth redistribution. However, its effectiveness is being seriously undermined by tax havens, which enable large companies and wealthy individuals to duck their responsibilities in this area. As a result workers and SMEs end up shouldering most of the tax burden. Banking secrecy constitutes the primary means by which individuals and organisations can bypass their tax obligations. Tax havens have always insisted on being provided with the name of a suspected tax evader, his or her bank details and the grounds for suspicion before they would release any details, making it virtually impossible to obtain any relevant information.

The European Parliament has drafted a number of reports in which it has stated clearly that tax havens are an insurmountable barrier to economic development, as they undermine national sovereignty and provide incentives for economic crime (resolutions of 19 February 2004, April 2010 and 8 March 2011). European Parliament resolution of 19 April 2012 on the call for concrete ways to combat tax fraud and tax evasion marked a step forward in efforts to tackle tax havens. The resolution makes it clear that fair taxation, transparency and exchanges of information are key to boosting public confidence in the tax system.

Despite the fact that countries such as France and Germany have come up with convincing responses to the information that has emerged and that the international community is increasingly hostile to tax havens, Spain has failed to adopt clear and credible positions. In fact it has even gone as far as to grant an amnesty to people who for years used tax havens for personal gain.

Does the Commission think that Spain has been too lax in applying the rules governing tax havens, in particular the agreements with countries such as Andorra or on corporate and personal wealth taxation? What would it advise Spain to do in order to combat tax havens?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

The Commission agrees on the need to strengthen our collective response in the fight against tax havens to prevent circumvention of the tax rules within the EU.

On 6 December 2012, the Commission tabled an Action Plan to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([1]) together with two recommendations on aggressive tax planning and regarding measures intended to encourage third countries to apply minimum standards of good governance in tax matters ([2]). The recommendations propose measures to be implemented by Member States in regard to third countries. The intention is to improve the effectiveness of Member States' actions to protect their tax systems against undue tax base erosion, in line with established principles of transparency, information exchange and fair tax competition.

These moves will raise issues for people who have accumulated undeclared deposits. It is however a matter for each Member State, like Spain, to decide how to deal with such cases, provided that EU rules, notably in the area of VAT based own resources, free movement of capital and non-discrimination, are observed.

The only tax agreement concluded between Spain and Andorra relates to the exchange of information as of 14 January 2010. As Andorra did not impose income taxes until recently, the main beneficiary of this agreement is Spain. Possible negotiations on an agreement against double taxation have been announced but do not seem to have started.

However, since 2005, Spain has benefitted from the EU-Andorra Savings Taxation Agreement ([3]). The Commission has started negotiations with Andorra to enhance this Agreement in line with progress in tax cooperation at EU and international level.

([1]) COM(2012) 722.
([2]) C(2012)8806; C(2012)8805.
([3]) OJ L 359, 4.12.2004.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007572/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Amnistía fiscal en España

En marzo de 2012, se presentó la tercera amnistía fiscal en la historia de España, la cual buscaba recaudar 2 500 millones de euros de capital residente en el extranjero, de los que finalmente tan solo recaudó 1 200. La medida incluía la exclusión de responsabilidades penales por blanqueo de dinero y un tipo de tributación extraordinariamente inferior al fijado normalmente para los casos de defraudación. Una política claramente injusta.

Expertos, como Economistas Frente a la Crisis, denuncian que la amnistía fiscal no frena por sí sola los problemas fiscales de España y que se necesitan reformas integrales del propio sistema fiscal añadiendo además, que la amnistía minaba la confianza de la ciudadanía en la Hacienda Pública. Especialmente grave en el contexto de casos de corrupción de cargos públicos y de la misma monarquía española. El dinero de entidades y fortunas españoles residentes en paraísos fiscales estaría alrededor de los 550 000 millones de euros, según Tax Justice Network.

El Parlamento Europeo adoptó la Resolución de 19 de abril de 2012, sobre la necesidad de adoptar medidas concretas para combatir el fraude y la evasión fiscales, que busca reducirlo en alrededor de un billón de euros de cara al 2020. En ésta, se extrae claramente que la equidad fiscal y el refuerzo de la confianza de la ciudadanía deben ser objetivos clave de la UE. En el mismo informe se abordan aspectos como la transparencia y el intercambio de información a nivel global.

¿Qué opina la Comisión sobre el hecho de que, mientras la Unión Europea aprueba medidas contra el blanqueo de dinero y el fraude fiscal, el Gobierno español aplique la amnistía de ambos? ¿Es el objetivo supuestamente recaudatorio suficiente para motivar una amnistía a actividades delictuales? ¿Por qué la Comisión nunca recomendó no aplicar dicha amnistía, dado que España se encuentra bajo el Procedimiento de Déficit Excesivo? ¿Cree que esta medida favorece el fraude fiscal en vez de fomentar su extinción? ¿Aporta ello confianza en la política fiscal de un país? ¿Qué recomendaciones hará la Comisión a España para luchar contra el fraude fiscal y el blanqueo de capitales, para así tener una tributación más justa que permita ahorrar recortes presupuestarios sumamente dolorosos en la población?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de septiembre de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de que los ciudadanos españoles padecen recortes presupuestarios cada vez mayores y de que el fraude fiscal genera una distribución injusta de la presión fiscal sobre la población. Las recomendaciones a España adoptadas por el Consejo de la Unión Europea ([1]) abordan la lucha contra la evasión y el fraude fiscales e incluyen la revisión sistemática del sistema fiscal para marzo de 2014. La Comisión evaluará el progreso realizado en el contexto del Semestre Europeo de 2014. El Plan de Acción de 6 de diciembre de 2012 propone una vigilancia más eficiente de los flujos financieros ilegales y el refuerzo de las políticas de lucha contra la corrupción ([2]). Además, la reciente propuesta de tercera Directiva contra el blanqueo de capitales menciona de forma explícita el delito fiscal como delito principal relacionado con el blanqueo de dinero.

La Comisión anunció su intención de estudiar la oportunidad y viabilidad de alinear la definición de determinados tipos de delitos fiscales, incluidas las sanciones penales y administrativas ([3]).

Es importante garantizar que cualquier acción en este ámbito se integre plenamente con acciones similares en otros ámbitos del Derecho de la UE de acuerdo con los principios establecidos en la Comunicación de la Comisión «Hacia una política de Derecho penal de la UE: garantizar la aplicación efectiva de las políticas de la UE mediante el Derecho penal» ([4]). Por lo que se refiere a las políticas de lucha contra la corrupción, la Comisión refiere a su Comunicación «Agenda para el cambio» ([5]), pertinente en lo tocante a la evasión fiscal y la transparencia.

Como se recoge en la respuesta a la cuestión parlamentaria E-000774/2013, la Comisión no es partidaria de la introducción de regímenes de amnistía fiscal. La introducción de este tipo de medidas, a falta de una armonización de la UE en este ámbito o de infracciones de las normas del Tratado, es una cuestión que deben considerar los Estados miembros y sobre la que tienen que asumir la responsabilidad.

([1]) COM(2013) 359.
([2]) COM(2012) 722.
([3]) COM(2012) 722, punto 30.
([4]) COM(2011) 573.
([5]) COM(2011) 637.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007572/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(26 June 2013)

Subject: Tax amnesty in Spain

The third tax amnesty in Spain's history took place in March 2012, with the aim of collecting EUR 2.5 billion in capital held abroad, although the amount finally brought in was only EUR 1.2 billion. The measure waived criminal charges for money laundering and included a form of extraordinary tax at a rate below that normally applied in cases of fraud. It was a transparently unfair policy.

Experts such as the Economists against the Crisis group have pointed out that the tax amnesty alone cannot put an end to Spain's fiscal problems and that a far-reaching reform of the tax system itself is needed. Furthermore, the amnesty undermined public confidence in the national treasury and is particularly worrying given the current spate of cases involving corruption among public officials and even in the Spanish royal family. Around EUR 550 billion in business and private wealth has been transferred from Spain to tax havens abroad, according to the organisation Tax Justice Network.

On 19 April 2012, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution calling for concrete ways to combat tax fraud and tax evasion, which aims to reduce the problem by around EUR 1 billion by 2020. The resolution clearly indicates that tax justice and strengthening public confidence should be key objectives for the EU. The same document addresses aspects such as transparency and information exchange at a global level.

How does the Commission view the fact that, while the EU has adopted measures to counter money laundering and tax fraud, Spain has applied an amnesty in both these areas? Is it justifiable to use tax collection objectives as grounds for applying an amnesty to criminal activities? Why did the Commission at no point recommend that said amnesty not be applied, given that Spain is subject to an Excessive Deficit Procedure? Why did it not do so as part of the European Semester? Does it believe that this measure encourages tax fraud rather than helping to eliminate it? Does it increase confidence in European tax policy? How would it recommend that Spain tackle tax fraud and money laundering, in order to create a fairer taxation system which could spare the Spanish population the effects of further distressingly painful budget cuts?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(12 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of Spanish citizens' increasing exposure to budget cuts and agrees that tax fraud generates an unfair distribution of the tax burden across the population. The fight against tax evasion and tax fraud features in the recommendations to Spain adopted by the Council of the European Union ([1]), which also include a systematic review of the tax system by March 2014. The Commission will assess the progress made in the context of the 2014 European semester. The action plan of 6 December 2012 proposes a more effective surveillance of illicit financial flows and stronger anti-corruption policies ([2]). In addition, the recent proposal for a review of the Third Anti-Money Laundering Directive explicitly mentions tax crimes as predicate offences to money laundering.

The Commission announced its intention to study the opportunity and feasibility to align the definition of certain types of tax offences, including administrative and criminal sanctions ([3]).

It is important to ensure that any action in this area is fully integrated with similar actions in other areas of EC law in accordance with the principles set out in the Commission Communication 'Towards an EU Criminal Policy: Ensuring the effective implementation of EU policies through criminal law' ([4]). Regarding anti-corruption policies, the Commission would refer to its communication 'Agenda for Change' ([5]) which is relevant to tax evasion and transparency.

As written in the reply to parliamentary Question E-000774/2013, the Commission does not advocate the introduction of tax amnesty schemes. The introduction of such measures, in the absence of EU harmonisation in the area or indeed infringements of Treaty rules, is a matter for the Member State to consider and to take responsibility for.

([1]) COM(2013) 359.
([2]) COM(2012) 722.
([3]) COM(2012) 722, pt.30.
([4]) COM(2011) 573.
([5]) COM(2011) 637.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007573/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Human papilloma virus vaccinations in Japan

Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare recently told local governments to suspend their previous recommendation for the human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine to be administered to 12-16-year-old girls. While girls can still receive the vaccination for free, medical institutions in Japan are now obliged to inform them that the ministry does not recommend it.

A special task force reportedly concluded that it could not rule out a connection between the HPV vaccine and adverse effects. Yet after examining 43 cases of widespread pain after HPV vaccinations, a direct cause-and-effect relationship could be neither established nor ruled out.

In 2007, the World Health Organisation's Global Advisory Committee reviewed published and non-published data on the safety of both HPV vaccines. The reviewed data covered local and systemic events in the short term, and long-term events up to six years later, including pregnancy events. The Committee concluded that the current evidence on the safety of HPV vaccines is reassuring.

Furthermore, the expert group set up by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has looked into introducing HPV vaccination in EU countries. The expert group's 2008 report states that while the HPV vaccine's adverse effects occurred in about 80% of study participants, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer — after breast cancer — affecting women aged 15 to 44 in the EU, and that the HPV vaccine offers a new, complementary tool to improve the control of cervical cancer.

Is the Commission aware of this suspension in Japan? What implications is this likely to have for the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

National public health authorities in Japan, as well as in the EU Member States, have full competence for vaccination programmes at national level.

The European Commission and the European Medicines Agency are aware that the Japanese government did not interrupt vaccination against the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), but that it instructed its local Japanese authorities to temporarily suspend the promotion of the use of the vaccine until investigations related to pain linked to the vaccine at the site of injection had been concluded.

The decision of the Japanese health authority will presumably have no impact on the EU. Nineteen Member States have informed the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) that they currently have HPV vaccination campaigns in place. Quadrivalent (Gardasil) and bivalent (Cervarix) HPV vaccines are in use, both of which received a central marketing authorisation by the Commission in 2006 and 2007 respectively. Further information and specific data on HPV vaccination schedules currently in use in the European Union is accessible at http://vaccine-schedule.ecdc.europa.eu/Pages/Scheduler.aspx

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007574/13
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(27 juni 2013)

Betreft: Een reddingsoperatie op leugens gebaseerd

Op 24 juni 2013 heeft de *Irish Independent* een opgenomen conversatie uitgezonden tussen twee leidinggevenden bij Anglo Irish Bank die zeiden dat — ondanks het feit dat de bank 7 miljard EUR financiële steun van de Centrale Bank van Ierland vroeg — zij zeer goed wisten dat zij veel meer geld nodig hadden aangezien het faillissement van de bank hangende was ([1]). Zij lachten ook met het idee de door de Ierse regering uitgegeven bankgarantie te gebruiken om deposito's uit het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Duitsland aan te trekken en spotten met die laatste door de eerste regels van het vroegere Duitse volkslied, „Deutschland, Deutschland über alles" te zingen ([2]).

De leningen van de Europese Faciliteit voor financiële stabiliteit (EFSF) in het kader van de Ierse reddingsoperatie zijn dus beheerst door een overeenkomst die op leugens is gebaseerd. De Ierse banksector heeft tegen openbare autoriteiten gelogen om zijn rekeningen te laten betalen door crediteurlanden van de eurozone, onder andere Nederland.

Volgens de beginselen van het Europees verbintenissenrecht, die door de Commissie voor Europees verbintenissenrecht werden voorbereid, „kan een partij die een verbintenis is aangegaan op basis van door de andere partij verstrekte incorrecte informatie schadevergoeding vorderen … om zoveel mogelijk in dezelfde positie te worden geplaatst alsof zij de verbintenis niet was aangegaan" (artikelen 4:106 en 4:117) ([3]). De Ierse autoriteiten moeten verantwoordelijk worden gesteld voor de inbreuken en de verkeerde informatie van de Ierse banksector.

Ten gevolge hiervan is de overeenkomst inzake financiële bijstand tussen de EFSF, Ierland en de Centrale Bank van Ierland nietig en moeten crediteurlanden hun geld terugkrijgen.

Kan de Commissie in het licht hiervan antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

1. Is de Commissie het eens met mijn verklaringen? Zo niet, kan de Commissie haar standpunt verduidelijken?

2. Hoe zal de Commissie ervoor zorgen dat de beginselen van het Europees verbintenissenrecht in acht worden genomen? Zullen de lidstaten hun geld volledig terugkrijgen?

3. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat de leidinggevenden bij Anglo Irish Bank van wie het gesprek werd gelekt, moeten worden vervolgd?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(6 augustus 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de openbaarmaking van opgenomen conversaties tussen leidinggevenden uit de Ierse financiële sector. Het deel van de gesprekken dat wordt vermeld, heeft betrekking op gebeurtenissen die dateren van voor de nationalisering van de Anglo Irish Bank door de Ierse regering in het voorjaar van 2009 (bijna twee jaar voor de start van het Ierse programma). De kapitaalinjecties in dit verband komen volledig van de Ierse staat. Mogelijke rechtsvorderingen zijn bijgevolg de verantwoordelijkheid van de Ierse regering. Ook eventuele strafrechtelijke vervolging valt onder de verantwoordelijkheid van het Ierse rechtssysteem.

De in het kader van het Ierse programma verstrekte leningen zijn afkomstig uit de Europese Faciliteit voor financiële stabiliteit (EFSF) en het Europees financieel stabilisatiemechanisme (EFSM). De Commissie onderzoekt op regelmatige basis de houdbaarheid van de overheidsschuld in lidstaten die onder een macro-economisch aanpassingsprogramma vallen om erop toe te zien dat de leningen in het kader van deze programma's volledig zullen worden terugbetaald.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f373d646-dcc9-11e2-9700-00144feab7de.html#axzz2XJjxS1nq
([2]) http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/top-bankers-joked-about-bailout-29371056.html
http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/feff200e-dd75-11e2-a756-00144feab7de.html#axzz2XJjxS1nq
([3]) http://frontpage.cbs.dk/law/commission_on_european_contract_law/PECL%20engelsk/engelsk_partI_og_II.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007574/13
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: A bailout based on lies

On 24 June 2013, the *Irish Independent* broadcast a taped conversation between senior executives at Anglo Irish Bank who said that — although the bank was seeking EUR 7 billion in financial aid from the Central Bank of Ireland — they knew full well that they needed far more money, given that bankruptcy was imminent ([1]). They also laughed at the idea of exploiting the bank guarantee issued by the Irish Government by using it to attract deposits from the United Kingdom and Germany, and mocked the latter by singing the opening bars of the former German national anthem, 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles' ([2]).

Therefore, Irish bailout loans from the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) are governed by an agreement based on lies. The Irish banking sector lied to public authorities in order to get its bill paid by eurozone creditor countries, including the Netherlands.

According to the principles of European contract law prepared by the Commission on European contract law, 'a party who has concluded a contract relying on incorrect information given to it by the other party may recover damages… so as to put the avoiding party as nearly as possible into the same position as if it had not concluded the contract' (Articles 4(106) and 4(117)) ([3]). The Irish authorities should be considered responsible for the wrongdoings and misinformation given by the Irish banking sector.

As a consequence, the Financial Assistance Facility Agreement between the EFSF, Ireland and the Central Bank of Ireland is null and void, and creditor countries should be given back their money.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree with my statements? If not, could the Commission indicate its stance on the matter?

2. How will the Commission ensure that the principles of European contract law will be properly upheld? Will Member States get their money back in full?

3. Does the Commission agree that the senior executives at Anglo Irish Bank whose conversation was leaked should be properly prosecuted?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the publication of taped conversations between senior executives in the Irish financial sector. The mentioned part of the tapes refers to events prior to the nationalisation of Anglo Irish Bank by the Irish government in early 2009 (almost two years before the start of the Irish programme). Any capital injections in this context originate from the Irish state only, hence, any potential legal claims rest with the Irish government. The prosecution of any criminal charges also rests with the Irish judicial system.

The loans under the Irish programme originate from the EFSF and the EFSM. The Commission assesses the sustainability of public debt in Member States under a macroeconomic adjustment programme regularly to make sure that the loans under said programmes will be repaid in full.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/f373d646-dcc9-11e2-9700-00144feab7de.html#axzz2XJjxS1nq
([2]) http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/top-bankers-joked-about-bailout-29371056.html
http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/feff200e-dd75-11e2-a756-00144feab7de.html#axzz2XJjxS1nq
([3]) http://frontpage.cbs.dk/law/commission_on_european_contract_law/PECL%20engelsk/engelsk_partI_og_II.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007575/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Traffico di esseri umani segnalato in Iran

Nel giugno 2013, il Dipartimento di Stato degli Stati Uniti ha lanciato la sua relazione annuale sul traffico di esseri umani, in cui definiva l'Iran «un paese, presumibilmente, di origine, transito e destinazione per uomini, donne e bambini soggetti al traffico sessuale e al lavoro forzato». Di conseguenza, la Repubblica islamica si è ritrovata nel posto più basso della classifica per quanto riguarda la gestione del traffico di esseri umani ogni anno dal 2006.

Apparentemente l'Iran non compie sforzi sufficienti per applicare la legge atta a debellare la pratica del traffico di esseri umani, benché esistano leggi che proibiscano tale pratica né sembra che siano state adottate misure adeguate per proteggere le vittime dal traffico. Ancor più problematico è il fatto che l'Iran non condivida le informazioni con le Nazioni Unite sul problema. Evidentemente oggi l'Iran funge da hub chiave della tratta di esseri umani tra il Pakistan, l'Afghanistan e gli Stati del Golfo.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quali misure intende adottare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per incoraggiare fermamente il governo iraniano a rispettare pienamente gli obblighi internazionali per affrontare il problema del traffico di esseri umani?

2. Quali misure, se del caso, l'Unione europea ha adottato negli anni precedenti per discutere il problema del traffico di esseri umani in Iran, che costituisce un problema che si estende ad altri paesi della regione e oltre?

3. È l'UE preparata per lavorare con altri governi della regione, quali l'Afghanistan e il Pakistan, per compiere maggiori passi per smantellare i canali di traffico di esseri umani che alimentano l'Iran nonché per contribuire ad individuare le persone che si ritiene siano coinvolte a livello penale in tale processo?

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

La tratta di esseri umani è un grave problema in Iran e ottenere un impegno da parte della Repubblica islamica su questo tema è ancor più difficile dal momento che l'Iran non ha sottoscritto molti degli strumenti internazionali pertinenti, in particolare il protocollo delle Nazioni Unite per prevenire, reprimere e punire la tratta di persone, in particolare donne e bambini, e la Convenzione internazionale delle Nazioni Unite sulla protezione dei diritti dei lavoratori migranti e dei membri delle loro famiglie.

In occasione della quinta conferenza ministeriale del processo di Budapest, svoltasi a Istanbul il 19 aprile 2013, è stato creato un «partenariato della via della seta per la migrazione», i cui obiettivi prioritari sono prevenire e combattere la tratta di esseri umani, affrontare le cause che ne sono all'origine e fornire protezione e sostegno alle vittime. A tal fine, le parti hanno deciso di adottare misure volte a: aumentare la sensibilizzazione su questo fenomeno; sviluppare strategie nazionali e regionali, con particolare attenzione per le donne e i minori e coinvolgendo tutte le parti interessate; sostenere la creazione di meccanismi di rinvio nazionali e transnazionali e aumentare la capacità di prestare assistenza e protezione alle vittime, definendo, se del caso, una normativa adeguata; sviluppare le capacità delle autorità di contrasto e giudiziarie affinché possano individuare, perseguire e punire in modo efficace i trafficanti di esseri umani. L'Iran, l'Iraq, l'Afghanistan e il Pakistan sono tra i 50 paesi che partecipano a questo processo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007575/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Reported human trafficking in Iran

In June 2013, the US Department of State launched its annual report on human trafficking in which it called Iran a 'presumed source, transit, and destination country for men, women and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour'. As a result, the Islamic Republic has earned the lowest possible ranking on handling human trafficking every year since 2006.

Iran seemingly does not make sufficient law enforcement efforts to stamp out the practice of human trafficking, even though there are laws that prohibit the practice, nor does it appear that adequate steps are being taken to protect the victims of trafficking. More problematically, Iran does not share information on the problem with the United Nations. Iran apparently now stands as a key hub for human trafficking between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Gulf states.

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take in order to strongly encourage the Iranian government to comply fully with international obligations to tackle the problem of human trafficking?

2. What steps, if any, has the EU taken in previous years to discuss the problem of human trafficking in Iran, which is a problem that extends to other countries in the region and beyond?

3. Is the EU prepared to work with other governments in the region, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, to take greater steps to break up human trafficking channels that feed into Iran, as well as to help locate individuals who are believed to be criminally involved with this process?

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

Trafficking in persons is a serious problem in Iran, and engaging the Islamic Republic on this issue is made more difficult by the fact that Iran is not a signatory of a number of relevant international instruments, in particular the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

At the 5th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process, which took place in Istanbul on 19 April 2013, the 'Silk Routes Partnership for Migration' was established. Preventing and combating trafficking in persons, address its root causes and provide adequate protection and support to the trafficked persons is one of its priority goals. To that end, the parties agreed to take measures to increase awareness of this phenomenon; to develop national and regional strategies, focusing on women and children and involving all relevant stakeholders; to support the establishment of national and transnational referral mechanisms and increasing capacities to assist and protect the victims as well as to establish, where appropriate, the adequate legislation and to develop capacities of law enforcement and judicial authorities to allow for effectively identifying, prosecuting and punishing traffickers in persons. Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan are among the 50 participating countries in this process.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007576/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Denunce relative a reti iraniane e di Hezbollah in Africa

Il 17 giugno 2013 il Centro di informazione su intelligence e terrorismo Meir Amit e il quotidiano israeliano *Haaretz* hanno riferito delle attività di agenti iraniani e di Hezbollah volte a espandere le basi in Africa con presunte finalità terroristiche.

Gli articoli riferiscono di processi penali a carico di cittadini libanesi e iraniani arrestati perché coinvolti nel contrabbando di armi, nella raccolta di informazioni di intelligenze e nella pianificazione di attacchi terroristici atti a colpire gli interessi israeliani e occidentali.

Nel giugno 2012 i cittadini iraniani Ahmad Abolfathi Mohammad e Sayed Mansour Mousavi sono stati arrestati a Nairobi perché in possesso di 15 kg di esplosivi. Secondo i funzionari locali i principali obiettivi sarebbero stati gli interessi israeliani, statunitensi e britannici in Kenya.

Nel febbraio 2013 il servizio nazionale di sicurezza nigeriano ha arrestato Abdullahi Mustapha Berende per aver ordito attacchi terroristici contro obiettivi americani e israeliani al fine di destabilizzare l'Occidente.

Il cittadino iraniano Azim Aghajani, membro della Forza Quod del Corpo dei guardiani della rivoluzione islamica, e i suoi complici nigeriani sono stati condannati alla reclusione per contrabbando in Nigeria di armi e munizioni, che, a quanto pare, dovevano essere utilizzate per colpire gli interessi occidentali.

Nel maggio 2013 quattro cittadini libanesi addestrati da Hezbollah sono stati detenuti per aver contrabbandato armi pesanti e averle immagazzinate in un parco di divertimenti nonché nello spazio sottostante un supermercato di Abuja. Altri agenti segreti di Hezbollah sono stati posti sotto sorveglianza in Sierra Leone e Senegal, dove coordinano attività di trasferimento di fondi e si adoperano per convincere i cittadini locali a trasferirsi in Libano per essere addestrati al terrorismo.

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante al corrente della presunta attività di costituzione di basi in Africa da parte di agenti segreti iraniani e di Hezbollah?

2. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante avviare una cooperazione in proposito con le forze di sicurezza israeliane e americane in un'ottica di prevenzione di eventuali attacchi terroristici futuri contro gli interessi israeliani e occidentali?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza di quanto riportato dai media sulla presunta attività di costituzione di basi in Africa da parte di agenti segreti iraniani e di Hezbollah. Seguiamo attentamente tali notizie e cerchiamo di stabilirne la validità.

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è impegnata a combattere il terrorismo ovunque si manifesti e a fare tutto il possibile per prevenire futuri attacchi. Cooperiamo strettamente su tale questione con tutti i nostri partner, compresi Israele e gli Stati Uniti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007576/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Alleged Hezbollah and Iranian networks exposed in Africa

On 17 June 2013, the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Centre and the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* published reports about Iranian and Hezbollah agents expanding bases in Africa allegedly for the purpose of terrorist activities.

The articles discuss criminal trials of arrested Lebanese and Iranian nationals involved in smuggling weapons, collecting intelligence and planning terrorist attacks against Israeli and Western interests.

In June 2012, Iranians Ahmad Abolfathi Mohammad and Sayed Mansour Mousavi, were arrested in Nairobi for possession of 15 kilos of explosives. According to local officials the main targets were Israeli, US and British interests in Kenya.

In February 2013, Nigeria's state security service arrested Abdullahi Mustapha Berende, who was plotting terrorist attacks against American and Israeli targets in order to destabilise the West.

Iranian national Azim Aghajani, a member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Qods Force, and his Nigerian counterparts were sentenced to prison for smuggling arms and ammunition into Nigeria. The weapons were allegedly to be used against Western interests.

In May 2013, four Lebanese nationals trained by Hezbollah were jailed for the illegal smuggling of heavy weapons and storing them at an amusement park and under a supermarket in Abuja. Other Hezbollah operatives have been monitored in Sierra Leone and Senegal, where they coordinate money transfers and work to convince local nationals to go to Lebanon in order to receive terrorist training.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of Iranian and Hezbollah operatives allegedly building bases across Africa?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative going to cooperate on this issue with Israeli and American security forces to prevent possible terror attacks against Israeli and Western interests in the future?

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

The HR/VP is aware of media reports that Iranian and Hezbollah operatives are allegedly building bases across Africa. We are following such reports closely, and endeavouring to establish their validity.

The HR/VP is committed to fighting terrorism wherever it occurs, and to doing all that we can to prevent future attacks. We cooperate closely on this issue with all our partners, including Israel and the United States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007577/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Islamisti in Tunisia

Il 17 giugno 2013 il *Washington Post* ha riportato la notizia di scontri in Tunisia tra le forze moderate e laiche e i gruppi che sostengono un approccio più radicale e islamista. L'Ennahda, il partito al governo, e il suo leader Rashid Al-Ghannushi erano dapprima determinati a basare la costituzione del paese sulla legge della Sharia ma il progetto di costituzione del paese è stato contestato poiché pregiudicherebbe i diritti delle donne e darebbe alla religione un ruolo troppo rilevante. Di conseguenza, l'Ennahda ha fatto numerose concessioni ai partiti laici.

Malgrado tali concessioni, l'Ennahda è stata accusato di consentire ai movimenti islamisti o salafiti di agire incontrollati. Molti nel paese desiderano imporre forme di islam più radicali e austere. Fra questi vi è il gruppo Ansar al-Sharia, il cui leader, Abu Iyadh, è ricercato dalle autorità tunisine per il suo ruolo in un attentato pianificato contro l'ambasciata degli Stati Uniti. Un'altra fazione, un gruppo armato chiamato Brigata Uqba ibn Nafa, è accusata di svolgere attività di formazione jihadiste nella Tunisia occidentale vicino al confine con l'Algeria.

Le forze armate tunisine sono attivamente alla ricerca di jihadisti nella parte occidentale del paese e almeno tre soldati sono morti a causa di bombe esplose sulla strada. Secondo Al-Ghannushi, gruppi quali Ansar al-Sharia si ispirano ad al-Qaeda e si stima vi siano 5000 salafiti impegnati in un'opposizione violenta al governo. Città quali Al-Qayrawan sono divenute centri importanti per le attività salafite e molti dei cittadini sono ferventi sostenitori di una legge islamica rigorosa.

1. Come valuta il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante la minaccia per l'UE di gruppi quali Ansar al-Sharia e il gruppo armato Brigata Uqba ibn Nafa che operano nella Tunisia occidentale?

2. Qual è il punto di vista del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sulla proposta di legge per «immunizzare la rivoluzione» che, se introdotta, vieterebbe a personalità politiche del regime di Ben Ali di candidarsi a qualsiasi carica politica eletta?

3. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante preparato a sostenere i governi dell'Algeria e della Tunisia nel loro impegno a combattere la minaccia terroristica sul monte Chaambi, una roccaforte dei ribelli islamici nella Tunisia occidentale?

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

L'UE è pienamente consapevole delle minacce terroristiche nella regione, comprese quelle in Tunisia, e segue da vicino gli sviluppi della situazione. Il Consiglio «Giustizia e affari interni» di marzo 2013 e i recenti Consigli «Affari esteri» hanno affrontato il tema della sicurezza nel Sahel/Maghreb.

L'UE attribuisce grande importanza alla questione della sicurezza delle frontiere e al potenziale rafforzamento della capacità di gestione dei confini tunisini. Inoltre, il sostegno alla riforma del settore della sicurezza, la lotta al terrorismo e la deradicalizzazione della società sono temi prioritari del dialogo politico con le autorità tunisine e algerine, a diversi livelli.

Nel contesto del dialogo politico con la Tunisia, l'UE ha sempre esortato il paese alla prudenza circa le leggi che potrebbero esacerbare la polarizzazione della scena politica tunisina. L'UE ritiene che un'ulteriore polarizzazione delle forze politiche potrebbe nuocere allo spirito di compromesso e al clima di consenso necessari per progredire nella transizione democratica.

A livello più generale, l'UE appoggia gli interventi dei governi africani volti a prevenire e scoraggiare le azioni terroristiche, in particolare nell'ambito della «Strategia per la sicurezza e lo sviluppo del Sahel». La questione del Sahel ha inoltre richiamato l'attenzione sulla necessità di collegare la dimensione esterna e quella interna dell'azione europea di lotta al terrorismo (a livello di UE e di Stati membri).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007577/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Islamists in Tunisia

On June 17 2013, the *Washington Post* reported on struggles in Tunisia between secular, moderate forces and groups supporting a more radical, Islamist approach. The ruling Ennahda party and its leader Rashid Al-Ghannushi were at first determined to base the country's constitution on sharia law. The country's draft constitution was contested, however, on the grounds that it undermines the rights of women and gives religion too prominent a role. In response, Ennahda made a number of concessions to secular parties.

These concessions notwithstanding, Ennahda has been accused of allowing Islamist or Salafist movements to operate unchecked. There are many in the country who wish to impose more radical and austere forms of Islam. One group that has emerged is Ansar al-Sharia, whose leader, Abu Iyadh, is wanted by the Tunisian authorities for his role in a planned attack against the US embassy. Another faction, an armed group called the Uqba ibn Nafa Brigade, is known to conduct jihadist training activities in western Tunisia near the Algerian border.

The Tunisian military is looking actively for jihadists in the western part of the country, and at least three soldiers have died as a result of roadside bombs. According to Al-Ghannushi, groups such as Ansar al-Sharia draw inspiration from al-Qaeda, and there are estimated to be 5000 Salafists who are committed to violent opposition to the government. Towns such as Al-Qayrawan have become important hubs of Salafist activity, and many of its residents are fervent advocates of strict Islamic law.

1. What is the assessment of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding the threat posed to the EU by groups such as Ansar al-Sharia and the armed Uqba ibn Nafa Brigade operating in western Tunisia?

2. What is the response of the Vice-President/High Representative to the proposed law to 'immunise the revolution' which, if introduced, would ban political figures from the Ben Ali regime from standing for elected public office?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to support the Algerian and Tunisian governments in their effort to tackle the terrorist threat in Mount Chaambi, a stronghold of Islamist rebels in western Tunisia?

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

The EU is well aware of the terrorist threats in the region, including in Tunisia and is closely following the development of the situation. The Security situation in the Sahel/Maghreb was discussed at the Justice and Home Affairs Council in March 2013 and in recent Foreign Affairs Councils.

The EU attaches great importance to the issue of border security and potential reinforcement of Tunisian border management capacities. In addition, the support to security sector reform, the fight against terrorism and de-radicalisation of societies are on the agenda of political dialogue with the Tunisian and Algerian authorities, at different levels.

In the framework of its political dialogue with Tunisia, the EU has constantly advised for caution when it comes to laws which could deepen the polarization of the Tunisian domestic political scene. The EU is convinced that further polarization between political forces would endanger the spirit of compromises and consensus necessary to take forward the democratic transition.

More generally, the EU also supports the work done by African governments to prevent and deter terrorist action, notably within its 'Strategy for Security and Development in Sahel'. Besides, in the EU, the Sahel issue has drawn attention to the need to link up the external and internal dimensions of European action in counter-terrorism matters (by EU and Member States).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007578/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Blogger arrestati in Vietnam

A metà giugno 2013 varie fonti d'informazione e organizzazioni quali «Human Rights Watch» hanno riferito che il governo vietnamita sta colpendo blogger e altri attivisti a favore della democrazia. Secondo il Wall Street Journal, il giornale di Stato vietnamita ha riferito che il blogger Dinh Nhat Uy è stato preso in custodia nella provincia di Long An per «aver abusato delle libertà democratiche» pubblicando online informazioni «false e tendenziose», un'accusa che potrebbe portare a una condanna fino a sette anni di carcere. Dinh Nhat Uy è il terzo blogger ad essere arrestato in meno di un mese. Gli altri due sono Truong Duy Nhat e Pham Viet Dao.

Il governo è preoccupato per l'economia vacillante del paese. Secondo notizie di stampa, oltre un terzo della popolazione utilizza i blog e altri media sociali per sollevare i problemi del Vietnam. Parlando di fronte al parlamento nazionale, il Ministro dell'informazione e della comunicazione Nguyen Bac Son ha definito Internet come un «deposito di conoscenze», ma ha messo in guardia dai contenuti che nuocciono agli usi e alle tradizioni e «sabotano il paese».

Secondo l'organizzazione «Global Voices», l'articolo 88 del codice penale vietnamita, che vieta la propaganda antigovernativa, è spesso utilizzato per incarcerare le persone che si oppongono al governo. L'articolo 258 del codice penale punisce l'abuso delle libertà democratiche per violare gli interessi dello Stato nonché i diritti e gli interessi legittimi delle collettività e degli individui con una condanna a sette anni di carcere. Lo scorso anno, il Primo ministro ha emesso un'ordinanza che impone la repressione dei blog «reazionari».

1. Può la Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere se è disposta a chiedere l'immediata scarcerazione dei blogger Dinh Nhat Uy, Truong Duy Nhat e Pham Viet Dao?

2. Qual è il parere dei funzionari della delegazione dell'Unione europea in Vietnam in merito ai crescenti sforzi delle autorità di reprimere i difensori dei diritti umani, i blogger e gli attivisti a favore della democrazia?

3. Nel corso dei dialoghi sui diritti umani che si sono tenuti negli ultimi anni con il Vietnam, quali risultati sono stati conseguiti per quanto riguarda la libertà di espressione online e i diritti dei blogger?

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

L'Unione europea è consapevole e preoccupata dei chiari segni di un approccio più restrittivo adottato dal Vietnam nell'ambito dei diritti umani, soprattutto per quanto riguarda la libertà di espressione, e solleva la questione in occasione delle riunioni con il governo a tutti i livelli, rammentando al Vietnam i suoi obblighi internazionali. Di recente sono state intraprese diverse iniziative in materia di diritti umani, soprattutto in relazione alle dure condanne inflitte ai blogger.

Casi specifici di blogger e altri attivisti a favore della democrazia sono stati oggetto di discussione anche nell'ultima sessione, svoltasi nell'ottobre 2012, del dialogo rafforzato sui diritti umani, di cui la libertà di espressione rappresenta un elemento cardine. La prossima sessione del dialogo, che si terrà entro fine anno, sarà un'ulteriore occasione per discutere della questione con il governo. Il dialogo sui diritti umani è uno strumento prezioso per interloquire in modo diretto ed esplicito con le autorità e contribuisce a far sì che la questione resti prioritaria nell'agenda bilaterale, oltre a richiamare costantemente l'attenzione del Vietnam sulla necessità di migliorare la situazione dei diritti umani nel paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007578/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Bloggers arrested in Vietnam

In mid-June 2013 a number of news sources and organisations such as Human Rights Watch reported that the Vietnamese government is targeting bloggers and other pro-democracy activists. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the Vietnamese state newspaper has reported that blogger Dinh Nhat Uy has been taken into custody in Long An Province for 'abusing democratic freedoms' by posting 'slanderous and erroneous' reports online, a charge that could lead to up to seven years in prison. Mr Uy is the third blogger arrested in less than a month. Other individuals include Truong Duy Nhat and Pham Viet Dao.

The government is concerned about the country's faltering economy. According to press reports, more than a third of the population use blogs and other forms of social media to complain about Vietnam's problems. Speaking before the national parliament, Minister of Information and Communication Nguyen Bac Son described the Internet as a 'store of knowledge' but warned against content that harmed customs and traditions and 'sabotaged the country'.

According to the organisation Global Voices, Article 88 of the Vietnamese criminal code, which bans anti-state propaganda, is often used to detain individuals who oppose the government. Article 258 of the criminal code punishes misuse of 'democratic freedoms [in order] to attack state interests and the legitimate rights and interests of collectives and individuals' with a sentence of seven years in prison. Last year the Prime Minister issued a directive ordering a crackdown on 'reactionary' blogs.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to call for the immediate release of bloggers Dinh Nhat Uy, Truong Duy Nhat and Pham Viet Dao?

2. What is the assessment of EU delegation officials in Vietnam regarding the authorities' increasing efforts to crack down on human rights defenders, bloggers and pro-democracy activists?

3. At human rights dialogues with Vietnam in recent years, what have been some of the outcomes regarding online freedom of expression and blogger rights?

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

The EU is aware and concerned about clear signs of a more restrictive approach to human rights in Vietnam, in particular freedom of expression. The EU raises Human Rights concerns in meetings with the Government at all levels, reminding Vietnam of its international obligations. Demarches on Human Rights and on harsh sentencing of bloggers in particular have been carried out repeatedly in the recent past.

Freedom of Expression is a key element on the agenda of the enhanced Human Rights Dialogue. Specific cases of bloggers/democracy activists have been addressed also in the last session held in October 2013. The next session of the dialogue, before the end of the year will be a further occasion to discuss these issues with the government. The Dialogue is a valuable instrument for addressing human rights concerns in a direct and frank manner with the authorities. It serves to keep human rights issues high on the bilateral agenda and is a constant reminder for Vietnam of the need to improve its human rights record.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007579/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Ultimatum alle milizie libiche

Il 13 giugno 2013, il sito di notizie online *Magharebia* ha riportato le affermazioni del nuovo Capo di Stato maggiore libico, Col. Salem al-Gnaidy, secondo cui, entro la fine dell'anno, le milizie libiche sono tenute o a deporre le armi o ad arruolarsi nell'esercito regolare. Tale richiesta è stata formulata poco dopo che i dimostranti avevano combattuto contro i membri della Prima brigata della «Libya Shield» a Bengasi. In quell'occasione, i dimostranti hanno accerchiato il quartier generale della milizia e il bilancio degli scontri è stato di almeno 31 morti e 70 feriti.

Di conseguenza, il Col. al-Gnaidy ha permesso ai gruppi armati di scegliere se arruolarsi nell'esercito e operare sotto il suo comando o consegnarsi alla giustizia. Egli ha annunciato che sarà definita una data per la consegna delle armi in coordinamento con il governo e il Congresso generale nazionale, aggiungendo che saranno accolte tutte le fazioni che vogliano unirsi all'esercito ed evidenziando la disponibilità a pagare bonus o ricompense a tutte le brigate che dismettono le armi ed esortano i relativi membri ad arruolarsi nell'esercito.

I cittadini della Libia, secondo il sito di notizie, chiedono l'istituzione di un esercito nazionale e lo scioglimento delle milizie armate. Il capo della «Joint Security Chamber», Brig. Gen. Mohammed al-Sharif, ha parlato delle difficoltà riscontrate nell'allentare le tensioni a Bengasi. Non solo mancano l'equipaggiamento, i veicoli, i dispositivi di protezione e le apparecchiature di comunicazione, i quali «sono molto importanti per il nostro operato», dice lui, ma è possibile utilizzare unicamente la metà del bilancio assegnato.

1. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante intraprendere azioni volte a sostenere gli sforzi profusi dalle autorità libiche che si stanno adoperando per lanciare un ultimatum ai gruppi di miliziani armati? In caso affermativo, può comunicare quali sono le azioni in questione?

2. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante prendere in considerazione l'ipotesi di proporre agli Stati membri di inviare in Libia una missione nel quadro della politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune, al fine di sostenere il disarmo dei gruppi di miliziani, oppure ritiene più opportuno che sia una forza della NATO ad occuparsene, qualora la Libia necessiti di aiuto militare esterno al riguardo?

3. Quali aiuti fornisce al momento l'UE al fine di sostenere l'istituzione di forze nazionali militari e di polizia?

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

L'UE sostiene l'obiettivo strategico del governo libico per quanto riguarda la necessità di accelerare il disarmo, la smobilitazione e il reinserimento delle varie milizie nelle forze di sicurezza statali o in strutture civili.

Il 22 maggio 2013 il Consiglio dell'UE ha dato il via libera all'avvio di una missione civile nell'ambito della politica di sicurezza e di difesa comune (PSDC) per la gestione integrata delle frontiere (EUBAM Libia). L'obiettivo della missione EUBAM è aiutare le autorità libiche a sviluppare le proprie capacità, così da migliorare la sicurezza delle frontiere terrestri, marittime e aeree, e a definire una più ampia strategia di gestione integrata delle frontiere. In tal modo si contribuirà al consolidamento dello Stato, allo sviluppo economico e alla lotta contro la criminalità organizzata e il terrorismo, nel paese e nell'intera regione. Ora come ora, l'UE non prevede di inviare in Libia una seconda missione nell'ambito della PSDC.

L'UE sostiene inoltre la riforma della polizia e della giustizia attraverso un programma, iniziato nel gennaio 2013 con una dotazione di 10 milioni di euro, che comprende anche un'assistenza per il reinserimento degli ex combattenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007579/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Ultimatum to Libyan militias

On 13 June 2013, the news website *Magharebia* reported that Libya's new chief of staff Col. Salem al-Gnaidy had said that Libyan militias must either lay down their weapons or join the regular army by the end of the year. He made this demand soon after protestors had fought with members of the 'Libya Shield' First Brigade militia in Benghazi. On that occasion, at least 31 people were killed and 70 injured after protestors moved to encircle the headquarters of the militia.

As a result, Col. al-Gnaidy gave armed groups a choice between joining the army and working under his command or facing the law. He announced that: 'We will set a date for handing in weapons in coordination with the government and General National Congress'. He added: 'We welcome all factions that want to join the army, and we are ready to pay bonuses or rewards to each brigade that hands in its weapons and sends its members to join the army'.

Libyan citizens, according to the news site, are demanding the establishment of a national army and the dissolution of armed militias. The head of the joint security chamber, Brig. Gen. Mohammed al-Sharif, talked about the difficulties in defusing tensions in Benghazi. Not only are there shortages of equipment, vehicles, shields and communication assets, which he said were 'very important for our work', but only half of the allocated budget is available for use.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take steps to support the efforts of the Libyan authorities who are working to issue an ultimatum to armed militia groups, and if so, what are those steps?

2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to consider proposing to Member States that a Common Security and Defence Policy mission be sent to Libya in order to support the disarmament of militia groups, or is it better left to a NATO force if Libya requires external military help to do this?

3. What assistance is the EU providing at present to support the establishment of a national military and police force?

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

The EU supports the strategic objective of the Libyan Government regarding the need to accelerate the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of the different militias within the state security forces or into civilian structures.

On 22 May 2013, the Council of the EU gave the green light to the launching of a civilian Common Defence and Security Policy mission on integrated border management (EUBAM Libya). The objective of EUBAM is to support the Libyan authorities to develop capacity for enhancing the security of their land, sea and air borders, and to develop a broader Integrated Border Management strategy. These efforts will contribute to state-consolidation, economic development as well as to the fight against organised crime and terrorism in the country and the wider region. Currently, the EU is not considering launching a second Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission in Libya.

Moreover, the EU provides support to the reform of the police and the justice (a EUR 10 million programme started in January 2013). Among its activites, this programme provides assistance to the reintegration of ex-fighters.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007580/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Hezbollah produrrebbe stimolanti farmaceutici contraffatti

Nel maggio 2013 l'Istituto internazionale per il controterrorismo (ICT) con sede in Israele ha pubblicato un video che mostra il coinvolgimento di Hezbollah nel settore farmaceutico della contraffazione.

Nel 2010 la polizia libanese avrebbe scoperto un giro di prodotti farmaceutici contraffatti gestito da Hezbollah. Secondo il dott. Boaz Ganor, direttore esecutivo dell'ICT, i macchinari per la produzione della sostanza stimolante fenitillina con il marchio Captagon sarebbero giunti in Libano dall'Iran. I fratelli Musawi, leader senior degli Hezbollah, hanno sviluppato un sistema per falsificare in Libano il Captagon e distribuirlo al resto del mondo, principalmente nella penisola araba. I fratelli sono stati autorizzati a produrre il Captagon sulla base di un permesso speciale legale e islamico, il che significa che non possono distribuire il prodotto tra la popolazione sciita. Il dott. Ganor sostiene che una delle potenziali conseguenze della distribuzione del Captagon è di aumentare il livello di ansietà tra gli utenti.

«La fenitillina è uno stimolante del sistema nervoso centrale ed ha effetti simili a quelli provocati dall'anfetamina. In dosi da piccole a moderate l'anfetamina provoca un'accelerazione del battito cardiaco, un aumento della temperatura corporea, della respirazione e della pressione sanguigna. Nel lungo periodo, tuttavia, l'anfetamina può avere diversi effetti collaterali, tra cui forte depressione, letargia, privazione del sonno, tossicità cardiaca e dei vasi sanguigni e malnutrizione.»

1. È il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante a conoscenza del coinvolgimento di Hezbollah nella produzione e distribuzione di medicinali contraffatti?

2. Quali sono le misure adottate dal Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per impedire che i prodotti contraffatti vengano spediti in Europa?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(30 agosto 2013)

1. La Commissione non è stata informata di tale attività.

2. La Commissione ha adottato misure concrete per prevenire l'accesso nell'UE di medicinali contraffatti. L'8 giugno 2011 il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno adottato la direttiva 2011/62/UE ([1]) finalizzata a impedire l'ingresso di medicinali falsificati nella catena di fornitura legale. Detta direttiva ha introdotto, tra l'altro, requisiti più rigorosi per l'importazione di sostanze attive farmaceutiche (le componenti attive dei medicinali). Essa ha agevolato inoltre l'identificazione dei medicinali contraffatti facendo obbligo di apporre caratteristiche di sicurezza (un identificatore unico e un dispositivo anti-manomissione) sulla confezione esterna di certi prodotti medicinali per uso umano (essenzialmente quelli soggetti a prescrizione). La Commissione prevede di adottare entro la fine del 2014 un atto delegato sugli aspetti tecnici delle caratteristiche di sicurezza.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:174:0074:0087:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007580/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Hezbollah allegedly manufacturing counterfeit pharmaceutical stimulant products

In May 2013, the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) based in Israel posted a video exposing Hezbollah's involvement in the counterfeit pharmaceutical industry.

In 2010 Lebanese police reportedly discovered counterfeit pharmaceutical operations run by Hezbollah. According to the executive director of the ICT, Dr Boaz Ganor, machines manufacturing the stimulant Fenethylline under the brand name Captagon were sent to Lebanon from Iran. The Musawi brothers, who are senior leaders in Hezbollah, developed a system to counterfeit Captagon in Lebanon and distribute it to the rest of the world, mainly in the Arabian Peninsula. The brothers were allowed to manufacture Captagon based on a special Islamic legal permit, but this means they are not permitted to distribute the product among the Shia population. Dr Ganor said that one of the potential consequences of distributing Captagon is to elevate levels of anxiety among users.

'Fenethylline is a central nervous system stimulant with effects similar to amphetamine. In small to moderate doses, amphetamine causes elevations in heart rate, body temperature, respiration, and blood pressure. Over the long term, however, amphetamine use can have a number of side effects, including extreme depression, lethargy, sleep deprivation, heart and blood vessel toxicity, and malnutrition.'

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of Hezbollah's involvement in the production and distribution of counterfeit medicines?

2. What steps has the Vice-President/High Representative taken to prevent counterfeit products being sent to Europe?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

1. The Commission has not been made aware of any such activity.

2. The Commission has taken concrete measures to prevent the entry into the EU of falsified medicines. On 8 June 2011, the European Parliament and the Council adopted Directive 2011/62/EU ([1]) on preventing the entry into the legal supply chain of falsified medicinal products. This directive introduced, *inter alia*, more stringent requirements for the importation of active pharmaceutical ingredients (the active components of medicines). It also facilitated the identification of falsified medicines by introducing the obligation to have safety features (a unique identifier and an anti-tampering device) on the outer package of certain human medicinal products (mainly those subject to prescription). The Commission is planning to adopt a delegated act on the technical caracteristics of the safety features by the end of 2014.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:174:0074:0087:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007581/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Impatto del rapido incremento demografico in Africa

In funzione dell'attuale andamento demografico in Nigeria è possibile prevedere un probabile aumento della popolazione da 161 milioni nel 2008 a 402 milioni nel 2050. Attualmente il 50 % della popolazione ha un'età inferiore ai 19 anni e il numero di minori che non frequentano la scuola si sta avvicinando al 50 % del totale in diverse regioni del paese. Il fatto che milioni di bambini non vadano a scuola o frequentino scuole non regolamentate è fonte di preoccupazione, poiché essi rappresentano i soggetti ideali per l'arruolamento nei gruppi armati non convenzionali, l'immigrazione clandestina, la divulgazione delle idee fondamentaliste, gli abusi sessuali e l'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti, nonché lo sfruttamento nell'ambito di pratiche di stregoneria e ai fini della prostituzione.

Una recente analisi dell'UNICEF sull'incremento demografico e il suo impatto in Africa ha rivelato l'attuale presenza di due crisi concomitanti: i) un boom di nascite senza precedenti, in ragione del quale il 50-60 % della popolazione ha un'età inferiore a 19 anni e ii) una crisi educativa dovuta a gravi inefficienze interne al sistema dell'istruzione, a causa delle quali il 24 % dei minori in età scolare non ha mai frequentato una scuola e il 55 % riesce a completare solo il ciclo di istruzione primaria.

Se non sarà intrapresa alcuna azione, l'impatto di tale fenomeno sulla stabilità, la pace e la prosperità a lungo termine della regione potrebbe essere enorme. È dimostrato che investire maggiormente nell'istruzione, in particolare quella delle ragazze, potrebbe sostenere gli sforzi dei governi volti a controllare l'aumento demografico e a ridurre le disparità, apportando una maggiore stabilità a livello sociale e politico e favorendo la crescita economica dei paesi interessati. Gli investimenti nell'istruzione, e in particolare l'istruzione delle ragazze, contribuirebbero a creare le premesse per il conseguimento degli obiettivi di sviluppo del Millennio in materia di istruzione e salute materna.

Ha il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sollevato la questione delle conseguenze della mancata scolarizzazione dei minori nel quadro del suo dialogo politico con paesi come la Nigeria, il Mali, la Repubblica democratica del Congo e la Somalia, nell'intento di sostenere i loro sistemi di istruzione e contribuire ad accrescerne l'efficacia?

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(21 agosto 2013)

La crescita demografica in Africa è al tempo stesso un'opportunità e una sfida. Il numero di abitanti del continente è destinato a raddoppiare entro il 2050 e la popolazione africana è attualmente la più giovane del mondo. Questo dinamismo demografico può stimolare la crescita, ma comporta anche numerose sfide in termini di uguaglianza e benessere.

I problemi associati alla forte crescita demografica sono temi centrali della politica di sviluppo dell'UE in linea con il programma di cambiamento e gli OSM ([1]). L'UE opera in stretta collaborazione con i partner e solleva tali questioni in sede di dialogo politico, laddove opportuno.

Il collegamento tra istruzione, aumento del reddito, sanità e crescita economica è stata evidenziato a più riprese. L'istruzione è un fattore chiave per lo sviluppo e la riduzione della povertà. L'UE continuerà a sostenere l'istruzione e garantirà che rimanga prioritaria nell'agenda di sviluppo post-2015. L'istruzione sarà contemplata da tutti i futuri strumenti finanziari, con particolare attenzione alla parità fra i sessi e all'accesso universale all'istruzione di base.

In Somalia, il sostegno dell'UE all'istruzione è pari a 85 milioni di euro su un periodo di sei anni. La partecipazione a un'istruzione di base di qualità, formale e non formale, è aumentata grazie al consolidamento e al miglioramento dell'accesso a tale istruzione.

In Mali e nella regione del Sahel, la crescita demografica rallenta lo sviluppo socioeconomico e ostacola l'erogazione dei servizi sociali di base. Occorre un maggiore impegno internazionale a sostegno delle amministrazioni carenti per migliorare il livello dei servizi statali (ad esempio, sanità e istruzione).

In Nigeria l'UE fornisce sostegno in campo sanitario, in particolare per le madri e i neonati, e contribuisce al coinvolgimento delle donne in materia di pace e sicurezza.

([1]) Obiettivi di sviluppo del millennio.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-007768/13
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(1 de julho de 2013)

Assunto: VP/HR — Impacto da educação das raparigas e do crescimento demográfico na estabilidade e situação de segurança de alguns países e, nomeadamente, da Nigéria, do Mali, da RDC e da Somália

Uma recente análise levada a efeito pela Unicef sobre o crescimento da população e respetivo impacto em África revela a existência de duas crises atualmente concomitantes: (1) um «baby boom» de proporções sem precedentes, de que resultam populações em que 50-60 % têm idades inferiores a 19 anos, e (2) uma crise da educação, precipitada por sistemas educativos afetados por graves ineficácias internas, o que conduz a que 24 % das crianças em idade escolar jamais frequentam a escola e que 55 % apenas conseguem concluir o ensino primário.

Na Nigéria, as atuais tendências demográficas sugerem que a população aumentará de 161 milhões, em 2008, para 402 milhões, em 2050, altura em que mais de 50 % da população terão idades inferiores a 19 anos. Entretanto, a proporção de crianças não escolarizadas atingirá 50 % do total da população em diversas regiões dos países em questão.

O facto de milhões de crianças não estarem a frequentar a escola ou estarem apenas a frequentar escolas não regulamentadas gera apreensão, porquanto essas crianças são o alvo ideal para o envolvimento em grupos armados não convencionais, para a imigração ilegal, para a generalização de ideais fundamentalistas, para o abuso sexual e consumo de drogas e para a exploração em feitiçaria e prostituição.

Sem ação, poderia ser enorme o impacto deste fenómeno na estabilidade, paz e prosperidade a longo prazo da região. Está provado que investir mais na educação e, em particular, na educação das raparigas, poderia simultaneamente ajudar os governos nos seus esforços de controlo do crescimento da população e de redução das desigualdades e gerar nestes países mais estabilidade política e social, bem como um mais forte crescimento económico.

Investir mais na educação e, em particular, na educação das raparigas, abriria igualmente o caminho a progressos significativos na via da consecução dos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio, nomeadamente o ODM 5 (saúde materna) e os ODM 2 e 3 (educação).

A Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante levantou a questão do impacto das crianças não escolarizadas no seu diálogo político com os governos de países como a Nigéria, o Mali, a RDC e a Somália, a fim de apoiar e fomentar a eficácia dos seus sistemas educativos?

Resposta conjunta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(21 de agosto de 2013)

O crescimento demográfico em África constitui uma oportunidade mas também um desafio. A população africana deverá duplicar até 2050, sendo a população deste continente atualmente a mais jovem do mundo. Embora este dinamismo demográfico possa contribuir para o crescimento, levanta uma série de desafios em termos de igualdade e bem-estar.

Os desafios suscitados pelo crescimento demográfico constituem um aspeto essencial da política de desenvolvimento da UE, em conformidade com a Agenda para a Mudança e os ODM ([1]). A UE tem colaborado estreitamente com os seus parceiros e, sempre que pertinente, tem levantado estas questões no âmbito do diálogo político.

A interligação existente entre a educação, o aumento dos rendimentos, a saúde e o crescimento económico tem sido frequentemente sublinhada. A educação é um aspeto essencial para promover o desenvolvimento e reduzir a pobreza. A UE pretende prosseguir o seu apoio à educação, assegurando-lhe um importante papel no âmbito da agenda para o desenvolvimento pós-2015. A educação será contemplada em todos os futuros instrumentos financeiros e será prestada especial atenção à igualdade entre os géneros e ao acesso universal ao ensino básico.

Na Somália, o apoio à educação prestado pela UE elevou-se a 85 milhões de EUR ao longo de um período de seis anos. O aumento da frequência do ensino básico formal e informal foi alcançado através da consolidação e da melhoria do acesso ao ensino básico.

([1]) Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio.

No Mali e na região do Sahel, o crescimento demográfico pode comprometer o crescimento socioeconómico e condicionar o desenvolvimento da prestação de serviços sociais de base. É necessário um maior empenho da comunidade internacional para suprir as carências governamentais, a fim de melhorar o nível dos serviços estatais (por exemplo, a saúde e a educação).

Na Nigéria, a UE tem prestado apoio ao setor da saúde, em particular, às mães e aos recém-nascidos, contribuindo ainda para uma maior participação das mulheres no domínio da paz e da segurança.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007581/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Impact of rapid population growth in Africa

Nigeria's current demographic trends suggest that the population is likely to grow from 161 million in 2008 to 402 million in 2050. At present, 50% of the population are under the age of 19, and the number of children who are not attending school is nearing 50% of the total in several regions of the country. The fact that millions of children are not at school, or are attending non-regulated schools, is a matter of concern, because these children are ideal targets for enrolment in non-conventional armed groups, for illegal immigration, for the dissemination of fundamentalist ideas, for sexual and drug abuse, and for abuse involving witchcraft and prostitution.

A recent Unicef analysis on population growth and its impact in Africa revealed the existence of two ongoing concomitant crises: (i) a baby boom of unprecedented proportions meaning that 50 to 60% of the population is below the age of 19 and (ii) an education crisis stemming from severe internal inefficiencies in education systems, resulting in 24% of school-age children never attending school, and 55% only being able to complete primary education.

If nothing is done, the impact of this phenomenon on the long-term stability, peace and prosperity of the region might be enormous. Evidence shows that investing more in education, and in particular in educating girls, could support governments in their efforts to control population growth and reduce inequalities, bringing more social and political stability and economic growth to the countries concerned. Investment in education, and in particular in educating girls, would help pave the way towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals on education and maternal health.

Has the Vice-President/High Representative raised the issue of the impact of out-of-school children in her political dialogue with countries such as Nigeria, Mali, the DRC and Somalia in an effort to support their educational systems and help make them more effective?

Question for written answer E-007768/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ana Gomes (S&D)
(1 July 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Impact of girls' education and demographic growth on the stability and security situation of some countries, in particular Nigeria, Mali, DRC and Somalia

A recent Unicef analysis on population growth and its impact in Africa reveals the existence of two ongoing concomitant crises: (1) a baby boom of unprecedented proportions resulting in populations in which 50-60% are below the age of 19; and (2) an education crisis precipitated by education systems suffering from severe internal inefficiencies, with the result that 24% of school-age children never attend school and 55% are only able to complete primary education.

In Nigeria, current demographic trends suggest that the population will grow from 161 million in 2008 to 402 million in 2050, at which time over 50% of the population will be below the age of 19. Meanwhile, the proportion of children out of school will reach 50% of the total in several regions of the countries concerned.

The fact that millions of children are not attending school, or are attending non-regulated schools, is a matter of concern, as they are ideal targets for involvement in nonconventional armed groups, illegal immigration, the spread of fundamentalist ideas, sexual and drug abuse, and exploitation in witchcraft and prostitution.

Without action, the impact of this phenomenon on the long-term stability, peace and prosperity of the region could be enormous. Evidence shows that investing more in education, and in particular in educating girls, could at the same time help governments in their efforts to control population growth and reduce inequalities, and bring about more social and political stability, and stronger economic growth, to these countries.

Investing more in education, and in particular in educating girls, would also pave the way for significant progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goals MDG 5 (maternal health) and MDGs 2 and 3 (education).

Has the Vice-President/High Representative raised the issue of the impact of out-of-school children in her political dialogues with the governments of countries such as Nigeria, Mali, DRC and Somalia in order to support and increase the effectiveness of their educational systems?

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

Population growth in Africa is both an opportunity and a challenge. The continent population is expected to double by 2050 while Africa currently has the youngest population in the world. This demographic dynamism can bolster growth. But it brings numerous challenges in terms of equality and well-being.

Challenges arising from sustained demographic growth are identified as core topics of the EU's development policy in line with the Agenda for Change and the MDGs ([1]). The EU works closely with partners and raises these issues in its political dialogue whenever relevant.

The link between education, increased income, health and economic growth has been highlighted frequently. Education is a key driver for development and poverty reduction. The EU will pursue its support to education and will ensure it remains high on the post-2015 development agenda. Education will be covered in all relevant future financial instruments with particular attention to gender equality and universal access to basic education.

In Somalia, the EU support to education amounts to EUR 85 million over a six-year period. Increased participation in non-formal and formal quality basic education has been achieved through consolidation and improvement of access to basic education opportunities.

In Mali and in the Sahel region, slow socioeconomic growth and limited developments in the delivery of basic social services are challenged by demographic growth. Enhanced international engagement in support of weak administrations is necessary to improve the level of state services (e.g. health and education).

In Nigeria, the EU provides support to health in particular for mothers and new-borns and contributes to women's engagement in the field of peace and security.

([1]) Millennium Development Goals.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007582/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Sondaggio sul ruolo dominante della Germania nell'UE

Il 24 giugno, il *Financial Times* ha pubblicato i risultati di un sondaggio condotto da *Harris Poll* in merito alla percezione di alcuni cittadini europei del ruolo dominante di Berlino nell'UE.

I risultati rivelano che una maggioranza di cittadini spagnoli e italiani è contraria alle politiche fiscali di «ispirazione tedesca» per risolvere la crisi dell'euro. Gran parte dei cittadini britannici, francesi, italiani e spagnoli intervistati ritiene che l'impatto di una intensificata «guida tedesca dell'UE» sarebbe più negativo che positivo.

Ben l'88 % degli spagnoli, l'82 % degli italiani e il 52 % dei francesi concordano che l'influenza della Germania è «troppo marcata». I sondaggi hanno inoltre dimostrato che più di tre quarti degli spagnoli e il 70 % degli italiani e dei britannici ritengono che un'UE a guida tedesca sarebbe per loro dannosa. Oltre la metà degli spagnoli e degli italiani intervistati ritiene che le rigorose e urgenti misure di austerità adottate dalla Germania non siano appropriate in un periodo di debole crescita economica.

1. Ciò premesso, è la Commissione a conoscenza degli ultimi risultati dei sondaggi condotti da *Harris poll* riguardo al crescente dominio della Germania nell'UE?

2. Ritiene la Commissione che detti risultati siano fondati?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del sondaggio online menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare.

2. La Commissione non esprime commenti su quanto riportato da fonti esterne. I sondaggi Eurobarometro standard, condotti in tutti gli Stati membri, illustrano l'atteggiamento dell'opinione pubblica in Europa da quattro decenni. Dall'avvento dell'attuale crisi economico-finanziaria detti sondaggi hanno continuato a presentare in dettaglio l'evoluzione dell'opinione pubblica in tutta l'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007582/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Poll on Germany's dominant role in the EU

On 24 June 2013, the *Financial Times* newspaper published results of a Harris poll showing how some European citizens perceive Berlin to have a dominant role in the EU.

The results reveal that a majority of Spanish and Italian nationals are against the 'German-inspired' fiscal policies to resolve the euro crisis. A large part of the British, French, Italian and Spanish citizens surveyed believe that the impact of a more 'German-led EU' would be more negative than positive.

Up to 88% of Spaniards, 82% of Italians and 52% of French people agreed that Germany's influence was 'too strong'. Polls also showed that more than three-quarters of Spaniards, and 70% of Italians and British people believe that a German-led EU would be bad for them. More than half of the Spaniards and Italians surveyed believe that Germany's tough and urgent austerity measures are inappropriate in times of weak economic growth.

1. Is the Commission aware of the latest results of the Harris poll on the increasing dominance of Germany in the EU?

2. Does the Commission consider the results of the Harris poll to be well founded?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the online survey mentioned by the Honourable Member.

2. The Commission does not comment on outside sources. Standard Eurobarometer surveys, which are carried out in all Member States, have depicted the state of public opinion in Europe for four decades. Since the emergence of the current financial and economic crisis, these surveys have continued to show in detail the evolution of public opinion across the EU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007583/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 juin 2013)

Objet: Journée européenne de l'emploi

De multiples rumeurs nous rapportent que la Journée européenne de l'emploi semble ne plus avoir lieu, par manque de volonté de la Commission.

1. La Commission a-t-elle, oui ou non, cessé de soutenir les Journées européennes de l'emploi?

2. Si oui, pour quelle raison? Cela ne donne-t-il pas l'impression, en abandonnant un événement réellement utile pour les demandeurs d'emploi, qu'à un moment où le taux de chômage en Europe n'a jamais été aussi élevé, et ce particulièrement parmi les jeunes, l'Europe les abandonne un peu plus?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(13 août 2013)

La Commission continue de soutenir les États membres dans l'organisation de leurs «Journées européennes de l'emploi». La planification de ces manifestations se fait conjointement avec EURES, le réseau de recherche d'emploi accessible à l'adresse suivante: eures.europa.eu. En 2012, environ 150 opérations de recrutement ont eu lieu. En 2013, 98 opérations de ce type ont été organisées jusqu'à présent.

La Commission apporte également une aide technique aux services de l'emploi afin de développer des journées européennes de l'emploi en ligne. Les foires à l'emploi en ligne optimisent les possibilités qu'offre le web pour connecter des personnes à des manifestations et élargissent le rayonnement, en aidant les participants à surmonter les contraintes physiques, financières et temporelles. Depuis 2011, des manifestations de ce genre se sont déroulées à Glasgow, Aarhus et Manchester, aux Pays-Bas, à Bruxelles et Lisbonne, et d'autres sont prévues cette année, notamment à Paris.

La Commission n'entend pas organiser une journée européenne de l'emploi dans ses propres locaux à Bruxelles cette année, mais elle continuera à soutenir les journées européennes de l'emploi dans les États membres, ces manifestations ayant une valeur ajoutée avérée au niveau national et européen. Concentrer les ressources sur les investissements dans le portail EURES et le soutien aux États membres pour leurs journées européennes de l'emploi aura un effet durable du point de vue du renforcement du réseau EURES et du rôle que les services de l'emploi jouent en favorisant la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre intra-UE, en particulier chez les jeunes. Une aide sera fournie pour des actions de communication et de sensibilisation, notamment par la formation et un soutien opérationnel à la mise en place de ces manifestations et à l'utilisation d'outils en ligne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007583/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: European Job Day

Rumours have been circulating that European Job Days will no longer take place owing to the Commission's lack of enthusiasm.

1. Has the Commission stopped supporting European Job Days, yes or no?

2. If it has, why? Will discontinuing an event that is actually useful for job seekers at a time when unemployment rates in Europe have never been higher, particularly among young people, not give the impression that Europe is now prepared to do even less than before to help the unemployed?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The Commission continues to support Member States in organising their 'European Job Days'. The planning of these events is shared within EURES, the Job search network at eures.europa.eu. In 2012 about 150 recruitment events took place. In 2013 so far 98 recruitment events were organised.

The Commission also provides technical support to employment services for the development of European online Job days. Online job fairs optimise the possibilities the web offers to connect people to events and increase outreach by helping to overcome attendees' physical, financial and time constraints. Since 2011 such events have taken place in Glasgow, Aarhus, Manchester, the Netherlands, Brussels and Lisbon and more are planned this year including in Paris.

The Commission will not organise a European Job Day in its own premises in Brussels this year but it will continue its support to European Job Days in Member States as these events have shown their added value at national and European levels. Focusing resources on investments in the EURES portal and support to Member States for their European Job Days will have a lasting impact when it comes to reinforcing EURES and the role employment services play in facilitating intra-EU labour mobility, in particular for young people. Assistance will be provided for communication and outreach activities and through training and operational support with the set-up of the events and the use of online tools.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007585/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili pratiche commerciali sleali nel settore degli edicolanti

Nel settore editoriale italiano si assiste ad una situazione per cui il giornalaio/l'edicolante, che vende la propria merce (riviste, giornali, periodici, opere a fascicoli, ecc.) nel suo negozio, è costretto ad affiggere messaggi pubblicitari diretti ai lettori/acquirenti per acquistare gli stessi prodotti direttamente dall'editore, con offerte, abbonamenti e sconti ad un prezzo inferiore a quello di vendita imposto al giornalaio da parte dello stesso editore.

Infatti, dal punto di vista fiscale, il giornalaio è inquadrato come commerciante, non avendo così la possibilità di decidere né il fornitore né il prezzo di vendita e trovandosi esposto ad una situazione impari nelle trattative sia verso i distributori dei periodici sia verso gli editori.

Tale situazione incide negativamente sulla categoria degli edicolanti, che già soffrono il calo della vendita della carta stampata dovuta all'aumento della free press e dell'utilizzo di internet e dei nuovi mezzi di comunicazione sociale.

Considerando che la Commissione lo scorso gennaio ha presentato una comunicazione dal titolo «Piano d'azione europeo per il commercio al dettaglio», accompagnata da un Libro verde relativo alle pratiche commerciali sleali, può la stessa Commissione indicare:

— come valuta tale pratica;

— in che modo è possibile tutelare i livelli occupazionali nel settore degli edicolanti, oggi gravemente compromesso dalla crisi;

— un quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(9 agosto 2013)

1. La Commissione comprende le preoccupazioni espresse dai giornalai e da altri commercianti che hanno subito pesanti contraccolpi dalla crisi e dal calo dei consumi. La Commissione non dispone tuttavia di informazioni dettagliate sulla situazione italiana e le pratiche commerciali che sarebbero imposte dagli editori. Le pratiche descritte nell'interrogazione non sembrano rientrare nelle categorie delle pratiche commerciali sleali individuate dal Libro verde sulle pratiche commerciali sleali adottato nel 2013.

2. La consultazione pubblica sul Libro verde ha ottenuto quasi 200 risposte, in base alle quali la Commissione non è in grado di concludere che gli edicolanti subiscano pratiche commerciali sleali a livello europeo.

3. La struttura della distribuzione della stampa varia da uno Stato membro all'altro. Il sistema italiano di diffusione della stampa quotidiana e periodica è disciplinato dal decreto legislativo n. 170 del 24 aprile 2001 che definisce diritti e obblighi di dettaglianti, distributori ed editori. I tribunali italiani sono competenti a verificare eventuali violazioni delle disposizioni del citato decreto. Inoltre, l'autorità italiana garante della concorrenza ha il potere di esaminare eventuali clausole vessatorie presenti nei contratti tra gli editori e i rivenditori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007585/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Possible unfair business practices affecting newsagents

In the Italian publishing sector, newsagents selling certain magazines, newspapers, periodicals, fascicules, etc. are required to display on their premises advertising for special offers, subscriptions and discounts enabling readers to acquire the same material directly from publishers at prices lower than those which the latter require newsagents to charge.

Newsagents, who are for tax purposes classified as traders and can neither choose their suppliers nor set retail prices, accordingly find themselves at a disadvantage in their dealings with both wholesalers and publishers.

This is having a serious effect on newsvendors, who are already suffering from flagging sales of printed material as a result of competition from the free press, Internet and the modern media.

Following the publication by the Commission of its European Retail Action Plan and Green Paper on unfair commercial practices:

— Can it give its views regarding the above?

— What action can be taken to protect the livelihood of newsagents, who have been severely hit by the crisis?

— Can the Commission give a general assessment of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

1. The Commission understands the concerns of newsagents and other undertakings, who have been hit by the crisis and falling consumer demand. However, the Commission does not have any detailed information about the situation in Italy and the alleged business practices of publishers described in the question. The practices described in the question do not seem to fall into any category of unfair trading practices identified by the Green Paper on Unfair Trading Practices adopted in 2013.

2. The Commission has received almost 200 replies to the public consultation on the Green Paper. These responses do not allow the Commission to conclude that newsagents face a problem of Unfair Trading Practices at European level.

3. The structure of the press distribution varies from Member State to Member State. The Italian press distribution is regulated by legislative Decree Nr 170 of 24 April 2001 which defines rights and obligations of retailers, distributors and publishers. The Italian courts are competent to examine possible breaches of provisions of this Decree. In addition, the Italian Competition authority has the powers to examine possible restrictive clauses in contracts between publishers and retailers.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007586/13
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Repubblica Serba condannata per l'incidente aereo del 7 gennaio 1992

I giudici della Terza Sezione della Corte d'assise di Roma hanno condannato la Repubblica Serba, erede diretta dell'ex-Jugoslavia, come responsabile della morte di cinque militari — quattro italiani e un francese — abbattuti con il loro elicottero nei cieli di Podrute, in Croazia, il 7 gennaio del 1992. Una sentenza che ha ribaltato il giudizio precedente, che aveva circoscritto le responsabilità del gravissimo incidente al solo pilota del Mig 21, il tenente Emir Šišić, che aveva sparato i missili contro due elicotteri bianchi con le insegne della ECMM (European Community Monitor Mission). I giudici hanno ora invece stabilito che la Repubblica Serba ha la responsabilità delle azioni dei militari coinvolti nell'azione, a partire dai gradi più elevati: il comandante dello Stato Maggiore delle Forze Armate e della Difesa Aerea, nonché il comandante del Quinto Corpo jugoslavo. I giudici della Corte d'assise di Roma hanno fissato in 1 milione di euro il risarcimento dovuto alle vittime di quell'incidente — somma che dovrà versare la Repubblica Serba, insieme ai due alti ufficiali.

Premesso che la Repubblica Serba ha presentato il 22 dicembre 2009 la domanda di adesione all'Unione europea, e che il Consiglio nella riunione del 1° marzo 2012 ha concesso lo status ufficiale di Paese candidato, si interroga la Commissione per sapere se non ritenga necessario congelare l'accoglimento della candidatura serba e vincolarla al rispetto dei termini della sentenza emessa dalla magistratura italiana.

Risposta data da Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(6 settembre 2013)

Il 28 giugno 2013 il Consiglio europeo ha deciso di avviare i negoziati di adesione con la Serbia. La Commissione è stata invitata a presentare il prima possibile una proposta relativa ad un quadro negoziale, in linea con le conclusioni del Consiglio europeo del dicembre 2006 e la prassi consolidata.

I negoziati di adesione con la Serbia saranno condotti seguendo la prassi consolidata, sulla base del fatto che la Serbia ha raggiunto un elevato livello di conformità ai criteri di adesione e soddisfa le condizioni associate al processo di stabilizzazione e associazione stabilite dal Consiglio nel 1997.

A tal proposito la Serbia dovrà continuare a rispettare detti principi, che comprendono tra l'altro l'osservanza degli obblighi internazionali e la gestione dell'eredità lasciata dal conflitto in ex Jugoslavia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007586/13
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Court finds Republic of Serbia responsible for downing of helicopter on 7 January 1992

Judges in the Third Section of the High Court in Rome have found the Republic of Serbia, as the direct successor to the former Yugoslavia, responsible for the death of five military personnel (four of whom were Italian and one French) whose helicopter was shot down over Podrute in Croatia on 7 January 1992. In so doing, the court overturned an earlier ruling that sole responsibility for this extremely serious incident lay with Lieutenant Emir Šišić, the pilot of the Mig 21 from which missiles were fired against two white helicopters bearing the markings of the European Community Monitor Mission (ECMM). The court found the Republic of Serbia responsible for the actions of the members of the armed forces involved in the affair at the highest level, namely the Chief of Staff of the Army and Air Force and the commander of the Yugoslav Fifth Corps. It set compensation for the victims of the incident at EUR 1 million, to be paid by the Republic of Serbia and the two senior officers.

Given that the Republic of Serbia applied to join the European Union on 22 December 2009 and that the European Council officially granted Serbia candidate country status on 1 March 2012, would the Commission not agree that that status should be suspended until such time as the country complies with the above judgment?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The European Council decided to open accession negotiations with Serbia on 28 June 2013. The Commission was invited to submit without delay a proposal for a framework for negotiations in line with the European Council's December 2006 conclusions and established practice.

Accession negotiations with Serbia will be conducted in line with established practice, on the basis that Serbia has achieved a high degree of compliance with the membership criteria and the Stabilisation and Association Process conditionality established by the Council in 1997.

In that respect, Serbia will be expected to continue to respect these principles which include abiding with its international obligations and dealing with the legacy of the conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-007587/13
aan de Commissie
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(27 juni 2013)

Betreft: Transparantie in energielasten

Toenemende energielasten zijn een groot probleem voor huishoudens in heel Europa. Daarnaast geniet meer dan 30 % van de Europeanen op dit moment niet het meest goedkope energietarief. Veel Europese burgers ervaren problemen met complexe energierekeningen en ondoorzichtige voorwaarden bij overschakelen.

In een werkgroepdocument uit november 2012 over de transparantie van Europese energiemarkten (Working Group Report on Transparency in EU Retail Energy Markets), waarin de Commissie samenwerkte met autoriteiten, de industrie en consumentenbelangenorganisaties, werd gesproken van een „tekort" aan transparantie en samenstelling van energieprijzen, en tijdige aanlevering van prijzen.

Eén van de aanbevelingen van de werkgroep is dat „minder informatie soms meer is". Consumenten moeten vooral simpele en begrijpelijke informatie krijgen aangeleverd op het moment dat ze zoeken naar de voor hen beste energie-optie. In een eerder onderzoek beweerde de Commissie echter dat burgers weinig pro-actief zijn in het vergelijken van energietarieven.

1. Welke acties onderneemt de Commissie om de in het werkgroepdocument aangewezen tekorten te repareren?

2. Hoe volgt de Commissie de aanbeveling van de werkgroep actief op om simpele informatie aan te leveren, zodat consumenten in één oogopslag zien wat voor hen de voordeligste energie-optie is?

3. Hoe zet de Commissie burgers, die vaak niet beseffen dat goedkopere opties voorhanden zijn, aan om actiever aan de slag te gaan met vergelijken van energieprijzen?

4. Dragen de maatregelen bij aan de aanpak van energie-armoede en uit de pan rijzende energielasten voor huishoudens? Welke andere maatregelen onderneemt de Commissie om deze urgente problemen aan te pakken en ervoor te zorgen dat de consument centraal staat in de integratie van de Europese energiemarkt?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(20 augustus 2013)

1. De tekortkomingen zouden moeten worden verholpen door de goede methoden en aanbevelingen aan belanghebbenden die worden geformuleerd in het rapport, dat de Commissie onderschrijft, ten uitvoer te leggen.

2 en 3. De Commissie ziet toe op de omzetting van Richtlijn 2009/72/EG ([1]), op grond waarvan de lidstaten de energievoorziening „tegen duidelijk vergelijkbare, transparante en redelijke prijzen" en de verstrekking van behoorlijke informatie dienen te waarborgen, en stimuleert de ontwikkeling van tariefvergelijkingsinstrumenten — een van de meest effectieve middelen om consumenten in staat te stellen zich te vergewissen van de meest gunstige opties die de markt biedt. De Commissie werkt tevens nauw samen met consumentenorganisaties om het publiek er bewuster van te maken dat zij de energietarieven kunnen vergelijken, bijvoorbeeld door het onderwerp op de agenda te plaatsen van het Citizens' Energy Forum ([2]) en van consumentenevenementen die de Commissie in de lidstaten organiseert. Tot slot is ook op de webpagina's van de Commissie informatie te vinden waarmee consumenten over hun rechten worden geïnformeerd ([3]).

4. Er zijn momenteel geen gegevens beschikbaar over het effect van de verschillende maatregelen. De consument kan de energiekosten onder controle houden door voor energiezuinigere oplossingen te kiezen (die de Commissie via verschillende programma's ondersteunt) en te kiezen voor de aanbieder met de meest geschikte en meest voordelige tariefplannen (wat door de Commissie wordt aangemoedigd). In de mededeling van de Commissie „De interne energiemarkt doen werken" ([4]) is een actieplan opgenomen met maatregelen die de Commissie en de lidstaten moeten nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de interne energiemarkt van de EU in het voordeel en tot voldoening van de consument functioneert.

([1]) Richtlijn 2009/72/EG, PB L 211 van 14.8.2009
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/forum_citizen_energy_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/consumer/rights_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/citizen/my_rights/energy_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/internal_market_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007587/13
to the Commission
Judith A. Merkies (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Energy tariff transparency

Increased domestic energy spending is a major problem throughout Europe, with over 30% of European households not obtaining the most economical rates available. Many European citizens have difficulty grasping complex energy invoices and unclear terms and conditions regarding transfer to other suppliers.

The working document of November 2012 (Working Group Report on Transparency in EU Retail Energy Markets) drawn up by the Commission in cooperation with national authorities, energy sector representatives and consumer organisations mentions a lack of transparency with regard to energy prices and the tariffs on which they are based and the need for prompt disclosure of such information.

One of the recommendations by the working group is that less is sometimes more as far as consumer information is concerned. It must above all be simple and comprehensible if it is to be of any use in selecting the best energy options. In a previous report, however, the Commission observed that consumers were not particularly proactive when it came to comparing energy tariffs.

1. What measures is the Commission taking with a view to remedying the shortcomings highlighted in the working group document?

2. What action is the Commission taking in accordance with the working group's recommendation to ensure that information is kept simple, enabling consumers to identify at a glance the most attractive energy options available?

3. What action is being taken by the Commission to encourage members of the public, who frequently do not realise that cheaper options are in fact available, to make more of an effort to compare energy tariffs?

4. Are these measures helping to combat energy poverty and the sharp increase in domestic energy spending? What other measures are being taken by the Commission in a bid to resolve the problem without delay and ensure that integration of the European energy sector is focused on the best interests of consumers?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

1. The shortcomings should be addressed by the implementation of good practice and recommendations for stakeholders highlighted in the report, which the Commission supports.

2 and 3. Besides enforcing the transposition of Directive 2009/72/EC ([1]), which requires Member States to ensure the provision of electricity at 'easily and clearly comparable, transparent and non-discriminatory prices' and of proper information to consumers, the Commission encourages the development of price comparison tools as one of the most effective means for consumers to ascertain best offers available to them. The Commission also works closely with consumer bodies on increasing public awareness of the possibility to compare energy tariffs, for example, by including the subject on the agenda of the Citizens' Energy Forum ([2]) and consumer events organised by the Commission in Member States. Finally, information is available on Commission websites to further inform consumers about their rights ([3]).

4. Data on the effect of different measures are not presently available. Consumers can control energy costs through energy efficiency improvements (which the Commission supports through several programmes) and by choosing the supplier with the most appropriate and advantageous tariffs (which the Commission promotes). Furthermore, the Commission Communication 'Making the Internal Energy Market Work' ([4]) includes an action plan, which lists actions for both the Commission and Member States needed to ensure that the EU's internal energy market works to the benefit and satisfaction of consumers.

([1]) Directive 2009/72/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/forum_citizen_energy_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/consumer/rights_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/citizen/my_rights/energy_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/internal_market_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007588/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Kształcenie zawodowe osób niepełnoletnich

W Strategii Europa 2020 jako jeden z trzech priorytetów UE wymieniony został „rozwój sprzyjający włączeniu społecznemu: wspieranie gospodarki o wysokim poziomie zatrudnienia, zapewniającej spójność społeczną i terytorialną". W dokumencie tym stwierdzono także, że celami Strategii jest między innymi doprowadzenie do sytuacji, w której wskaźnik zatrudnienia osób w wieku 20-64 lat będzie wynosić 75 %, a liczba osób przedwcześnie kończących naukę szkolną zostanie ograniczona do 10 %. Realizacja tych założeń wymaga aktywnej polityki UE w dziedzinie popularyzacji i wspierania kształcenia zawodowego młodzieży niepełnoletniej.

W związku z coraz większymi problemami demograficznymi w UE oraz kryzysem ekonomicznym wiele samorządów ogranicza liczbę placówek kształcenia zawodowego, wymagającego większych nakładów środków niż kształcenie ogólnokształcące. Efektem tego jest coraz mniejsza liczba wykwalifikowanych pracowników na stanowiskach robotniczych oraz bardzo duża grupa bezrobotnej młodzieży, nieposiadającej specjalistycznych kwalifikacji potrzebnych do uzyskania wolnych miejsc pracy.

Zwracam się z zapytaniem:

Czy w związku z trudną sytuacją młodych obywateli na rynku pracy, Komisja zamierza realizować programy wsparcia i promocji działań na rzecz rozwoju kształcenia zawodowego osób niepełnoletnich?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(9 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Za treść nauczania i organizację systemów edukacyjnych, w tym za kształcenie i szkolenie zawodowe, odpowiedzialne pozostają państwa członkowskie. Mimo to wsparcie na rzecz opracowania wysokiej jakości wstępnego kształcenia i szkolenia zawodowego jest głównym elementem polityki i programów Komisji służących rozwiązaniu problemu bezrobocia osób młodych. W dniu 2 lipca 2013 r. Komisja uruchomiła europejski sojusz na rzecz przygotowania zawodowego, wielopodmiotową inicjatywę mającą na celu poprawę jakości, dostępności i wizerunku praktyk zawodowych oraz kształcenia zawodowego w całej UE.

Mobilizuje on państwa członkowskie, partnerów społecznych, izby zawodowe, organizatorów kształcenia i szkolenia zawodowego, organizacje młodzieżowe oraz inne podmioty do zaangażowania się w niezbędne reformy, które usprawnią naukę przez praktykę w ramach systemów kształcenia i szkolenia zawodowego, poprawią jakość i dostępność praktyk zawodowych, pozwolą uzyskać niezbędne finansowanie publiczne i prywatne oraz będą propagować korzyści płynące z praktyk zawodowych.

Nowy program Erasmus+ będzie wspierać strategiczne partnerstwa i reformę polityki, która wzmocni kształcenie i szkolenie zawodowe, uczenie się poprzez praktykę oraz przyuczanie do zawodu. Znacząco zwiększone zostanie wsparcie na rzecz trangranicznej mobilności osób odbywających kształcenie i szkolenie zawodowe oraz praktykę zawodową.

W ramach Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego 2014-2020 oczekuje się, że państwa członkowskie z wysokim bezrobociem osób młodych wdrożą programy tzw. gwarancji dla młodzieży. EFS będzie wspierać lepsze i atrakcyjniejsze systemy kształcenia i szkolenia zawodowego oraz ukierunkowane działania mające na celu ułatwianie przechodzenia ze szkoły do życia zawodowego, w tym wsparcie dla przyuczania do zawodu i programów drugiej szansy.

Przyuczanie do zawodu jest jednym z czterech kluczowych elementów w programach gwarancji dla młodzieży, a Inicjatywa na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych z budżetem w wysokości 6 mld EUR pomoże wdrożyć takie gwarancje w regionach z najwyższymi wskaźnikami bezrobocia wśród osób młodych.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007588/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Vocational training for minors

One of the three EU priorities set out in the Europe 2020 strategy is 'inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion'. The document also stated that the strategy's targets include achieving a 75% employment rate among those aged 20-64, and reducing the share of early school leavers to 10%. Achieving these targets depends upon having an active EU policy that popularises and supports vocational training for minors.

In view of the EU's constantly deteriorating demographic situation and the ongoing economic crisis, many local authorities are reducing the number of vocational training places, which require more funding than general education. Consequently, there is a constantly dwindling number of skilled workers in employment, and a huge number of unemployed young people without the specialised qualifications that they need to get the jobs that are available.

Given the difficult circumstances facing young people on the labour market, does the Commission intend to put in place support programmes and promotional activities for the development of vocational training for minors?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The content and organisation of education systems, including vocational education and training (VET), is a responsibility of the Member States. Nevertheless, support for the development of high quality initial VET is a core part of Commission policies and programmes to address youth unemployment. On 2 July 2013, the Commission launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, a multi-stakeholder initiative to strengthen the supply, quality and image of apprenticeships in Europe.

Member States, social partners, chambers, businesses, VET providers, youth organisations and others are being mobilised to engage in necessary reforms to strengthen work-based learning in VET, to increase the quality and supply of apprenticeships, to leverage necessary public and private funding, and to promote the benefits of apprenticeships.

The new Erasmus+ programme will support strategic partnerships and policy reform that strengthen VET, work-based learning and apprenticeships. There will be a substantial increase in support to transnational mobility for VET students and apprentices.

Under the ESF 2014-2020, Member States with high youth unemployment are expected to implement Youth Guarantee schemes. The ESF will support better and more attractive VET systems and targeted actions towards facilitating school-to-work transitions, including support to apprenticeships, and second-chance programmes. .

Apprenticeships are one of four key elements in the Youth Guarantee schemes, and the EUR 6 billion Youth Employment Initiative will help implement such guarantees in regions with the highest youth unemployment rates.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007590/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) oraz Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Propozycja Ministra Finansów do Komisji Europejskiej zawierająca ograniczenia na kolejne 5 lat do pełnego odliczania VAT-u od zakupu samochodów firmowych

Polski rząd zdecydował o wystąpieniu do Komisji Europejskiej o zgodę w zakresie stosowania odmiennych przepisów regulujących odliczanie VAT-u na samochody, które zawarte są w unijnej dyrektywie ([1]).

Stało się to po tym, jak Rada Ministrów zaakceptowała wniosek derogacyjny ministra finansów do Komisji Europejskiej dotyczący propozycji ograniczenia na kolejny okres czasu prawa do pełnego odliczania VAT-u od zakupu samochodów firmowych ([2]).

Z kolei eksperci branżowi wskazują, że straty budżetu Państwa w powyższym okresie z powodu niewdrożenia ich propozycji dotyczącej pełnego odliczenia podatku VAT, mogą sięgać około 4 mld złotych. Podnoszą przy tym argument dotyczący wysokich kosztów wdrożenia projektu opracowanego przez Ministerstwo Finansów w stosunku do uzyskanego efektu ([3]).

W związku z powyższym pragniemy zapytać:

1. Jakimi argumentami kierowała się Komisja przychylając się do rządowego wniosku dotyczącego ograniczenia prawa do pełnego odliczania VAT-u od zakupu samochodów firmowych w poprzednich latach?

2. Czy Komisja będzie kwestionowała słuszność wniosku strony polskiej w zakresie ograniczenia na kolejny okres czasu prawa do pełnego odliczania VAT-u od zakupu samochodów firmowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Algirdasa Šemetę w imieniu Komisji
(9 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja starannie bada każdy wniosek o odstępstwo otrzymany od państwa członkowskiego, aby zagwarantować, że wnioskowany środek stanowiący odstępstwo jest zgodny z obowiązującymi przepisami unijnego prawa, a w szczególności dyrektywą VAT 2006/112/WE. Jeśli chodzi o środki dotyczące prawa do odliczenia, Komisja jest świadoma faktu, że prawo to stanowi integralny element systemu VAT; tym samym zapewnia ona, aby wszelkie ograniczenia obowiązywały wyłącznie w zakresie niezbędnym do umożliwienia stosowania środków należycie uzasadnionych i proporcjonalnych w odniesieniu do celów na podstawie art. 395 dyrektywy VAT, takich jak usprawnienie procedury pobierania VAT lub zapobieganie oszustwom podatkowym lub unikaniu opodatkowania. W tym kontekście Komisja bada również spójność przedmiotowego środka z odstępstwami przyznanymi innym państwom członkowskim w podobnych przypadkach. Szczegółową argumentację dotyczącą odstępstwa przyznanego wcześniej Polsce można znaleźć w uzasadnieniu odpowiedniego wniosku Komisji z dnia 7 czerwca 2010 r. ([4])

Zgodnie z procedurą ustanowioną w art. 395 dyrektywy VAT Komisja przekazuje tylko wnioskującemu państwu członkowskiemu uwagi w sprawie szczegółów dotyczących bieżącego wniosku o zastosowanie pewnych szczególnych środków stanowiących odstępstwo od przepisów dyrektywy VAT. Komisja przedstawia Radzie stosowny wniosek lub, jeżeli wniosek o odstępstwo budzi jej zastrzeżenia, komunikat przedstawiający te zastrzeżenia. Ponieważ wewnętrzny proces podejmowania decyzji w sprawie najnowszego wniosku o odstępstwo złożonego przez Polskę jest nadal w toku, Komisja nie może na tym etapie przekazać bardziej szczegółowych informacji dotyczących środka stosowanego przez Polskę, opisanego w zapytaniu Szanownego Pana Posła.

([1]) http://biznes.interia.pl/podatki/news/jest-szansa-na-pelne-odliczenie-vat-u-od-samochodow,1927084,4211
([2]) http://www.samar.pl/__/3/3.a/73125/VAT--4-mld-z%C5%82otych-niewarte-rz%C4%85dowej-uwagi-.html?locale=pl_PL
([3]) http://motoryzacja.interia.pl/hity_dnia/news/cztery-miliardy-zlotych-niewarte-rzadowej-uwagi,1927840
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0293:FIN:PL:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007590/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) and Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Minister of Finance's proposal to the Commission to restrict the full deduction of VAT from company car purchases for another five years

The Polish Government requested the Commission's consent to regulate the deduction of VAT on cars using different provisions of the EU directive ([1]).

This occurred after the Council of Ministers endorsed a request for a derogation sent by the Ministry of Finance to the Commission in respect of the proposal to restrict the right to full deduction of VAT from company car purchases ([2]) in the upcoming period.

Industry experts point out that losses to the national budget in the aforementioned period, caused by the failure to implement their proposals regarding the full deduction of VAT, could reach PLN 4 billion. They also argue that the cost of implementing the project developed by the Ministry of Finance is too high when compared to the effect achieved ([3]).

1. What arguments have guided the Commission in recent years to come out in support ofthe Polish Government's request concerning restricting the right to full deduction of VATon company car purchases?

2. Will the Commission question the validity of the request?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The Commission scrutinises every application for a derogation received from a Member State carefully to ensure that the requested derogating measure is coherent with the applicable provisions of EC law and in particular the VAT Directive 2006/112/EC. As regards measures concerning the right of deduction, the Commission is aware that this right is an integral part of the VAT system and therefore it ensures that any limitation only applies to the extent necessary to allow for the application of measures duly justified and proportionate with respect to the objectives under Article 395 of the VAT Directive, such as to simplify the procedure for collecting VAT or to prevent tax evasion or avoidance. In this context, the Commission also examines the coherence of the measure in question with derogations granted to other Member States in similar cases. More detailed arguments concerning the derogation previously granted to Poland can be found in the Explanatory Memorandum of the corresponding Commission proposal of 7 June 2010 ([4]).

According to the procedure laid down in Article 395 of the VAT Directive, the Commission only provides comments to the requesting Member State on details regarding their ongoing request for the application of certain special measures derogating from the provisions of the VAT Directive. The Commission presents any supporting position or any objections to the Council in a respective proposal or communication. Since the internal decision-making process concerning the latest request for a derogation submitted by Poland is still ongoing, the Commission cannot at this stage go into any further detail regarding the measure pursued by Poland as described in the question of the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://biznes.interia.pl/podatki/news/jest-szansa-na-pelne-odliczenie-vat-u-od-samochodow,1927084,4211.
([2]) http://www.samar.pl/__/3/3.a/73125/VAT--4-mld-z%C5%82otych-niewarte-rz%C4%85dowej-uwagi-.html?locale=pl_PL.
([3]) http://motoryzacja.interia.pl/hity_dnia/news/cztery-miliardy-zlotych-niewarte-rzadowej-uwagi,1927840.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0293:FIN:EN:PDF.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007591/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Likwidacja przedsiębiorstwa Kowent w Końskich

Pracownicy przedsiębiorstwa Kowent z siedzibą w Końskich poinformowali mnie o trudnej sytuacji ekonomicznej, w jakiej znalazł się ich zakład. Firma produkująca konstrukcje stalowe i urządzenia odpylające funkcjonuje od 60 lat. Obecnie Kowent znajduje się w stanie upadłości likwidacyjnej. Postępowanie w tym zakresie prowadzi Sąd Rejonowy w Kielcach.

O problemach zakładu na bieżąco informują świętokrzyskie media: dziennik Echo Dnia i Tygodnik Konecki. 102 członków załogi wystąpiło z pozwami przeciwko pracodawcy o uregulowanie należności pracowniczych do Sądu Rejonowego w Kielcach. Do chwili obecnej zapadły 53 wyroki. Do rozpoznania pozostaje 49 spraw.

W czerwcu br., na wniosek nadzorcy sądowego, zmieniony został tryb postępowania upadłościowego dla zakładu Kowent z formy układowej na likwidacyjną.

Do dnia 31 marca br. firma Kowent zalegała swoim pracownikom 661 tysięcy złotych netto. Zobowiązania finansowe wobec wszystkich wierzycieli wynoszą 22,7 mln zł. ([1])

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać:

Czy zdaniem Komisji w przypadku przedsiębiorstwa Kowent istnieje możliwość udzielenia wsparcia dla zwalnianych pracowników środkami z Funduszu Dostosowania do Globalizacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(6 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Polska może starać się o środki z Europejskiego Funduszu Dostosowania do Globalizacji (EFG) w celu udzielenia wsparcia zwolnionym pracownikom i pomocy w jak najszybszym znalezieniu nowej pracy, pod warunkiem że zwolnienia w przedsiębiorstwie Kowent spowodowane zostały globalizacją handlu oraz że spełniono inne mające zastosowanie wymogi. Informacji na temat tego, czy istnieją plany złożenia wniosku o środki z EFG, szanowny Pan Poseł zasięgnąć może u osoby wyznaczonej do kontaktów w zakresie EFG ([2]) dla Polski.

Polska jest jednym z największych beneficjentów Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego (EFS). W ramach polskiego Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki współfinansowanego ze środków EFS udzielić można wsparcia osobom znajdującym się w szczególnie trudnej sytuacji pod względem możliwości zatrudnienia. Wsparcie to obejmuje działania mające na celu złagodzenie negatywnych skutków procesów dostosowawczych, takie jak programy zwolnień monitorowanych dla pracowników restrukturyzowanych przedsiębiorstw. Wybór działań, które mają być finansowane, należy do właściwych organów krajowych ([3]), mogących udzielić w tej kwestii szczegółowych informacji.

([1]) http://www.strefabiznesu.echodnia.eu/artykul/koneckie-przedsiebiorstwo-kowent-do-likwidacji-ma-gigantyczny-dlug
([2]) Szczegółowe informacje znajdują się na stronie internetowej EFG pod adresem: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=pl
([3]) http://www.pokl.sbrr.pl/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007591/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Liquidation of Kowent sp. z o.o. in Końskie

Workers at Kowent sp. z o.o., which is based in Końskie, have informed me of the difficult economic circumstances facing their plant. The company produces steel structures and dust removal systems and has been in operation for 60 years. Kowent is currently going through liquidation proceedings, which are being administered by the Kielce District Court.

The media in Świętokrzyskie province, including the *Echo Dnia* and *Tygodnik Konecki* newspapers, have been publishing up-to-date information on the plant's troubles. 102 members of staff have launched claims against the employer with Kielce District Court for the payment of unpaid wages. So far, 53 judgments have been handed down and 49 cases are awaiting consideration.

In June 2013, at the request of the court-appointed administrator, Kowent's bankruptcy procedure was modified from one premised upon reaching a bankruptcy agreement to one premised upon liquidation.

By 31 March 2013, Kowent's arrears to its staff amounted to PLN 661 000 net. The company's obligations to its creditors total PLN 22.7 million ([1]).

In the Commission's view, could the laid-off workers from Kowent receive support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

Provided that the redundancies at Kowent were caused by trade-related globalisation and the other conditions applying are met, Poland could apply for funding from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) to provide support for the workers made redundant and help them find new jobs as quickly as possible. The Honourable Member may wish to contact the EGF Contact Person ([2]) for Poland to find out whether an application is planned.

Poland is one of the major beneficiaries of the European Social Fund (ESF). The Polish Human Capital Operational Programme co-financed by the ESF provides assistance for individuals in particularly difficult labour-market situations. Such assistance includes measures (including outplacement programmes for employees of restructured companies) to offset the negative repercussions of adjustment processes. The selection of operations for funding is a responsibility of relevant national authorities ([3]), which can provide further information.

([1]) http://www.strefabiznesu.echodnia.eu/artykul/koneckie-przedsiebiorstwo-kowent-do-likwidacji-ma-gigantyczny-dlug
([2]) For details, see the EGF website at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=pl
([3]) http://www.pokl.sbrr.pl/

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007592/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Trudna sytuacja pracowników zakładu Marywil w Suchedniowie

Pracownicy Zakładu Wyrobów Kamionkowych MARYWIL S.A. poinformowali mnie o trudnej sytuacji, w jakiej znalazł się ich zakład. W tym miesiącu Sąd Rejonowy w Kielcach ogłosił upadłość firmy.

Zakłady MARYWIL S.A. zatrudniają 91 pracowników. Przedsiębiorstwo posiada 90-letnią tradycję. Zostało założone w roku 1925 i zajmowało się produkcją: rur kanalizacyjnych, kamionki kwasoodpornej i systemów kominowych. Zadłużenie MARYWIL S.A. sięga kilku milionów. Z wnioskiem do Sądu o ogłoszenie upadłości likwidacyjnej zakładu wystąpił zarząd spółki.

W trakcie rozpatrywania pozostaje postępowanie o zwolnienie grupowe. Dotyczy ono 40 pracowników przedsiębiorstwa ([1]).

W miejscu tym należy także nadmienić o fakcie, gdzie z końcem 2012 r. MARYWIL S.A. podjął kontrowersyjną decyzję o sprzedaży kopalni gliny BARANÓW. Za cenę wywoławczą około 3 mln złotych kupiła je starachowicka firma AGRO BUD.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać:

1. Czy Komisja zna trudną sytuację pracowników Zakładu Wyrobów Kamionkowych MARYWIL S.A. z siedzibą w Suchedniowie?

2. Czy Komisja może przeznaczyć środki z Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego w celu pomocy dla zwalnianych pracowników Zakładu Wyrobów Kamionkowych MARYWIL S.A?

3. Jak wysokie środki może przeznaczyć Komisja Europejska z funduszy Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego w związku z pomocą dla zwalnianych pracowników Zakładu Wyrobów Kamionkowych MARYWIL S.A?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(6 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma sytuacji w Zakładach Wyrobów Kamionkowych MARYWIL S.A., lecz nie ma ona uprawnień do wpływania na decyzje podejmowane przez przedsiębiorstwa. Zachęca je ona jednak do stosowania najlepszych praktyk w zakresie restrukturyzacji z uwzględnieniem odpowiedzialności społecznej. W następstwie opublikowania zielonej księgi Komisji ze stycznia 2012 r. ([2]) oraz przyjęcia przez Parlament Europejski w dniu 15 stycznia 2013 r. sprawozdania Alejandra Cercasa Komisja zaproponuje komunikat w sprawie ustanowienia ram jakości dla unijnych przepisów oraz inicjatyw w dziedzinie restrukturyzacji, w którym przedstawi ona najlepsze praktyki z myślą o ich wdrożeniu przez wszystkie zainteresowane strony. Warto wspomnieć, że w sytuacji zamknięcia przedsiębiorstwa pracodawca musi przestrzegać zobowiązań związanych z informowaniem pracowników i przeprowadzaniem z nimi konsultacji zgodnie z prawem UE.

W ramach polskiego Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki współfinansowanego ze środków Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego udziela się wsparcia osobom znajdującym się w szczególnie trudnej sytuacji pod względem możliwości zatrudnienia, m.in. w formie działań mających na celu złagodzenie negatywnych skutków procesów dostosowawczych, takich jak programy zwolnień monitorowanych dla pracowników restrukturyzowanych przedsiębiorstw.

Program Operacyjny Kapitał Ludzki zarządzany jest wspólnie przez państwo członkowskie i Komisję, jednak wybór działań, które mają być finansowane, należy do właściwych organów krajowych. W przedmiotowej sprawie szczegółowych informacji dotyczących przeprowadzonych i planowanych działań mogą udzielić szanownemu Panu Posłowi organy administracji województwa świętokrzyskiego ([3]).

([1]) http://www.strefabiznesu.echodnia.eu/artykul/marywil-do-likwidacji-suchedniowska-fabryka-w-stanie-upadlosci-91-osob-pojdzie-na-bruk
([2]) Streszczenie odpowiedzi respondentów zamieszczono na stronie: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en
([3]) http://www.pokl.sbrr.pl/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007592/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Difficult situation facing workers at the 'Marywil' plant in Suchedniów

Workers at Zakłady Wyrobów Kamionkowych 'Marywil' S. A. (Marywil stoneware plant), have notified me of the difficult economic circumstances facing their plant. This month the Kielce District Court declared the company bankrupt.

Zakłady Wyrobów Kamionkowych 'Marywil' S. A. employs 91 workers and has been in business for almost 90 years. It was founded in 1925 to produce sewage pipes, acid-proof stoneware and chimney sets. The total debt of 'Marywil' S. A. is in the order of several million PLN. The company's board of directors approached the court with a request that the company be placed into liquidation bankruptcy.

While this request is being considered, the process of mass lay-offs is ongoing. 40 of the company's workers stand to lose their jobs ([1]).

It should be noted that in late 2012, 'Marywil' S. A. took a controversial decision to sell the Baranów clay pit. It was bought at the starting price of PLN 3 million by the Starachowice-based company AGRO BUD.

1. Is the Commission aware of the difficult situation facing workers at Zakłady Wyrobów Kamionkowych 'Marywil' S. A. in Suchedniów?

2. Can the Commission allocate support from the European Social Fund to help the laid-off workers of 'Marywil' S. A.?

3. What amount of support can the Commission provide from the European Social Fund in order to help the laid-off workers of 'Marywil' S. A.?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the situation at Zakłady Wyrobów Kamionkowych 'Marywil' S. A., but has no powers to interfere in specific company's decisions. It encourages them however, to follow good practices in socially responsible management of restructuring. Following its January 2012 Green Paper ([2]) and the adoption by the European Parliament on 15 January 2013 of the Cercas report, the Commission will propose a communication establishing a Quality Framework that will frame the EU legislation and initiatives relevant to restructuring and will present the best practices to be implemented by all stakeholders. It should also be noted that in case of closure of undertakings, the employer has to respect obligations relating to information and consultation of workers in accordance with EC law.

The Polish Human Capital Operational Programme co-financed by the ESF provides assistance for individuals in a particularly difficult situation on the labour market, including through measures counteracting negative implications of adaptation processes (for example outplacement programmes for employees of restructured companies).

The Human Capital Operational Programme is jointly managed by the Member State and the Commission, but the selection of operations for funding is a responsibility of relevant national authorities. In this particular case — Swietokrzyskie administration can provide the Honourable Member with more information on implemented and planned measures ([3]).

([1]) http://www.strefabiznesu.echodnia.eu/artykul/marywil-do-likwidacji-suchedniowska-fabryka-w-stanie-upadlosci-91-osob-pojdzie-na-bruk.
([2]) See the replies and a summary under http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8908&langId=en.
([3]) http://www.pokl.sbrr.pl/.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007593/13
do Komisji
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Gorsza jakość produktów sprzedawanych w Europie B

Wczoraj do polskiej opinii publicznej dotarły informacje, z których jasno wynika, że międzynarodowe koncerny w różnych krajach Unii Europejskiej sprzedają produkty różnej jakości, sygnowane tą samą marką. Dodatkowo, z dostępnych publicznie źródeł, m.in. z raportu Słowackiej Federacji Konsumentów, wynika, że produkty gorszej jakości są sprzedawane w krajach „nowej Unii". Produkty o jakich wspominają raporty to: kawa, Coca-Cola, czekolada z orzechami, proszek do prania, płyn do płukania, przyprawy.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z zapytaniem:

— Czy Komisja bada skład produktów tych samych marek sprzedawanych w różnych krajach UE w kontekście równego i sprawiedliwego traktowania konsumentów?

— Czy Komisja zamierza podjąć interwencję i wyciągnąć konsekwencje wobec koncernów, które nierówno traktują konsumentów wspólnego, europejskiego rynku?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Nevena Mimicę w imieniu Komisji
(13 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią udzieloną na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie nr E-07154/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007593/13
to the Commission
Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Inferior quality of products sold in 'second-class Europe'

Yesterday the Polish public received information which clearly proves that international companies operating in a number of EU Member States are selling products of varying quality, but which bear the same brand name. Furthermore, publicly available sources, including a report from the Slovak Consumer Federation, prove that products of inferior quality are being sold in the 'new EU' Member States. The products mentioned in the reports are coffee, Coca-Cola, chocolate with nuts, washing powder, mouthwash and condiments.

In this connection:

— Is the Commission looking into the ingredients of products sold under the same brand names in different EU Member States, with a view to determining whether consumers are being treated equally and fairly?

— Does the Commission intend to take steps and hold companies to account for treating theconsumers of the single European market in an unequal manner?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-07154/2013 ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007594/13
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Fala emigracji syryjskich uchodźców do państw ościennych

Konflikt trwający w Syrii wciąż nie przygasa i mimo wsparcia Unii Europejskiej i innych państw, pomoc humanitarna jest niewystarczająca. Coraz więcej Syryjczyków zmuszonych jest do ucieczki z ojczyzny, a najczęściej wybieranymi przez nich krajami są Turcja, Liban i Jordania. Zauważyć należy, że większość uchodźców to kobiety oraz osoby młode, które wymagają odpowiedniej edukacji. Rząd turecki oświadczył, iż Syryjczycy otrzymają niezbędną pomoc, natomiast pomoc ta już teraz urasta do niebagatelnych rozmiarów. Co więcej, zważywszy na problemy wewnętrzne Turcji nie można oczekiwać i wymagać, że będą w stanie przyjąć takie ilości Syryjczyków. Do czerwca tego roku z Syrii uciekło prawie 1,5 mln osób, ale jak szacują eksperci, liczba ta może podwoić się jeszcze przed końcem 2013 r. Oznacza to, że z kraju ucieknie co szósty z 21 milionów Syryjczyków.

Zwracam się z zapytaniem:

— Czy Komisja ma na uwadze wsparcie Turcji, Libanu i Jordanii w przyjęciu uchodźców z Syrii?

— Czy można liczyć na szczególne działania wspierające kobiety i młodych ludzi?

— Czy Komisja planuje rozwinąć pomoc humanitarną poprzez wprowadzenie programów mających na celu ułatwienie ich trudnej sytuacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Kristalinę Georgijewą w imieniu Komisji
(16 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja w istocie udziela wsparcia państwom sąsiadującym z Syrią, które przyjmują dużą liczbę syryjskich uchodźców; w obliczu przedłużającej się sytuacji kryzysowej Komisja będzie tę pomoc kontynuować.

Oprócz 429,5 mln EUR pomocy humanitarnej udzielonej przez państwa członkowskie w ramach stosunków dwustronnych, od końca 2011 r. w ramach bezpośredniej reakcji na sytuację kryzysową w budżecie UE zmobilizowano ok. 840 mln EUR (pomoc humanitarna: 515 mln EUR, inna pomoc: 325 mln EUR) łącznego wsparcia na rzecz działań w Syrii i poza jej granicami. 47 % wsparcia zakontraktowanego przez Komisję jest przeznaczone na potrzeby wewnątrz Syrii, a 53 % trafia do krajów sąsiadujących (do Libanu – 24,3 %, do Jordanii – 23,1 %, do Iraku – 3,3 %, a do Turcji – 2,3 %).

Komisja wspiera dziewięciu partnerów w działaniach bezpośrednio związanych z ochroną dzieci, zapobieganiem przemocy ze względu na płeć i reagowaniu na nią. Projekty te stanowią około 5 % łącznego finansowania z UE i są realizowane w Syrii, Libanie, Jordanii, Turcji i Iraku. Oprócz projektów dotyczących bezpośrednio ochrony dzieci lub dotyczących przemocy ze względu na płeć, wybierając działania do objęcia wsparciem, Komisja stosuje surowe kryteria oceny podatności na zagrożenia – kobiety i dzieci często stosunkowo najbardziej potrzebują pomocy, muszą więc być bezpośrednimi odbiorcami pomocy ratującej życie, obejmującej pożywienie, wodę, zapewnienie artykułów sanitarnych i higienicznych, schronienia i artykułów nieżywnościowych.

Komisja organizuje właśnie nową rundę składania wniosków o dofinansowanie w łącznej wysokości 250 mln EUR w ramach pomocy humanitarnej, która została udostępniona w ramach kompleksowego pakietu. Te dodatkowe środki pomogą najbardziej zagrożonym rodzinom, w tym uchodźcom z Syrii i społecznościom przyjmującym, a także przesiedleńcom wewnętrznym.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007594/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Wave of Syrian refugees emigrating to neighbouring countries

The ongoing conflict in Syria shows no sign of abating and in spite of the support provided by the EU and other countries, there is insufficient humanitarian aid. An increasing number of Syrians are being forced to flee their homeland, with their most common destinations being Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. It should be noted that most of the refugees are women and young people, who need appropriate schooling. The Turkish Government has announced that Syrians are receiving necessary aid, but that the amount of aid now required has grown enormously. Furthermore, given Turkey's internal problems, it is unrealistic to expect and demand that Turkey accommodates such large numbers of Syrians. By June 2013, almost 1.5 million people had fled Syria. However, experts estimate that this figure could double before 2013 ends. This would mean that one-in-six Syrians would have fled their homeland.

— Is the Commission considering providing support to Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan to help them accommodate Syrian refugees?

— Can we count on seeing specific actions aimed at supporting women and young people?

— Does the Commission plan to expand its humanitarian support by setting up programmes aimed at improving conditions for Syrian refugees?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2013)

The Commission is indeed providing support to those neighbouring countries hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees and will continue doing so with the outlook of a protracted crisis.

In addition to EUR 429.5 million of humanitarian assistance provided bilaterally by Member States, the EU budget has, since the end of 2011 and in direct response to the crises, mobilised approximately EUR 840 million (humanitarian aid: EUR 515 million, other assistance: EUR 325 million) of total support for activities inside and outside Syria. 47% of the assistance contracted by the Commission goes to needs inside Syria and 53% goes to neighbouring countries (Lebanon 24.3%, Jordan 23.1%, Iraq 3.3%, Turkey 2.3%).

The Commission supports nine partners for activities directly related to child protection and gender based violence (GBV) prevention and response. The projects represent approximately 5% of total EU funding and are being implemented in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. In addition to projects focusing directly on child protection and/or GBV, the Commission exerts strict vulnerability criteria when selecting actions to support. That is, women and children often have the relatively greatest need of aid and thus, must be direct recipients of life-saving assistance including food, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and non-food items.

The Commission is in the process of organising a new round for proposals for the funding of EUR 250 million in humanitarian assistance that was made available through the comprehensive package. This additional allocation will help the most vulnerable families including Syrian refugees, host communities but also Internally Displaced People (IDPs).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007606/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Obavy z porušovania európskych hodnôt v Maďarsku a Bulharsku

Existujú dôvodné podozrenia z porušovania základných európskych hodnôt v Maďarsku a v Bulharsku. Takpovediac plynule sa prechádza od obrany a ochrany práv a slobôd k ich postupnému obmedzovaniu. Skupina S&D má k takémuto správaniu jednoznačný postoj a neakceptuje takéto konanie. Ohrozovanie demokratických princípov, právneho štátu či nezávislosti súdnictva je v rozpore so zásadami, na ktorých stojí Európska únia. Podobne znepokojujúca je situácia v Bulharsku, kde boli odhalené nelegálne odpočúvania.

Akým spôsobom chce na také závažné a znepokojujúce skutočnosti reagovať Komisia? Má k dispozícii mechanizmy, pomocou ktorých by bolo možné zabrániť, aby sa podobná situácia v budúcnosti opakovala?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(30. augusta 2013)

Predseda Barroso vo svojom prejave o stave Únie v septembri 2012 výslovne uviedol, že je potrebný „lepšie vypracovaný súbor nástrojov“, prostredníctvom ktorého by sa riešili hrozby súvisiace s hodnotami Únie, akými sú najmä dodržiavanie základných práv, právny štát a demokracia.

Ako bolo vysvetlené v plenárnej rozprave 2. júla 2013, Komisia sa domnieva, že akákoľvek iniciatíva v tejto záležitosti by mala priniesť skutočnú pridanú hodnotu. Rovnako by mala byť schopná účinne riešiť systémové a významné hrozby, ktorým je vystavená právna a demokratická štruktúra v členských štátoch a ktoré sú v protiklade k spoločným európskym hodnotám uvedeným v článku 2 Zmluvy o EÚ.

Je potrebné zhromaždiť skúsenosti z už prebiehajúcich iniciatív, ktoré zahŕňajú napríklad porovnanie justičných systémov v Európskej únii predložené v marci 2013, ako aj mechanizmus spolupráce a overovania pre Bulharsko a Rumunsko, z ktorého sa možno poučiť vo všeobecnosti. Okrem toho sa bude musieť zohľadniť aj pripravovaná správa o boji proti korupcii. Z hľadiska právnej istoty a dôvery investorov má zásadný hospodársky význam aj nezávislé a riadne fungujúce súdnictvo. Odporúčania pre jednotlivé krajiny v rámci európskeho semestra preto zahŕňajú aj odporúčania pre určité členské štáty, aby prijali opatrenia na zlepšenie fungovania svojich justičných systémov.

Potrebujeme stanoviť spôsob, ako posilniť našu schopnosť lepšie riešiť obavy v súvislosti s dodržiavaním zásady právneho štátu v členských štátoch. Komisia po ukončení dialógu a diskusií s Parlamentom, Radou, zástupcami súdnych orgánov a inými zainteresovanými stranami v náležitom čase predloží výsledky svojich úvah o tom, ako lepšie monitorovať a zabezpečovať dodržiavanie zásady právneho štátu v členských štátoch.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007606/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Concerns about violations of European values in Hungary and Bulgaria

There is reasonable suspicion that there has been a violation of fundamental European values in Hungary and Bulgaria. There has been, so to speak, a fluent shift from the defence and protection of rights and freedoms to their progressive restriction. The S&D Group has a clear attitude towards such behaviour and will not accept such actions. Threats to democratic principles, the rule of law and independence of the judiciary are contrary to the principles that underpin the European Union. Similarly worrying is the situation in Bulgaria, where illegal bugging has been discovered.

How does the Commission wish to respond to such serious and disturbing facts? Does it have the mechanisms by which it would be possible to prevent a repeat of a similar situation in the future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(30 August 2013)

In his State of the Union speech in September 2012, President Barroso explicitly called for a 'better developed set of instruments' to address threats to the values of the Union, notably the respect for fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy.

As explained in the Plenary debate on 2 July 2013, the Commission believes that any initiative in this matter should bring real added value and be able to effectively address systemic and significant threats to the legal and democratic fabric in Member States going against the common European values referred to in Article 2 TEU.

Experience must be gathered from initiatives that are already ongoing, including the European Union's justice scoreboard, presented in March 2013, as well as the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Romania and Bulgaria, from which general lessons can be drawn. The upcoming anti-corruption report will also need to be taken into account. An independent and well-performing judiciary is also of great economic relevance, in terms of legal certainty and investor confidence. Therefore country-specific recommendations in the European Semester also include recommendations for certain Member States to take measures to improve their justice system.

We need to establish how to reinforce our capacity to better address concerns about the rule of law in Member States. Following a process of dialogue and debate with the Parliament, the Council, the judiciary and other stakeholders, the Commission will in due time present its reflections on ways to better monitor and ensure compliance of Member States with the rule of law.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007607/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Kroky proti vzrastajúcemu antisemitizmu v Európe

V uplynulých dňoch bola Európska únia vyzvaná, aby rázne zakročila voči narastajúcim prejavom antisemitizmu v Európe. Podľa ostatného prieskumu vandalizmus namierený proti Židom vzrástol v uplynulom roku o 30 %. Ako sa zdá, šíreniu týchto myšlienok akoby „napomáhala“ i súčasná nepriaznivá situácia v súvislosti s ekonomickou krízou.

Ako chce Komisia riešiť situáciu? Akým spôsobom chce adekvátne zasiahnuť voči takýmto prejavom neznášanlivosti?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(22. augusta 2013)

Komisia odsudzuje všetky formy a prejavy rasizmu a xenofóbie vrátane antisemitizmu, keďže sú v rozpore s hodnotami, na ktorých je EÚ založená.

Rasistické a xenofóbne správanie nemožno ničím ospravedlniť. Verejné orgány musia takéto prejavy dôrazne odsudzovať a aktívne proti nim bojovať.

Podľa rámcového rozhodnutia Rady 2008/913/SVV o boji proti niektorým formám a prejavom rasizmu a xenofóbie prostredníctvom trestného práva sú členské štáty povinné trestať akékoľvek úmyselné verejné podnecovanie k násiliu alebo nenávisti voči skupine osôb alebo členovi takejto skupiny vymedzenej podľa rasy, farby pleti, náboženského vyznania, rodového, národného alebo etnického pôvodu. Komisia v súčasnosti monitoruje vykonávacie opatrenia členských štátov a do konca roka 2013 vypracuje správu o tejto otázke. Do 1. decembra 2014 však Komisia v tejto súvislosti nie je oprávnená začať konanie vo veci porušenia právnych predpisov. Vyšetrovanie nenávistných prejavov alebo popierania holokaustu a trestné stíhanie páchateľov takéhoto protiprávneho konania teda prináleží vnútroštátnym orgánom.

Komisia okrem toho finančne podporuje činnosti zainteresovaných strán zamerané na boj proti antisemitizmu vrátane pamiatky obetí holokaustu. Túto finančnú podporu môžu využívať verejné aj súkromné organizácie a inštitúcie, napríklad prostredníctvom programu Základné práva a občianstvo.

Agentúra pre základné práva uverejňuje správy o trestných činoch páchaných z nenávisti v EÚ a pomáha Komisii monitorovať trendy. V novembri 2013 by sa mali uverejniť výsledky prieskumu týkajúceho sa skúseností príslušníkov židovského národa a vnímania antisemitizmu, ktorý táto agentúra zrealizovala.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007607/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Action against growing anti-Semitism in Europe

In recent days, the European Union has called for decisive intervention against increasing expressions of anti-Semitism in Europe. According to a survey, vandalism directed against Jews rose last year by 30%. It appears that the spreading of such ideas has been 'facilitated' by the current unfavourable situation due to the economic crisis.

How does the Commission intend to deal with this situation? How does it intend to adequately intervene against such intolerance?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

The Commission condemns all forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, including anti-Semitism, as they are incompatible with the values on which the EU is founded.

Racist and xenophobic behaviour can never be justified on any grounds. On the contrary, public authorities must strongly condemn the phenomenon and actively fight against it.

According to Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating racism and xenophobia, Member States are obliged to penalise the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. The Commission is currently monitoring Member State's implementing measures and will draw up a report on this issue by the end of 2013. It is not, however, authorised to launch infringement proceedings in this regard until 1 December 2014. It is for national authorities to investigate any instances of hate speech or Holocaust denial and to prosecute the perpetrators of such offences.

Furthermore, the Commission financially supports stakeholders' activities aimed at fighting against anti-Semitism, including commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust. Both private and public organisations and institutions can receive such financial support, for instance through the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme.

The Fundamental Rights Agency publishes reports on hate crime in the EU and helps the Commission to monitor trends. The results of its survey of Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of anti-Semitism are expected to be published in November 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007608/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Dostupnosť vodných zdrojov

Organizátori občianskej iniciatívy zameranej na uznanie ľudského práva na vodu a kanalizáciu, ktorá sa usiluje dosiahnuť, aby bolo ich poskytovanie základnou verejnou službou a nie predmetom obchodovania, ešte v priebehu februára oznámili, že v EÚ nazbierali milión podpisov. Faktom je, že získanie takého množstva súhlasných stanovísk od európskych občanov k tejto problematike možno považovať za úspech. Keďže voda je verejným statkom, malo by byť povinnosťou európskych inštitúcií a všetkých členských štátov zaistiť obyvateľom právo na vodu a hygienu. Zásobovanie vodou a správa vodných zdrojov by sa teda nemali stať predmetom obchodu.

Má Komisia v úmysle navrhnúť také legislatívne opatrenia, ktoré by podporovali a hájili ľudské právo na vodu a hygienu tak, aby bol zabezpečený prístup k vode a k hygiene ako k základnej verejnej službe pre všetkých?

Odpoveď pána Šefčoviča v mene Komisie
(13. augusta 2013)

Vážená poslankyňa sa odvoláva na iniciatívu občanov, ktorá ešte nebola predložená Komisii v súlade s článkom 9 nariadenia o iniciatíve občanov ([1]).

Komisia sa zo zásady nikdy nevyjadruje k žiadnej z registrovaných iniciatív, pokým ešte prebieha zber podpisov.

([1]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (EÚ) č. 211/2011 zo 16. februára 2011 o iniciatíve občanov, Ú. v. EÚ L 65, 11.3.2011: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:065:0001:0022:EN:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007608/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Availability of water resources

The organisers of a citizens' initiative aimed at recognising the human right to water and sanitation, with a view to ensuring their provision as an essential public service and not a tradable commodity, announced in February that one million signatures had been collected across the EU. The obtaining of so many consenting opinions from European citizens on this issue can be considered a success. Since water is a public good, it should be the responsibility of the European institutions and Member States to ensure that all citizens have the right to water and sanitation. Water supply and management of water resources should therefore not be traded.

Does the Commission intend to propose such legislative measures to promote and defend the human right to water and sanitation so as to ensure access to water and sanitation as a basic public service for all?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

The Honourable Member is referring to a proposed citizens' initiative which has not yet been submitted to the Commission in accordance with Article 9 of the regulation on the citizens' initiative ([1]).

As a matter of principle the Commission never pronounces itself on any registered initiative while the process of collecting signatures is still ongoing.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative, OJ L 65, 11.3.2011: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:065:0001:0022:EN:PDF.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007609/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Koniec preferenčného prístupu na trh Európskej únie pre africké krajiny

Mnoho afrických rozvojových krajín od 1. októbra 2014 prestane ťažiť z preferenčného prístupu na trh Európskej únie. Od roku 2007, keď sa platnosť systému referenčného prístupu skončila, väčšina afrických, karibských a tichomorských krajín uzatvorila bilaterálne dohody s členskými štátmi Európskej únie. Sedemnásť krajín však daný proces rokovaní ešte neukončila. I preto skupina S&D požadovala poskytnutie dlhšieho času týmto krajinám, až do januára 2016.

Napriek skutočnosti, že bolo nakoniec pristúpené ku kompromisu v zmysle termínu stanoveného na október 2014, nebolo by predsa len v možnostiach Komisie, aby vyvinula úsilie o posunutie tohto časového horizontu?

Odpoveď pána De Guchta v mene Komisie
(9. augusta 2013)

V nariadení Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (EÚ) č. 527/2013 ([1]), ktorým sa mení „nariadenie o prístupe na trh“ č. 1528/2007 ([2]), sa stanovuje, že zmeny sa budú uplatňovať od 1. októbra 2014. Nie je v právomoci Komisie, aby tento dátum zmenila.

Spomínaných 17 krajín už ukončilo rokovania s EÚ v roku 2007. Napriek tomu však ešte nepodpísali alebo nezačali uplatňovať výsledné dohody, na ktorých sa zakladá ich voľný prístup na trh EÚ. Z tohto dôvodu Európsky Parlament a Rada rozhodli o odstránení týchto krajín ako príjemcov nariadenia o prístupe na trh, ak k 1. októbru 2014 tieto krajiny nepodniknú kroky potrebné na ratifikáciu týchto dohôd.

Iba osem z týchto 17 krajín sú rozvojové krajiny, ktoré nemôžu využívať režim EÚ Všetko okrem zbraní. Naďalej však budú môcť využívať voľný prístup na trh EÚ, ak buď ratifikujú dohodu o hospodárskom partnerstve, ktorú uzatvorili v roku 2007, alebo ak začnú vykonávať túto dohodu do 1. októbra 2014. Ak sa rozhodnú, že tak neurobia, môžu stále využívať všeobecný systém preferencií EÚ v prípade, že to nie sú krajiny s vyššími strednými príjmami alebo viac rozvinuté krajiny.

([1]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (EÚ) č. 527/2013 z 21. mája 2013, ktorým sa mení nariadenie Rady (ES) č. 1528/2007, pokiaľ ide o vypustenie niekoľkých krajín zo zoznamu regiónov alebo štátov, ktoré ukončili rokovania, Ú. v. EÚ L 165, 18.6.2013.

([2]) Nariadenie Rady (ES) č. 1527/2007 zo 17. decembra 2007, ktorým sa mení a dopĺňa nariadenie (ES) č. 1255/96, ktorým sa dočasne pozastavuje uplatňovanie autonómnych ciel podľa Spoločného colného sadzobníka na niektoré priemyselné a poľnohospodárske výrobky, ako aj produkty rybolovu, Ú. v. EÚ L 349, 31.12.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007609/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: End of preferential access to the EU market for African countries

From 1 October 2014, many African developing countries will no longer benefit from preferential access to the EU market. Since 2007, when the validity of the reference approach system ended, most of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries concluded bilateral agreements with EU Member States. Seventeen countries, however, have not yet completed the negotiating process. Therefore, the S&D Group has requested the provision of additional time to these countries until January 2016.

Despite the fact that a compromise was eventually reached in that a deadline of October 2014 was established, would it be beyond the abilities of the Commission to make every effort to move this time frame?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

Regulation (EU) No 527/2013 of Parliament and of the Council ([1]) amending the 'Market Access Regulation' No 1528/2007 ([2]) lays down that the amendment shall apply as from 1 October 2014. The Commission does not have the power to move this date.

The 17 countries referred to already concluded negotiations with the EU in 2007. However, they have not yet signed or applied the resulting agreements, on which their free access to the EU is based. This is why Parliament and the Council decided to remove these countries as beneficiaries of the Market Access Regulation if, come 1 October 2014, they have not taken the necessary steps to ratify their agreement.

Only eight of the 17 countries concerned are developing countries that cannot benefit from the EU's Everything But Arms scheme. However, they will continue to enjoy free access to the EU if they either ratify the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) they concluded in 2007, or implement a successor EPA by 1 October 2014. Should they decide not to do so, they can still benefit from the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), unless they are Upper Middle Income countries or more developed.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 527/2013 of Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1528/2007 as regards the exclusion of a number of countries from the list of regions or states which have concluded negotiations, OJ L 165, 18.6.2013.

([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1527/2007 of 17 December 2007 amending Regulation (EC) No 1255/96 temporarily suspending the autonomous common customs tariff duties on certain industrial, agricultural and fishery products, OJ L 349, 31.12.2007.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007610/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Právne predpisy a rovnosť žien a mužov

Je dôležité vyplniť legislatívne medzery v právnych predpisoch EÚ, pokiaľ hovoríme o otázke rovnosti žien a mužov. V niektorých členských štátoch je táto skutočnosť rešpektovaná, no objavujú sa i také prípady, keď práve hospodárska kríza akoby sa stávala zámienkou na „zjemnenie" boja voči rodovej nerovnosti.

Aké kroky môže podniknúť Komisia v tomto prípade?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(20. augusta 2013)

V Európskej únii už existuje vyspelý a komplexný legislatívny rámec týkajúci sa rodovej rovnosti.

Smernicou 2006/54/ES ([1]) sa zakazuje rozdielne zaobchádzanie s mužmi a ženami vo veciach zamestnania a povolania a v smernici 2004/113/ES ([2]) sa stanovuje rámec boja proti diskriminácii na základe pohlavia v prístupe k tovaru a službám a k ich poskytovaniu. Jednou z priorít Komisie v oblasti rovnosti žien a mužov bude v nasledujúcich rokoch monitorovanie správneho uplatňovania a presadzovania ustanovení oboch týchto smerníc a podpora členských štátov a iných aktérov pri riadnom uplatňovaní a presadzovaní existujúcich pravidiel. Komisia v súčasnosti pripravuje správu o uplatňovaní smernice 2006/54/ES, ktorá sa má zverejniť v priebehu tohto roka, zatiaľ čo prijatie správy o uplatňovaní smernice 2004/113/ES sa predpokladá v roku 2014.

Komisia v súčasnosti analyzuje vnútroštátne právne predpisy oznámené členskými štátmi, ktorými sa transponuje smernica 2010/41/EÚ ([3]) o uplatňovaní zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania so ženami a mužmi vykonávajúcimi činnosť ako samostatne zárobkovo činné osoby a smernica 2010/18/EÚ ([4]) o rodičovskej dovolenke, a začne monitorovať, či sú tieto vykonávacie opatrenia v súlade s danými smernicami.

Komisia okrem toho 14. novembra 2012 prijala návrh smernice o zlepšení rodovej vyváženosti medzi nevýkonnými riadiacimi pracovníkmi spoločností kótovaných na burze a súvisiacich opatreniach. O návrhu sa práve rokuje v Európskom parlamente a Rade.

Právne predpisy sú jedným z viacerých dôležitých nástrojov a opatrení, ktoré sú súčasťou Stratégie rovnosti žien a mužov 2010 – 2015 ([5]) Európskej komisie.

([1]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2006/54/ES z 5. júla 2006 o vykonávaní zásady rovnosti príležitostí a rovnakého zaobchádzania s mužmi a ženami vo veciach zamestnanosti a povolania (prepracované znenie), Ú. v. EÚ L 204, 26.7.2006, s. 23-26.

([2]) Smernica Rady 2004/113/ES z 13. decembra 2004 o vykonávaní zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania medzi mužmi a ženami v prístupe k tovaru a službám a k ich poskytovaniu, Ú. v. EÚ L 373, 21.12.2004, s. 37-43.

([3]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2010/41/ES zo 7. júla 2010 o uplatňovaní zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania so ženami a mužmi vykonávajúcimi činnosť ako samostatne zárobkovo činné osoby a o zrušení smernice Rady 86/613/EHS, Ú. v. EÚ L 180, 15.7.2010, s. 1-6.

([4]) Smernica Rady 2010/18/EÚ z 8. marca 2010, ktorou sa vykonáva revidovaná Rámcová dohoda o rodičovskej dovolenke uzavretá medzi BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP a ETUC a zrušuje smernica 96/34/ES, Ú. v. Ú L 68, 18.3.2010, s. 13-20.

([5]) KOM(2010) 491 v konečnom znení.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007610/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Legislation and gender equality

It is important to fill the regulatory gaps in EU legislation with regard to the issue of gender equality. In some Member States this is respected, but there are also fears that there are cases when the economic crisis has become an excuse to 'soften' the fight against gender inequality.

What steps can be taken by the Commission in this regard?

Answer given by Ms Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The EU already has an advanced and comprehensive legislative framework in the field of gender equality in place.

Directive 2006/54/EC ([1]) prohibits differential treatment of men and women in employment and occupation and Directive 2004/113/EC ([2]) lays down a framework for combating sex discrimination in access to and supply of goods and services. One of the Commission's priorities in the field of gender equality for the coming years will be to monitor the correct application and enforcement of provisions of both Directives and to support Member States and other stakeholders with the proper enforcement and application of the existing rules. The Commission is currently preparing a Report on the application of Directive 2006/54/EC, to be published later this year, while the report on the application of Directive 2004/113/EC is envisaged for adoption in 2014.

The Commission is currently analysing the national laws notified by the Member States transposing Directive 2010/41/EU ([3]) on self-employed and assisting spouses and Directive 2010/18/EU ([4]) on parental leave and will start monitoring whether these implementing measures are in conformity with the directives.

Moreover, on 14 November 2012 the Commission adopted the proposal for a directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures. The proposal is being negotiated in the European Parliament and the Council.

Legislation is one of several important tools and measures that are part of the European Commission Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015 ([5]).

([1]) Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast), OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23-36.

([2]) Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services, OJ L 373, 21.12.2004, p. 37-43.

([3]) Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Directive 86/613/EEC, OJ L 180, 15.7.2010, p. 1-6.

([4]) Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC, OJ L 68, 18.3.2010, p. 13-20.

([5]) COM(2010) 491 final.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007611/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Nepokoje po prezidentských voľbách vo Venezuele

Dňa 14. apríla toho roku sa vo Venezuele konali prezidentské voľby. Kompetentnými orgánmi bolo uznané, že celý volebný proces mal spravodlivý a demokratický priebeh, pričom nespochybniteľnými sú takisto výsledky volieb. Existujú však obavy z pokusov o destabilizáciu politickej situácie v Bolívii. Venezuela čelí násilným činom podobajúcim sa na predchádzajúce z roku 2002, keď bola snaha o štátny prevrat.

Môže Komisia prípadnou intervenciou danej hroziacej situácii zamedziť? Ako čo najskôr učiniť kroky smerujúce k náprave vypätej situácie, apelujúc na kompetentných, aby uznali vôľu ľudu vyjadrenú v prezidentských voľbách?

Odpoveď podpredsedníčky Komisie/vysokej predstaviteľky Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(3. septembra 2013)

Európska únia pravidelne monitoruje politickú situáciu vo Venezuele. Dňa 17. apríla 2013 VP/PP vydala stanovisko, v ktorom vyjadrila poľutovanie nad stratami na životoch, a vyzvala všetky strany, aby nadviazali mierový dialóg a odmietli násilie ([1]). Ocenila aj vysokú účasť a riadny a pokojný priebeh volieb, pričom však vyjadrila znepokojenie v súvislosti s rastúcou polarizáciou venezuelskej spoločnosti. VP/PP okrem toho zdôraznila význam toho, aby výsledky volieb boli akceptovateľné pre všetkých, a vyzvala všetky strany, aby sa podujali na podporu transparentnosti a dobrej správy vecí verejných.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136829.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007611/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Riots following the presidential elections in Venezuela

Presidential elections were held in Venezuela on 14 April this year. The competent authorities recognised that the entire electoral process was fair and democratic, and that the election results were indisputable. However, there are concerns about attempts to destabilise the political situation in Bolivia. Venezuela is facing hostile acts resembling those that occurred previously in 2002, when a coup attempt was made.

Is the Commission able to intervene in order to prevent the impending situation? Can it take steps as soon as possible to correct the tense situation, calling on the competent authorities to recognise the will of the people as expressed in the presidential elections?

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

The EU regularly monitors the political situation in Venezuela. On 17 April 2013 the HR/VP issued a statement in which she regretted the loss of life, and called upon all parties to engage in peaceful dialogue and reject violence ([1]). She also commended the high participation and the orderly and calm conduct of the election, while expressing concerns about the growing polarisation of Venezuelan society. Furthermore, the HR/VP stressed the importance that the outcome of the vote can be accepted by all and encouraged all parties to engage to promote transparency and good governance.

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/136829.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007612/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Zjednodušenie vízových vzťahov medzi Európskou úniou a Ukrajinou

Európsky parlament v uplynulých dňoch na svojom zasadnutí v Štrasburgu odsúhlasil dohodu, na základe ktorej budú zjednodušené vízové vzťahy medzi EÚ a Ukrajinou, čo bude mať, okrem iného, za následok i menej byrokracie pre občanov. Bude tak umožnená lepšia komunikácia a výmena informácií, dohoda môže prispieť k rozvoju demokracie, právneho štátu a ľudských práv.

V akých prípadných ďalších krokoch vidí Komisia možnosť posilnenia vzťahov medzi Európskou úniou a Ukrajinou?

Odpoveď vysokej predstaviteľky Únie a podpredsedníčky Komisie Ashtonovej v mene Komisie
(21. augusta 2013)

Závery týkajúce sa Ukrajiny, ktoré odsúhlasila Rada pre zahraničné veci 10. decembra 2012, potvrdili odhodlanie EÚ spolupracovať s Ukrajinou smerom k naplneniu jej politického pridruženia a hospodárskej integrácie založených na dodržiavaní spoločných hodnôt. Tento záväzok je ambiciózny ako svojou hĺbkou, tak aj svojím rozsahom: vyžaduje si aj množstvo kľúčových nástrojov na zlepšenie vzťahov medzi EÚ a Ukrajinou a na podporu procesu modernizácie Ukrajiny. Ako príklad možno uviesť dohodu o pridružení, vrátane rozsiahlej a komplexnej oblasti voľného obchodu, akčný plán týkajúci sa liberalizácie vízového režimu, celkovú finančnú pomoc EÚ, vrátane prípadnej makrofinančnej pomoci EÚ, umožnenie podpory z medzinárodných finančných inštitúcií na modernizáciu ukrajinskej plynovej prepravnej sústavy, a to v súlade s existujúcimi dohodami vrátane Zmluvy o Energetickom spoločenstve.

EÚ zdôrazňuje najmä hodnotu zvýšenia kontaktov medzi ľuďmi ako prostriedku na posilňovanie vzťahov, čo pomáha vytvoriť široký a stály dialóg medzi EÚ a občanmi Ukrajiny.

EÚ zostáva odhodlaná podpísať už parafovanú dohodu o pridružení, vrátane rozsiahlej a komplexnej oblasti voľného obchodu hneď, ako orgány Ukrajiny preukážu rozhodnú aktivitu a hmatateľný pokrok v troch kritických oblastiach – voľby, reforma súdnictva a celkové reformy v rámci programu pridruženia – podľa možností pred tým, ako sa uskutoční samit Východného partnerstva v novembri 2013 vo Vilniuse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007612/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Simplification of visa relations between the EU and Ukraine

In recent days, Parliament agreed to a deal at its sitting in Strasbourg in which visa relations between the EU and Ukraine will be simplified. This will, amongst other things, result in even less bureaucracy for citizens. This will allow for better communication and information exchange, while the agreement may contribute to the development of democracy, rule of law and human rights.

In what other ways does the Commission see the possibility of strengthening relations between the EU and Ukraine?

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

The Conclusions on Ukraine agreed by the Foreign Affairs Council on 10 December 2012 reaffirmed the EU's engagement with Ukraine towards political association and economic integration based on the respect for common values. This engagement is ambitious both in its depth and its breadth: it also takes in a number of key instruments to enhance EU-Ukraine relations and to support the process of Ukraine's modernisation: examples of these include the Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area; the action plan on Visa Liberalisation; the overall EU financial assistance, including potential EU Macro-Financial Assistance; the facilitation of support from International Financial Institutions for the modernisation of the Ukrainian Gas Transmission System, in accordance with existing agreements, including the Energy Community Treaty.

The EU stresses in particular the value of increased people-to-people contacts as a means of strengthening relations, helping to establish a broad and permanent dialogue between EU and Ukrainian citizens.

The EU remains committed to the signing of the already initialled Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, as soon as the Ukrainian authorities demonstrate determined action and tangible progress in three critical areas — elections, judiciary and overall Association Agenda reforms — possibly by the time of the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007613/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Práva osôb LGBT na Balkáne a v Turecku

Koncom apríla toho roku Európsky parlament prijal päť výročných správ o kandidátskych a potenciálnych kandidátskych štátoch Európskej únie. Poslanci adresovali Chorvátsku, Čiernej hore, Srbsku, Kosovu a Turecku odporúčania vzťahujúce sa na práva osôb LGBT. Otvorenosť, rôznorodosť a rovnosť zároveň patria k popredným európskym hodnotám. I preto je dôležité tieto myšlienky pretaviť do ústretovosti voči osobám LGBT a rešpektovania ich práv.

Chce aj Komisia konkrétnym spôsobom podporiť tieto snahy? Ak áno, akými krokmi?

Odpoveď pána Füleho v mene Komisie
(6. septembra 2013)

Komisia si je vedomá situácie komunity lesbičiek, homosexuálov, bisexuálov a transrodových osôb (LGBT) v Turecku a v krajinách západného Balkánu a je pevne odhodlaná zabezpečiť náležité riešenie tejto otázky na vhodných fórach s krajinami zapojenými do procesu rozširovania.

Komisia pozorne sleduje prácu orgánov zameranú na vykonávanie všetkých relevantných právnych ustanovení, a to najmä tých, ktoré majú za cieľ chrániť komunitu LGBT pred zastrašovaním a fyzickým násilím. Vývoj v tejto oblasti sa zohľadňuje v ročných správach o pokroku krajín zapojených do procesu rozširovania. Finančná pomoc v tejto oblasti sa poskytuje prostredníctvom nástroja IPA, ako aj iných nástrojov EÚ, akým je napríklad európsky nástroj pre demokraciu a ľudské práva.

Komisia bude v krajinách zapojených do procesu rozširovania túto otázku pozorne sledovať aj naďalej.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007613/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: The rights of LGBT persons in the Balkans and in Turkey

At the end of April this year, the European Parliament adopted five annual reports on candidate and potential candidate countries of the European Union. Members addressed Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and Turkey with recommendations relating to the rights of LGBT persons. Openness, diversity and equality are some of the most important European values. It is therefore important to transform these ideas into the welcoming of LGBT people and respect for their rights.

Does the Commission wish to specifically support these efforts? If so, by what means?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission is aware of the situation of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) persons in Turkey and the western Balkans, and is seriously committed to ensuring that this issue will be adequately addressed in the appropriate fora with the enlargement countries.

The Commission closely follows the work of the authorities to fully implement all relevant legal provisions, in particular those aiming at protecting LGBT persons from intimidation and physical violence. Developments in this field are reflected in the annual progress reports on the enlargement countries. Financial assistance in this field is granted through IPA, as well as through other EU instruments like the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

The Commission will continue to closely monitor the issue in the enlargement countries.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007614/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Ústavná situácia v Maďarsku

Momentálna situácia v Maďarsku je neakceptovateľná. Maďarský parlament, v ktorom koalícia súčasného premiéra Viktora Orbána disponuje dvojtretinovou väčšinou, v marci opäť novelizoval ústavu krajiny. Od nástupu jeho vlády k moci v roku 2010 ide už o štvrtú novelu! Novela vyvoláva znepokojenie doma i v zahraničí. Maďarský parlament pozostávajúci z prevažujúcej ústavnej väčšiny jednej politickej strany vyvíja neustále snahy o pretransformovanie mnohých kompetencií pod centralizovanú kontrolu. Schválená novela prináša nehoráznosti v podobe ďalšieho oklieštenia právomocí ústavného súdu, kriminalizácie bezdomovcov, zavádza predpoklady na užšie spojenie cirkví so štátom a priamu kontrolu/ovládanie školstva, osobitné neprimerané zdaňovanie občanov mimo rozpočtu a zasahovanie do nezávislosti médií počas volieb. Zákon stanovuje výslovnú možnosť obmedziť právo na slobodu prejavu v prípade, ak bude narúšaná dôstojnosť maďarského národa, alebo dokonca článok ústavy umožňuje zriaiť parlamentnú gardu/stráž, zodpovednú priamo predsedovi parlamentu.

Aký má Komisia názor na momentálnu ústavnú situáciu v Maďarsku? Bude v tejto otázke určitým spôsobom intervenovať?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(10. septembra 2013)

Komisia si dovoľuje odkázať váženú poslankyňu na svoju odpoveď na písomnú otázku E-5496/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007614/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: The constitutional situation in Hungary

The current situation in Hungary is unacceptable. In March of this year, the Hungarian parliament, where the coalition of the current Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, has a two-thirds majority, once again amended the country's constitution. This will be the fourth amendment since his government came to power in 2010. The amendment raises concern at home and abroad. The Hungarian parliament, consisting of a predominant constitutional majority by a single political party, continually strives to bring several areas of competence under centralised control. The approved amendment causes outrage in that it means further curtailment of the powers of the Constitutional Court, criminalisation of the homeless, establishment of conditions for closer links between the church and the State and direct control of education, special disproportionate off-budget taxation of its citizens and interference in the independence of the media during elections. The law expressly provides for the restriction of the right to freedom of expression if the dignity of the Hungarian nation is disrupted, and there is even an article in the constitution that allows the establishment of a parliamentary guard, directly responsible to the President.

What is the opinion of the Commission on the current constitutional situation in Hungary? Will it somehow intervene in this matter?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-5496/2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007615/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Spoločná poľnohospodárska politika a problém diskriminácie

V nasledujúcich dňoch sa začne oficiálny trialóg rokovaní medzi Európskym parlamentom, Radou a Európskou komisiou. Predmetom rokovaní má byť problematika spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020. Ide o veľmi dôležitú a náročnú tému. Tento rámec totiž určí nasledujúci vývoj poľnohospodárskeho a potravinárskeho sektora, ako aj potravinovú sebestačnosť, rozvoj vidieka, zamestnanosť a ekonomickú stabilitu. Zástupcovia slovenských poľnohospodárov, ako aj poľnohospodárskych komôr krajín V4 ma však upozornili na skutočnosť, že kritériá nadchádzajúcej reformy SPP sú nastavené diskriminačne a opätovne postihnú poľnohospodárov nových členských štátov.

Aký je názor Komisie na upozornenia stredoeurópskych poľnohospodárov, že kritériá nadchádzajúcej reformy SPP na roky 2014 – 2020 sú nastavené diskriminačne a opätovne postihujú poľnohospodárov z nových členských krajín?

Odpoveď pána Cioloşa v mene Komisie
(6. augusta 2013)

Pravidlá budúcej SPP sa budú na celom území EÚ uplatňovať rovnakým spôsobom, pričom členské štáty budú mať priestor, aby si ich do istej miery prispôsobili.

Vďaka takzvanej „externej konvergencii“ vnútroštátnych finančných balíkov sa znížia rozdiely medzi členskými štátmi vo výškach priamych platieb na hektár. Komisia by chcela odkázať váženú pani poslankyňu na svoje odpovede na písomné otázky E-012310/2011 a E-003269/2012 ([1]), v ktorých sa objasňujú návrhy Komisie v súvislosti s externou konvergenciou.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007615/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: The common agricultural policy and the issue of discrimination

In the coming days, formal trialogue negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission will commence. The subject of the discussions is due to be the issue of the common agricultural policy for the period 2014-2020. This is a very important and challenging issue. This framework will determine the subsequent development of the agricultural and food sectors, as well as food sovereignty, rural development, employment and economic stability. Representatives of Slovak farmers and agricultural chambers of V-4 countries have pointed out to me that the criteria for the upcoming CAP reform are set discriminatorily and will once again affect farmers in the new Member States.

What is the Commission's view on the warnings by central European farmers that the criteria for the upcoming CAP reform for 2014-2020 are set in a discriminatory manner and will once again affect farmers in the new Member States?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(6 August 2013)

The rules for the future CAP will apply on the entire EU territory in an equal way, with some possible adjustments by the Member States.

The difference in the level of direct payments per hectare between the Member States will become smaller through the so-called 'external convergence' of the national financial envelopes. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-012310/2011 and E-003269/2012 ([1]) which provide explanations on the proposals of the Commission on external convergence.

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

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007616/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Spoločná poľnohospodárska politika a spravodlivé priame platby

V nasledujúcich dňoch sa začne oficiálny trialóg rokovaní medzi Európskym parlamentom, Radou a Európskou komisiou. Predmetom rokovaní má byť problematika spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020. Ide o veľmi dôležitú a náročnú tému. Tento rámec totiž určí nasledujúci vývoj poľnohospodárskeho a potravinárskeho sektora, rovnako ako potravinovú sebestačnosť, rozvoj vidieka, zamestnanosť a ekonomickú stabilitu.

Akým spôsobom zabezpečí Komisia spravodlivé a rovné prerozdelenie priamych platieb, ako aj vyrovnanie podmienok vo všetkých členských štátoch?

Odpoveď pána Cioloşa v mene Komisie
(20. augusta 2013)

Z politickej dohody o spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politike, ku ktorej 26. júna 2013 dospeli Európsky parlament, Rada a Komisia, vyplýva, že poľnohospodári v členských štátoch musia smerovať k vyrovnanejším výškam platieb za hektár (vnútorná konvergencia). Členské štáty si môžu vybrať spomedzi viacerých možností: zvoliť vnútroštátny alebo regionálny prístup; do roka 2019 dosiahnuť jednotnú regionálnu/vnútroštátnu mieru platobných nárokov alebo zabezpečiť, aby sa hospodárstvam, ktoré dostávajú menej než 90 % priemernej regionálnej/vnútroštátnej miery platieb, postupne zvyšoval prísun prostriedkov, pričom navyše musia zabezpečiť, aby do roka 2019 každý platobný nárok dosiahol minimálnu hodnotu 60 % vnútroštátneho/regionálneho priemeru. V prípade poľnohospodárov, ktorí dostávajú sumy presahujúce regionálny/vnútroštátny priemer, sa tieto platby upravia, pričom členské štáty majú možnosť obmedziť stratu na 30 %.

Okrem toho môžu členské štáty vyčleniť až 30 % vnútroštátneho rozpočtu na platbu na účely prerozdelenia za prvé hektáre. Počet hektárov bude obmedzený na 30, prípadne na priemernú veľkosť hospodárstiev, ak táto veľkosť prevyšuje 30 ha. Suma na hektár nesmie presiahnuť 65 % priemeru na rok 2019.

V návrhu Komisie o regulácii priamych platieb ([1]) sa stanovilo, že členské štáty s priamymi platbami za hektár nižšími než 90 % priemeru by mali znížiť rozdiel medzi súčasnou úrovňou platieb a uvedenou úrovňou (vonkajšia konvergencia) o jednu tretinu. Tieto platby by mali pomerným dielom financovať všetky členské štáty, ktoré sú nad priemerom. V záveroch Rady zo 7. a 8. februára 2013 sa navyše stanovuje, že všetky členské štáty by sa do rozpočtového roka 2020 mali dostať na určitú minimálnu úroveň.

([1]) KOM(2011) 625.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007616/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: The common agricultural policy and fair direct payments

In the coming days, formal trialogue negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission will commence. The subject of the discussions is due to be the issue of the common agricultural policy for the period 2014-2020. This is a very important and challenging issue. This framework will determine the subsequent development of the agricultural and food sectors, as well as food sovereignty, rural development, employment and economic stability.

How will the Commission ensure fair and equal distribution of direct payments and settlement of conditions in all Member States?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The political agreement on the CAP reform of 26 June 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission foresees that within Member States farmers must move towards more similar levels of payment per hectare (internal convergence). Member States may choose from different options: to take a national or regional approach; to achieve a uniform regional/national rate of payment entitlements by 2019, or to ensure that those farms getting less than 90% of the regional/national average rate see a gradual increase — with the additional guarantee that each payment entitlement reaches a minimum value of 60% of the national/regional average by 2019. The amounts for farmers above the regional/national average will be adjusted, with an option for Member States to limit the loss to 30%.

Additionally, Member States may allocate up to 30% of their national budget to a redistributive payment for the first hectares. The number of hectares will be limited to 30 hectares or the average farm size if the latter is more than 30 ha. The amount per hectare cannot exceed 65% of the average for the year 2019.

The Commission proposal for a direct payment regulation ([1]) foresaw that Member States with direct payments per hectare below 90% of the average should close one third of the gap between their current level and this level (external convergence). It should be financed proportionally by all Member States above the average. The European Council conclusions of 7/8 February 2013 foresee in addition that all Member States should arrive at a minimum level by financial year 2020.

([1]) COM(2011) 625.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007617/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Spoločná poľnohospodárska politika a kríza

V nasledujúcich dňoch sa začne oficiálny trialóg rokovaní medzi Európskym parlamentom, Radou a Európskou komisiou. Predmetom rokovaní má byť problematika spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky na obdobie rokov 2014 – 2020. Ide o veľmi dôležitú a náročnú tému. Tento rámec totiž určí nasledujúci vývoj poľnohospodárskeho a potravinárskeho sektora, ako aj potravinovú sebestačnosť, rozvoj vidieka, zamestnanosť a ekonomickú stabilitu.

Predstaví Komisia určité efektívne regulačné mechanizmy pre predchádzanie krízam na trhu s poľnohospodárskymi komoditami?

Odpoveď pána Cioloşa v mene Komisie
(12. augusta 2013)

Dňa 26. júna 2013 sa dosiahla politická dohoda medzi Európskym parlamentom, Radou a Komisiou o reforme spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky. Pokiaľ ide o riadenie trhov v súlade s revidovaným znením nariadenia Európskeho parlamentu a Rady o vytvorení spoločnej organizácie poľnohospodárskych trhov (nariadenie o jednotnej spoločnej organizácii trhov), zavádzajú sa nové ustanovenia, ktoré umožnia Komisii, aby prijala včasné a primerané výnimočné opatrenia s cieľom reagovať na hrozby narušenia trhov pre všetky sektory. Výnimočné opatrenia sa takisto môžu prijať v prípade všetkých sektorov, keď dôjde k strate dôvery spotrebiteľov v súvislosti s verejným zdravím, zdravím zvierat a rastlín a rizikami nákazy, ako aj s cieľom riešiť špecifické problémy. Tieto opatrenia sa budú financovať z krízovej rezervy v rámci okruhu 2 rozpočtu. Komisia je toho názoru, že tieto nové opatrenia prispejú k proaktívnejšiemu a efektívnejšiemu prístupu ku krízam, nech sa týkajú akéhokoľvek poľnohospodárskeho výrobku.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007617/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: The common agricultural policy and the crisis

In the coming days, formal trialogue negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission will commence. The subject of the discussions is due to be the issue of the common agricultural policy for the period 2014-2020. This is a very important and challenging issue. This framework will determine the subsequent development of the agricultural and food sectors, as well as food sovereignty, rural development, employment and economic stability.

Will the Commission present effective regulatory mechanisms for crisis prevention in the agricultural commodity market?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

On 26 June 2013, a political agreement on the reform of the common agricultural policy has been found between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. As regards the management of the markets in accordance with the revised text of the regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products (single CMO Regulation), new provisions are introduced which will allow the Commission to take timely and appropriate exceptional measures to respond to threats of market disturbance for all sectors. Exceptional measures can also be made available for all sectors in cases of loss of consumer confidence due to public, animal or plant health and disease risks, as well as to address specific problems. These measures will be funded by a crisis reserve within Heading 2 of the budget which will be funded by financial discipline. The Commission believes that these new measures will contribute to a more proactive and efficient approach to crises, whatever agricultural product they may affect.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007618/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Makroekonomická nerovnováha

Rozpočtové deficity, rast verejného dlhu, úsporné opatrenia sú v čase krízy známymi pojmami. Veľa sa však nehovorí o makroekonomickej nerovnováhe, a to napriek skutočnosti, že ju mnohí odborníci vidia ako hlavnú príčinu problémov eurozóny. Podľa poslednej správy Komisie z 10. apríla vykazuje v súčasnosti známky nerovnováhy 13 krajín Únie. Kým ukazovatele rozpočtu a verejného dlhu kladú bremeno nápravy na deficitné krajiny, makroekonomická nerovnováha poukazuje aj na prebytkové krajiny ako na súčasť problému.

Komisia zriadila porovnávacie tabuľky s 11 ukazovateľmi na určenie nerovnováhy a pravidelne kontroluje dáta z členských krajín. Aký je postup v prípade, že sa tieto ukazovatele prejavia ako negatívne?

Odpoveď pána Rehna v mene Komisie
(26. augusta 2013)

Postup v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy nadobudol účinnosť 13. decembra 2011 ako súčasť balíka na posilnenie správy ekonomických záležitostí (tzv. „balík šiestich návrhov“).

Postup v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy je mechanizmus dohľadu zameraný na skoré určenie možných rizík, predchádzanie vzniku škodlivých makroekonomických nerovnováh a korekciu už vzniknutých nerovnováh. Správa o mechanizme varovania je každoročne východiskovým bodom postupu v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy. V predmetnej správe – vytvorenej na základe hodnotiacej tabuľky a obsahujúcej 11 indikátorov a niekoľko ďalších pomocných indikátorov – sa identifikujú členské štáty, v ktorých je potrebné vykonať pred prijatím záveru o existencii nerovnováhy alebo nadmernej nerovnováhy hĺbkovú analýzu. Postup v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy nie je „mechanickým“ ale čisto číselným cvičením. Indikátory hodnotiacej tabuľky podporujú ekonomickú analýzu dotknutej krajiny.

Prvé kolo postupu v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy sa uskutočnilo v roku 2012, kedy Komisia prijala a zverejnila prvú správu o mechanizme varovania ([1]) a následne aj hĺbkovú analýzu ([2]) 12 členských štátov.

Druhé kolo postupu v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy zahŕňalo správu o mechanizme varovania ([3]) z novembra 2012 a hĺbkovú analýzu 13 členských štátov, pričom obe boli zverejnené v apríli 2013. ([4]) V druhom kole postupu v prípade makroekonomickej nerovnováhy Komisia identifikovala nerovnováhy v 11 krajinách ([5]) a nadmerné nerovnováhy v Španielsku a Slovinsku. Do odporúčaní pre jednotlivé krajiny, ktoré na základe odporúčania Komisie Rada prijala 9. júla 2012 v kontexte európskeho semestra, boli zahrnuté vhodné politické odporúčania.

([1]) COM(2012) 68 final.
([2]) Pozri European Economy – Occasional Papers, č. 99 až 110, dostupné na: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 751 final.
([4]) Pozri European Economy – Occasional Papers, č. 132 až 144, dostupné na: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/index_en.htm Pozri aj sprievodné oznámenie COM(2013) 199 final.
([5]) Belgicko, Bulharsko, Dánsko, Francúzsko, Taliansko, Maďarsko, Malta, Holandsko, Fínsko, Švédsko a Spojené kráľovstvo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007618/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Macroeconomic imbalance

Budget deficits, public debt growth and austerity measures are familiar concepts during periods of crisis. However, there is little mention of macroeconomic imbalance, despite the fact that many experts see it as a major cause of the problems in the euro area. According to a recent report by the Commission on 10 April, 13 EU Member States currently show signs of imbalance. Whilst budget and public debt indicators impose the burden of remedy on deficit countries, macroeconomic imbalance also points to surplus countries as part of the problem.

The Commission has set up a comparative table with 11 indicators for the identification of imbalances and regularly checks the data provided by Member States. What is the procedure in the event that those indicators are shown to be negative?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) entered into force on 13 December 2011 as part of the so called 'six-pack' to strengthen economic governance.

MIP is a surveillance mechanism for identifying potential risks early on, preventing the emergence of harmful macroeconomic imbalances and correcting the imbalances already accumulated. The annual starting point of the MIP is the Alert Mechanism Report (AMR), which identifies -- based on a scoreboard of eleven indicators, and a few other auxiliary indicators -- for which MS an in-depth review (IDR) is necessary before concluding whether imbalances or excessive imbalances exist. The MIP is not a 'mechanical', purely numerical exercise. The scoreboard indicators support the economic analysis of the country in question.

A first round of the MIP was carried out in 2012, when the Commission adopted and published the first Alert Mechanism Report (AMR) ([1]) and, subsequently the IDRs ([2]) for 12 MS.

The second round of the MIP included the AMR ([3])of November 2012, and IDRs for 13 MS which were published in April 2013 ([4]). In the second round of the MIP, the Commission identified imbalances in eleven countries ([5]) and excessive imbalances in Spain and Slovenia. The appropriate policy recommendations were included in the country-specific recommendations (CSRs) that, upon a recommendation of the Commission, were adopted by the Council on 9 July 2013 in the context of the European Semester.

([1]) COM(2012) 68 final.
([2]) European Economy-Occasional Papers, 99 to 110, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 751 final.
([4]) European Economy-Occasional Papers, 132 to 144, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/index_en.htm See also the accompanying communication COM(2013) 199 final.
([5]) Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Italy, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007619/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Rovnosť pohlaví v zabezpečení prístupu k tovaru a službám

Smernica 2004/113/ES o vykonávaní zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania medzi mužmi a ženami v prístupe k tovaru a službám a k ich poskytovaniu znamenala pri nadobudnutí účinnosti 21. decembra 2004 významný krok vo vývoji zákonov EÚ v oblasti rodovej rovnosti. Zaoberá sa otázkou rodovej rovnosti a diskriminácie na základe pohlavia mimo oblasti zamestnania. Smernica zakazuje priamu aj nepriamu diskrimináciu na základe pohlavia v prístupe k tovaru a službám, ktoré sú prístupné verejnosti vo verejnom i súkromnom sektore, a k ich poskytovaniu. Zakázané je aj menej priaznivé zaobchádzanie so ženami z dôvodu tehotenstva a materstva, ako aj obťažovanie a sexuálne obťažovanie a pokyny na diskrimináciu všade, kde sa ponúkajú alebo poskytujú tovar a služby. Členské štáty mali smernicu zaviesť do 21. decembra 2007 a podľa článku 16 Európska komisia mala vypracovať súhrnnú správu s cieľom posúdiť vykonávanie smernice najneskôr do 21. decembra 2010. Po niekoľkých odkladoch však Európska komisia informovala, že takáto správa o vykonávaní nebude vypracovaná skôr ako v roku 2014.

Aký je dôvod Komisie pre takéto zdržanie?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(21. augusta 2013)

V rozsudku vo veci C-236/09 (Test-Achats) z 1. marca 2011 Súdny dvor Európskej únie vyhlásil článok 5 ods. 2 smernice 2004/113/ES ([1]) za neplatný s účinnosťou od 21. decembra 2012. Súdny dvor dospel k záveru, že článok 5 ods. 2 tým, že členským štátom umožňuje zachovať si bez časového obmedzenia výnimku z pravidla o jednotných príspevkoch a dávkach pre obe pohlavia stanoveného v článku 5 ods. 1, je v rozpore s dosiahnutím cieľa rovnakého zaobchádzania s mužmi a so ženami, pokiaľ ide o výpočet poistných príspevkov a dávok, a je preto nezlučiteľný s článkami 21 a 23 Charty základných práv Európskej únie.

V decembri 2011 Komisia uverejnila usmernenia o dôsledkoch rozsudku vo veci Test-Achats na uplatňovanie smernice 2004/113/ES v sektore poisťovníctva ([2]).

Vzhľadom na význam, ktorý má vec Test-Achats na implementáciu smernice, sa Komisia rozhodla predložiť správu o implementácii smernice 2004/113/ES v jednotlivých členských štátoch až v roku 2014. Táto všeobecná správa bude zahŕňať analýzu implementácie rozhodnutia vo veci Test-Achats do vnútroštátnych právnych predpisov a jeho vykonávanie v poistnej praxi.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 373, 21.12.2004.
([2]) Ú. v. EÚ C 11, 13.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007619/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Gender equality in securing access to goods and services

Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services marked an important step in the development of EU gender equality laws when it entered into force on 21 December 2004. The directive addresses gender equality and discrimination based on sex outside the field of employment. This directive prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination based on sex in the access to and supply of goods and services that are available to the public, in both the public and private sectors. Less favourable treatment of women for reasons of pregnancy and maternity is also prohibited, as well as (sexual) harassment and instruction to discriminate wherever goods or services are offered or supplied. The Member States had until 21 December 2007 to implement the directive and, according to Article 16 of the text, the European Commission had to draw up a summary report in order to assess this implementation no later than 21 December 2010. After several delays, the European Commission indicated that such an implementation report would not be drafted before 2014.

What is the Commission's reason for such a delay?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

In its ruling in Case C-236/09 (Test-Achats), which was delivered on 1 March 2011, the Court of Justice of the European Union declared Article 5(2) of the directive 2004/113/EC ([1]) invalid with effect from 21 December 2012. The Court considered that by enabling Member States to maintain without temporal limitation an exemption from the unisex rule laid down in Article 5(1), Article 5(2) runs counter to achievement of the objective of equal treatment between men and women in relation to the calculation of insurance premiums and benefits, and is therefore incompatible with Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

In December 2011, the Commission published guidelines on the implications of the Test-Achats ruling for the application of Directive 2004/113/EC in the insurance sector ([2]).

Due to the importance of the Test-Achats case for the implementation of the directive, the Commission decided to report in 2014 on the implementation of the directive 2004/113/EC in the different Member States. This general report will include an analysis of the implementation of the Test-Achats ruling in national law and in insurance practice.

([1]) OJ L 373 of 21.12.2004.
([2]) OJ C 011 of 13.01.2012.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007620/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Hospodárska súťaž a obdobie krízy

Finančná kríza sa v niektorých častiach eurozóny zmenila na dlhovú krízu, ktorá ohrozuje udržateľnosť bankového sektora a fiškálnu udržateľnosť mnohých európskych vlád. Takisto vážne oslabila úverové toky do reálnej ekonomiky. V tomto hospodárskom kontexte je spravodlivá hospodárska súťaž naďalej zásadnou podmienkou plného využívania vnútorného trhu a kľúčovou súčasťou spoločnej stratégie s cieľom prispieť k oživeniu európskeho hospodárstva a úspešne napredovať na celosvetovej úrovni. Únia hneď po vypuknutí krízy koordinovala európsky balík hospodárskych stimulov na podporu oživenia.

Aký je podľa názoru Komisie vplyv režimu štátnej pomoci na spravodlivú hospodársku súťaž v jednotlivých členských krajinách Únie?

Odpoveď pána Almunia v mene Komisie
(9. augusta 2013)

Hospodárska a finančná kríza spôsobila väčšie zapojenie štátu do hospodárstva. Členským štátom sa poskytla pomoc v prípadoch, keď bola potrebná priama reakcia na krízu. To sa však vykonalo pri úplnom dodržaní pravidiel pre štátnu pomoc ([1]).

Poskytnutie štátnej pomoci vedie vždy k potenciálnemu riziku narušenia hospodárskej súťaže. Dodržiavanie pravidiel štátnej pomoci počas krízy je zvlášť dôležité na zachovanie spravodlivej hospodárskej súťaže v rámci štátu aj medzi členskými štátmi. Navyše, politika štátnej pomoci môže veľkou mierou prispieť k prekonaniu krízy tým, že podporí stratégiu Európa 2020 a to prostredníctvom lepšieho a účinnejšieho využívania obmedzených verejných zdrojov, napríklad uľahčením prístupu malých a stredných podnikov k financovaniu.

Cieľom politiky EÚ v oblasti štátnej pomoci je uľahčiť pomoc, ktorá je dobre naplánovaná, zameraná na zistené zlyhania trhu a ciele spoločného záujmu a ktorá je najmenej rušivá, a zároveň odrádzať od pomoci, ktorá podnikom neposkytuje skutočné stimuly, vytláča súkromné investície, udržiava pri živote neefektívne či neživotaschopné spoločnosti a škodí spravodlivej hospodárskej súťaži a jednotnému trhu.

To je účel Programu modernizácie štátnej pomoci, ktorý Komisia začala 8. mája 2012, a ktorý sa teraz vykonáva spolu s revíziou viacerých nariadení a usmernení týkajúcich sa štátnej pomoci.

([1]) Výročná hodnotiaca tabuľka štátnej pomoci http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/studies_reports.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007620/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Economic competition and the crisis period

The financial crisis turned into a sovereign debt crisis in parts of the euro area, threatening the banking sector and the fiscal sustainability of many European governments. It also severely impaired the flow of credit to the real economy. In that economic context, fair competition continues to be an essential condition for the full realisation of the internal market and a key component of a common strategy to contribute to the recovery of the European economy so that it may thrive at a global level. As soon as the crisis broke out, the EU coordinated the European economic stimulus package to promote recovery.

In the Commission's view, what is the impact of state aid on fair competition in each EU Member State?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The economic and financial crisis entailed greater State involvement in the economy. Member States granted aid where a direct response to the crisis was needed. However, this was done in full respect of the state aid discipline ([1]).

The grant of state aid always creates potential risks of distortions of competition. Observance of state aid rules throughout the crisis is particularly crucial for preserving fair competition inside and between Member States. Beyond that, State aid policy can make an important contribution to overcoming the crisis by supporting the Europe 2020 strategy by favouring better and more effective use of scarce public resources, for example by facilitating access to finance for small and medium enterprises.

EU State aid policy aims to facilitate aid which is well-designed, targeted at identified market failures and objectives of common interest, and least distortive, while dissuading aid which does not provide real incentives for companies, crowds out private investment, keeps inefficient and non-viable companies on life support and harms fair competition and the Single Market.

This is the purpose of the State Aid Modernisation programme, which was launched on 8 May 2012 by the Commission and is being implemented now with the revision of several state aid regulations and guidelines.

([1]) Annual state aid Scoreboard, http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/studies_reports.html

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007621/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Demografické údaje a ochrana osobných údajov

V dôsledku vzrastajúcich a zložitých demografických výziev vznikla potreba spoločnej právnej úpravy demografickej štatistiky na európskej úrovni. Európska komisia potrebuje informácie o obyvateľstve a životných udalostiach spojených s obyvateľstvom v Únii. V takmer každej oblasti politiky, ktorou sa EÚ zaoberá, či už ide o hospodársku politiku, sociálnu politiku alebo politiku v oblasti životného prostredia, je potrebná vysoko kvalitná demografická štatistika, ktorá napomáha pri stanovovaní operačných cieľov a hodnotení pokroku, napríklad v záujme spoľahlivého porovnávania členských štátov. Aj monitorovanie pokroku, ktorý sa v EÚ dosiahol z hľadiska hospodárskej, sociálnej a územnej súdržnosti, sa posudzuje prostredníctvom správy založenej okrem iného na regionálnych demografických údajoch Eurostatu.

Akým spôsobom však Komisia v súvislosti so zberom potrebných demografických dát zaručí obyvateľom Európskej únie ochranu ich osobných údajov?

Odpoveď pani Redingovej v mene Komisie
(5. septembra 2013)

Komisia chce zdôrazniť, že akékoľvek spracovávanie demografických údajov, ktoré zahŕňajú osobné údaje, inštitúciami a orgánmi EÚ musí spĺňať požiadavky ochrany osobných údajov podľa nariadenia 45/2001 ([1]), ako sa objasňuje v odôvodneniach 21 a 22 nariadenia 223/2009 o európskej štatistike ([2]) a v odôvodnení 16 rozhodnutia Komisie o Eurostate ([3]). K týmto požiadavkám patrí aj zodpovednosť európskeho dozorného úradníka pre ochranu údajov za monitorovanie spracovávania osobných údajov inštitúciami alebo orgánmi EÚ.

Rovnako v prípade, že členské štáty zhromažďujú alebo inak spracovávajú iné osobné údaje než údaje uvedené v článku 3 ods. 2 smernice 95/46, uplatňujú sa ustanovenia tejto smernice.

Demografická štatistika sa vo všeobecnosti môže vypracovávať aj bez spracovávania osobných údajov. Pojem „osobné údaje“ vymedzuje článok 2 písm. a) nariadenia (ES) č. 45/2001 a článok 2 písm. a) smernice 95/46/ES ([4]) ako:

„akékoľvek informácie týkajúce sa identifikovanej alebo identifikovateľnej fyzickej osoby („dotknutá osoba“); identifikovateľná osoba je ten, kto môže byť priamo alebo nepriamo identifikovaný s odvolaním sa na identifikačné číslo, alebo na jeden alebo viacero faktorov špecifických pre jeho alebo jej fyzickú, fyziologickú, duševnú, hospodársku, kultúrnu alebo spoločenskú identitu.“

([1]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 45/2001 z 18. decembra 2000 o ochrane jednotlivcov so zreteľom na spracovanie osobných údajov inštitúciami a orgánmi Spoločenstva a o voľnom pohybe takýchto údajov, Ú. v. ES L 8, 12.1.2001.

([2]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 223/2009 z 11. marca 2009 o európskej štatistike a o zrušení nariadenia (ES, Euratom) č. 1101/2008 o prenose dôverných štatistických údajov Štatistickému úradu Európskych spoločenstiev, nariadenia Rady (ES) č. 322/97 o štatistike Spoločenstva a rozhodnutia Rady 89/382/EHS, Euratom o založení Výboru pre štatistické programy Európskych spoločenstiev, Ú. v. EÚ L 87, 31.3.2009, s. 164.

([3]) Rozhodnutie Komisie zo 17. septembra 2012 týkajúce sa Eurostatu (2012/504/EÚ), Ú. v. EÚ L 251, 18.9.2012, s. 49.

([4]) Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 95/46/ES z 24. októbra 1995 o ochrane fyzických osôb pri spracovaní osobných údajov a o voľnom pohybe týchto údajov, Ú. v. ES L 281, 23.11.1995.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007621/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Demographic data and personal data protection

Due to increasing and complex demographic challenges, a clear need for common legislation at European level on the subject of demographic statistics has emerged. The European Commission needs high-quality information on the population and vital events linked to the population in the Union. In almost every policy area in which the EU is active, be it economic, social or environmental, there is a need for high-quality demographic statistics to help formulate operational objectives and to evaluate progress, for instance, in order to make valid comparisons between Member States. The monitoring of the progress made in the EU towards achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion is assessed by means of a report based, *inter alia*, on Eurostat regional demographic data.

However, how will the Commission guarantee the protection of the personal data of the citizens of the European Union in connection with the collection of necessary demographic data?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 September 2013)

The Commission wishes to emphasise that any processing of demographic data by the EU institutions and bodies which contains personal data has to comply with the requirements of the protection to personal data according to Regulation 45/2001 ([1]) as clarified by Recitals 21 and 22 of Regulation 223/2009 on European statistics ([2]) and Recital 16 of the Commission's Decision on Eurostat ([3]). This includes the European Data Protection Supervisor's being responsible for monitoring of the processing of personal data by EU institutions or bodies.

Equally, where Member States collect or otherwise process personal data other than those referred to in Article 3 (2) of Directive 95/46, the rules of that directive apply.

Demographic statistics may generally be performed without processing personal data. Personal data are defined in Article 2(a) of Regulation (EC) 45/2001 and Article 2(a) of Directive 95/46/EC ([4]) as:

'information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ("data subject"); identifiable person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identification number or to one or more factors specific to his physical, physiological, mental, economic, cultural or social identity'.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data; Official Journal L 008 , 12/01/2001.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics and repealing Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1101/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the transmission of data subject to statistical confidentiality to the Statistical Office of the European Communities, Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics, and Council Decision 89/382/EEC, Euratom establishing a Committee on the Statistical Programmes of the European Communities; Official Journal L 87/164, 31.3.2009.

([3]) COMDecision of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat (2012/504/EU) of 18.9.2012, OJ L 251/49.

([4]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data; Official Journal L 281, 23.11.1995.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007622/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Európska agentúra pre bezpečnosť sietí a informácií (ENISA)

Európska agentúra pre bezpečnosť sietí a informácií (ENISA) bola zriadená v marci 2004. Agentúra uspokojuje špecifické potreby na úrovni EÚ: koordinuje zainteresované strany účinnejšie a efektívnejšie, ako by sa mohlo dosiahnuť v rámci spolupráce medzi členskými štátmi. Sieťová a informačná bezpečnosť však často nadobúda globálnejší rozmer, ako ukázali i nedávne udalosti, a preto by agentúra mala mať možnosť nadviazať dialóg a spoluprácu s tretími krajinami a medzinárodnými organizáciami s cieľom vypracovať do väčšej miery spoločný prístup k možným hrozbám.

Akým konkrétnym spôsobom chce Komisia zabezpečiť spoluprácu Európskej agentúry pre bezpečnosť sietí a informácií ENISA s tretími krajinami a organizáciami na medzinárodnej úrovni?

Odpoveď pani Kroesovej v mene Komisie
(5. augusta 2013)

Začiatkom tohto roku bol Európskej agentúre pre bezpečnosť sietí a informácií (ENISA) podľa politickej dohody medzi Európskym parlamentom a Radou udelený sedemročný mandát. Podľa článku 30 príslušného nariadenia existuje mechanizmus na zahrnutie krajín EZVO do fungovania agentúry. Tento postup sa uplatňoval od roku 2004. V súčasnej dobe však nejestvuje mechanizmus ani právny základ na rozšírenie tejto formy spolupráce na krajiny mimo EZVO. Podľa nového nariadenia zahŕňajú nové úlohy ENISA nevyhnutné prispievanie ku snahe Únie o spoluprácu s tretími krajinami a medzinárodnými organizáciami a podporu medzinárodnej spolupráce v rámci bezpečnosti sietí a informácií. To agentúra dosiahne tým, že v náležitých prípadoch zaujme pozíciu pozorovateľa, v organizovaní medzinárodných cvičení urýchli výmenu najlepších postupov relevantných organizácií a poskytne expertízu jednotlivým inštitúciám EÚ. Medzinárodné činnosti už ENISA vykonala. Dňa 23. septembra bude organizovať druhú konferenciu s názvom ENISA International Conference on Cyber Crisis Cooperation and Exercises (ENISA Medzinárodná konferencia o spolupráci v rámci kybernetických krízových situácií a kybernetických cvičení). Spolupráca s tretími krajinami, napríklad so Spojenými štátmi, sa už začala. Nedávno ENISA preukázala aj ochotu a potrebu aktívnejšej spolupráce s ďalšími tretími krajinami, a to za predpokladu, že je to v súlade s jej právnym základom. ENISA sa takisto zúčastňuje multilaterálnych medzinárodných fór, napríklad OECD, kde prispieva k revízii usmernení o bezpečnosti OECD z roku 2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007622/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)

The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) was established in March 2004. The agency fulfils specific needs at EU level, coordinating stakeholders more effectively and efficiently than inter-Member State cooperation might be able to achieve. Network and information security often assumes a more global dimension, as recent events have demonstrated. The agency must therefore be able to establish dialogue and cooperation with third countries and international organisations in order to develop a more common approach to potential threats.

Exactly how does the Commission intend to ensure the cooperation of the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) with third countries and organisations at an international level?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) was granted a new seven-year mandate following a political agreement between the European Parliament and Council earlier this year. According to Article 30 of the regulation, there is a mechanism to include EFTA countries in the workings of the Agency. This has been the case since 2004. There is currently no mechanism or legal basis to expand this form of cooperation to countries outside EFTA. Under the new Regulation, ENISA's new tasks include the necessity for the Agency to contribute to the Union's efforts to cooperate with third countries and international organisations to promote international cooperation on network and information security by being engaged, where appropriate as an observer and in the organisation of international exercises, facilitating exchange of best practices of relevant organisations and providing the Union institutions with expertise. ENISA already carried out international activities. It will organise the 2nd ENISA International Conference on Cyber Crisis Cooperation and Exercises on 23rd September. There is already ongoing cooperation with third countries such as the United States. Recently, ENISA has also signalled willingness and need to engage more actively with other third countries as long as this is in conformity with its legal basis. ENISA also participates in multilateral international forums, such as the OECD, where they are contributing to the revision of the OECD 2002 security guidelines.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007623/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Členské štáty Únie vyzývajú na prijatie opatrení proti daňovým únikom

Európa musí mať snahu prijať potrebné opatrenia, ktoré by nadviazali na aktuálny pokrok v boji proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom. Je žiaduce pokúsiť sa do roku 2020 skresať stratu v dôsledku nekalých daňových operácií na polovicu. Podľa odhadov sa v súvislosti so snahami vyhnúť sa daňovým povinnostiam každoročne stratí až bilión eur.

Ako chce Komisia prispieť k snahe odstrániť medzeru v daňovej politike? Je v jej kompetencii a možnostiach napomôcť k akejsi sociálnej spravodlivosti?

Odpoveď pána Šemetu v mene Komisie
(1. augusta 2013)

Komisia je rovnakého názoru ako pani poslankyňa, že je potrebné nadviazať na doposiaľ dosiahnutý pokrok v boji proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom.

Komisia prijala v decembri 2012 akčný plán, ktorý obsahuje 34 opatrení na posilnenie boja proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom ([1]). Cieľom týchto konkrétnych opatrení je zabezpečiť výber daní a daňové príjmy, presadiť spravodlivejšie vnútroštátne daňové systémy a v konečnom dôsledku zlepšiť fungovanie vnútorného trhu. Uvedené opatrenia sa budú realizovať v krátkodobom a strednodobom časovom horizonte (2014), ako aj v nasledujúcom období.

Pokiaľ ide o opatrenia zahrnuté v akčnom pláne, Komisia zastáva názor, že najúčinnejším prostriedkom na boj proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom je automatická výmena informácií. Komisia počas írskeho predsedníctva predložila návrh ([2]) na zmenu smernice 2011/16/EÚ s cieľom rozšíriť rozsah automatickej výmeny informácií. Okrem toho Komisia získala mandát na opätovné prerokovanie existujúcich dohôd s nečlenskými štátmi EÚ (Švajčiarsko, Lichtenštajnsko, Monako, Andorra a San Maríno), pokiaľ ide o zdaňovanie príjmu z úspor, a to s cieľom zabezpečiť, aby tieto krajiny pokračovali v uplatňovaní opatrení rovnocenných s opatreniami v EÚ.

Komisia sa bude usilovať dosiahnuť ďalší pokrok v boji proti daňovým podvodom a daňovým únikom na úrovni EÚ aj na medzinárodnej úrovni.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final, 6.12.2012.
([2]) Návrh smernice Rady, ktorou sa mení smernica 2011/16/EÚ, pokiaľ ide o povinnú automatickú výmenu informácií v oblasti daní. COM(2013) 348 final, 12.6.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007623/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: EU Member States are encouraged to adopt measures against tax evasion

Europe must endeavour to take measures necessary to build on the current progress in the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion. It is desirable to attempt to cut losses due to dishonest tax transactions by one half by 2020. According to estimates, annual losses in connection with efforts to evade tax total up to EUR 1 trillion.

How does the Commission wish to contribute to the effort to eliminate the gap in tax policy? Is it within its competence and ability to help towards achieving some sort of social justice?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Commission shares the views of the Honourable Member that recent progress has been made in the fight against tax fraud and evasion and that there is a need to build on this.

In December 2012, the Commission adopted an Action Plan containing 34 measures to strengthen the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion ([1]). These concrete actions intend to secure tax collection and tax revenues, to make national tax systems fairer, and ultimately to improve the functioning of the internal market. Their implementation is undertaken in the short term, medium term (2014) and beyond.

As regards the measures included in the Action Plan, the Commission is convinced that automatic exchange of information is the most effective way to combat tax fraud and tax evasion. Under the Irish Presidency, the Commission presented a proposal ([2]) to amend Directive 2011/16/EU in order to broaden the scope of automatic exchange of information. It also obtained a mandate to renegotiate the existing agreements with non-EU countries (Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra and San Marino) as regards the taxation of savings income in order to ensure that these countries continue to apply measures equivalent to those in the EU.

The Commission will endeavour to make further progress in the fight against tax fraud and evasion in the EU level and at an international level.

([1]) COM(2012) 722 final, 6.12.2012.
([2]) Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2011/16/EU as regards mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation. COM(2013) 348 final, 12.6.2013.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007624/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Rozvojové krajiny a obchodná politika EÚ

Obchod je jednou z najdôležitejších politických oblastí v rámci súdržností politík EÚ v záujme rozvoja. Pokiaľ sa nástroje obchodnej politiky používajú správne, môžu mať podstatný vplyv na rozvoj chudobných krajín. Máme morálnu povinnosť pomôcť znižovať mieru chudoby a utrpenia vo svete. Európska únia má v tomto zmysle v rámci globálnej ekonomiky vysokú mieru zodpovednosti.

Čo je podľa názoru Komisie hlavným cieľom obchodnej politiky EÚ vo vzťahu k rozvojovým krajinám?

Odpoveď komisára EÚ De Guchta v mene Komisie
(21. augusta 2013)

Účinná obchodná politika môže byť silným hnacím prvkom rozvoja v súlade so zásadou EÚ týkajúcou sa súdržnosti politík v záujme rozvoja ([1]), ktorá si vyžaduje, aby EÚ zohľadnila ciele v oblasti rozvojovej spolupráce, pričom hlavným cieľom je odstránenie chudoby, v politikách, ktoré môžu mať vplyv na rozvojové krajiny. Vo svojom oznámení „Obchod, rast a rozvoj“ ([2]) Komisia stanovila kľúčové ciele pre obchodnú a investičnú politiku EÚ pre rozvoj počas ďalšieho desaťročia.

([1]) Článok 208 Zmluvy o fungovaní Európskej únie.
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/january/tradoc_148992.EN.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007624/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Developing countries and EU trade policy

Trade is one of the most important policy areas in the EU Policy Coherence for Development. If trade policy tools are used properly, they can have a substantial impact on the development of poor countries. We have a moral obligation to help reduce poverty and suffering in the world. The European Union has, in this sense, a high level of responsibility as part of the global economy.

In the Commission's view, what is the principal objective of EU trade policy vis-à-vis developing countries?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

Effective trade policy can be a powerful engine for development, in line with the EU principle of Policy Coherence for Development ([1]), which requires the EU to take account of the objectives of development cooperation, the primary one being poverty eradication, in the policies likely to affect developing countries. In its communication on 'Trade, Growth and Development' ([2]), the Commission has outlined the key objectives for the EU's trade and investment policies for development over the next decade.

([1]) Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
([2]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/january/tradoc_148992.EN.pdf

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-007625/13
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27. júna 2013)

Vec: Boj proti xenofóbii a diskriminácii

V uplynulých dňoch Lyon hostil diskusiu na tému integrácie a lepšieho vzájomného spolužitia. Vzhľadom na rastúcu xenofóbiu a diskrimináciu v rámci celej Európy je potrebné bezodkladne konať a bojovať za Európu založenú na solidarite a rovnakých právach pre všetkých. Rok 2013 je európskym rokom občanov. I v duchu tohto odkazu je dôležité sústrediť pozornosť na širší prístup k občianstvu, venovať sa otázke prisťahovaleckej politiky EÚ a preukázať nulovú toleranciu voči diskriminácii.

Migranti totiž nesmú byť považovaní iba za akýchsi „hostí“, ale musia im byť priznané rovnaké sociálne i pracovné práva, prístup k vzdelaniu a službám, tak ako je to v prípade domáceho obyvateľstva. Ako sa k tejto problematike stavia Komisia?

Odpoveď pani Malmströmovej v mene Komisie
(16. augusta 2013)

Komisia sa zaviazala, že zabezpečí, aby štátni príslušníci tretích krajín mohli v súlade s príslušnými právnymi predpismi platnými v oblasti migrácie požívať rovnaké práva ako občania EÚ, pokiaľ ide o sociálne zabezpečenie, podmienky zamestnania a odborné vzdelávanie a prípravu. „Smernicou o jednotnom povolení“ (2011/98/EÚ ([1])) sa napríklad štátnym príslušníkom tretích krajín, na ktorých sa uvedená smernica vzťahuje, udeľuje bez ohľadu na to, či získali povolenie na pobyt v EÚ na základe právnych predpisov EÚ alebo vnútroštátnych právnych predpisov, právo na rovnaké zaobchádzanie ako so štátnym príslušníkmi členského štátu, v ktorom majú pobyt. Rovnaké zaobchádzanie sa vzťahuje napríklad na pracovné podmienky vrátane mzdy a ukončenia pracovného pomeru, ako aj bezpečnosti a ochrany zdravia pri práci, odborné vzdelávanie a prípravu, rôzne odvetvia sociálneho zabezpečenia, určité daňové výhody a prístup k tovarom a službám. Na niektoré z týchto práv sa môže uplatňovať obmedzený súbor reštriktívnych opatrení, ako napríklad v prípade sociálneho zabezpečenia, pokiaľ je doba zamestnania kratšia ako šesť mesiacov.

Podobné ustanovenia sa už zaviedli pre osoby s dlhodobým pobytom (smernicou 2003/109/ES ([2])) a štátnych príslušníkov tretích krajín pracujúcich vo vysoko kvalifikovaných zamestnaniach („modrá karta EÚ“, 2009/50/ES ([3])). Tieto smernice sú dôležitými krokmi vpred a Komisia pozorne sleduje, či ich členské štáty správne implementujú.

([1]) Ú. v. EÚ L 343, 23.12.2011, s. 1.
([2]) Ú. v. EÚ L 16, 23.1.2004, s. 44.
([3]) Ú. v. EÚ L 155, 18.6.2009, s. 17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007625/13
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: The fight against xenophobia and discrimination

In recent days, Lyon has hosted a debate on the theme of integration and better mutual coexistence. Given the growing xenophobia and discrimination throughout Europe, there is an urgent need to act and fight for a Europe based on solidarity and equal rights for all. 2013 is the European Year of Citizens. Even in the spirit of this legacy, it is important to focus our attention on broader access to citizenship, to address the issue of EU immigration policy, and to demonstrate zero tolerance towards discrimination.

Migrants cannot be regarded as merely 'guests', but must be accorded the same social and employment rights and access to education and services as the domestic population. What is the Commission's stance on this matter?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2013)

The Commission is committed to ensuring that third-country nationals enjoy equal rights with EU citizens as regards social security, employment conditions, education and vocational training, in line with relevant migration legislation. For example, the 'Single Permit Directive' (2011/98/EU ([1])) gives third-country nationals covered by that directive, whether residing in the EU on the basis of EU or national law, the right to equal treatment compared to the nationals of the Member State in which they reside, with regard to for instance working conditions, including pay and dismissal as well as health and safety at the workplace, education and vocational training, different branches of social security, certain tax benefits, access to goods and services. For some of these rights, a limited set of restrictions may be applied, for instance social security if the period of employment is less than six months.

Equivalent provisions were already in place for long term residents (Directive 2003/109/EC ([2])) and third-country nationals working in highly qualified employment ('EU Blue Card', 2009/50/EC ([3])). These Directives are major steps forward, and their correct implementation in the Member States is being closely monitored by the Commission.

([1]) OJ L343, 23.12.2011, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 16, 23.1.2004, p. 44.
([3]) OJ L155, 18.6.2009, p. 17.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-007626/13
до Комисията
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(27 юни 2013 г.)

Относно: Механизъм за сътрудничество и проверка за България

На 21 юни 2013 г. се проведе среща между министър-председателя на Република България, Пламен Орешарски, и председателя на Европейската комисия, Жозе Мануел Барозу, след която г-н Барозу е заявил, че Механизмът за сътрудничество и проверка на страната ще продължи и в бъдеще. По-късно тези думи бяха потвърдени от ръководителя на представителството на ЕК в България, Огнян Златев.

България е обект на Механизма от присъединяването си през 2007 г. и се очаква следващият редовен доклад да бъде публикуван в края на 2013 г. Докладът ще оцени напредъка на България в рамките на борбата с организираната престъпност и корупцията и на провеждането на съдебната реформа и ще препоръча запазването или отпадането на Механизма.

В тази връзка правилно ли е цитиран г-н Барозу? В случай че това е така, какво дава основание за категоричната позиция на председателя на ЕК, още преди да са извършени необходимите проверки?

Отговор, даден от г-н Барозу от името на Комисията
(1 август 2013 г.)

Механизмът за сътрудничество и проверка (МСП) беше създаден преди присъединяването на България към Европейския съюз през 2007 г. Беше постигнато съгласие, че са необходими допълнителни усилия в ключови области, за да се преодолеят слабостите в съдебната реформа, в борбата с корупцията и в борбата с организираната престъпност.

Бяха определени шест индикативни показатели, обхващащи независимостта и отчетността на съдебната система, нейната прозрачност и ефективност, преследването на корупцията по високите етажи на властта, както и на корупцията в публичния сектор, и борбата с организираната престъпност.

В решението за създаване на МСП се определя изискване за редовно докладване от страна на Комисията и се предвижда механизмът да продължи да действа до постигането на целите на му и до задоволителното изпълнение на всички шест индикативни показатели. В последния доклад по МСП от 18 юли 2012 г. се заключава, че България е постигнала важен напредък в създаването на необходимите закони и институции, но че потенциалът на тази рамка все още не се оползотворява максимално. Предвидено е следващият доклад да бъде изготвен около края на 2013 г.

По време на пресконференцията след срещата между председателя на Комисията г-н Барозу и министър-председателя г-н Орешарски на 21 юни 2013 г. не беше направена оценка на бъдещето на МСП. На уебсайта Europa може да бъде намерен запис на изказването на председателя на Комисията:
http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?sitelang=en&ref=I079690

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007626/13
to the Commission
Iliana Malinova Iotova (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria

On 21 June 2013, a meeting was held between the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Plamen Oresharski, and the President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso. After that meeting, Mr Barroso announced that the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria would continue into the future. This was later repeated by the Head of the Commission representation in Bulgaria, Ognian Zlatev.

Bulgaria has been subject to this Mechanism since its accession in 2007, and the next regular report is due to be published at the end of 2013. The report will assess the progress made by Bulgaria in combating organised crime and corruption and implementing judicial reform, and will recommend whether or not to continue or discontinue the Mechanism.

Is it true that Mr Barroso said this? If so, what grounds did the Commission President have for adopting such a categorical stance before the necessary assessments had been made?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) was established prior to Bulgaria's accession to the European Union in 2007. It was agreed that further work was needed in key areas to address shortcomings in judicial reform, the fight against corruption, and tackling organised crime.

Six benchmarks were established, covering the independence and accountability of the judicial system, its transparency and efficiency; the pursuit of high-level corruption, as well as corruption throughout the public sector; and the fight against organised crime.

The decision set up regular reporting by the Commission, and provided that the mechanism will continue until the objectives of the CVM are met and all six benchmarks are satisfactorily fulfilled. The latest CVM report from 18 July 2012 concluded that Bulgaria had made important progress in establishing the necessary laws and institutions, but that further potential remained for making full use of this framework. The next report is foreseen around the end of 2013.

In the press conference following the meeting between Commission President Barroso and Prime Minister Oresharski on 21 June 2013, no assessment was made concerning the future of the CVM. A recording of the President's comments can be found on the Europa website:
http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?sitelang=en&ref=I079690

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007627/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: Consejos Fiscales independientes

El artículo 5 del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo obliga a los Estados miembros a crear un organismo fiscal independiente encargado del seguimiento de la correcta ejecución del presupuesto de su Estado miembro, pues, en muchas ocasiones, el dinero no se destina realmente a las partidas presupuestadas, sino a otras ([1]), y a controlar al mismo tiempo que el gasto no crezca más de lo previsto.

Asimismo, en las Recomendaciones del Consejo al Estado español de 29 de mayo, se recuerda, en el punto 13, que el establecimiento de un consejo fiscal, con total independencia institucional y financiera, aún está pendiente.

Según los datos disponibles, parece que el anteproyecto de ley del Gobierno español propone que el consejo fiscal dependa del ministerio de hacienda y que sus informes no tengan carácter vinculante ([2]).

Finalmente, entre sus recomendaciones provisionales específicas en el marco del PDE, el Consejo propone al Gobierno español «set up an independent observatory to inform the assessment of future major infrastructure projects».

A la luz de lo anterior:

— ¿Cree la Comisión que, para ser plenamente independiente, el consejo fiscal no debería estar dentro de la estructura gubernamental?

— ¿Cuándo cree la Comisión que este consejo fiscal debería entrar en funcionamiento?

— ¿Cree la Comisión que este consejo fiscal debe servir para controlar la ejecución presupuestaria en todos los subsectores del Gobierno central y todos los territorios del Estado?

— ¿Cree la Comisión que este consejo fiscal independiente podría actuar como observatorio que asegure la viabilidad de los grandes proyectos futuros de infraestructuras en el Estado español?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(31 de julio de 2013)

1. La llamada reforma «Two-Pack» y, más concretamente, el Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 [artículo 2, apartado 1, letra a)], define los organismos independientes como los que son independientes estructuralmente o están dotados de autonomía funcional respecto a las autoridades presupuestarias de los Estados miembros. Estos organismos deben fundarse en disposiciones jurídicas nacionales que garanticen un elevado grado de autonomía funcional y la obligación de rendir cuentas. Estas características son especialmente pertinentes en el caso de los organismos que puedan ligarse a las instituciones existentes por razones administrativas, de manera que su comportamiento y buen criterio queden libres de interferencias de cualquier organismo público o privado.

2. El artículo 17, apartado 3, del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 establece que los organismos independientes que hayan de comprobar el cumplimiento de las normas fiscales a tenor del artículo 5 deberán crearse a más tardar el 31 de octubre de 2013.

3. Con arreglo al Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013, el cumplimiento de las reglas presupuestarias cuantificadas, que también se refieren a subsectores de las administraciones públicas, deberá estar sujeto a la supervisión de organismos independientes o de organismos dotados de autonomía funcional. Evaluar la conducta presupuestaria en todos los subsectores de la administración es especialmente importante en los Estados miembros con un alto porcentaje de gasto público confiado a las administraciones descentralizadas.

4. La creación de un observatorio para evaluar los futuros grandes proyectos de infraestructura es una prerrogativa nacional. Por consiguiente, incumbe a las autoridades españolas decidir qué entidad estaría en las mejores condiciones para llevar a cabo esta tarea, que exige una combinación adecuada de cualificaciones técnicas, económicas y financieras.

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/10/07/catalunya/1349635130_900838.html
([2]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia-y-finanzas/26223-el-gobierno-sigue-oponiendose-a-la-autoridad-fiscal-independiente-que-califica-de-antidemocratica

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007627/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Independent fiscal councils

Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 of Parliament and of the Council requires Member States to create an independent fiscal body to monitor the correct implementation of the national budget of their Member State, since in many instances funds are not actually used as budgeted for but for other purposes ([1]), and to ensure that spending does not increase to unplanned levels.

The Council also recalled in point 13 of its recommendations to Spain of 29 May 2013 that the country has yet to set up a fiscal council with full institutional and financial independence.

According to available data, the bill presented by the Spanish Government seems to propose that the fiscal council should answer to the Treasury and that its reports should not be binding ([2]).

Lastly, as part of its specific provisional recommendations within the context of the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP), the Council proposes that the Spanish Government 'set up an independent observatory to inform the assessment of future major infrastructure projects'.

In light of the above:

— Does the Commission believe that, in order to be fully independent, the fiscal council should not form part of the governmental structure?

— When does the Commission think that this fiscal council should become operational?

— Does the Commission believe that the role of this fiscal council should be to monitor budgetary compliance in all subsectors of the central government and in all parts of Spain?

— Does the Commission consider that this independent fiscal council could act as an observatory to guarantee the viability of future major investment projects in the Spanish State?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

1. The so-called Two-Pack reform package, and more specifically Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 (Article 2(1)(a)), defines independent bodies as those that are structurally independent or endowed with functional autonomy vis-à-vis the budgetary authorities of the Member State. These bodies need to be underpinned by national legal provisions ensuring a high degree of functional autonomy and accountability. These features are especially relevant for those bodies which may be attached to existing institutions for administrative reasons, so that their performance and judgment remain free of interference from any public or private body.

2. Article 17(3) of Regulation 473/2013 stipulates that independent bodies monitoring compliance with fiscal rules within the meaning of Article 5 shall be put in place no later than 31 October 2013.

3. According to Regulation 473/2013, compliance with numerical fiscal rules, which also concern subsectors of the general government, should be monitored by independent bodies or bodies endowed with functional autonomy. Assessing the fiscal policy conduct across all government sub-sectors is particularly important in Member States with a high share of public expenditure devolved to sub-national governments.

4. Setting up an independent observatory to assess future major infrastructure projects is a national prerogative. Accordingly, it is up to the Spanish authorities to decide which entity would be best placed to carry out such a task requiring an appropriate mix of technical, economic and financial skills.

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2012/10/07/catalunya/1349635130_900838.html
([2]) http://www.vozpopuli.com/economia-y-finanzas/26223-el-gobierno-sigue-oponiendose-a-la-autoridad-fiscal-independiente-que-califica-de-antidemocratica

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007628/13
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: VP/HR — Minería en Colombia y explotación sexual de niñas

La Controlaría General de la República publicó, en mayo de 2013, un informe titulado *Minería en Colombia: Fundamentos para superar el modelo extractivista* en el cual informa acerca de graves violaciones de derechos humanos en las zonas mineras. La Controlaría encontró una coincidencia entre las zonas de explotación minera, y zonas en las cuales se producen violaciones de derechos humanos. Según cifras retomadas por el informe, «80 % de las violaciones de derechos humanos que ocurren en Colombia, se presentan en los municipios mineros-petroleros (el 35 % del total nacional)», en particular desplazamiento forzado.

A finales de mayo, el periódico *El Tiempo* —uno de los periódicos de mayor circulación en Colombia— publicó un artículo titulado «Campamentos de explotación de niñas en zonas mineras» en el cual alerta acerca de la existencia y del funcionamiento de redes organizadas de trata que existen alrededor de las minas, y del horror que viven las niñas y adolescentes víctimas de la trata. Denuncia asimismo la pasividad de las autoridades locales frente a esta situación.

Según datos del Instituto de Medicina Legal y de Ciencias Forenses de Colombia, en el 2011 se registraron en ese país 18.982 casos de violencia sexual —un incremento del 11 % con respecto al 2010. Y según cifras de la Fiscalía, la impunidad para estos hechos es prácticamente total.

¿Qué acciones concretas piensan tomar la delegación de la UE y el SAE frente a la trata de niñas en zonas mineras, en base a las Directrices de la UE sobre violencia contra la mujer?

¿Cómo piensan la UE y el SAE plantear el tema de las violaciones a los derechos humanos en relación con la minería en el marco del diálogo UE-Colombia sobre industrias extractivas?

¿Cómo piensa la UE asegurar la sanción y responsabilidad civil y penal de las empresas europeas presentes en Colombia en caso de que sean directa o indirectamente responsables de violaciones a los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de agosto de 2013)

La UE está trabajando intensamente en el fomento de la aplicación de las Directrices de la UE de 2007 sobre la protección y promoción de los derechos del niño, uno de cuyos objetos principales es proteger a los niños víctimas del trabajo infantil y la explotación sexual. En este sentido, la asistencia de la UE en Colombia se ha centrado principalmente en abordar las necesidades especiales de protección de los niños derivadas de los conflictos armados. Sin embargo, como es en las zonas del país más afectadas por el conflicto interno donde las actividades mineras son más intensas, muchas actividades han abordado las necesidades específicas de las niñas víctimas de la prostitución. En los últimos cinco años, la UE ha comprometido más de 30 millones de euros para apoyar a los niños en Colombia. Los esfuerzos proseguirán en el período 2014-2017, cuando la UE tiene previsto dedicar importantes fondos a apoyar la protección de los niños vulnerables en las zonas caracterizadas por una minería intensiva.

La cuestión de la protección de los derechos humanos, medioambientales y laborales en relación con el carácter intensivo de las industrias extractivas, incluidas las minas, se ha debatido en varios foros bilaterales con Colombia. El fomento de la responsabilidad social de las empresas ocupa un lugar destacado en el orden del día de las conversaciones bilaterales, tales como el diálogo UE-Colombia sobre derechos humanos y el diálogo político de alto nivel. También podría abordarse el tema en el marco institucional del acuerdo comercial entre la UE y Colombia, especialmente en el Subcomité de Comercio y Desarrollo Sostenible.

Además, la UE ha puesto en marcha una consulta pública sobre una posible iniciativa de la UE para el abastecimiento responsable de minerales originarios de zonas de alto riesgo y afectadas por conflictos. Esta iniciativa podría contribuir a fomentar que las empresas extractivas de la UE presentes en Colombia velen por que sus actividades no den lugar a violaciones graves de los derechos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007628/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Mining in Colombia and sexual exploitation of girls

In May 2013 the Comptroller General of Colombia published a report entitled 'Mining in Colombia: Guidelines for overcoming the extractive model' in which it reported serious human rights abuses in mining areas. The Comptroller General's office found that mining areas coincided with those in which human rights violations take place. According to data included in the report, '80% of the human rights abuses taking place in Colombia are in mining or oil-producing municipalities (35% of the national total)', particularly forced relocation.

At the end of May 2013, the newspaper *El Tiempo* — one of Colombia's most widely-read newspapers — published an article under the headline 'Girls held in exploitation camps in mining zones', in which it reported the existence and activities of organised human trafficking networks operating in the vicinity of the mines, and the horrific experiences of the young girls and teenagers exploited by them. The paper also condemned the local authorities' passive approach to this situation.

According to data provided by the Colombian Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, 18 982 cases of sexual violence were reported in 2011 — an increase of 11% from the year before. Figures from the State Prosecutor's office show that there is almost total impunity for these crimes.

What specific actions do the EU delegation and the European External Action Service (EEAS) intend to take in response to the trafficking of girls in mining areas, based on the EU guidelines on violence against women?

How do the EU and the EEAS intend to raise the issue of human rights violations linked to mining within the context of the EU-Colombia dialogue on extractive industries?

How does the EU intend to ensure that European companies operating in Colombia are penalised and their civil and criminal liability upheld in the event that they are found to be directly or indirectly responsible for human rights violations?

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

The EU is working intensely to promote the implementation of the EU Guidelines on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child, one of whose main concerns is to protect children who are victims of child labour and sexual exploitation. In Colombia, relevant EU assistance has focused principally on addressing the specific protection needs of children arising from the armed conflict. However, since it is in the areas of the country most affected by the internal conflict that mining activities are most intense, many activities have been addressing the specific needs of girls who are victims of prostitution. In the past five years, the EU committed over EUR 30 million to support children in Colombia. Efforts will continue in 2014-2017, when the EU plans to commit substantial funds to support the protection of vulnerable children in areas characterised by intensive mining.

The issue of protecting human, environmental and labour rights in relation to the intensive development of extractive industries, including mining, is being discussed in several bilateral fora with Colombia. Fostering corporate social responsibility is high on the agenda of the bilateral dialogues, such as the EU-Colombia Human Rights Dialogue and the High-Level Policy Dialogue. It could also be addressed within the institutional framework of the EU-Colombia Trade agreement, notably in the Trade and Sustainable Development Sub-committee.

The EU has moreover launched a public consultation on a possibile EU initiative for responsible sourcing of minerals originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas. Such an initiative could help encourage EU extractive companies operating in Colombia to ensure that their activities do not result in gross human rights violations.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-007629/13
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(27. juni 2013)

Om: Implementeringen af arbejdstidsdirektivet i forbindelse med offentlige udbud

Af artikel 4 i EU's arbejdsdirektiv (2003/88/EF) fremgår det, at medlemsstaterne træffer de nødvendige foranstaltninger til at sikre, at alle arbejdstagere kan holde pause, hvis den daglige arbejdstid overstiger 6 timer.

I Danmark er direktivets bestemmelser indarbejdet gennem Arbejdstidsgennemførelsesloven. Det følger af § 3 i denne lov, at en lønmodtager med en daglig arbejdstid på mere end 6 timer, har ret til en pause af et sådant omfang, at pausens formål tilgodeses. Det fremgår ligeledes, at pausen skal lægges efter de for arbejdsstedets normale regler for lægning af arbejdstiden, som aftalt mellem arbejdsmarkedets parter via kollektive overenskomster.

I Region Midtjylland i Danmark udbydes der tjenesteydelser via EU-udbud. I visse af disse udbud fastlægges der af udbudsmaterialet forpligtigelser for arbejdsgiver til at yde en tjenesteydelse, hvor en medarbejder skal præstere over 6 timers arbejdsindsats.

Endvidere fremgår det, at der ikke nødvendigvis vil blive indlagt faste pauser på forud planlagte tidspunkter, men blot blive tilstræbt, at personalet vil kunne holde spisepause.

Kommissionen bedes vurdere, hvorvidt Region Midtjylland, som udbyder af en EU-udbudspligtig tjenesteydelse, gennem udbudsmateriale eller dertil hørende regelsæt og vejledninger, kan fastsætte forpligtigelser for arbejdsgiver til at yde en tjenesteydelse, hvor en medarbejder skal præstere over 6 timers arbejdsindsats, der samtidig fastlægger, at der ikke er ret til, men at det blot søges tilstræbt, at holde en pause.

Kommissionen bedes endvidere vurdere, om dette er muligt i henhold til eller om det er hensigten med EU's arbejdstidsdirektiv? Medfører formuleringen »tilstræbe« frem for f.eks. »tilsikre« en faktisk eller teknisk hindring af gældende ret i en sådan grad, at der kan gøres indsigelser overfor Region Midtjylland som udbudsgiver i forhold til et EU-udbud?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Lázsló Andor
(14. august 2013)

Arbejdstidsdirektivet fastsætter, at »(m)edlemsstaterne træffer de nødvendige foranstaltninger for at sikre, at alle arbejdstagere kan holde pause, hvis den daglige arbejdstid overstiger seks timer ([1]).« De nærmere bestemmelser herfor, herunder varigheden og kriterierne for tildeling af pausen, fastsættes i kollektive overenskomster eller aftaler mellem arbejdsmarkedets parter eller, hvor sådanne overenskomster eller aftaler ikke findes, i den nationale lovgivning. Formålet med direktivet er at beskytte arbejdstageres sundhed og sikkerhed mod kortsigtede og langsigtede risici som følge af træthed. Varigheden af og tidspunktet for pauser bør være hensigtsmæssige for at opfylde dette mål under hensyntagen til den pågældende aktivitet.

Domstolen har fastslået ([2]), at nationale foranstaltninger, hvoraf det fremgik, at arbejdsgiverne ikke var forpligtet til at sikre, at arbejdstagerne i praksis kan drage nytte af deres daglige og ugentlige minimumshviletider, var uforenelige med direktivet. Diretivet fastsætter undtagelser i bestemte situationer. Disse er normalt betinget af tilsvarende kompenserende hvileperioder umiddelbart efter afslutningen af den forlængede arbejdsperiode ([3]).

Ved udarbejdelsen af offentlige kontrakter og navnlig ved formuleringen af udbudsbetingelserne for sådanne kontrakter skal de ordregivende myndigheder under alle omstændigheder overholde alle gældende forpligtelser, der følger af EU-retten og national ret inden for alle områder af lovgivningen. Dette omfatter naturligvis forpligtelsen til at overholde gældende lovgivning på det arbejdsretlige område.

([1]) Artikel 4 i Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv 2003/88/EF af 4. november 2003 om visse aspekter i forbindelse med tilrettelæggelse af arbejdstiden (EUT L 299 af 18.11.2003, s. 9) (konsoliderer og erstatter tidligere direktiv 93/104/EF).
([2]) Sag C-484/04, Kommissionen mod Det Forenede Kongerige, Sml. 2006 I, s. 7471, præmis 44.
([3]) Se nærmere i kapitel 6 i arbejdsdokumentet fra Kommissionens tjenestegrene (SEK(2010)1611 endelig af 21. december 2010).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007629/13
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Implementation of the Working Time Directive in the context of public procurement

Article 4 of the EU's Working Time Directive (2003/88/EC) states that Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that, where the working day is longer than six hours, every worker is entitled to a rest break.

In Denmark, the provisions of the directive are transposed by the Working Time Implementation Act (*Arbejdstidsgennemførelsesloven*). Section 3 of this Act states that an employee with a daily working time of longer than 6 hours is entitled to a rest break of sufficient duration to achieve the objective of the break. It is also stated that the rest break should be determined in accordance with the normal rules at the place of work on establishing working time, as agreed by the social partners through collective agreements.

In Denmark's Midtjylland region, services are being put out to tender via the EU tender procedure. For some of these tenders, the tender documents impose obligations on employers to provide a service in which the employee has to work for longer than 6 hours a day.

It also appears that there need not necessarily be provision for fixed breaks at pre-scheduled times, but that efforts should simply be made to ensure that staff can have a lunch break.

Can the Commission assess to what extent the Midtjylland region as the provider of a service subject to the mandatory EU tendering procedure, may, through the tender documents or related regulations and guidelines, impose obligations on employers to provide a service in which an employee must work for longer than 6 hours, while at the same time establishing no entitlement to a rest break, but simply that efforts should be made for a break to be taken.

Can the Commission also assess whether this is possible under the EU Working Time Directive, or if it is the intention of that directive? Does the concept of 'making efforts' rather than, for example, 'ensuring' constitute an actual or technical impediment to current legislation to the extent that objections may be lodged against the Midtjylland region as the tendering authority for an EU call for tender?

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

The Working Time Directive provides that 'Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that, where the working day is longer than six hours, every worker is entitled to a rest break…' ([1]). The details, including the duration of the break and the terms on which it is granted, are to be laid down in collective agreements or, failing that, by national law. The objective of the directive is to protect workers' health and safety against short-term and long-term risks due to fatigue. The duration and timing of the rest break should be appropriate to meeting that objective, having regard to the activity in question.

The Court of Justice has held ([2]) that national measures which suggested that employers were under no obligation to ensure workers could actually benefit in practice from their daily and weekly minimum rest periods were incompatible with the directive. The latter provides for derogations in specified situations. These are generally conditional on providing equivalent compensatory rest immediately after the extended working period ([3]).

In any case, when defining the subject matter of public contracts and, in particular, when drafting the tender specifications of such contracts, contracting authorities must comply with all applicable obligations established by Union and national law in all areas of legislation. This includes, of course, the obligation to respect the applicable legislation in the field of labour law.

([1]) Article 4 of Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9 (consolidating and replacing earlier Directive 93/104/EC).
([2]) Case C-484/04 *Commission* v *UK* [2006] ECR I-7471, paragraph 44.
([3]) For details see Chapter 6 of Commission Staff Working Paper SEC(2010) 1611 final of 21 December 2010.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007630/13
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(27. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Korrektheit der Angaben im Beihilfeverfahren Flughafen Berlin-Brandenburg

In ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage (E-001282/2013) schrieb die Kommission am 10. April 2013 in Bezug auf die Genehmigung der Kapitalerhöhung für den Flughafen Berlin-Brandenburg: „Die Kommission traf ihre Entscheidung auf der Grundlage der Angaben Deutschlands." In Bezug auf diese Angaben und um einzelne Beantwortung folgender Nachfragen ersucht:

1. Wie kommt die Kommission hinsichtlich des Urteils des Oberverwaltungsgericht Berlin-Brandenburg (OVG) zu ihrem Schluss, „die Umstände, die zu einer Kostensteigerung geführt hatten, waren nicht vorhersehbar", obwohl das Gericht nur das von Beginn an im Planfeststellungsbeschluss festgehaltene Schallschutzniveau bestätigte und nicht neu definierte bzw. „beispiellos" erhöhte Niveaus?

2. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die deutsche Bundesregierung und die Landesregierungen von Berlin und Brandenburg über den Inhalt des Planfeststellungsbeschlusses in Hinblick auf den Lärmschutz hätten informiert sein müssen? Wenn nein, wie bewertet sie es, dass der Aktenvermerk des Ministeriums für Infrastruktur und Raumordnung von Brandenburg vom 20. November 2008 (siehe anbei) die Problematik klar benennt?

3. Ist die Kommission der Meinung, dass Schallschutzkosten vom gängigen Beihilfeverfahren ausgenommen werden können? Wenn ja, mit welcher Begründung?

4. Ist die Kommission der Meinung, dass die deutsche Bundesregierung falsche Angaben gemacht hat? Wenn ja, wie bewertet sie dies? Wenn nein, warum hält sie die offensichtlich falschen Angaben für zutreffend?

5. Wie beurteilt die Kommission ihre genehmigte Beihilfe für den BER vom 19. Dezember 2012 im Lichte der oben genannten Erkenntnisse?

6. Wie wird die Kommission vor diesem Hintergrund mit den sich bereits abzeichnenden weiteren Anträgen auf Kapitalerhöhung verfahren?

7. Kann eine weitere Kapitalerhöhung genehmigt werden, obwohl ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren aufgrund einer fehlenden Umweltprüfung gegen den betreffenden Mitgliedstaat Deutschland läuft?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(26. August 2013)

Deutschland hat bestätigt, dass ein Schallschutzniveau, wie es in der Entscheidung des Oberverwaltungsgerichts Berlin-Brandenburg verlangt wird, 2008/2009 nicht vorhersehbar war. Die Planung des Flughafens Berlin-Brandenburg umfasste damals auch Schallschutzbestimmungen. Diese beruhten auf den zu diesem Zeitpunkt für deutsche Flughäfen geltenden Vorschriften und Verfahren. Vor der Entscheidung gingen Deutschland und der Flughafen Berlin-Brandenburg davon aus, dass der Lärmschutz nicht bis zum höchsten Niveau ausgebaut werden müsste. Deutschland hat daher bestätigt, dass die frühere Risikobewertung, die zu dem festgelegten Niveau der Schallschutzbestimmungen geführt hatte, angemessen erschien. Der Aktenvermerk des brandenburgischen Ministeriums spiegelt die unterschiedlichen Standpunkte wider, die damals vertreten wurden.

Die Kommission hat die wirtschaftliche Begründung der Anmeldung analysiert und geprüft, ob der Grundsatz des marktwirtschaftlich handelnden Kapitalgebers beachtet wurde. Angesichts des Charakters dieser Prüfung ist die konkrete Verwendung des zugeführten Kapitals von untergeordneter Bedeutung.

Deutschland hat wiederholt bestätigt, dass alle der Kommission übermittelten Informationen richtig und genau sind. Die Kommission hat keinen Grund, daran zu zweifeln.

Die Kommission hat ihren Standpunkt nach Prüfung des relevanten Sachverhalts in ihrem Beschluss vom 19. Dezember 2012 dargelegt.

Jede von einem Mitgliedstaat übermittelte Anmeldung wird für sich geprüft. Es wäre daher verfrüht, auf den künftigen Standpunkt der Kommission zu schließen.

Maßnahmen zugunsten des Flughafens Berlin-Brandenburg, die dem Grundsatz des marktwirtschaftlich handelnden Kapitalgebers entsprechen, sind beihilfefrei. Ein Verstoß gegen andere Bestimmungen des EU-Rechts kann unter diesen Umständen nicht im Wege der Beihilfevorschriften sanktioniert werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007630/13
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Correctness of the information provided in the context of the aid authorisation procedure for Berlin-Brandenburg airport

In its answer of 10 April 2013 to Written Question E-001282/2013, the Commission wrote the following concerning the authorisation of the capital injection for Berlin-Brandenburg airport: 'The Commission based its decision on Germany's submission'. I should like to put the following additional questions concerning the information supplied by Germany as part of that submission and I would ask the Commission to answer them individually:

1. In the light of the ruling delivered by the Berlin-Brandenburg Higher Administrative Court, how did the Commission arrive at its conclusion that 'the circumstances causing the rise in costs were unforeseen', even though the court merely confirmed the level of noise protection stipulated from the outset in the planning decision, and did not insist on a new, 'unprecedentedly strict' level of noise protection?

2. Does the Commission agree that the federal German Government and the *Land* governments of Berlin and Brandenburg must have known about the noise protection provisions of the planning decision? If not, what view does it take of the fact that a document drawn up by the Brandenburg Ministry for Infrastructure and Regional Planning of 20 November 2008 (attached) makes specific reference to the problem?

3. Does the Commission take the view that noise protection costs can be excluded from the scope of the current aid authorisation procedure? If so, on what grounds?

4. Does the Commission think that the federal German Government submitted incorrect information? If so, what view does it take of this? If not, why is it continuing to accept what is obviously false information as accurate?

5. In the light of the findings outlined above, what view does the Commission take of its decision of 19 December 2012 to authorise aid for Berlin-Brandenburg airport?

6. Against this background, how will the Commission deal with the further applications for the authorisation of capital injections which are almost certain to be submitted?

7. Can a further capital injection be authorised even though a treaty infringement procedure for failure to carry out an environmental impact assessment has been opened against the Member State in question, Germany?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 August 2013)

Germany confirmed that the noise protection obligations, as called for in the OVB's preliminary injunction, could not have been foreseen in 2008/09. Back then, the planning of FBB included provisions for noise protection. These were based on the rules and practice at German airports applicable at the time. Before the injunction, Germany and FBB understood that noise protection would not have to be implemented up to the maximum level. Accordingly, Germany confirmed that the past risk assessment leading to the chosen level of provisions for noise protection was considered adequate. The document of the Brandenburg Ministry reflects the different views of the time.

The Commission assessed the commercial rationale of the notification, conducting a market economy investor test ('MEIT'). Given the nature of the MEIT, the concrete use of the capital injected is of secondary nature.

Germany has repeatedly confirmed that all information submitted to the Commission is correct and accurate. The Commission has no reason not to share Germany's views.

The Commission expressed its position with its decision taken on 19 December 2012 after having assessed all necessary facts.

Each notification by a Member State is assessed on its own merits. It is thus premature to prejudge the Commission's future position.

Measures in favour of FBB meeting the MEIT are void of aid. In such circumstances, a breach of other provisions of EC law cannot be sanctioned through state aid rules.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007631/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Pläne zur Einführung von EU-weiten Mautgebühren

Es gibt offenbar eine Initiative im Europäischen Parlament, eine Kilometer Toll/Mautgebühr in der gesamten EU auf Autobahnen einzuführen. Auch Österreich soll Medienberichten zufolge angehalten werden, die österreichische Autobahn Vignette abzuschaffen und anstatt dessen Mautgebühren einzuführen. Die meisten existierenden Toll/Maut-Konzessionen sind in privater Hand, und die erwirtschafteten Gewinne werden nur zur Instandhaltung verwendet, aber nicht um Verbesserungen in anderen Bereichen oder Gebieten vorzunehmen. Auch benötigen die Toll/Maut-Plätze bei jeder Ein- und Ausfahrt tausende asphaltierte Quadratkilometer. Diese wiederum strahlen große Hitze aus und kosten sehr viel. In Spanien muss man für jede kleine Strecke auf der Autobahn bezahlen. Auch wenn man durch Frankreich fährt, muss man 6-7 mal bezahlen.

1. Experten sind gegen die Einführung einer EU-weiten Toll-Gebühr. Wie steht die Kommission zu diesem Vorstoß?

2. Was soll mit der Einführung einer Toll-Gebühr erreicht werden; was ist das Ziel?

3. Die Gewinne aus den Mautstationen gehen an einige Manager, Banken und Aktionäre, aber nicht in die Verbesserung der allgemeinen Infrastruktur. Wie beurteilt die Kommission dies?

4. Österreich und die Schweiz haben ein gut funktionierendes Vignettensystem. Warum sollte man das überhaupt abschaffen? Warum soll der Status quo nicht in jedem Land beibehalten werden?

5. Wird so nicht durch einige wenige Konzessionsfirmen massiver Druck auf die Politik ausgeübt?

6. Ist es nach Meinung der Kommission denkbar, die Bevölkerung über das Thema „Vignette oder Tollgebühr" abstimmen zu lassen?

7. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Möglichkeit einer EU weiten Einführung der Autobahn Vignette statt der kolportierten Tollgebühr?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(6. August 2013)

Mautgebühren (entfernungsabhängige Gebühren) sind ein wirksameres Instrument als zeitabhängige Gebühren, um die externen Kosten des Verkehrs wie Abnutzung der Infrastruktur, Luftverschmutzung und Lärmbelastung oder Verkehrsüberlastung zu internalisieren. Sie können zu einer nachhaltigeren Wahl der Verkehrsmittel führen, wie sich insbesondere anhand der Auswirkungen der österreichischen und schweizerischen Mautsysteme für Lastkraftwagen aufzeigen lässt. Die Kommission beabsichtigt daher nicht, den Einsatz von Vignetten zu fördern.

Die Kommission möchte den Herrn Abgeordneten davon in Kenntnis setzen, dass sie derzeit die Möglichkeiten für einen neuen Vorschlag über Straßenbenutzungsgebühren prüft, dass aber ein solcher Vorschlag keinesfalls vor dem Herbst angenommen werden kann. Auch wenn dem genauen Inhalt des in Aussicht genommenen Vorschlags nicht vorgegriffen werden soll, so wäre es dennoch höchst unwahrscheinlich, dass er die Maßnahme enthält, auf die in den Medien angespielt wird. Des Weiteren möchte sich die Kommission zu der vom Herrn Abgeordneten in Frage 3 zum Ausdruck gebrachten Ansicht nicht äußern. Sie möchte außerdem hervorheben, dass die Kommission nicht befugt ist, Referenda zu organisieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007631/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Plans to introduce EU-wide motorway tolls

A proposal to introduce a per-kilometre toll on motorways throughout the EU has apparently been put forward in the European Parliament. According to media reports, Austria would also be required to do away with its motorway vignette and replace it with a toll system. Most existing toll concessions have been awarded to private companies, and the profits are used only to maintain the motorways covered by the relevant concession, but not to make improvements to other facilities or in other areas. What is more, accommodating each toll station calls for the laying of thousands of square kilometres of tarmac, which are very expensive and reflect large amounts of heat. In Spain, motorists have to pay tolls even if they use only a very short stretch of motorway. Road users travelling through France, meanwhile, are required to make six or seven toll payments on average.

1. Experts are opposed to the introduction of an EU-wide toll system. What view does the Commission take of this proposal?

2. What is the purpose of introducing a toll system?

3. The profits from toll concessions end up in the pockets of a few managers, banks and shareholders, rather than being used to improve road infrastructure as a whole. What view does the Commission take of this?

4. Austria and Switzerland have a vignette system which works well. Why should they be required to do away with that system? Why not simply maintain the status quo in every country?

5. Will the introduction of a toll system not put the select group of firms which hold the concessions in a position to exert massive pressure on politicians?

6. Could the Commission envisage holding a referendum on the topic of 'vignette or toll'?

7. Does the Commission see any scope for introducing an EU-wide motorway vignette instead of the rumoured toll system?

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

Tolls (distance-based charges) are a more efficient tool than time-based vignettes to internalise the external costs of transport such as infrastructure wear and tear, air and noise pollution or congestion. They can induce more sustainable transport choices as illustrated notably by the impacts of the Austrian and Swiss heavy goods vehicle tolling schemes. The Commission therefore does not intend to promote the deployment of vignettes.

The Commission would inform the Honourable Member that it is currently examining the possibilities for a new proposal on road charging, but that such a proposal could in any event not be adopted before the autumn. While it is too early to prejudge the exact content of any proposal, it would be very unlikely to contain the provision allegedly reported in the media. Furthermore, the Commission has no comment on the judgment expressed by the Honourable Member in question 3. It would also underline that the Commission does not have the competence to organise referenda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007632/13
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Test Town initiative

In Dunfermline, Scotland, UK, an initiative has been introduced called the Test Town initiative. The Carnegie Trust UK has launched the Test Town competition, calling for UK-wide enterprise ideas from 18-30 year-olds in a bid to revamp the nation's traditional high streets. These young entrepreneurs are given the opportunity to present a business plan and the 10 best business plans and finalists will have the opportunity to locate in Dunfermline Town Centre's empty premises, roll out their enterprises and trade with real money.

Will the Commission consider using a similar approach as part of its youth guarantee initiative to support young people by taking their ideas and testing them with the potential to create the next generation of young European entrepreneurs? Furthermore, what else does the Commission do to support young entrepreneurs?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the importance of youth entrepreneurship in job creation and fighting unemployment. The June European Council launched an investment action plan aimed at restoring credit flows in the economy. Supporting SMEs, entrepreneurship and self-employment are priorities. This reinforces the Entrepreneur 2020 Action Plan which has one of three pillars addressing entrepreneurship education, and the Rethinking Education communication which will see the publication of policy guidance in this area.

It does not seem possible for the Commission to run a similar competition in the current and future legal and financial framework. However the Youth Guarantee Council Recommendation ([1]) calls on countries to encourage education and employment services to promote and provide guidance on entrepreneurship and self-employment for young people, including through courses. In 2014-2020, the ESI funds will actively support entrepreneurship and self-employment as a dedicated investment priority. Entrepreneurship education programmes can be funded under the ESF to ensure skills align to labour market needs. ERDF can also be used for the promotion of entrepreneurship, more precisely by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, social innovation and support for social enterprises. The Youth Employment Initiative will support direct interventions for young people not in employment, education or training, including through job practice and apprenticeships, as well as self-employment measures.

Capacity-building seminars for ESF Managing Authorities 2013 will continue to raise awareness of the need to support young entrepreneurs.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32013H0426(01):EN:NOT.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007633/13
an die Kommission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(27. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Von Eurostat zur Verfügung gestellte Daten

Auf der Website von Eurostat, die statistische Daten zu den Zielen von Europa 2020 enthält ([1]), sind im Abschnitt „Von Armut oder sozialer Ausgrenzung bedrohte Personen" und den entsprechenden Unterabschnitten keine Daten für das Jahr 2012 zu finden.

Ähnlich verhält es sich in der Veröffentlichung „Basic figures on the EU (Summer 2013 Edition)" (Grundlegende Zahlen zur EU (Ausgabe Sommer 2013)) von Eurostat.

Auf Seite drei dieser Veröffentlichung wurden zwei Fußnoten eingefügt. Fußnote 1 lautet „Daten für 2010 und 2011 statt 2011 und 2012" und Fußnote 2 lautet „Daten für 2009 und 2010 statt 2011 und 2012". Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

— Bedeutet dies, dass die Daten zu Forschung und Entwicklung und zu Armut oder sozialer Ausgrenzung in den Zellen für die Jahre 2011 (2012) in Wahrheit aus den Jahren 2010 (2011) stammen?

— Bedeutet dies, dass die Daten zu Klimawandel und Energie in den Zellen für die Jahre 2011 (2012) in Wahrheit aus den Jahren 2009 (2010) stammen?

— Wie kann diese extrem irreführende Darstellung der Daten in der Broschüre mit dem Bestreben von Eurostat in Einklang gebracht werden, zuverlässige Daten auf eindeutige und verständliche Weise darzustellen?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(5. August 2013)

Der Europa-2020-Indikator „Von Armut oder sozialer Ausgrenzung bedrohte Personen" beruht auf der EU-SILC ([2]), für die gemäß ihrer Rechtsgrundlage ([3]) Daten aus dem Bezugsjahr N vor Ende November N+1 vorliegen. Daher stehen Daten für 2012 für einige Länder bereits auf der Eurostat-Website zur Verfügung und werden für die gesamte EU bis Ende 2013 veröffentlicht werden.

Was die Veröffentlichung „Basic Figures on the EU (Summer 2013 Edition)" (Grundlegende Zahlen zur EU (Ausgabe Sommer 2013)) betrifft, so wird Eurostat den Anmerkungen zur Darstellung der Broschüre und zur potenziell irreführenden Tabelle auf Seite 3 Rechnung tragen. Die Arbeiten für die nächste Ausgabe im Herbst haben begonnen und Eurostat wird diese Gelegenheit wahrnehmen, um das Layout der Tabellen der Broschüre zu verbessern.

Was den Abschnitt „Klimawandel/Energie" angeht, so stammt die Reihe „Treibhausgasemissionen" von der Europäischen Umweltagentur, die die amtlichen THG-Emissionsverzeichnisse für das Rahmenübereinkommen der Vereinten Nationen über Klimaänderungen (UNFCCC) nach dem Kyoto-Protokoll erstellt. Als die Ausgabe der Broschüre für den Sommer 2013 erstellt wurde, waren 2009 und 2010 die letzten Jahre, für die Daten zur Verfügung standen. Angesichts des Bedarfs an aktuelleren Daten prüft Eurostat derzeit jedoch die Möglichkeit von Frühschätzungen. So hat Eurostat bereits beispielsweise im Mai 2012 erstmals Frühschätzungen der CO_2-Emissionen aus der Verbrennung fossiler Brennstoffe veröffentlicht. Durch die Heranziehung monatlicher Energiestatistiken standen diese Ergebnisse bereits fünf Monate nach Ablauf des Bezugsjahrs zur Veröffentlichung bereit.

Die Aktualität des Indikators „Anteil erneuerbarer Energieträger" wurde im Jahr 2013 verbessert, da er drei Monate früher (April 2013) als im letzten Jahr veröffentlicht wurde, und 2014 werden weitere Verbesserungen erwartet.

Eurostat unternimmt zusammen mit den Mitgliedstaaten kontinuierliche Anstrengungen, um trotz der Mittelknappheit die Aktualität der Daten für alle Bereiche zu verbessern.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/europe_2020_indicators/headline_indicators
([2]) Statistik der Europäischen Union über Einkommen und Lebensbedingungen.
([3]) Siehe Artikel 10 Absatz 2 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1177/2003 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates für die Gemeinschaftsstatistik über Einkommen und Lebensbedingungen (EU-SILC).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007633/13
to the Commission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Data provided by Eurostat

Eurostat's website, which provides statistical data on the Europe 2020 objectives ([1]), fails to provide data, for 2012 under the section 'People at risk of poverty or social exclusion' and its subsections.

A similar shortcoming can be found in the Eurostat publication 'Basic figures on the EU (Summer 2013 Edition)'.

On page three of the abovementioned publication, two footnotes have been included. Footnote 1 reads: 'Data for 2010 and 2011 instead of 2011 and 2012 respectively', and footnote 2 reads: 'Data for 2009 and 2010 instead of 2011 and 2012 respectively'. In light of this, I have the following questions for the Commission:

— Does this mean that the data for research and development and poverty or social exclusion in the cells referring to 2011 (2012) in reality stem from 2010 (2011) respectively?

— Does this also mean that the data for climate change and energy, in the cells referring to 2011 (2012) in reality stem from 2009 (2010) respectively?

— Can this highly misleading presentation of data in the brochure be reconciled with Eurostat's ambition to present reliable data in a clear and understandable way?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The Europe 2020 indicator 'People at risk of poverty or social exclusion' is sourced from the EU-SILC ([2]) for which, according to its legal basis ([3]), data from reference year N are available before the end of November N+1. As a consequence, 2012 data are already available for some countries on the Eurostat website and will be released for the whole EU by the end of 2013.

Concerning the 'Basic figures on the EU (Summer 2013 edition)', Eurostat will take into account the comments made on the leaflet presentation and on the potential misleading table on page 3. The preparation of the next Autumn edition has started and Eurostat will take this opportunity to improve the layout of the leaflet tables.

About the section 'Climate change / energy', the 'Greenhouse gas emissions' series comes from the European Environment Agency which compiles the official GHG emissions inventories for UNFCCC under the Kyoto Protocol. When the Summer 2013 edition leaflet was produced, the latest data were only available for years 2009 and 2010. But, given the demand for more timely data, Eurostat is currently investigating the feasibility of early estimates. For instance, Eurostat already published for the first time early estimates of CO_2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion in May 2012. These were released only 5 months after the end of the reference year by using monthly energy statistics.

The timeliness of the 'Share of renewable energy' indicator has been improved in 2013 as it was published 3 months earlier (April 2013) than last year; further improvements are expected in 2014.

For all domains, Eurostat with the Member States are making continuous effort to improve data timeliness despite resources constraints.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/europe_2020_indicators/headline_indicators.
([2]) European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.
([3]) See Article 10) 2. of Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the EU-SILC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007635/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Emigrazione giovanile all'esterno dei confini dell'Unione europea

La disoccupazione giovanile in Europa raggiunge livelli sempre più preoccupanti: 5,6 milioni di giovani (sotto i 25 anni) sono senza occupazione, su un totale di 26 milioni di disoccupati all'interno dell'Unione europea. Con l'aggravarsi della situazione economica, è in continuo aumento il numero di giovani che decidono di emigrare dal proprio paese, scegliendo di trasferirsi oltre i confini dell'Unione europea. Esaminando il caso dell'Italia, nel corso dell'ultimo anno si è verificato un incremento del 30 % del tasso di emigrazione. Dati simili si registrano per paesi quali Spagna, Portogallo e Grecia. Ogni mese migliaia di giovani europei, molti dei quali neolaureati, si trasferiscono in cerca di un impiego in Australia, Stati uniti, Canada, Asia, con la conseguenza di un impoverimento del nostro tessuto socio-economico.

Sarebbe molto utile far comprendere all'opinione pubblica e all'insieme degli attori politici europei la differenza, in termini di costi-benefici, tra un'emigrazione interna alle frontiere dell'Unione e una all'esterno dei suoi confini.

Potrebbe la Commissione chiarire se:

— è in grado di quantificare con precisione il numero di giovani europei che, a partire dal 2008, hanno deciso di trasferirsi fuori dall'Unione europea in cerca di un impiego;

— ritiene utile spronare gli Stati membri a attuare misure complementari intese a incentivare l'approfondimento di un mercato del lavoro integrato a livello europeo e, in caso affermativo, quali iniziative intende proporre;

— intende promuovere una campagna di sensibilizzazione dell'opinione pubblica europea per far conoscere gli eventuali benefici per l'intera popolazione europea di un'immigrazione interna ai confini dell'UE;

— intende realizzare studi e ricerche riguardanti il nuovo fenomeno migratorio europeo, prestando particolare attenzione ai giovani, rilevarne la reale portata e proporre agli attori decisionali valide misure di contrasto e regolamentazione del suddetto fenomeno?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(13 agosto 2013)

Eurostat ([1]) segnala che il numero di emigranti dai paesi UE verso paesi terzi è passato da 816 000 nel 2009 a 1,22 milioni nel 2011. In base ai dati disponibili si stima che, tra gli emigranti verso paesi terzi, la percentuale dei giovani (15-24 anni) si assesti intorno al 13 %, mentre quella relativa alle persone di età compresa tra 25 e 34 anni sia pari al 25 % circa.

Molti emigranti verso paesi non UE erano tuttavia cittadini di paesi terzi che facevano ritorno ai rispettivi paesi d'origine, piuttosto che cittadini UE che lasciavano il territorio dell'Unione; pertanto, ad onta dell'aumento registrato negli ultimi anni, i tassi di emigrazione fra i cittadini UE sono rimasti contenuti, perlomeno fino al 2011.

Le statistiche sull'immigrazione in USA, Canada e Australia ([2]) evidenziano, in percentuale, un consistente aumento della migrazione di manodopera dagli Stati membri meridionali, ma in termini assoluti il fenomeno risulta modesto. Solo dall'Irlanda si registra una significativa emigrazione verso tali paesi.

È essenziale un maggiore coordinamento dei mercati del lavoro e la Commissione ha individuato a tale proposito settori di rilevanza cruciale per le riforme degli Stati membri ([3]) affinché il mercato del lavoro UE divenga maggiormente dinamico ed inclusivo, nonché più resistente ai mutamenti economici. Recentemente la Commissione ha altresì proposto una decisione ([4]) su una cooperazione rafforzata tra i servizi pubblici per l'impiego degli Stati membri, per far corrispondere meglio le esigenze delle persone in cerca di lavoro e delle imprese.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=TPS00177
([2]) Cfr. la pertinente analisi nell'EU Employment and social situation quarterly review, June 2013, p. 47-50.
([3]) COM(2012) 173 final «Verso una ripresa fonte di occupazione».
([4]) Proposta di decisione del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio su una cooperazione rafforzata tra i servizi pubblici per l'impiego, COM(2013) 430.

La Commissione si sta attivando al fine di eliminare gli attuali ostacoli di natura giuridica e pratica alla libera circolazione ([5])ed intende altresì sviluppare l'iniziativa «Il tuo primo posto di lavoro EURES» per aiutare i giovani a trovare ed andare ad occupare un posto di lavoro in un altro paese dell'UE. 4. La Commissione, che ha recentemente pubblicato un'analisi ([6]) sulle tendenze relative a mobilità e migrazione fra i cittadini europei (incentrata in modo specifico sui giovani, laddove i dati lo consentono), continuerà a seguire attentamente l'evolversi della situazione e darà anche seguito all'iniziativa a favore dell'occupazione giovanile ([7]) nonché all'attuazione della garanzia per i giovani ([8]).

([5]) Proposta di direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa alle misure intese ad agevolare l'esercizio dei diritti conferiti ai lavoratori nel quadro della libera circolazione dei lavoratori, COM (2013) 236.

([6]) EU Employment and social situation quarterly review, June 2013, reperibile al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1389&furtherNews=yes

([7]) COM(2013) 0144 final, COM(2013) 0145 final — 2011/268 (COD) e COM(2013) 0146 final — 2011/0276 (COD).

([8]) Raccomandazione del Consiglio del 22 aprile 2013 sull'istituzione di una garanzia per i giovani (2013/C/120/01).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007635/13
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Youth migration to countries outside the European Union

Youth unemployment is reaching increasingly alarming levels: currently, fully 5.6 million of the EU's 26 million unemployed are under the age of 25. In response to a worsening economic situation, an increasing number of young people are deciding to leave their countries to find work outside the European Union. For example, in Italy, the emigration rate has risen by 30% over the last year. The situation is much the same in countries such as Spain, Portugal and Greece. Every month, thousands of young Europeans, many of whom have just graduated, leave the EU to find work in Australia, the United States, Canada and Asia, thus depriving our economy and society of the benefits of their talents.

The general public and all politicians Europe need to be made aware of the difference, in cost-benefit terms, between migration inside the European Union and migration to countries outside its borders.

— Can the Commission say exactly how many young Europeans have decided to find work outside the European Union since 2008?

— Would it agree that it should encourage Member States to take further steps to promote the establishment of an integrated European labour market, and if so, how does it intend to go about doing this?

— Does it intend to promote an EU-wide public information campaign to raise awareness of the benefits that migration within the European Union can bring to each and every one of us?

— Does it intend to have research carried out into this new EU migration trend, focusing on young people in particular, in order to gauge its scale and give decision-makers effective tools, including regulatory instruments, for addressing this problem?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 August 2013)

Eurostat ([1]) indicates that the number of emigrants from EU to non-EU countries has risen from 816.000 in 2009 to 1.22 million in 2011. Estimated on the basis of available data, young people (15-24) represented around 13% of the emigrants to non-EU countries and those aged 25-34, around 25%.

However, many emigrants to non-EU countries were 3rd country nationals returning to their origin countries rather than EU nationals leaving, and the emigration rates among EU nationals, despite an increase over the last years, remained limited, at least until 2011.

Immigration statistics in the USA, Canada and Australia ([2]) point to large increases in labour migration from Southern Member States in percentage, but to low levels in absolute terms. Only from Ireland is there a substantial emigration to those countries.

Stronger coordination of labour markets is essential and the Commission has identified key areas for Member States' reforms ([3]) in order for the EU labour market to become more dynamic and inclusive as well as more resilient to economic change. It has recently also proposed a decision ([4]) on closer cooperation of Member States' public employment services to better match the needs of jobseekers and businesses.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=TPS00177
([2]) See analysis in EU Employment and social situation quarterly review, June 2013, pp. 47-50.
([3]) COM(2012) 173 final 'Towards a job-rich recovery'.
([4]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on enhanced cooperation between public employment services, COM(2013) 430.

The Commission is working on removing remaining legal and practical obstacles to free movement ([5]), and is intending to develop 'Your First EURES Job' to help young people in finding and taking up jobs in another EU country. 4. The Commission has recently published analysis ([6]) on trends in mobility and migration among European citizens (with a specific focus on young people when data allows), will continue to follow closely developments, also follow-up on the Youth Employment Initiative ([7]) and the implementation of the Youth Guarantee ([8]).

([5]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of the rights conferred on workers in the context of the exercise of free movement, COM(2013) 236.

([6]) EU Employment and social situation quarterly review, June 2013, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=1389&furtherNews=yes

([7]) COM(2013) 0144 final, COM(2013) 0145 final — 2011/268 (COD) and COM(2013) 0146 final — 2011/0276 (COD).

([8]) Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (2013/C/ 120/01).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007636/13
do Komisji
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Zachowanie niemieckiego Jugendamtu wobec polskich dzieci

W ostatnim czasie Jugendamt – niemiecki Urząd do spraw dzieci i młodzieży – odebrał rodzinie polskich emigrantów zarobkowych sześciotygodniowe, karmione jeszcze przez matkę piersią, niemowlę. Pan Leszek i pani Daniela przyjechali do Niemiec w celach zarobkowych, jednak oszukani przez pracodawcę znaleźli się w niedogodnej sytuacji materialnej. Po bezskutecznym poszukiwaniu pracy postanowili wrócić do Polski pod koniec czerwca bieżącego roku.

Dnia 31 maja 2013 r. urzędnicy Urzędu ds. dzieci i młodzieży w asyście 15 funkcjonariuszy policji odebrali sześciotygodniowe niemowlę rodzicom. Dziecko zostało odebrane siłą, po obezwładnieniu zarówno matki, jak i ojca. Niemowlę nadal karmione piersią zostało w brutalny sposób pozbawione niezbędnej opieki i ochrony biologicznej matki. Należy dodać, iż rodzina ta nie przejawia żadnych patologicznych i kryminalnych skłonności.

Niemiecki Urząd ds. dzieci i młodzieży co roku w podobny sposób odbiera 40 tysięcy dzieci, stosując przy tym brutalne metody. Sądy rodzinne prowadzą na ich zlecenie około 80 tysięcy postępowań w sprawie regulowania stosunków pomiędzy odebranymi dziećmi a ich rodzicami.

W związku z powyższym kieruję do Komisji następujące pytania:

1. Jakie są wyniki dotychczasowych postępowań Komisji w sprawie naruszenia zasady niedyskryminacji przez niemiecki Urząd do spraw dzieci i młodzieży, w związku z tak licznym odbieraniem dzieci ich biologicznym rodzicom?

2. Czy Komisja nadzoruje zacieśnienie współpracy pomiędzy ministerstwami sprawiedliwości a ministerstwami do spraw rodzin poszczególnych państw członkowskich? Jakie są wyniki tej współpracy?

3. Czy Komisja kontroluje kryteria, które są przesłankami do odbierania dzieci rodzicom przez niemiecki Urząd ds. dzieci i młodzieży? Jak Komisja ocenia te kryteria pod względem zasady niedyskryminacji?

4. Jak przedstawia się sytuacja odbierania dzieci rodzicom w innych państwach członkowskich na tle Niemiec?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(6 września 2013 r.)

Komisja nie rozpoczęła postępowania w sprawie uchybienia zobowiązaniom państwa członkowskiego dotyczącego niemieckiego *Jugendamtu*, ponieważ sprawy przedstawione Komisji nie wykazywały związku z prawem UE.

Komisja propaguje zintegrowany system ochrony dziecka, którego głównym elementem jest koordynacja między różnymi instytucjami i dziedzinami, a najważniejszym interesem – ochrona dobra dziecka. Do wysiłków ukierunkowanych na promowanie zacieśniania współpracy między różnymi podmiotami i sektorami, w tym różnymi ministerstwami, należą organizacja 7. Europejskiego Forum ds. Praw Dziecka ([1]) oraz niedawno utworzona nieformalna grupa ekspercka ds. ochrony praw dziecka. Komisja nie monitoruje jednak realizacji kwestii leżących w kompetencji krajowej

Główna odpowiedzialność za opiekę nad dzieckiem należy do jego biologicznej rodziny, a państwa członkowskie ponoszą ogólną odpowiedzialność za tworzenie systemu ochrony dziecka, w tym zapewnienie pomocy umożliwiającej w miarę możliwości pozostanie dziecka z rodziną. Zadaniem UE jest przyczynianie się do wysiłków w tym kierunku ([2]). Komisja pragnie podkreślić, że ubóstwo nigdy nie powinno być jedynym powodem odebrania dziecka rodzicom ([3]).

Komisja nie jest w stanie przeprowadzić analizy porównawczej krajowych systemów ochrony dziecka ani przypadków odebrania dziecka rodzicom.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/rights-child/european-forum/seventh-meeting/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/children/docs/com_2011_60_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1060&langId=pl

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007636/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Conduct of the German Jugendamt towards Polish children

Recently, the *Jugendamt*, the German agency for children and youth issues, removed a six-week-old baby who was still being breastfed by his mother from a family of Polish economic migrants. Leszek and Daniela came to Germany in order to earn a living, but they were cheated by their employer and found themselves in dire economic straits. After fruitlessly searching for employment, they decided to return to Poland in late June 2013.

However, on 31 May 2013, officials from the *Jugendamt* accompanied by 15 police officers removed their six-week-old baby. The child was removed forcefully after both parents were overpowered. The baby was brutally deprived of the vital care and protection of his biological mother. It should be noted that the family displayed no signs of criminal or pathological tendencies.

Each year, the German *Jugendamt* removes some 40 000 children in a similar manner and through the use of brutal methods. Upon instructions from the *Jugendamt*, German family courts are processing 80 000 cases to resolve access issues between removed children and their parents.

In light of the above:

1. What have been the outcomes of the infringement proceedings launched by theCommission concerning the German *Jugendamt*'s violation of the principle ofnon-discrimination in connection with the numerous removals of children from theirbiological parents?

2. Is the Commission monitoring the enhanced cooperation between the justice ministriesand family ministries of individual Member States? What have been the results of thiscooperation?

3. Does the Commission monitor the criteria used by the German *Jugendamt* to determinewhether a child should be removed from its parents? What is the Commission'sassessment of these criteria in respect of the principle of non-discrimination?

4. What is the situation in other Member States with regard to the removal of children whencompared with the situation in Germany?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 September 2013)

The Commission has not launched infringement proceedings concerning the German Jugendamt, as cases brought to the attention of the Commission have shown no connection to EC law.

The Commission promotes integrated child protection systems in which interagency and multidisciplinary coordination are key components and the child is placed at the centre. Efforts to promote the need for stronger collaboration among different actors and across sectors, including various national ministries, include the 7th European Forum on the rights of the child ([1]) and a recently established informal expert group on the rights of the child. However, the Commission does not monitor implementation of matters of national competence.

The primary responsibility for the care of children lies with their birth family. Member States have the overall responsibility for developing their child protection systems, including the provision of services to allow children to stay in their families, where possible. However, the EU has a role to play in contributing to their efforts ([2]). The Commission underlines that poverty should never be the sole reason for removing a child from parents' care ([3]).

The Commission is not in a position to provide a comparative analysis of the merits of national child protection policies, including when they concern the removal of children from their parents.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/rights-child/european-forum/seventh-meeting/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/children/docs/com_2011_60_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1060&langId=en

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007637/13
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wyjaśnienia w sprawie programu Tempora

W ostatnim czasie media podają niepokojące informacje na temat podsłuchiwania rozmów telefonicznych i inwigilowania internautów przez brytyjski wywiad w ramach tajnego programu „Tempora".

W piątek dziennik Guardian podał, że brytyjska służba wywiadu elektronicznego podsłuchiwała międzynarodowe rozmowy telefoniczne, podglądała wiadomości e-mail, wpisy na portalach społecznościowych oraz inwigilowała historie odwiedzanych stron. Program o nazwie Tempora działał przez ok. 18 miesięcy.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać:

1. Czy Komisja wystąpiła do brytyjskiego rządu z wnioskiem o szczegółowe wyjaśnienie sprawy?

2. Czy Komisja wie, które z państw członkowskich Unii Europejskiej zostały objęte brytyjskim programem Tempora?

3. Czy Komisja ma wiedzę na temat przekazywania danych zebranych w ramach programu Tempora do innych państw?

4. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja, by znaleźć równowagę pomiędzy przetwarzaniem danych osobowych ze względów bezpieczeństwa a samą ochroną danych osobowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(10 września 2013 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytanie pisemne nr E-006783/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007637/13
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Explanations regarding the 'Tempora' programme

Recent media reports have shed disturbing light on the British secret services' eavesdropping on telephone conversations and spying on Internet users as part of its secret 'Tempora' programme.

On Friday, the Guardian newspaper revealed that Britain's GCHQ had been eavesdropping on international telephone conversations and spying on e-mail messages, entries on social networking sites and browsing histories. The 'Tempora' programme has been in operation for approximately 18 months.

1. Has the Commission asked the British Government to provide a thorough explanation ofthis matter?

2. Does the Commission know which EU Member States are affected by the British'Tempora' programme?

3. Does the Commission have information on the transfer to other countries of personal datagathered through the 'Tempora' programme?

4. What steps does the Commission intend to take to strike a balance between the processingof personal data for security purposes and personal data protection?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-006783/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007638/13
al Consejo
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: PRISM

El programa secreto de vigilancia PRISM permite a los servicios de inteligencia de Estados Unidos acceder de manera directa a los datos personales colectados por las grandes empresas de Internet —tales como Google o Facebook— de manera masiva e indiscriminada.

Los usuarios de Internet pensaban, y los poderes públicos y empresas como Google o Facebook garantizaban, que su huella digital no era de libre acceso para los servicios de inteligencia de ningún país. Es sabido que, al menos, el Gobierno de Estados Unidos tiene acceso directo a los datos personales colectados por las principales empresas de Internet. En Europa al menos el Reino Unido ha tenido acceso a información colectada con PRISM.

Dada la información pública disponible, podemos asumir que ya existe un panóptico digital capaz de violar cualquier tipo de privacidad. La consecuencia de proyectos de vigilancia digital indiscriminada y masiva atentan de lleno contra derechos individuales y colectivos. Sin privacidad no hay autonomía personal ni proyectos colectivos posibles. Sin privacidad Internet, como un espacio de autonomía personal, desaparece y se convierte en una cárcel virtual.

La revelación de PRISM coincide con la negociación en la EU de la Directiva de protección de datos personales y del reglamento relativo.

¿Conocía el Consejo la existencia de PRISM? ¿Conoce cuáles son los Estados miembros que han accedido a información colectada con el programa PRISM? ¿Conoce la existencia de programas similares de vigilancia digital en los Estados miembros? ¿Considera que el programa Safe Harbor entre Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea garantiza un nivel de protección aceptable de los datos personales de los europeos, cuando son tratados por empresas ubicadas en Estados Unidos? ¿Considera necesario reformar la Directiva de Retención de Datos con vistas a evitar en Europa situaciones similares a las creadas por PRISM en Estados Unidos?

Respuesta
(16 de septiembre de 2013)

El Consejo no había sido informado del programa PRISM antes de las revelaciones aparecidas en la prensa.

El Consejo no tiene conocimiento de qué Estados miembros, en su caso, han consultado información recogida por medio de PRISM, y tampoco sabe si existen programas de vigilancia digital similares en los Estados miembros.

En relación con el programa de «puerto seguro» entre los Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea, el Consejo quisiera recordar que se trata de una Decisión de la Comisión cuyo cumplimiento es supervisado por la propia Comisión.

El Consejo quisiera asimismo señalar a Su Señoría que, con arreglo a la Directiva sobre conservación de datos, no se efectúa la transferencia masiva de estos datos a los gobiernos, si bien los operadores están obligados a conservarlos durante un periodo determinado que ha de fijar la legislación nacional. Por consiguiente, no se da similitud alguna con la situación de los Estados Unidos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007638/13
to the Council
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: PRISM

PRISM, a US secret surveillance programme, enables the country's intelligence services to have direct access to personal data collected by major Internet companies, such as Google or Facebook, indiscriminately and on a massive scale.

On the basis of assurances given by public authorities and companies such as Google and Facebook, Internet users wrongly believed that their digital footprint would not be freely accessible to the intelligence services of any country. It is now known that the US Government for one has direct access to personal data collected by major Internet companies, and that in Europe the United Kingdom for one was able to consult information collected via PRISM.

All this points to the existence of a digital panopticon, in which nobody is immune to prying eyes. Indiscriminate, mass digital surveillance projects constitute a clear infringement of individual and collective rights. Without privacy, personal freedom and collective action become an impossibility and the Internet a virtual prison.

PRISM's disclosure coincides with the EU's negotiations on the Data Protection Directive and the corresponding regulation.

Did the Council know that PRISM existed? Does it know which Member States have consulted information collected via PRISM? Does it know whether similar digital surveillance programmes exist in the Member States? Does it believe that the US-EU Safe Harbour programme adequately protects European citizens' personal data when their information is processed by companies located in the US? Does it see a need to reform the Data Retention Directive in order to spare Europe from situations similar to those caused by PRISM in the US?

Reply
(16 September 2013)

The Council was not informed of the PRISM programme prior to the press revelations.

The Council does not know which Member States, if any, have consulted information collected via PRISM, neither does it know whether similar digital surveillance programmes exist in the Member States.

Regarding the US-EU Safe Harbour, the Council would like to recall that this is a Commission decision, compliance with which is monitored by the Commission.

The Council would also like to point out to the Honourable Member that under the Data Retention Directive there is no transfer in bulk of such data to governments, but telecom operators are obliged to retain data for a certain period of time to be defined by national law. There is thus no similarity to the situation in the US.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-007639/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 de junio de 2013)

Asunto: PRISM

El programa secreto de vigilancia PRISM permite a los servicios de inteligencia de Estados Unidos acceder de manera directa a los datos personales colectados por las grandes empresas de Internet —tales como Google o Facebook— de manera masiva e indiscriminada.

Los usuarios de Internet pensaban, y los poderes públicos y empresas como Google o Facebook garantizaban, que su huella digital no era de libre acceso para los servicios de inteligencia de ningún país. Es sabido que, al menos, el Gobierno de Estados Unidos tiene acceso directo a los datos personales colectados por las principales empresas de Internet. En Europa al menos el Reino Unido ha tenido acceso a información colectada con PRISM.

Dada la información pública disponible, podemos asumir que ya existe un panóptico digital capaz de violar cualquier tipo de privacidad. La consecuencia de proyectos de vigilancia digital indiscriminada y masiva atentan de lleno contra derechos individuales y colectivos. Sin privacidad no hay autonomía personal ni proyectos colectivos posibles. Sin privacidad Internet, como un espacio de autonomía personal, desaparece y se convierte en una cárcel virtual.

La revelación de PRISM coincide con la negociación en la EU de la Directiva de protección de datos personales y del reglamento relativo.

¿Conocía la Comisión la existencia de PRISM? ¿Conoce la Comisión cuáles son los Estados miembros que han accedido a información colectada con el programa PRISM? ¿Conoce la existencia de programas similares de vigilancia digital en los Estados miembros? ¿Considera la Comisión que el programa Safe Harbor entre Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea garantiza un nivel de protección aceptable de los datos personales de los europeos, cuando son tratados por empresas ubicadas en Estados Unidos? ¿Considera la Comisión necesario reformar la Directiva de Retención de Datos con vistas a evitar en Europa situaciones similares a las creadas por PRISM en Estados Unidos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de septiembre de 2013)

Se remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas de la Comisión a las preguntas escritas E-007934/2013 y E-006783/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007639/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: PRISM

PRISM, a US secret surveillance programme, enables the country's intelligence services to have direct access to personal data collected by major Internet companies, such as Google or Facebook, indiscriminately and on a massive scale.

On the basis of assurances given by public authorities and companies such as Google and Facebook, Internet users wrongly believed that their digital footprint would not be freely accessible to the intelligence services of any country. It is now known that the US Government for one has direct access to personal data collected by major Internet companies, and that in Europe the United Kingdom for one was able to consult information collected via PRISM.

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PRISM's disclosure coincides with the EU's negotiations on the Data Protection Directive and the corresponding regulation.

Did the Commission know that PRISM existed? Does it know which Member States have consulted information collected via PRISM? Does it know whether similar digital surveillance programmes exist in the Member States? Does it believe that the US-EU Safe Harbour programme adequately protects European citizens' personal data when their information is processed by companies located in the US? Does it see a need to reform the Data Retention Directive in order to spare Europe from situations similar to those caused by PRISM in the US?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 September 2013)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to written questions E-007934/2013 and E-006783/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007640/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Aid to the Sahel region

Recently, the Commission announced that it was to respond to the growing humanitarian crisis in the Sahel region of Africa with additional support of EUR 69 million.

Will the Commission outline how it intends to spend this money? Further, what criteria will the Commission use to assess how successful the additional aid has been?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

Abnormal and persistent high food prices have put 15 million people in a situation of food insecurity including 7.2 million of them in need of emergency food assistance. In order to respond to humanitarian needs in time for the peak of the hunger period (May-September), the Commission announced the allocation of EUR 69 million Euros which were spent in a timely and efficient way.

Major food assistance programmes targeting the most vulnerable are currently helping 2 million people, enabling them to cover their most basic needs and preventing further deterioration of their livelihoods. Nutrition care will benefit over 520 000 children under the age of five and prevent irrevocable damages on their physical and mental development.

Parts of these funds (EUR 12 million) were also allocated to improve the support to multi-sectorial humanitarian response for the Mali crisis and to Chad (EUR 14 million) for the response to food and nutrition but also for the response to refugees (Sudan and the Central African Republic).

Criteria to assess success of additional aid are timeliness of the interventions, capacity to provide quality support to most affected populations, pertinence of activities compared to needs and effectiveness of the implementation. The Commission allocates funds to professional international humanitarian organisations and monitors regularly the programmes, with the assistance of humanitarian experts based in the field, to ensure their effective and optimal use.

Furthermore, the Commission remains convinced of the importance of providing assistance to long-term resilience-building activities and will continue to work on food and nutritional security in the Sahel with the aim of preventing food crises in the future.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007641/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Unemployment in the EU

The recently published European Vacancy Monitor has shown that despite record unemployment in Europe, there are 1.7 million job vacancies in the EU.

What is the Commission doing to ensure that citizens are aware of such vacancies?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 August 2013)

In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 on the freedom of movement for workers, the European Commission is managing the EURES Job Mobility Portal, where all job vacancies published by the European Public Employment Services are made available to citizens at http://eures.europa.eu. The number of vacancies currently published on the EURES portal amounts to around 1.5 million.

This platform also allows EU and EEA citizens to publish their CV's online in order to be found by employers registered with an account on the portal and willing to recruit from other countries.

Moreover, these and other vacancies are also promoted on another platform at http://europeanjobdays.eu, managed by the European Commission and which is specifically dedicated to promoting European wide recruitment events throughout the EU (the so called European Job Days).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007643/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Missing Children in the EU

The Commission recently published figures revealing that in 2011 a quarter of a million cases concerning missing children were officially reported in the EU.

In addition to the promotion of a missing child hotline (116), could the Commission outline any other plans it has to ensure that the number of missing children does not reach a critically high level in the future? Further, what cross-border plans or initiatives are in place to ensure that Member States coordinate efforts to locate any missing children in an effective way?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The figures the Honourable Member is referring to are part of the preliminary findings of a study on Missing Children in the EU carried out by the European Commission with funding from the European Parliament ([1]). Aside from the overall number, the findings suggest that in some Member States a considerable proportion of the cases relate to children, who run away repeatedly. The complete findings and the full study will be published after the summer and will contain good practices and recommendations for the Member States to improve the response when children go missing and to address some of the underlying causes.

In addition to the national activities of the 116 000 hotlines, such as awareness-raising, prevention and follow-up activities, all targeted at reducing the number of children going missing, the European network coordinated by Missing Children Europe ensures support and information exchange in cross-border cases in support of law enforcement authorities. When a child goes missing and there are indications that the child may cross national borders, the Member State law enforcement authorities can currently cooperate through the Schengen Information System and the national SIRENE bureaus, by posting alerts and exchanging detailed information where needed. With the launch of the second generation of the system (SIS II) on 9 April 2013 ([2]), improvements have been made by expanding the information that can be transmitted with specific alerts on missing persons — in particular children — now included to ensure more effective cooperation to find missing children.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/contracts/2012_90538_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-309_en.htm?locale=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007644/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Digital Agenda Scoreboard

The Commission's recently released Digital Agenda Scoreboard has found that while citizens across Europe have access to basic digital networks and services, they are missing out on the main current and future benefits of the digital revolution.

What is the Commission doing to address these issues and further extend networks and services to those countries found to be lower down on the Digital Agenda Scoreboard?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(1 August 2013)

The Commission supports the extension of networks and services and the digital transformation in multiple ways. As regards networks, the Commission implements the regulatory framework on electronic communications aimed in particular at opening up the market and ensuring a level playing field. In case of market failures, support can be granted by the Member States, subject to state aid rules through Structural Funds (SF), or through other financial instruments such as the European Investment Bank.

As the Digital Agenda Scoreboard illustrates, however, availability of infrastructure will not in itself secure a successful digital transformation. The Commission therefore supports the uptake of ICT in a variety ways, notably through the Grand Coalition for ICT jobs to meet current skills gaps affecting business; legislation targeted at improving cyber security and trust; policies in support of e-government and eHealth, resource efficiency and interoperability.

The Commission expects Member States to implement commonly agreed legislation and policies and invites them to use all available instruments, including SF. Where Member States are not sufficiently responding , for example if they under-invest in broadband networks, the Commission can propose Country Specific Recommendations in the context of the European Semester to encourage more political attention and priority being accorded to ensuring a successful digital transformation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007645/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: eCall system in cars

Does the Commission intend to produce a proposal regarding the eCall system? If so, will such a system become mandatory across the EU? Further, if introduced, will it apply as well to imported cars manufactured outside of the EU? Finally, in the Commission's estimate, what will the extra cost to consumers be if manufacturers are obliged to install this system in new car models from 2015?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(5 August 2013)

The EC proposal for a regulation ([1]) concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system and amending Directive 2007/46/EC was published on 13.6.2013. According to the proposal, it would apply from 1 October 2015 to the EC type-approval of vehicles of categories M1 and N1; the scope of the regulation concerns new vehicles to be registered in the EU, wihtout making a difference whether the venicles are manufactured inside or outside of the EU, the requirement applies to both.. The manufacturers shall demonstrate that all new types of vehicles referred to in Article 2 are equipped with an eCall in-vehicle system, in accordance with the proposed regulation and the referred delegated acts.

The basic pan-European eCall service, based on 112, is a public service which must be offered for free. Taking into account economies of scale, installation of the eCall in-vehicle system is estimated to cost much less than EUR 100 per new car ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/files/safety/com-2013-316_en.pdf
([2]) MEMO/13/547, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-547_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007647/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Smallhold farmers in Zambia

The Commission, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, has agreed to support smallhold farmers and promote agricultural conservation in Zambia, with almost EUR 11.1 million in EU funding. This will see local farmers benefit from an average increase of 40% in household revenue. If this programme is successful, will the Commission outline any plans it may have to extend it to other developing countries?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

Agriculture is a key sector of intervention for the EU in Zambia. The EU is currently supporting the Zambian Government's vision of involving 600 000 small scale farmers in Conservation Agriculture (CA) by 2015. Beyond recent projects under the Food Facility, a new four-year Scaling Up CA programme started in 2013.

CA has been promoted for many years by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Conservation Farming Unit of the Zambian National Farmers' Union. The method is particularly relevant in Zambia where the technology can mitigate the effects of high rainfall variability; improve the efficiency of soil water management and increase yields and farmers' incomes.

CA has shown positive results in the areas where it is applied. Research is ongoing for further adoption and intensification of CA throughout the country.

In the case of Zambia, CA has also already been integrated into the National Agriculture Investment Plan of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The EU's commitment to CA was also recently reiterated during the Zambia CAADP Business Meeting in May 2013.

Globally, the EU supports developing countries' governments in their efforts to increase agriculture productivity in a sustainable and inclusive manner. It has been proven that sustainable intensification in smallholder farms can contribute to food security and poverty eradication in many developping countries.

In Africa in particular, where the EU supports the implementation of the CAADP, the development of CA could be included in this framework.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007648/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syrian Peace Conference

Following the recent G8 summit in Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, world leaders agreed to hold a Syrian Peace Conference at the earliest opportunity.

Will the Commission confirm if the EU will be represented at such a conference? If so, will the Commission elaborate on what form the conference will take?

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

The EU will be represented at the planned Geneva Conference on Syria (Geneva II). The organisers (US, Russia, UN) have indicated that they would like to make the conference inclusive and are planning to invite all participants (potentially more) of the previous Geneva conference that produced the Geneva Communique on Syria on 30 June 2012. The planned conference will also include delegations from the regime and the opposition. The sessions with international stakeholders and between the opposition and the regime will be separate. The mediation between the two sides will be done by the Joint Special Representative L. Brahimi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007650/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: EU Solidarity Fund

Commissioner Hahn has recently stated that, in light of the recent floods in Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany, the Commission was ready to give help in the form of aid from the EU Solidarity Fund.

Could the Commission outline how much aid it intends to give in light of the flooding, and could it specify how much money is actually in the fund?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 August 2013)

The affected countries are currently completing their damage assessments and are preparing their applications for Solidarity Fund assistance. The deadline for submission of the applications is early August, 10 weeks after the occurrence of the first damage in the respective country.

Following the assessment of the applications and if the conditions of the Solidarity Fund Regulation are met, the Commission will propose the mobilisation of Fund. The aid amounts — to be approved by the European Parliament and the Council — will depend on the amount of total direct damage in each country.

The total annual allocation of the Solidarity Fund in 2013 is EUR 1 billion (reduced to EUR 500 million from 2014 onward) of which currently over 90% is still available.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007651/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: EU Spending on nutrition programmes

Between 2014 and 2020, the European Union is to spend an unprecedented EUR 3.5 billion on improving nutrition in some of the world's poorest countries.

Will the Commission outline which countries will receive the money and can it specify the amount that each will receive?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(17 September 2013)

Following the recommendations of the Council Conclusions for the communication 'Enhancing maternal and Child Nutrition' ([1]), adopted on 28 May 2013, the Commission is currently applying a series of measures for the attainment of its target of reducing the number of children under five who are stunted, by 7 million by 2025.

Among other measures, greater focus is foreseen in countries where there is more potential to reduce undernutrition These are countries that meet a number of criteria, among which a high prevalence of undernutrition and a national commitment to do more to reduce stunting, are the most important. The Commission is currently assessing which countries meet these criteria and which can effectively act as 'vanguards' in the effort to reduce undernutrition. Most of these countries will be in high burden regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, where the need for support is greater. Country-specific and indicative allocations will depend on the ongoing multiannual programming process which will not be finalised before the end of the year. In any event a significant proportion of the EUR 3.5 billion for nutrition will be implemented through nutrition sensitive activities by ensuring that sectors such as food security or social protection do more for nutrition.

In addition to Commissioner Piebalgs' pledge to allocate EUR 3.5 billion of development funding to nutrition it is worth mentioning that the Commission's humanitarian assistance also provides significant support to nutrition in crisis situations. In 2012, EUR 145 million, representing more than 10% of the overall humanitarian assistance budget, were allocated to nutrition activities in humanitarian crises.

([1]) COM(2013) 141.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007652/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: EU Funding to Mozambique

The Commission will fund three projects in Mozambique worth a total of EUR 93 million. These projects have the potential to provide 50 000 people with access to clean water, trade opportunities (by improving an international transport corridor) and healthcare (with the construction of two hospitals).

Will the Commission outline how much money has been given to Mozambique since 2008? Further, will the Commission detail how this money has been spent area by area?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(21 August 2013)

An amount of EUR 701 million has been committed for Mozambique for the period 2008-2013 under the 10th European Development Fund. So far, out of the committed amount, a total of EUR 547 million have been contracted and EUR 398 million disbursed. The disbursements by area are as follows: General Budget Support: EUR 275 million; transport infrastructure: EUR 74 million; agriculture and rural development: EUR 14 million; health: EUR 25 million; governance: EUR 9 million.

Furthermore, EUR 52 million have been committed and EUR 34 million disbursed for projects in Mozambique under the Development Cooperation Instrument in the period in question. The disbursements by area are as follows: environment: EUR 8 million; non-state actors and local authorities: EUR 11 million; food security: EUR 10 million; sugar sector: EUR 6 million; gender: EUR 0.5 million.

In addition, under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights an amount of

EUR 1.5 million has been committed and EUR 1 million has been disbursed for projects in Mozambique.

Finally, the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) has contributed to humanitarian activities in the country (disasters preparedness and humanitarian assistance following natural disasters) with an amount close to EUR 10 million.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007653/13
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Employee vocational training in the EU

A recent study conducted across 27 Member States revealed that on average two thirds (66%) of all enterprises with ten or more employees provided vocational training for their staff in 2010. This was up from 60% in 2005. Austria and Sweden ranked highest with a rate of 87% each whilst Poland and Romania ranked lowest with 23% and 24% respectively.

What is the Commission planning to do to ensure that vocational training opportunities are available across the whole of the EU to a high standard?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 July 2013)

The Commission promotes policies and runs actions that support good quality initial education and training and provide citizens with the opportunities for lifelong skills development and recognition.

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships, launched on 2 July 2013, is a broad partnership of employment and education stakeholders to improve the quality and supply of apprenticeships, a form of training which has proven particularly successful in allowing young people to enter the labour market. It is supported by the ESF, the future Erasmus+ programme and the Youth Employment Initiative.

Erasmus+ also aims at creating 200 Knowledge Alliances and equally many Sector Skills Alliances. The latter will, in particular, bring together training providers and businesses to promote employability through targeted curricula and innovative forms of vocational training.

The Commission will publish in autumn 2013 a document on quality and efficiency in adult learning, both vocational and non-vocational, and in 2014 policy guidance specifically addressing participation in continuing vocational training.

Participation in further training is also promoted by the Commission through its provision of information about skills needs (pursued through the European Skills Panorama ([1])), guidance ([2]) , and opportunities for validation of skills already acquired — as called for by the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

([1]) cf. http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/guidance_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007654/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 juin 2013)

Objet: Allonger la durée de vie des aliments

Et si nos yaourts, nos steaks et nos œufs pouvaient se consommer une à deux semaines plus tard? Au regard de ce que font déjà les grandes entreprises, cela a l'air tout à fait possible. En effet, la limite de consommation (DLC) est très souvent plus tardive en outre-mer sur des produits identiques à ceux vendus sur notre continent alors que ces produits font partie des mêmes lots.

1. Comment la Commission explique-t-elle qu'un même produit avec les mêmes ingrédients ait une date de péremption deux semaines plus longue en outre-mer?

2. Pourquoi, si les aliments vendus sur le continent sont les mêmes que ceux vendus dans les DOM-TOM, ne pas aligner les dates sur ceux ayant la date de péremption la plus longue? Cela permettrait de contrer le gaspillage alimentaire qui s'élève, rappelons-le, à 90 millions de tonnes annuellement dans l'Union européenne.

3. Ne s'agit-il pas de discrimination envers les citoyens habitant sur le continent? En effet, les industriels partent du principe qu'un produit bon à la consommation est étiqueté périmé prématurément afin de pousser à la consommation et de miser sur le gaspillage, ce qui va à l'encontre de ce que l'Union prône.

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(8 août 2013)

Pour les denrées alimentaires préemballées dont l'étiquetage doit indiquer une date de durabilité minimale («à consommer de préférence avant le») ou une date limite de consommation, la Commission renvoie l'auteur de la question à l'explication donnée dans les réponses aux questions E-007655/2013 et E-006058/2013 ([1]) en ce qui concerne leur utilisation et leur contrôle/la responsabilité des exploitants, d'une part, dans l'Union et, d'autre part, dans les territoires d'outre-mer de celle-ci. Les exploitants du secteur alimentaire sont les mieux placés pour connaître les propriétés de leurs produits et tenir compte d'autres facteurs tels que les bonnes pratiques de fabrication et d'hygiène et les conditions de stockage. Par conséquent, à moins que l'Union ne dispose d'une réglementation spécifique pour certains produits (les œufs, par exemple), c'est à ces exploitants qu'il appartient de déterminer la date de durabilité et la durée de conservation appropriées d'un produit spécifique.

S'agissant du cas particulier des œufs de table, la Commission a récemment demandé à l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA) d'évaluer les risques pour la santé publique que ceux-ci présentent tout au long de leur durée de conservation.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007654/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Extending food product expiry dates

Would it not be better if the expiry dates for our yoghurts, steaks and eggs were one to two weeks longer? This seems eminently possible in the light of what large companies are already doing. The best--before dates printed on products sold in overseas territories are very often longer than those on identical products sold on the European continent, even though the products are from the same batch.

1. Can the Commission explain why a product sold in an overseas territory has an expiry date two weeks longer than the same product with the same ingredients sold in Europe?

2. Why not give products sold on the continent the same longer expiry date as identical products sold in overseas departments and territories? This approach would help tackle food waste, which amounts to 90 million tonnes a year in the Union.

3. Does it not agree that this disparity is discriminatory towards consumers living on thecontinent? Food companies operate on the principle that products should be given earlyexpiry dates in order to boost consumption and exploit the food waste culture, anapproach which runs counter to that advocated by the Union.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

With regard to pre-packed foods which must be labelled to bear a date of minimum durability ('best before' date) or a 'use by' date, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the explanation given on their use and their respective responsibility/enforcement in the EU and in the EU overseas territories in answers to questions E-007655/2013 and E-006058/2013 ([1]). Food business operators are best placed to understand the properties of their products and to consider other factors such as good manufacturing practices, good hygiene practices and conditions of storage. Therefore, unless there are specific Union rules for specific products, (e.g. eggs) the responsibility for determining the appropriate durability indication and the appropriate shelf life of any specific product lies with food business operators.

In the particular case of table eggs, the Commission has recently asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to evaluate the public health risks along their shelf life.

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

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-007655/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 juin 2013)

Objet: DLUO et DLC

La DLC signifie *Date limite de consommation* du produit. Elle peut être remplacée par: *À consommer avant le* jusqu'au (pour un jour précis) ou *avant fin* (pour un mois ou une année). Tous les produits frais emballés comme la viande, la charcuterie ou les laitages portent cette mention obligatoire fixée sous la responsabilité du fabricant et ne peuvent être vendus une fois la date dépassée. Cette date doit être respectée, même si une certaine flexibilité est parfois possible, notamment avec les yaourts.

La DLUO signifie *Date limite d'utilisation optimale* du produit. Derrière cette appellation un peu tarabiscotée, se cache le simple *À consommer de préférence avant le* qui, comme l'indique cette mention, prévient que, passé la date, le produit peut avoir perdu certaines de ses qualités, mais peut encore être consommé sans danger pour la santé. Cette indication est visible sur les boissons, les pâtes, le riz, le sucre, les conserves, les produits surgelés, etc.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel la DLUO est une information optionnelle?

2. Partage-t-elle l'avis selon lequel la DLC doit apparaître sur tous les aliments emballés?

3. Qu'en est-il au niveau européen? À partir de quand la DLC deviendra une mention obligatoire?

4. Si tel est le cas dans le futur, les marques en non conformité s'exposeront-elles à des sanctions? Lesquelles? Une tolérance sera-t-elle acceptée? Si oui, de quel ordre?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(31 juillet 2013)

C'est principalement aux États membres qu'il incombe de veiller à l'application de la législation de l'UE sur les denrées alimentaires et de vérifier, au moyen de contrôles officiels, si ses exigences sont respectées par les exploitants du secteur.

Les denrées alimentaires préemballées doivent porter, à de rares exceptions près, une date limite de consommation ou une date limite d'utilisation optimale. La législation de l'UE ([1]) précise que la date limite de consommation doit être remplacée par une date limite d'utilisation optimale lorsque, d'un point de vue microbiologique, un aliment est très périssable et risque donc, après une courte période, de présenter un danger immédiat pour la santé humaine. La date limite de consommation n'est pas une information optionnelle.

Conformément à la directive 2000/13/CE, il relève de la responsabilité de l'exploitant du secteur alimentaire de déterminer si un produit doit être étiqueté «à consommer de préférence avant le».

Le nouveau règlement concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires ([2]), qui s'appliquera à compter du 13 décembre 2014, maintient les règles existantes. De plus, son article 24 dispose qu'au-delà de la date limite de consommation, une denrée alimentaire est dite dangereuse conformément à l'article 14, paragraphes 2 à 5, du règlement (CE) nº 178/2002 ([3]).

En revanche, la date limite d'utilisation optimale indique la date jusqu'à laquelle l'aliment conserve ses propriétés spécifiques dans des conditions de conservation appropriées. Donc, même après cette date, une denrée alimentaire peut encore être consommée et vendue si l'exploitant du secteur alimentaire peut garantir qu'elle respecte encore toutes les exigences de la législation alimentaire.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 mars 2000 relative au rapprochement des législations des États membres concernant l'étiquetage et la présentation des denrées alimentaires ainsi que la publicité faite à leur égard (JO L 109 du 6.5.2000, p. 29).

([2]) Règlement (UE) n° 1169/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2011 concernant l'information des consommateurs sur les denrées alimentaires, modifiant les règlements (CE) n° 1924/2006 et (CE) n° 1925/2006 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant la directive 87/250/CEE de la Commission, la directive 90/496/CEE du Conseil, la directive 1999/10/CE de la Commission, la directive 2000/13/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, les directives 2002/67/CE et 2008/5/CE de la Commission et le règlement (CE) n° 608/2004 de la Commission (JO L 304 du 22.11.2011, p. 18).

([3]) Règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 28 janvier 2002 établissant les principes généraux et les prescriptions générales de la législation alimentaire, instituant l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments et fixant des procédures relatives à la sécurité des denrées alimentaires, JO L 31 du 1.2.2002.

Les contrôles officiels doivent être réalisés régulièrement, en fonction des risques et à une fréquence appropriée, et les mesures adéquates doivent être prises en vue d'éliminer les risques et de garantir l'application de la législation de l'UE sur les denrées alimentaires. Les États membres doivent également fixer les règles relatives aux mesures et sanctions applicables en cas de violation de la législation relative aux denrées alimentaires et aux aliments pour animaux. Les mesures et sanctions doivent être effectives, proportionnées et dissuasives.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007655/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: 'Use by' and 'best before' dates

A product's 'use by' date indicates the last date on which it may safely be consumed. It is usually displayed on a product as 'use by' followed by a specific date or 'use by end' followed by a month or a year. Manufacturers are responsible for printing 'use by' dates on all pre-packed fresh food, such as raw and cooked meat and dairy products. Such products must not be sold after this date, even though sometimes there is some flexibility, particularly with yoghurts.

A product's 'best before' date, on the other hand, indicates when the food is at its best. In other words, after this date, the product may have lost some of its qualities, but it is still safe to eat. This date mark is written on canned foods, drinks, pasta, rice, sugar, frozen foods, etc.

1. Does the Commission agree that the 'best before' date is optional information?

2. Does the Commission agree that all pre-packed food should display a 'use by' date?

3. What about at EU level? Will 'use by' dates become a labelling requirement? If so, when?

4. If this happens, will manufacturers face penalties for non-compliance? What penalties will apply? Will there be any tolerance for non-compliance? If so, to what extent?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 July 2013)

Member States are primarily responsible for the enforcement of EU food law and verify, through the organisation of official controls, that the relevant requirements thereof are fulfilled by business operators.

Pre-packed foods, with few exceptions, must bear a date of minimum durability (best before date) or a use by date. EC law ([1]) specifies that the 'best before' date should be replaced by a 'use by' date when, from a microbiological point of view, a food is highly perishable and is therefore likely after a short period to constitute an immediate danger to human health. The 'best before' date is not optional information.

According to Directive 2000/13/EC, it is the responsibility of the food business operator to determine when a product should be labelled with a 'use by' date.

The new Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]), which will apply from 13 December 2014, maintains the existing rules. Moreover, Article 24 states that after the 'use by' date a food shall be deemed to be unsafe in accordance with Article 14(2) to (5) of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([3]).

On the contrary, the 'best before' date relates to the date until which the food retains its specific properties when properly stored. Hence, even after this date, a food may still be consumed and sold if the food business operator can assure that the food still meets all food law requirements.

Official controls must be carried out regularly, on a risk basis, and with appropriate frequency, and appropriate measures must be taken to eliminate risk and ensure enforcement of EU food law. Member States are also required to lay down the rules on measures and penalties applicable to infringements of food and feed law. Such measures and penalties must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 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, p.29).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

([3]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31 of 1.2.2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007656/13
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Danni provocati dal randagismo e dalla fauna selvatica

Come spesso denunciato dai coltivatori, il fenomeno del randagismo e la fauna selvatica provocano danni all'agricoltura e alla zootecnia. In alcune regioni italiane si adottano iniziative per la conservazione del lupo, dal momento che il fenomeno del randagismo e la fauna inselvatichita attentano all'integrità della specie mettendo altresì a rischio la salvaguardia della sua identità genetica dal pericolo di ibridazione. Per far fronte ai danni e ai rischi citati è necessaria un'efficace strategia che, da un lato, combatta il randagismo e, dall'altro, applichi la direttiva 92/43/CE in relazione alla tutela del lupo e alla conservazione di un habitat naturale equilibrato.

1. È la Commissione in grado di valutare i risultati dell'applicazione della direttiva Habitat?

2. Dispone di dati relativi al monitoraggio del randagismo e alla lotta a tale fenomeno? È in grado di fornirli?

3. Non valuta l'opportunità di prevedere, nell'ambito della programmazione della PAC 2014-2020 e dei programmi di sviluppo rurale regionali, una specifica misura per la prevenzione dei danni e per il cofinanziamento di strumenti di gestione del rischio, al fine di assicurare la sostenibilità delle attività agricole e zootecniche nel rispetto delle esigenze di tutela degli animali?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(9 agosto 2013)

1. Conformemente all'articolo 17 della direttiva 92/43/CEE ([1]) (direttiva «Habitat»), ciascuno Stato membro è tenuto a trasmettere ogni sei anni una relazione sull'attuazione della direttiva. Successivamente la Commissione prepara una relazione riassuntiva basata sulle relazioni nazionali. La relazione riassuntiva, che comprende la valutazione dei progressi compiuti, viene successivamente messa a disposizione del pubblico. È disponibile la relazione relativa al periodo 2001-2006 ([2]).

Gli Stati membri dovevano presentare la relazione relativa al periodo 2007-2012 entro il 1º luglio 2013. Su internet è consultabile una tabella che riporta il calendario della presentazione delle relazioni da parte degli Stati membri ([3]). Sulla base dei dati attualmente raccolti dagli Stati membri, la Commissione redigerà la prossima relazione riassuntiva relativa al periodo 2007-2012.

2. Il problema dell'ibridazione è stato analizzato dalle *Guidelines for Population Level Management Plans for Large Carnivores* (linee guida per i piani di gestione delle popolazioni di grandi carnivori) ([4]). Spetta agli Stati membri adottare le misure necessarie. Sono disponibili finanziamenti europei per misure specifiche, quali ad esempio il progetto LIFE ibriwolf ([5]) in fase di attuazione per definire il problema e avviare azioni intese a rimuovere gli ibridi in due zone della Toscana. La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta data all'interrogazione scritta E-7929/2012 ([6]) riguardante la politica in materia di cani randagi.

3. La politica di sviluppo rurale non dispone di strumenti specifici per affrontare il problema degli animali randagi cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare. Essa prevede, tuttavia, un sostegno che può essere utilizzato dagli Stati membri per introdurre misure di prevenzione volte a impedire questo tipo di rischi, quali ad esempio gli investimenti in recinzioni.

([1]) GU L 206 del 22.07.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/rep_habitats/.
([3]) http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Reporting/Article_17/Reports_2013/Member_State_Deliveries.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/docs/guidelines_final2008.pdf
([5]) http://www.ibriwolf.it/.
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007656/13
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Damage caused by wild animals and strays

Complaints are frequently being received from farmers regarding damage to crops and injury to livestock caused by wild animals and strays. In a number of Italian regions, measures are now being taken to preserve the wolf population, whose genetic identity is at risk from cross breeding because of the increasing number of stray animals. It is therefore necessary to formulate an effective strategy to prevent animals being allowed to run wild, while at the same time protecting the wolf population and conserving a balanced natural habitat in accordance with Directive 92/43/EC.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say how effectively the Habitats Directive is being implemented?

2. Can it say what measures are being taken to keep track of developments and contain the problem of stray animals?

3. Does it not consider that specific damage containment and risk management funding measures should be included in the 2014-2020 CAP and regional development programmes, so as to ensure the sustainability of arable and livestock farming while complying with animal protection provisions?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

1. According to Art.17 of Directive 1992/43/EEC ([1]) ('Habitats Directive'), each Member State has to submit every six years a report on the implementation of the directive. The Commission then prepares a composite report based on the national reports. This composite report includes an evaluation of the progress achieved and is subsequently made available to the public. A report is available covering the period 2001-2006 ([2]).

For the period 2007-2012 Member States had to report by 1 July 2013. A scoreboard is available on the state of Member States reports ([3]). Based on data currently being collected by Member States, the Commission will prepare the next composite report covering the period 2007-2012.

2. The problem of hybridization has been analysed by the 'Guidelines for Population Level Management Plans for Large Carnivores' ([4]). It is for the Member States to take the necessary measures. European funding is available for specific measures such as the LIFE project IBRIWOLF ([5]) that is being implemented to define the problem and start implementing actions to remove hybrids in two areas of Tuscany. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-7929/2012 ([6]) concerning the policy on stray dogs.

3. The rural development policy does not have any specific tools to address the problem of stray animals referred to by the Honourable Member. However, this policy provides for support which can be used by Member States to introduce preventive measures, such as investments in fences, to prevent this type of risks.

([1]) OJ L 206 , 22.07.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/rep_habitats/.
([3]) http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Reporting/Article_17/Reports_2013/Member_State_Deliveries.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/docs/guidelines_final2008.pdf
([5]) http://www.ibriwolf.it/.
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007657/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti al comune di Roma per la creazione del Museo del veicolo storico, civile, militare e commerciale

L'associazione culturale Archetipo è impegnata da più di trent'anni nella raccolta, nella catalogazione e nel restauro di veicoli storici civili, militari e commerciali, e può così vantare un patrimonio di veicoli e oggetti legato al mondo delle macchine unico al mondo. In particolare, la collezione in oggetto possiede oltre duecento motociclette dalla fine dell'Ottocento ai primi anni Settanta, motocarrozze, moto militari, sidecar, tricicli commerciali degli anni Trenta/Cinquanta, carri, antiche biciclette, carri in legno a trazione animale per il trasporto dei generi alimentari del XIX secolo, una raccolta unica di macchine agricole e industriali dalla fine dell'Ottocento agli anni Sessanta e addirittura dieci aerei civili e militari degli anni Trenta. Inoltre, l'associazione possiede una collezione di centinaia di attrezzature agricole (aratri, erpici, vomeri, torni, frese) e industriali che vanno dall'Ottocento agli anni Sessanta. Il progetto, infatti, oltre ad avere carattere espositivo e divulgativo in relazione ai veicoli storici in generale, ha come obiettivo quello di creare, anche grazie al materiale cartaceo e bibliografico raccolto negli anni, una scuola di restauro del veicolo storico, con corsi di formazione altamente specializzati, nonché un portale online per lo scambio di tecniche del restauro e la valorizzazione di veicoli storici unici al mondo.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione indicare:

1. se esistono finanziamenti nell'ambito del restauro e della catalogazione online;

2. le azioni o i programmi previsti per il sostegno alla cultura e alla formazione nell'ambito della nuova programmazione 2014-2020;

3. un quadro generale della situazione.

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 agosto 2013)

1. Nel periodo 2007-2013 gli investimenti a favore della cultura e della tutela del patrimonio culturale a sostegno dello sviluppo socioeconomico sono, in linea di principio, ammissibili al cofinanziamento da parte del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR).

Il programma FESR Lazio 2007-2013 contempla la possibilità di cofinanziare attività di questo tipo nel quadro di una strategia integrata basata sul territorio per la valorizzazione delle risorse culturali, con particolare attenzione al turismo sostenibile e alla sostenibilità finanziaria e gestionale degli interventi selezionati. Il programma individua due zone di intervento prioritarie: le necropoli etrusche di Cerveteri e Tarquinia, Villa d'Este a Tivoli e le aree collegate a questi due siti UNESCO.

2. Per quanto riguarda il periodo successivo la proposta della Commissione, non ancora adottata dal Consiglio e dal Parlamento, prevede la possibilità di sostenere gli investimenti volti a tutelare, promuovere e sviluppare il patrimonio culturale. Tali investimenti dovrebbero tuttavia rientrare in una strategia di sviluppo economico globale di un territorio o di una città specifici. Gli obiettivi regionali specifici verranno definiti nei programmi 2014-2020, da sottoporre alla Commissione all'atto dell'adozione dei regolamenti sulla politica di coesione e parallelamente al perfezionamento dell'accordo di partenariato con l'Italia.

3. Per una panoramica generale dei progetti dell'UE finanziati dalla politica di coesione, la Commissione invita l'onorevole deputata a consultare i siti web:
www.opencoesione.gov.it e http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_it.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007657/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Possible funding for setting up a museum of vintage civil, military and commercial vehicles in Rome

For over 30 years the 'Archetipo' cultural association has been cataloguing and restoring vintage civil, military and commercial vehicles and accessories, resulting in truly unique collection of items dating from the 1800s to the 1960s comprising, for example, over 200 motorcycles, including three-wheeled pickups, military motorcycles and sidecars, as well as three-wheeled delivery vans used from the 1930s to the 1950s, not to mention ten civil and military aircraft from the 1930s. It also has on display carts, ancient bicycles, nineteenth-century wooden horse-drawn vehicles used for transporting food and hundreds of items of agricultural and industrial equipment (ploughs, harrows, ploughshares, lathes and cutters).

In addition to putting exhibits on display, the association also intends to make available from the archives it has compiled over the years documentary material concerning the general history of vintage vehicles for the purpose of setting up a centre providing highly specialised training in vintage vehicle restoration and creating an online portal for exchanges of information concerning vintage vehicle restoration and enhancement.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say whether funding for restoration and online cataloguing is currently available?

2. Can it say what actions or projects for promoting information and training in this area exist within the new 2014-2020 programming framework?

3. Can it give a general assessment of measures taken to date?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 August 2013)

1. In the 2007-2013 period, investments in favour of culture and preservation of the cultural heritage in support of socioeconomic development are in principle eligible for co-financing from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The 2007-2013 ERDF Lazio programme provides for the possibility to co-finance this type of activities within the framework of an integrated, place-based strategy for the exploitation of cultural resources and with a particular focus on sustainable tourism and the financial and management sustainability of the selected interventions. The Programme identifies two priority areas of intervention: the Etruscan Necropolises of Cerveteri and Tarquinia, Villa d'Este in Tivoli and the areas connected to these two Unesco sites.

2. With respect to the next period, the Commission proposal, which has not yet been adopted by the Council and the Parliament, provides for the possibility to support investments aiming at protecting, promoting and developing cultural heritage. However, such investments should be part of an overall economic development strategy of a specific territory or town. The specific regional objectives will be defined in the 2014-2020 programmes to be submitted to the Commission upon adoption of the cohesion policy regulations and in parallel with the finalisation of the Italian partnership agreement.

3. For a general overview of EU projects funded by cohesion policy the Commission suggests the Honourable Member to consult the websites
www.opencoesione.gov.it and http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007658/13
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Possibile violazione delle norme a tutela dell'ambiente e della salute pubblica da parte del Comune di Tivoli

Nel Comune di Tivoli, in provincia di Roma, la società municipalizzata che si occupa della raccolta dei rifiuti non effettua più il servizio da circa un mese a causa della grave situazione finanziaria in cui versa. In particolare, la società ASA S.p.A. risulterebbe debitrice di circa 9 milioni di euro nei confronti della società che gestisce la discarica di Guidonia, dove dovrebbe conferire regolarmente i rifiuti. Inoltre, il dissesto finanziario oggi in essere ha altresì portato alla sospensione dei pagamenti degli stipendi dei dipendenti. Il debito sarebbe stato causato anche da una cattiva gestione della società municipalizzata, che non riesce a porre in essere atti idonei alla riscossione del tributo dovuto né è stata in grado di varare un piano industriale credibile che portasse all'avvio della raccolta differenziata porta a porta. Ad oggi, neppure le trattative avviate con le banche per contrattare un graduale rientro del debito sembrerebbero essere andate a buon fine. La situazione descritta potrebbe portare alla privatizzazione del servizio di raccolta e smaltimento, con conseguenti ricadute negative sul piano occupazionale e sociale. Nel frattempo, la mancata raccolta dei rifiuti sta provocando enormi disagi alla città, con conseguente pericolo per la salute pubblica e l'ambiente.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione indicare:

— le misure urgenti che possono essere adottate per salvaguardare la salute dei cittadini di Tivoli;

— le azioni che possono essere intraprese per salvaguardare l'ambiente;

— come tutelare i posti di lavoro oggi in pericolo.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(8 agosto 2013)

La direttiva 2008/98/CE ([1]) relativa ai rifiuti obbliga gli Stati membri ad adottare le misure necessarie a garantire che i rifiuti siano trattati in maniera adeguata, in base alla gerarchia dei rifiuti e senza mettere in pericolo la salute umana e l'ambiente. Gli Stati membri devono istituire sistemi di raccolta differenziata per promuovere un riciclaggio di alta qualità.

Spetta agli Stati membri garantire l'effettivo rispetto degli obblighi che incombono loro in forza di questa direttiva.

Non è opportuno che la Commissione formuli osservazioni in merito a questioni inerenti agli accordi contrattuali tra le società a cui il comune di Tivoli ha affidato la gestione dei rifiuti.

([1]) GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007658/13
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Possible infringement of environmental protection and public health regulations by the Tivoli municipal authorities

In Tivoli, a municipality in the province of Rome, the municipally controlled waste collection company has not been operating normally for about a month, because it is in severe financial difficulty. The company concerned, ASA SpA, is thought to owe approximately EUR 9 million to the company that runs the Guidonia landfill, to which collected waste is supposed to be delivered. The current financial mess is such, moreover, that the employees are no longer being paid. The debt has apparently been caused by mismanagement on the part of the municipal company, which is failing to levy dues and has likewise proved incapable of launching a credible industrial plan for door-to-door sorted waste collection. To date, not even the negotiations with the banks on repayment of the debt by instalments appear to have turned out satisfactorily. Given the situation described above, the waste collection and disposal service might be privatised, entailing adverse effects on employment and in social terms. Meanwhile, the disruption to the waste collection service is causing enormous inconvenience in the town, resulting in a threat to public health and the environment.

What immediate steps can be taken to protect public health in Tivoli?

What measures can be taken to protect the environment?

How will the Commission protect the jobs now in jeopardy?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) on waste obliges Member States to take the necessary measures to ensure that waste is adequately managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy and without endangering human health and the environment. Member States are required to set up separate collection schemes to promote high-quality recycling.

It is the responsibility of the Member State to ensure that the obligations it has under this directive are complied with in practice.

It is not appropriate for the Commission to comment on matters related to contractual arrangements between the waste management companies serving the municipality of Tivoli.

([1]) OJ L 312 of 22.11.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007659/13
alla Commissione
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Diritti dei figli minori di detenuti

Considerando che nella risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 13 marzo 2008 sulla situazione particolare delle donne in carcere e l'impatto della detenzione dei genitori sulla vita sociale e familiare si chiedeva, agli Stati membri, di investire nell'ammodernamento e nell'adeguamento delle infrastrutture penitenziarie e di dare attuazione alla raccomandazione R(2006)2 del Consiglio d'Europa, onde assicurare condizioni di detenzione rispettose della dignità umana e dei diritti fondamentali, e, alla Commissione e al Consiglio, di adottare, sulla base dell'articolo 6 del trattato UE, una decisione quadro sulle norme minime di protezione dei diritti dei detenuti, ai fini di una maggiore armonizzazione delle condizioni di detenzione in Europa, in particolare per quanto attiene al rispetto delle esigenze specifiche delle donne;

considerando che nella stessa risoluzione si invitavano gli Stati membri a facilitare il ravvicinamento familiare e le relazioni dei genitori incarcerati con i figli, predisponendo strutture di accoglienza adeguate, nonché a conformarsi agli obblighi internazionali assicurando la parità dei diritti e di trattamento dei figli che vivono con il genitore detenuto creando altresì condizioni di vita adatte alle loro esigenze in unità totalmente indipendenti e il più lontane possibile dall'ambiente carcerario ordinario;

vista la risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 15 dicembre 2011 sui diritti dei detenuti nell'UE;

preso atto che sono oltre un milione i bambini europei che hanno un genitore detenuto ed entrano dunque in contatto con gli istituti penitenziari presenti in Europa per mantenere il legame affettivo con il proprio genitore detenuto, fondamentale per crescere;

preso atto che è in corso a livello europeo una mobilitazione attraverso una petizione intitolata «Not my crime, still my sentence — help us help children of prisoners» (Condannato per un reato non mio — aiutateci ad aiutare i figli dei detenuti), promossa dalla rete europea Eurochips (composta da 15 paesi e 18 associazioni) e in Italia dall'associazione *Bambinisenzasbarre,*

1. Quali iniziative intende adottare la Commissione al fine di portare avanti quanto il Parlamento ha chiesto con la risoluzione del 13 marzo 2008?

2. Intende la Commissione adottare una decisione quadro sulle norme minime di protezione dei detenuti che ponga l'accento sui diritti dei figli minori di detenuti?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(20 agosto 2013)

Le condizioni di detenzione sono di competenza degli Stati membri. Tuttavia, uno dei settori prioritari del programma UE per i diritti dei minori ([1]) è tutelare i diritti dei minori vulnerabili, tra cui circa 800 000 bambini ([2]) colpiti dalla reclusione dei genitori nell'UE ([3]).

Per proteggere i bambini vulnerabili, compresi quelli i cui genitori sono in prigione, la Commissione europea aiuta gli Stati membri a rafforzare i loro sistemi di protezione dei minori, basati sui seguenti aspetti fondamentali: collaborazione tra gli attori operanti nell'ambito della tutela dei minori e i vari settori, raccolta dei dati, formazione dei professionisti, disponibilità di finanziamenti e partecipazione dei minori ([4]). Inoltre, un finanziamento specifico è stato destinato a progetti sui bambini che si trovano in queste situazioni, come ad esempio Children of Imprisoned Parents ([5]) e «COPING» ([6]) (Children of Prisoners, Interventions and Mitigations to Strengthen Mental Health), mentre nel 2013 una sovvenzione di funzionamento è stata concessa a Europchips — la rete europea dei figli di genitori detenuti.

([1]) COM(2011) 60 def.
([2]) Children of Prisoners: Interventions and mitigations to strengthen mental health (Bambini di detenuti: Interventi e mitigazioni volti a rafforzare la salute mentale), eds Jones, Adele D. and Wainaina-Woźna, Agnieszka E., 2013. Consultabile all'indirizzo: http://www.eurochips.org/images/1374138579.pdf
([3]) Secondo la raccomandazione della Commissione su «Investire nell'infanzia: spezzare il circolo vizioso dello svantaggio sociale», i figli di detenuti sono maggiormente a rischio a causa di molteplici svantaggi e hanno perciò bisogno di particolare attenzione.
([4]) Si veda il 7° Forum europeo sui diritti del minore: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/rights-child/european-forum/seventh-meeting/index_en.htm
([5]) Progetto dell'Istituto danese per i diritti umani, Eurochips, University of Ulster and Bambinisenzasbarre (2011) finanziato dal programma «Diritti fondamentali e cittadinanza».
([6]) Progetto di ricerca (2010-2013) finanziato dal 7° Programma quadro (FP 7).

Attualmente la Commissione, a seguito delle discussioni sul Libro verde adottato nel 2011 ([7]), non intende adottare una legislazione sulle norme minime per tutelare i diritti dei detenuti.

([7]) LIBRO VERDE Rafforzare la fiducia reciproca nello spazio giudiziario europeo — Libro verde sull'applicazione della normativa dell'UE sulla giustizia penale nel settore della detenzione, COM(2011) 0327 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007659/13
to the Commission
Patrizia Toia (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Rights of children of incarcerated parents

In its resolution of 13 March 2008 on the particular situation of women in prison and the impact of the imprisonment of parents on social and family life, Parliament called on the Member States to invest in modernising and adapting their prisons and to implement Recommendation R(2006)2 of the Council of Europe so that human dignity and fundamental rights are upheld in prisons. Parliament also called for the Commission and Council to adopt a framework decision, on the basis of Article 6 of the EU Treaty, on minimum standards to protect the rights of prisoners with a view to harmonising prison conditions in Europe, particularly as regards taking proper account of the specific needs of women.

In addition to this, Parliament asked Member States to make it easier for families to stay in touch, in particular imprisoned parents and their children, by creating a suitable visiting environment. Member States were urged to ensure that children residing with an imprisoned parent enjoy equal rights and treatment, in accordance with international obligations, and to create living conditions adapted to their needs through the provision of cells, kept separate from the ordinary prison environment.

On 15 December 2011, Parliament also adopted a resolution on detention conditions in the EU.

More than one million children in the EU have a parent in prison and if family ties, which are essential to a child's development, are to be maintained these children cannot avoid coming into contact with the prison system.

An EU-wide petition entitled 'Not my crime, still my sentence — help us help children of prisoners' is currently being promoted by the European Network for Children of Imprisoned Parents (Eurochips) and by the Bambinisenzasbarre association in Italy.

1. How does the Commission intend to address the issues raised in Parliament's resolution of 13 March 2008?

2. Does it intend to adopt a framework decision on minimum standards to protect the rights of prisoners, which focuses in particular on the rights of children of incarcerated parents?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

Detention conditions are under the competence of Member States. However, one of the priority areas of the EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child ([1]) is protecting the rights of children when they are vulnerable, including an estimated 800.000 children ([2]) who are affected by parental imprisonment in the EU ([3]).

To protect vulnerable children, including those whose parents are in prison, the European Commission is supporting Member States to strengthen their child protection systems, in which collaboration between child protection actors and across sectors, data collection, training of professionals, availability of funding and child participation are key aspects ([4]). In addition, specific funding has been allocated to projects on children in these situations, such as 'Children of Imprisoned Parents' ([5]) and 'COPING,' ([6]) and an operating grant was awarded to Europchips — the European network for children of imprisoned parents in 2013.

As a result of the discussions on a Green Paper adopted in 2011 ([7]), the Commission currently does not intend to adopt legislation on minimum standards to protect the rights of prisoners.

([1]) COM(2011) 60 final.
([2]) Children of Prisoners: Interventions and mitigations to strengthen mental health, eds Jones, Adele D. and Wainaina-Woźna, Agnieszka E., 2013. Available at http://www.eurochips.org/images/1374138579.pdf
([3]) In the Commission Recommendation on Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage, children of imprisoned parents were said to be facing increased risks due to multiple disadvantages and therefore needing special attention.
([4]) See 7th European Forum on the Rights of the child: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/rights-child/european-forum/seventh-meeting/index_en.htm
([5]) Project by the Danish Institute for Human Rights, Eurochips, University of Ulster and Bambinisenzasbarre (2011) funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme.
([6]) Research project (2010-2013) funded by the 7th Framework Programme (FP 7).
([7]) Green Paper Strengthening mutual trust in the European judicial area — A Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention, COM(2011) 0327 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-007660/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(27 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Programe bilingve

Comunitățile rurale de mici dimensiuni din anumite zone izolate ale unor regiuni din statele membre, inclusiv cele aflate de o parte și de alta a frontierelor, întâmpină dificultăți în păstrarea tinerilor și a forței de muncă, în general, în aceste zone.

În cazul în care există forță de muncă de o anumită specialitate de o parte a unei frontierei, care este deficitară într-o comunitate vecină sau o societate comercială aflată de cealaltă parte a graniței, principala problemă este comunicarea dificilă dintre angajat-salariat, în perspectiva integrării acelei persoane, generată mai ales de necunoașterea reciprocă a limbii.

Cum consideră Comisia că pot fi sprijinite programele transfrontaliere de educație în sistem bilingv pentru o cât mai bună cunoaștere reciprocă a limbii, culturii și tradițiilor, tocmai pentru a putea folosi potențialul micilor comunități din zonele de frontieră în beneficiul tuturor și pentru o valorificare mai bună a resurselor umane din acest zone?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(8 august 2013)

Comisia împărtășește opinia distinsului membru al Parlamentului potrivit căreia înțelegerea reciprocă a limbilor, culturilor și tradițiilor ar trebui încurajată. Prin politica sa în materie de multilingvism, Comisia sprijină și completează politicile naționale din domeniul educației care își propun să îi ofere fiecărui cetățean european posibilitatea de a comunica în cel puțin două limbi străine.

În acest context, Comisia colaborează cu statele membre pentru a crește eficiența și calitatea predării și învățării limbilor străine în toate sectoarele educației. În vederea monitorizării acestui proces, Comisia a propus un nou criteriu de referință în domeniul competențelor lingvistice. Acesta a fost prezentat în documentul de lucru intitulat *„Language competences for employability, mobility and growth”* ([1]) care însoțește comunicarea „Regândirea educației”.

Începând din 2007, Programul de învățare de-a lungul vieții ([2]), care ar urma să se finalizeze în 2013, a (co)finanțat anual proiecte lingvistice în valoare de 10 milioane de euro. Un studiu dedicat inițiativelor lingvistice de succes ([3]) a identificat 40 de exemple de proiecte lingvistice derulate între țări din vecinătatea UE. Sistemele bilingve de învățare s-au aflat atât în centrul unora dintre aceste proiecte, cât și în centrul unora dintre cele 1800 de proiecte naționale și bilaterale cărora li s-a acordat Certificatul lingvistic european ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw372_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/languages/orphans/neighbour-language_ro.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/languages/european-language-label/index_ro.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007660/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Bilingual programmes

Small rural communities in isolated parts of some Member State regions, including ones situated on one side or another of borders, find it difficult to retain young people and their labour force in general.

In cases where there are workers specialising in a certain field on one side of a border and no such workers in a neighbouring community or company on the other side of that border, the main problem in terms of their integration into the workforce is one of communication, especially when no common language is spoken.

How does the Commission feel cross-border education programmes in bilingual systems might be supported in order to encourage the best possible mutual understanding of languages, cultures and traditions, precisely so that the potential of small communities in border areas can be harnessed to the benefit of all and the best possible use made of human resources in those areas?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(8 August 2013)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's view that mutual understanding of languages, cultures and traditions should be encouraged. The multilingualism policy of the Commission supports and complements national educational policies aimed at enabling every European citizen to communicate in at least two foreign languages.

Within this context, the Commission is working together with the Member States to increase the efficiency and quality of language teaching and learning in all educational sectors. In order to monitor progress, the Commission has proposed a new European benchmark for language competences. It was presented in the Staff Working Document 'Language competences for employability, mobility and growth' ([1]) accompanying the 'Rethinking Education' Communication.

Since 2007, the Lifelong Learning Programme ([2]), which is due to end in 2013, has (co)financed language projects for an average amount of EUR 10 million per year. A study of good language initiatives ([3]) identified 40 examples of language learning projects between neighbouring European countries. Bilingual learning systems have been addressed by some of these projects, as well as by some of the over 1800 national and bilateral projects that have been awarded the European Language Label ([4]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw372_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/languages/orphans/neighbour-language_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/languages/european-language-label/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007661/13
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Funding into Huntington's disease

In January 2013, the EU sanctioned EUR 38 million to set up an international rare diseases research consortium. I understand that one of the diseases identified for further research is Huntington's disease.

Can the Commission confirm that this is the case, and if so, how much of this money will be used to fund the research and who will be undertaking it?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 2013)

The Commission is actively involved in the International Rare Diseases Research Consortium (IRDiRC), which teams up researchers and organisations investing in rare diseases research in order to achieve two main objectives by the year 2020: to deliver 200 new therapies for rare diseases and means to diagnose most rare diseases.

The Commission supports research pursuing the IRDiRC objectives through actions funded by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013). EUR 38 million was earmarked for IRDiRC-related projects in the specific heading '-Omics for rare diseases' in the FP7 Health Theme Work Programme 2012 ([1]). Out of this amount, EUR 36 million was committed to research projects constructing a solid foundation for molecular characterisation and diagnostics for rare diseases. Indeed, one of the projects funded, Neuromics ([2]), investigates rare neurodegenerative and neuromuscular diseases including Huntington's disease. EUR 12 million has been committed as EU funding for this large-scale collaborative research project involving 19 beneficiaries from 10 countries. EUR 2 million was granted for SUPPORT-IRDiRC ([3]), which provides organisational support to the implementation of the international consortium.

The FP7 Health Theme Work Programme 2012 also included a topic on preclinical and clinical development of orphan drugs, under which 10 projects were funded with an overall EU contribution of EUR 57 million, thus contributing towards the IRDiRC objective to develop new therapies for rare diseases.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/wp-2012_en.html
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13202162
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=proj.document&PJ_RCN=13217319

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007664/13
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(27. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Digitale Agenda

Im Mai 2012 wurde im Rahmen der Roaming III-Verordnung ein Gleitpfad für reduzierte Endkundenpreise bis 2017 beschlossen. Die europäische Mobilfunkindustrie hat bereits sehr hohe Ressourcen in die Umsetzung investiert, um die verordneten Maßnahmen erfüllen zu können.

Am 30. Mai 2013 hat Vizepräsidentin Neelie Kroes (Mitglied der Kommission mit Zuständigkeit für die Digitale Agenda) im Binnenmarktausschuss des Europäischen Parlaments das Ende aller Roaming-Gebühren für das Jahr 2015 ankündigt.

1. Gibt es Bestrebungen, die bereits beschlossenen Maßnahmen der Roaming III-Verordnung abzuändern bzw. zu ergänzen?

2. Wo liegen die Anreize für alternative Netzbetreiber, die durch die Roaming III-Verordnung geschaffenen Business-Cases („Single-IMSI" und „LBO") zu verwirklichen?

3. Welche Rahmenbedingungen plant die Kommission, um einen europaweiten, transparenten Wettbewerb zu ermöglich („must carry", Bit-Börse, Nummernkompatibilität, etc.)?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(7. August 2013)

Der Europäische Rat bekräftigte auf seiner Frühjahrstagung 2013 die große Bedeutung des digitalen Binnenmarkts für das Wachstum und verwies in seinen Schlussfolgerungen auf die Notwendigkeit, dass die Kommission so bald wie möglich und in jedem Fall rechtzeitig zur Tagung des Europäischen Rates im Oktober Vorschläge für konkrete Maßnahmen zur Schaffung eines Binnenmarkts für Informations- und Kommunikationstechnik (IKT) vorlegt. Die Kommission erarbeitet gegenwärtig eine Reihe von Legislativvorschlägen, die es den Betreibern erlauben sollen, digitale Dienstleistungen in der gesamten EU zu erbringen, damit Bürger und Unternehmen solche Dienste überall in Europa nutzen können. Die Roamingentgelte sind ein Beispiel dafür, dass ein solcher Binnenmarkt heute noch nicht existiert. Rechtssicherheit und genügend Vorlaufzeit zur Anpassung an neue rechtliche Anforderungen sind wichtige Voraussetzungen für eine erfolgreiche Regulierung. Die seit 2007 schrittweise erfolgende Senkung der Roamingentgelte gibt den Betreibern Gelegenheit, ihre Geschäftsmodelle entsprechend anzupassen. Nach dem gleichen Grundsatz denkt die Kommission nun — aufbauend auf den wettbewerbsfördernden Bestimmungen der Roamingverordnung von 2012 — über weitere Maßnahmen nach, um den Betreibern Anreize für die Erbringung von Roamingdiensten zu Inlandspreisen zu geben.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007664/13
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Digital Agenda

In May 2012, as part of the Roaming III Regulation, a 'glide path' was adopted for reduced end-user prices by 2017. The European mobile communications industry has already invested a high volume of resources in implementing the regulation in order to be able to carry out the required measures.

On 30 May 2013, during a meeting of Parliament's Committee on the internal market, Vice-President Neelie Kroes (Member of the Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda) announced the end of all roaming charges by 2015.

1. Are efforts being made to amend or supplement the measures already adopted under the Roaming III Regulation?

2. What incentives are there for alternative network operators to put into practice the business cases (Single IMSI and LBO) established by the Roaming III Regulation?

3. What ground rules is the Commission planning in order to make pan-European andtransparent competition possible ('must carry', bit exchange, number compatibility, etc.)?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(7 August 2013)

The 2013 Spring European Council stressed the importance of the digital single market for growth and, in its conclusions, included the need for concrete measures to be presented by the Commission in time for the October European Council to establish a Single Market for Information and Communications Technology as early as possible. The Commission is currently working on a set of legislative measures which should allow operators to provide digital services across the EU and allow citizens and businesses to enjoy such services from anywhere in Europe. Roaming charges are an example of the absence of such a single market today. Legal certainty and sufficient time to adapt to a new regulatory requirement constitute important elements of successful regulatory policy. The gradual reduction of roaming charges since 2007 has provided operators an opportunity to adapt their business plans. Respecting the same principle, the Commission is considering further measures to incentivise operators to provide roaming at domestic price levels building on the pro-competitive measures of the 2012 Roaming Regulation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007666/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Attività illecite della criminalità organizzata nelle sale slot

L'AIRA (Associazione Italiana Responsabili Antiriciclaggio) lancia un allarme: la criminalità organizzata si sta espandendo in Italia attraverso la filiera del gioco d'azzardo. I clan hanno trasformato il settore, che più di altri garantisce liquidità e al contempo permette di eludere facilmente i controlli, in uno strumento di riciclaggio di denaro sporco, usura e evasione fiscale. Sono 41 i gruppi che attualmente si spartiscono il racket del gioco d'azzardo sul territorio nazionale, in parte con la complicità degli esercenti, in parte con l'imposizione di slot-machine appositamente modificate per evadere la rete del Monopolio di Stato, controllando poi i ricavi o pretendendo una larga percentuale dai gestori. Nonostante l'avanzata tecnologia degli apparecchi, la criminalità organizzata è riuscita anche a clonare le schede dei dispositivi di gioco di ultima generazione, con la complicità di professionisti lautamente compensati.

Potrebbe la Commissione chiarire se:

— è a conoscenza dei fatti?

— Considerando che l'Italia rappresenta il più grande mercato del gioco d'azzardo in Europa e uno dei più grandi al mondo (con un fatturato di 90 miliardi di euro registrato nel 2012), ritiene opportuno intervenire, ed eventualmente in che modo, per contrastare tale meccanismo che permette alle organizzazioni mafiose di gestire illecitamente milioni di euro?

— Con riferimento alla proposta di direttiva e regolamento approvata dalla Commissione il 5 febbraio 2013 per combattere le alterazioni sospette e garantire la lotta al riciclaggio di denaro nel settore del gioco d'azzardo, quali provvedimenti concreti intende far adottare agli Stati membri?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(16 agosto 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'implicazione di lunga data della criminalità organizzata in alcune attività dell'industria del gioco d'azzardo, comprese quelle legate agli apparecchi utilizzati nei bar e caffè.

Questo particolare tipo di attività della criminalità organizzata non è stato segnalato nella relazione di Europol sulla valutazione della minaccia rappresentata dalla criminalità organizzata e dalle forme gravi di criminalità (SOCTA) del 2013 ([1]). Ciò potrebbe significare che la dimensione transfrontaliera di questa attività deve ancora essere dimostrata, anche se alcuni Stati membri hanno istituito unità d'indagine specifiche per occuparsi di questo tipo di frodi.

Il ciclo programmatico dell'UE per contrastare la criminalità organizzata e le forme gravi di criminalità internazionale ha individuato nove priorità per gli anni 2013-2017 ([2]). La revisione che sarà organizzata a metà periodo potrebbe fornire indicazioni sull'esistenza di un riconoscimento più ampio della dimensione transfrontaliera di questo tipo di attività. Nel frattempo, riciclaggio e recupero dei beni sono considerati una questione trasversale da tenere presente per tutte le priorità.

La proposta della Commissione di una quarta direttiva antiriciclaggio ([3]) intende far fronte alle minacce emergenti di riciclaggio in questo settore, ampliando l'ambito di applicazione all'intero settore del gioco d'azzardo, per arrivare ad un approccio più omogeneo, basato sul rischio e comune a tutta l'UE.

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013PC0045:EN:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007666/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Illegal activities of organised criminals in games arcades

The AIRA (Italian Association of Anti-Money Laundering Officers) has sounded the alarm: organised crime is expanding in Italy through the gaming industry. More than other industries, gaming ensures liquidity, while at the same time making it easy to elude control, and gangs have transformed it into a way of laundering dirty money and committing usury and tax evasion. There are currently 41 groups which have carved up among themselves racketeering involving gambling in Italy, partly with the complicity of those working in the industry, partly by compelling them to use slot machines specially modified to evade the network of the State Monopoly, and the groups have taken control of the profits or forced operators to surrender a generous proportion of them. Despite the advanced technology used in the machines, organised criminals have also succeeded in cloning cards for the latest gaming machines, with the complicity of lavishly remunerated professionals.

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— Italy has the largest gaming market in Europe and one of the largest in the world (with a turnover of EUR 90 bn in 2012). Does the Commission therefore consider it desirable to clamp down on such arrangements which enable Mafia-type organisations to manage millions of euros illicitly? If so, how?

— With reference to the proposals for a directive and regulation adopted by the Commission on 5 February 2013 to combat suspected modifications and money laundering in the gaming industry, what practical measures does the Commission intend to induce Member States to take?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 August 2013)

The Commission is aware of the longstanding involvement of organised crime in parts of the gaming industry, including machines used in bars and cafés.

This particular type of organised crime activity has not been flagged in the Europol 2013 Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) report ([1]). This could indicate that the cross-border dimension of this activity has yet to be demonstrated, even though some Member States set up specific investigation units dealing with this type of fraud.

The EU policy cycle on serious and transnational organised crime has identified 9 priorities for the years 2013-2017 ([2]). A review will be organised at mid-term and could indicate whether there is wider recognition of the cross-border dimension of this type of activity. In the meantime, money laundering and asset recovery are considered a cross-cutting concern to be addressed in all priorities.

The Commission's proposal for a 4th Anti-Money Laundering Directive ([3]) is seeking to address perceived money laundering threats in this sector by broadening its scope to cover the entire gambling sector, which should result in a more homogenous and risk based approach throughout the EU.

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013PC0045:EN:NOT

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007667/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Spazzolini da denti cinesi: nessuna tutela per i consumatori

L'importazione di prodotti cinesi a rischio per la salute si sta diffondendo anche nel settore dell'igiene orale. Sono numerose, infatti, le aziende italiane che si riforniscono di spazzolini in Cina, dove tali prodotti costano 20 centesimi, li confezionano con il proprio marchio e li rivendono a 2-4 euro. Come dimostrano i test effettuati, in 9 casi su 10 gli articoli importati, oltre a utilizzare materiali plastici di scarsa qualità, non rispettano la norma prevista per l'arrotondamento delle punte delle setole, fondamentale per non intaccare lo smalto dei denti. Gli spazzolini cinesi, invece, sono spesso realizzati con setole non adeguatamente lavorate, perché la procedura di arrotondamento, richiedendo tempo, inciderebbe sul costo finale.

L'unica norma europea finora esistente in materia, la BS EN ISO 2016:2012 del 31 marzo 2012, si limita a stabilire la norma per i requisiti e i metodi di prova circa le proprietà fisiche degli spazzolini manuali, al fine di promuovere la sicurezza nell'utilizzo di tali prodotti, ma non ha carattere obbligatorio. Essa prevede inoltre l'obbligo per i produttori di dichiarare in etichetta la presenza di setole arrotondate solo quando queste superino il 50 %, riconoscendo il rispetto dello standard anche ai modelli che contengono il 49 % di setole irregolari.

Potrebbe la Commissione chiarire se:

— è a conoscenza dei fatti;

— riterrebbe opportuno, al fine di contrastare tale pratica dannosa per la salute dei consumatori europei, avviare controlli mirati sulle aziende che non informano il consumatore sulla reale provenienza del prodotto;

— non ritenga utile un intervento legislativo a livello comunitario per stabilire adeguati parametri e standard di sicurezza comuni intesi a tutelare i consumatori europei?

Risposta di Neven Mimica a nome della Commissione
(9 agosto 2013)

Non risultano alla Commissione problemi relativi alla salute e alla sicurezza degli spazzolini da denti secondo quanto riferito dall'on. deputato. In particolare, gli Stati membri non hanno notificato, attraverso il sistema di allarme rapido per i prodotti non alimentari pericolosi (RAPEX), alcuna misura volta a prevenire o a limitare la commercializzazione di spazzolini da denti a causa di possibili rischi per la salute e la sicurezza dei consumatori.

Quanto ai controlli mirati, spetta agli Stati membri effettuare controlli di vigilanza dei mercati ed adottare azioni adeguate nel caso in cui vengano individuati prodotti pericolosi. È opportuno rilevare che la direttiva 2001/95/CE ([1]) del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 3 dicembre 2001, sulla sicurezza generale dei prodotti non contiene un obbligo di indicare il luogo di fabbricazione dei prodotti stessi.

Tale direttiva stabilisce già un chiaro obbligo di immettere sul mercato dell'Unione europea solo prodotti sicuri. Pertanto, nel caso in cui venissero immessi sul mercato spazzolini da denti pericolosi, spetterebbe alle autorità di sorveglianza degli Stati membri adottare misure limitative o correttive.

([1]) GU L 11 del 15.1.2002.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007667/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Toothbrushes from China: no protection for consumers

In line with developments in other sectors, Chinese-made products which pose a risk to public health are becoming increasingly common on the oral hygiene market. Large numbers of firms in Italy are now sourcing toothbrushes from China, where they cost 20 cents, packaging them under their own labels and selling them for between EUR 2 and EUR 4. Tests have shown that nine out of 10 of these imported toothbrushes are made of poor quality plastic and do not meet the standard for rounding the ends of the bristles, which is vital in order to prevent damage to dental enamel. The ends of the bristles on many Chinese-made toothbrushes are not properly rounded, as this process takes time and thus increases production costs.

The only European standard currently existing in this area, BS EN ISO 2016:2012 of 31 March 2012, goes no further than to lay down requirements and test methods for the physical properties of manual toothbrushes with a view to making them safer to use, and is not binding. What is more, the standard stipulates that, for producers to be able to state that a toothbrush has end-rounded bristles, at least 50% of the bristles must be end-rounded, which in practice means that up to 49% of the bristles in those toothbrushes may be rough-ended.

— Is the Commission aware of this situation?

— Would it agree that, in order to discourage this practice, which poses a health risk for consumers, targeted checks should be carried out on companies that do not tell consumers where their products were actually made?

— Would it agree that EU legislation needs to be enacted in order to lay down common safety standards and rules that will protect the health of EU consumers?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(9 August 2013)

The Commission has no evidence on health and safety issues with toothbrushes as referred to by the Honourable Member. In particular no measures to prevent or restrict the marketing of toothbrushes due to possible risks to health and safety of consumers have been notified by Member States through the European rapid alert system for non-food dangerous products (RAPEX).

As regards targeted checks, it is the responsibility of Member States to carry out market surveillance checks and to take appropriate action in case they find dangerous products. It should be noted that directive 2001/95/EC [1] of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 December 2001 on general product safety does not contain an obligation to indicate where the products were made.

This directive already contains the clear obligation that only safe products may be placed on the European Union market. If therefore dangerous toothbrushes are placed on the market, restrictive or corrective measures would need to be taken by market surveillance authorities of the Member States.

[1] OJ L 11, 15.01.2002.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-007668/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(27 giugno 2013)

Oggetto: Utilizzo dei derivati da parte degli Stati membri

È dei giorni scorsi la notizia secondo cui il Ministero del Tesoro italiano avrebbe rinegoziato lo scorso anno alcuni contratti derivati, la cui stipula risalirebbe alla seconda metà degli anni Novanta. Dalla ristrutturazione risulterebbero potenziali perdite dell'ordine di 8 miliardi di euro, che aggraverebbero il già pesantissimo debito dello Stato italiano.

La questione che si pone è tuttavia politica, poiché questi derivati sottoscritti alla fine degli anni Novanta avrebbero permesso all'Italia di trovare un escamotage per «migliorare» i propri conti, consentendo così il suo ingresso nell'area euro già nella prima fase, circostanza che aveva all'epoca sollevato dubbi e sospetti.

Nell'interrogazione E-004801/2012 del maggio 2012, il sottoscritto aveva già denunciato questa presunta falsificazione dei bilanci dello Stato, come avvenuto del resto con la Grecia nei mesi successivi.

— Alla luce di queste nuove rivelazioni, non ritiene la Commissione di dover intraprendere un'inchiesta per sottoporre a verifica la situazione?

— Come ritiene possibile che nessuno si sia accorto che l'Italia adempisse solo formalmente ai criteri di convergenza per l'adozione della moneta unica, ma che la realtà fosse ben diversa?

— Quali misure intende prevedere per ottenere regole chiare e bilanci trasparenti da parte degli Stati membri?

— Il Tesoro italiano al 31 gennaio 2012 aveva contratti derivati stipulati per un valore di 160 miliardi di euro, ovvero pari ad un decimo dell'intero PIL annuale del Paese. Alla luce della rischiosità di questi investimenti, non ritiene la Commissione auspicabile che agli Stati membri e alle Istituzioni pubbliche sia vietato il riscorso a tali strumenti derivati?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(29 agosto 2013)

L'adesione dell'Italia all'euro è stata decisa dal Consiglio in linea con la normativa in vigore in quel momento. Detta normativa non prevedeva disposizioni in merito alla registrazione dei derivati.

Le prime norme sulla registrazione dei derivati sono state introdotte con l'entrata in vigore del Sistema europeo dei conti riveduto (SEC 95). Nel 2008 Eurostat ha ulteriormente precisato le norme contabili per i derivati finanziari nella procedura per i disavanzi eccessivi, attraverso orientamenti agli Stati membri.

Non è compito della Commissione raccomandare agli Stati membri quali strumenti utilizzare per gestire il loro debito pubblico. Il ruolo della Commissione consiste nel garantire che il debito venga gestito in modo tale da assicurarne la sostenibilità e nel garantire che tutte le informazioni necessarie relative alle operazioni di gestione del debito vengano registrate in maniera trasparente e adeguatamente comunicate a Eurostat, conformemente alla normativa in vigore. I prodotti derivati consentono ai responsabili della gestione del debito pubblico di gestire, ad esempio, i rischi legati all'esposizione in valuta o all'esposizione al rischio di tasso d'interesse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007668/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Use of derivatives by the Member States

In recent days reports have emerged suggesting that last year the Italian Finance Ministry renegotiated a number of derivatives contracts dating from the second half of the 1990s. The potential losses stemming from the restructuring of these deals could amount to as much as EUR 8 billion, adding even further to Italy's already very burdensome level of government debt.

The question which this raises is a political one, however, since these derivatives contracts concluded in the late 1990s appear to have been a trick which enabled Italy to 'clean up' its accounts and thus to join the eurozone in the first wave of countries, an event which at the time prompted doubts and suspicions.

In my Written Question E-004801/2012 of 10 May 2012 I condemned this apparent falsification of Italy's national accounts, and similar allegations were made against Greece in the subsequent months.

— In the light of these revelations, does the Commission not think that it should open an investigation in order to determine what actually happened?

— How is it possible that no-one noticed that Italy met the convergence criteria laid down for countries wishing to join the single currency only on paper, and that its economic situation was in fact very different?

— What measures does it intend to take to ensure that the Member States introduce clear rules and draw up transparent budgets?

— As at 31 January 2012 the Italian Treasury had on its books derivatives contracts worth EUR 160 billion, equivalent to one-tenth of Italy's annual GDP. Given the highly risky nature of such investments, does the Commission not think that the Member States and public institutions should be banned from concluding deals involving derivatives?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(29 August 2013)

Italy's accession to the euro was decided by the Council in line with the rules in force at the time. These rules did not include any provision on the recording of derivatives.

The first rules on the recording of derivatives were introduced with the entry into force of the revised European System of Accounts (ESA 1995), and in 2008 Eurostat further clarified the accounting rules for financial derivatives in EDP through guidelines to Member States.

It is not for the Commission to recommend to Member States which instruments to use to manage their public debt. The Commission's role is to ensure that debt is managed in such a way as to ensure its sustainability, and to ensure that all necessary information regarding debt management operations is transparently recorded and properly communicated to Eurostat in accordance with the rules in force. Derivatives enable public debt managers to manage the risk related to e.g. currency or interest rate exposure.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007669/13
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Foka szara w Bałtyku

W nawiązaniu do zapytania nr E-006325/2012, chciałbym doprecyzować kilka kwestii. Wraz ze wspomnianym wcześniej wzrostem populacji foki szarej w Bałtyku zauważalny jest problem spadku populacji ryb. Niektóre kraje podjęły działania w celu stworzenia warunków koegzystencji między fokami a rybołówstwem.

W Polsce, tak jak w wielu krajach nadbałtyckich, problem ten dotyka zwłaszcza rybołówstwa przybrzeżnego i małych armatorów. Straty nie wpływają znacząco na kondycję ogólnokrajowego rybołówstwa, jednakże w sensie indywidualnym są duże.

W krajach UE brakuje stosownego prawodawstwa w tej kwestii. W przypadku szkód powodowanych przez dzikie zwierzęta żyjące na lądzie, istnieją już odpowiednie regulacje prawne.

Problem odszkodowań za straty w połowach, jak i w samym sprzęcie rybackim mogłoby uregulować ogólnoeuropejskie rozporządzenie.

W celu ochrony zarówno populacji fok jak i kondycji europejskiego rybołówstwa, warto by nałożyć ogólnie obowiązujące regulacje w celu ochrony tej koegzystencji. Dodatkowym argumentem jest tu fakt, że foka szara to ssak migrujący. Nie jest to zatem zwierzę związane z jakimś określonym miejscem. Problem ten dotyczy wszystkich nadbałtyckich państw członkowskich.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać:

— Czy Komisja nie uważa, że w związku z powyższą argumentacją byłoby stosowne zlecenie dokładnych badań, które pomogłyby ustalić wpływ obecności foki szarej na ekosystem Bałtyku?

— Czy w oparciu o wyniki tych badań możliwe jest rozpoczęcie dyskusji i konsultacji społecznych dotyczących wprowadzenia planu zarządzania fokami?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(9 września 2013 r.)

Zgodnie z ostatnią oceną stanu ochrony, opublikowaną w oparciu o sprawozdania państw członkowskich zgodnie z art. 17 dyrektywy siedliskowej ([1]), stan ochrony foki szarej w regionie Morza Bałtyckiego jest postrzegany jako „niewłaściwy – zły" (U2). Nowa ocena stanu ochrony, która zostanie opublikowana w roku 2015, określi obecną sytuację i powinna być uwzględniona we wszelkich przyszłych dyskusjach na temat rozwoju stosunków w zakresie rybołówstwa na tym obszarze morskim.

Komisja śledzi prace dotyczące fok prowadzone przez grupę ekspertów ad hoc w ramach Konwencji o ochronie środowiska morskiego obszaru Morza Bałtyckiego ([2]), gdzie omawiane są kwestie takie jak poziom zagrożenia populacji wymarciem. W większości państw bałtyckich obowiązują już krajowe plany zarządzania lub są one obecnie opracowywane, a foki szare objęte są w nich programami monitorowania. W związku z tym Komisja nie przewiduje na tym etapie rozpoczęcia nowych badań, lecz opiera się na pracach regionalnej grupy ekspertów i popiera wysiłki państw bałtyckich mające na celu opracowanie planów zarządzania populacjami fok.

W odniesieniu do wsparcia finansowego za szkody dotyczące narzędzi połowowych, to w chwili obecnej Europejski Fundusz Rybacki (rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1198/2006 ([3])) wnosi wkład na rzecz finansowania sprzętu i prac modernizacyjnych służących do ochrony połowów i narzędzi połowowych przed drapieżnikami. Ogólne podejście Rady w odniesieniu do przyszłego instrumentu finansowego – Europejskiego Funduszu Morskiego i Rybackiego, który ma być przedmiotem negocjacji z Parlamentem Europejskim, przewiduje również wsparcie na rzecz ochrony narzędzi połowowych i połowów przed chronionymi ssakami i ptakami, pod warunkiem że nie pogarsza ona selektywności sprzętu połowowego i że zostaną zastosowane odpowiednie środki w celu uniknięcia fizycznego uszkodzenia drapieżników.

([1]) Dyrektywa 92/43/EWG, Dz.U. L 206 z 22.7.1992. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31992L0043:EN:NOT
([2]) http://www.helcom.fi/Convention/en_GB/text/
([3]) Dz.U. L 223 z 15.8.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007669/13
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Grey seals in the Baltic

There are some issues that I would like to clarify with reference to question No E-006325/2012. In addition to the increase in the grey seal population, there is another noticeable trend in the Baltic — decreasing fish stocks. Some countries have taken steps to ensure the co-existence of seals and fisheries.

In Poland — as in other countries bordering the Baltic Sea — this issue mainly affects coastal fishing and owners of small ships. The losses do not have a major impact on the national fisheries situation, but they do have a major impact on individuals.

There is no relevant legislation in the EU to address this issue. Legal provisions already exist to regulate damage caused by land-based wildlife.

Compensation for reduced catches and for damage to fishing gear could be regulated by a Europe-wide regulation.

Universal rules should be imposed in order to protect both the seal population and European fisheries. Another relevant argument is the fact that the grey seal is a migratory mammal. It is not, therefore, an animal with links to a specific location. This problem affects all of the Member States bordering the Baltic Sea.

— In light of the above, does the Commission not agree that it would be appropriate to commission in-depth studies to help determine the impact of the grey seal on the Baltic ecosystem?

— Would it be possible, on the basis of the results of these studies, to launch discussions andpublic consultations on introducing a seal management plan?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 September 2013)

According to the last published conservation status assessment, based on Member States' reports in accordance with Article 17 of the Habitats Directive ([1]), the status of the Grey Seal in the Baltic region is considered as 'unfavourable-bad' (U2). A new conservation status assessment, to be published in 2015, will determine the current situation and should inform any future discussions on managing relations with fisheries in this marine area.

The Commission is following the *ad hoc* expert group on seals under the Baltic Regional Sea Convention ([2]), where issues like the population's extinction risk levels are under discussion. Most Baltic States already have national management plans in force or under development and Grey Seals are part of their monitoring programmes. Thus, the Commission does not intend to launch new studies at this stage but relies on the ongoing regional expert group and supports Baltic States' efforts to continue their seals management plans.

As regards the financial support for damages to fishing gears the current European Fisheries Fund (Council Regulation (EC) No1198/2006 ([3])) contributes to the financing of equipment and modernisation works for the protection of catches and gear from wild predators. The general approach of the Council on the future financial instrument — the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, which is still to be negotiated with the European Parliament, also foresees a support for protecting gear and catches from protected mammals and birds, provided that it does not undermine the selectivity of the fishing gear and that all appropriate measures are introduced to avoid physical damage to the predators.

([1]) Directive 92/43/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31992L0043:EN:NOT
([2]) http://www.helcom.fi/Convention/en_GB/text/
([3]) OJ L 223, 15.8.2006.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-007670/13
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(27 czerwca 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Dostępność wiz Schengen w polskich konsulatach na Białorusi

Z napływających do mnie sygnałów wynika, że w ostatnim czasie w polskich konsulatach na Białorusi nasilił się problem trudności z rejestracją wniosku o wydanie wizy Schengen. W szczególności dotyczy to wydziału konsularnego w Mińsku, ale również innych placówek.

Obywatele Białorusi alarmują, że od kilku miesięcy nie ma możliwości zapisania się w uczciwy sposób na termin złożenia wniosku wizowego do polskich konsulatów. Przy próbie rejestracji wniosku w systemie polskiego Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych e-konsulat wyświetla się informacja o błędzie lub braku terminów. Wynika to najprawdopodobniej z tego, że w rzeczywistości wszystkie dostępne miejsca są natychmiast przechwytywane przez hakerów, którzy odsprzedają miejsce w kolejce za 200-400 euro.

Liczne interwencje w polskim Ministerstwie Spraw Zagranicznych nie przynoszą jak dotąd poprawy tej sytuacji.

W związku z tym zwracam się z następującym pytaniem:

Czy Komisja podejmie kroki zapewniające obywatelom Białorusi równy i uczciwy dostęp do możliwości uzyskania wizy Schengen w polskich konsulatach na Białorusi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(20 sierpnia 2013 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma, że niektóre konsulaty państw członkowskich w niektórych krajach nie stosują się do wymogu wyznaczenia terminu złożenia wniosków wizowych w terminie określonym w kodeksie wizowym. Komisja wyjaśnia tą kwestię z właściwymi organami w państwach członkowskich, w tym z polskimi władzami.

W odniesieniu do szczególnego przypadku Białorusi, Komisja została poinformowana, że władze Białorusi nie zgodziły się na wydanie akredytacji dla dodatkowych członków personelu konsularnego ani dla polskich władz, upoważniającej do korzystania z usługodawcy zewnętrznego w zakresie przyjmowania wniosków wizowych, co mogłoby przyczynić się do wygospodarowania czasu dla personelu konsulatów na rozpatrywanie rosnącej liczby wniosków. Jeśli chodzi o system e-konsulat, strona polska podjęła kroki mające na celu jego ochronę przed atakami, które prowadzą do powstawania wirtualnych kolejek i sztucznie przedłużonego czasu oczekiwania.

Komisja pragnie zagwarantować, że procedury wizowe nie stanowią przeszkody dla legalnie przemieszczających się osób i w związku z tym zachęca państwa członkowskie do wydawania wizy wielokrotnego wjazdu o długim okresie ważności osobom, które korzystały z wcześniejszych wiz zgodnie z prawem. To mogłyby również przyczynić się do wygospodarowania środków konsularnych na rozpatrywanie wniosków wizowych.

W 2012 r. łączna liczba wiz wielokrotnego wjazdu do krajów wschodnich objętych europejską polityką sąsiedztwa wyniosła 40 % wszystkich wydanych wiz, co stanowi wzrost o 3 % w stosunku do 2011 r.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007670/13
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(27 June 2013)

Subject: Availability of Schengen visas in Polish consulates in Belarus

I am informed that it has recently become much more difficult to apply for a Schengen visa in Polish consulates in Belarus. This problem mainly affects the consular section in Minsk, but other consulates are also concerned.

Belarusians are alarmed, as for several months now they have been unable to honestly obtain an appointment to submit a visa application to Polish consulates. Attempts to register an application on the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs e-consulate system result in an error message or in a message stating that no appointments are available. This is most likely due to the fact that all of the appointments are immediately snatched up by hackers, who then sell places in the queue for between EUR 200 and EUR 400.

Despite the numerous interventions that have been made within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this state of affairs shows no sign of improving.

Will the Commission take steps to ensure that Belarusian citizens have equal and honest access to Schengen visa application procedures in Polish consulates in Belarus?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(20 August 2013)

The Commission is aware that some Member States' consulates in certain countries are failing to respect the deadline set by the Visa Code for granting appointments for lodging visa applications. The Commission is clarifying the issue with the competent authorities in MS, including with Polish authorities.

As regards the specific case of Belarus, the Commission has been informed that the Belarus authorities have refused to allow the accreditation of additional consular staff or for the Polish authorities to make use of an external service provider for the purpose of collecting visa applications which could contribute to free up time for staff at the consulate to deal with the growing number of applications. As regards the e-konsulat system, Poland has taken measures to protect it from attacks that lead to virtual queuing and waiting times that are artificially extended.

The Commission is keen to ensure that the visa procedures do not constitute an obstacle for legitimate travellers' movements and therefore encourages Member States to issue multiple entry visas (MEVs) with a long validity to persons who have used previous visas lawfully. That would also contribute to freeing up consular resources for handling visa applications.

In 2012 the total number of MEVs in the Eastern ENP amounted to 40% of all visas issued which represents an increase of 3% compared to 2011.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-007671/13
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(28 iunie 2013)

Subiect: Protecția consumatorilor privind garantarea calității conexiunilor de bandă largă

Conform unui studiu realizat recent de Comisia Europeană, consumatorii europeni nu primesc viteza de transfer internet pentru care plătesc, aceştia primind, în medie, numai 74% din viteza anunțată pentru care plătesc.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri are în vedere, inclusiv la nivel legislativ, pentru a proteja consumatorii în privința garantării calității conexiunilor de bandă largă pentru care aceştia plătesc.

Are Comisia deja un calendar stabilit pentru implementarea acestor măsuri?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(24 iulie 2013)

Viteza reală de conexiune la internet înregistrată într-o rețea publică de comunicații depinde de o serie de factori, inclusiv de tipul conexiunii, de numărul utilizatorilor unei anumite rețele, de capacitatea rețelei și de capacitatea serverelor furnizorilor conexiunii la internet. Comisia recunoaște că acest lucru nu este întotdeauna ușor de înțeles pentru clienți și că ar putea să existe situații în care nu sunt atinse vitezele anunțate în reclame. Comisia consideră că clienții ar trebui să fie informați în mod corespunzător cu privire la viteza reală pe care furnizorul de servicii de acces la internet o poate livra, și nu doar cu privire la o viteza teoretică, orice abatere trebuind să fie redusă la minimum.

Referitor la acest aspect, cadrul de reglementare al UE pentru comunicațiile electronice conține măsuri privind asigurarea transparenței. Cu toate acestea, asigurarea unui grad de transparență mai ridicat în ceea ce privește viteza conexiunii la internet efectiv disponibilă pentru consumatori, inclusiv creșterea nivelului de înțelegere al acestora cu privire la modul în care viteza conexiunii în bandă largă și alți parametri de calitate afectează utilizarea aplicațiilor și a serviciilor, reprezintă un domeniu în care consumatorii europeni ar putea să beneficieze de un sprijin suplimentar. De exemplu, un studiu publicat recent privind calitatea serviciilor în bandă largă în UE ([1]) arată că în medie, viteza conexiunii la internet atinsă de consumatorii din UE este de 74 % din viteza anunțată pentru care au plătit.

Consiliul European din primăvara anului 2013 a subliniat importanța pieței unice digitale și a făcut apel la măsuri concrete pentru instituirea unei piețe unice pentru tehnologia informației și comunicațiilor. În acest scop, Comisia intenționează să prezinte, în septembrie 2013, o inițiativă legislativă menită să creeze o adevărată piață unică în domeniul telecomunicațiilor, care va aborda, printre altele, problemele legate de transparență în ceea ce privește viteza conexiunii la internet.

([1]) Studiu privind calitatea serviciilor în bandă largă în UE, în martie 2012, realizat pentru Comisia Europeană de către SamKnows Limited, https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/quality-broadband-services-eu-march-2012

(English version)

Question for written answer P-007671/13
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(28 June 2013)

Subject: Consumer protection through high quality broadband Internet connections

According to a recent Commission study, European consumers, far from receiving the advertised Internet connection speed for which they are paying, are on average obtaining only 74% thereof.

In view of this:

What legislative and other measures are being envisaged by the Commission with a view to protecting the interests of consumers and ensuring that they receive the broadband connection quality for which they are paying?

Has the Commission already established a timetable for the implementation of these measures?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2013)

The actual Internet connection speed delivered over public communications network is a result of a number of different factors, including the type of the connection, the number of users sharing a particular network, the capacity of the network and the capacity of the website servers. The Commission recognises that this is not always easy for customers to understand, and there might be instances where the advertised speeds are not achieved. The Commission considers that customers should be duly informed about the speed that they can normally expect to be achieved by their Internet access service, and not a merely theoretical speed, and any deviation should be kept to a minimum.

The EU regulatory framework for electronic communications provides for transparency measures in this regard. However, ensuring better transparency of the actually available Internet speeds for consumers, including improving their understanding of how broadband speeds and other quality parameters affect the use of applications and service, is an area where European consumers could benefit from further support. For example, a recently published study on quality of broadband services in the EU ([1]) shows that on average, EU consumers receive 74% of the advertised headline speed they have paid for.

The 2013 Spring European Council stressed the importance of the digital single market and called for concrete measures to establish a Single Market for Information and Communications Technology. To this effect, the Commission intends presenting in September 2013 a legislative initiative to create a true Telecoms Single Market, which will *inter alia* address the issue of transparency regarding Internet speeds.

([1]) Study on quality of broadband services in the EU March 2012, carried out for the European Commission by SamKnows Limited, https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/quality-broadband-services-eu-march-2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-007672/13
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(28. Juni 2013)

Betrifft: Fluktuation und Fehlzeiten beim OLAF

1. Wie viele Mitarbeiter haben seit 1. Juli 2011 bis 1. Februar 2012 das OLAF verlassen

   — in den Ruhestand?

   — in andere Generaldirektionen der Kommission?

   — zu anderen Organen/Einrichtungen der Europäischen Union?

   — in die Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Wie viele Mitarbeiter haben seit 1. Februar 2012 bis Ende 2012 das OLAF verlassen

   — in den Ruhestand?

   — in andere Generaldirektionen der Kommission?

   — zu anderen Organen/Einrichtungen der Europäischen Union?

   — in die Mitgliedstaaten?

3. Wie viele Mitarbeiter haben 2013 das OLAF verlassen

   — in den Ruhestand?

   — in andere Generaldirektionen der Kommission?

   — zu anderen Organen/Einrichtungen der Europäischen Union?

   — in die Mitgliedstaaten?

4. Wie haben sich die Fehlzeiten (Krankheitstage) der Mitarbeiter seit 1. Februar 2012 (für jeden Monat, bitte) entwickelt?

5. Wie hat sich die Nutzung der Flexitime und des damit verbundenen Freizeitausgleichs 2012 und 2013 entwickelt?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(13. September 2013)

Gründe für den Weggang vom OLAF	1. Juli 2011 - 31. Januar 2012	1. Februar 2012 - 31. Dezember 2012	1. Januar 2013 - 30. Juni 2013
Ruhestand	3	7	4
Wechsel zu anderen Dienststellen der Kommission	8	16	14
Wechsel zu einem anderen Organ oder einer anderen Einrichtung der EU	1		4
Abordnung an eine nationale Verwaltungsbehörde		1	

Die krankheitsbedingten Abwesenheiten zwischen Februar 2012 und Juni 2013 betrugen durchschnittlich 4,70 %.

Die Tendenz bei der Verwendung der Flexitime-Regelung ist gleichbleibend. Drei Viertel der OLAF-Mitarbeiter wenden die Flexitime-Regelung an.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007672/13
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(28 June 2013)

Subject: Varying staff levels and absences from work in OLAF

1. How many staff members left OLAF between 1 July 2011 and 1 February 2012:

— … because of retirement?

— … to transfer to other Commission DGs?

— … to transfer to other EU institutions or bodies?

— … to transfer to any of the Member States?

2. How many staff members left OLAF between 1 February 2012 and the end of that year:

— … because of retirement?

— … to transfer to other Commission DGs?

— … to transfer to other EU institutions or bodies?

— … to transfer to any of the Member States?

3. How many staff members left OLAF in 2013:

— … because of retirement?

— … to transfer to other Commission DGs?

— … to transfer to other EU institutions or bodies?

— … to transfer to any of the Member States?

4. What have been the trends regarding days off work (sick leave) taken by staff members since 1 February 2012 (indicating figures for each month)?

5. What have been the trends regarding use of flexitime and related compensatory leave facilities in 2012 and 2013?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(13 September 2013)

Grounds for leaving OLAF	1 July 2011 — 31 January 2012	1 February — 31 December 2012	1 January 2013 — 30 June 2013
Retirement	3	7	4
Transfer to other Commission services	8	16	14
Transfer to another EU institution or body	1		4
Detachment to a national administration		1	

The average percentage of sickness leave between February 2012 and June 2013 is 4.70%.

The trends in OLAF on the use of flexitime are stable, three quarters of the OLAF Staff use flexitime.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-007673/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(28 Ιουνίου 2013)

Θέμα: Μείωση του Ειδικού Φόρου Κατανάλωσης (ΕΦΚ) στα καύσιμα κινητήρων και θέρμανσης για τα ελληνικά νησιά

Στην Ελλάδα, μεταξύ των τομέων της οικονομίας που έχουν επιβαρυνθεί ιδιαίτερα από την υφιστάμενη οικονομική συγκυρία και την υψηλή φορολογία, είναι και η αγορά πετρελαιοειδών (μεταξύ άλλων ΦΠΑ και ΕΦΚ), με αποτέλεσμα τη μειωμένη κατανάλωση αυτών και το κλείσιμο πολλών επιχειρήσεων του είδους. Ειδικότερα στις νησιωτικές περιοχές της Ελλάδας, λόγω της απομακρυσμένης θέσης τους από τον ηπειρωτική χώρα, αλλά και του περιορισμένου πληθυσμού τους, παρατηρείται μεγαλύτερη ύφεση στην εν λόγω αγορά, που χωρίς την εφαρμογή ευνοϊκότερων ρυθμίσεων η κατάσταση είναι δύσκολα αναστρέψιμη.

Δεδομένου ότι η Συνθήκη Λειτουργίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης αναγνωρίζει τον ιδιαίτερο χαρακτήρα των εξόχως απόκεντρων περιοχών της, οι οποίες σε πολλές περιπτώσεις είναι απομονωμένες και νησιωτικές και την ανάγκη στήριξης της ανάπτυξής τους με τη λήψη ειδικών μέτρων που λαμβάνουν υπόψη την ιδιαίτερη γεωγραφική θέση των περιοχών αυτών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Αντίστοιχα με το πλαίσιο που ισχύει για τις γεωγραφικές παρεκκλίσεις στον ΦΠΑ τόσο για τα ελληνικά νησιά όσο και για άλλες περιοχές της ΕΕ (Οδηγία 92/77/ΕΟΚ), θα μπορούσε η Ελλάδα να αξιοποιήσει τις διατάξεις της οδηγίας 2003/96/ΕΚ, σχετικά με την αναδιάρθρωση του κοινοτικού πλαισίου φορολογίας των ενεργειακών προϊόντων και της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (ιδίως το άρθρο 19 παρ. 1), προκειμένου να ισχύσει ένα αντίστοιχο καθεστώς γεωγραφικής διαφοροποίησης στον ΕΦΚ στα καύσιμα κινητήρων και θέρμανσης για τα ελληνικά νησιά; Λαμβάνοντας βέβαια υπόψη μια προβλεπόμενη μείωση του ΕΦΚ κατά μέτριο ποσοστό, ώστε να αντισταθμιστεί μεν το κόστος μεταφοράς, με το οποίο επιβαρύνονται οι περιοχές αυτές, αλλά και να μην οδηγήσει σε αθέμιτες πρακτικές στην κατανάλωση, καθώς και τις διατάξεις του άρθρου 7 της εν λόγω οδηγίας για τα ελάχιστα προβλεπόμενα επίπεδα.

— Έχοντας ως δεδομένο ότι οι γαλλικές αρχές (σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 19 της οδηγίας 2003/96/ΕΚ) ζήτησαν, και τελικά τους χορηγήθηκε, άδεια για εφαρμογή μειωμένου συντελεστή φορολογίας της αμόλυβδης βενζίνης που χρησιμοποιείται ως καύσιμο και διατίθεται προς κατανάλωση στα διοικητικά διαμερίσματα της Κορσικής (απόφαση Συμβουλίου 2007/880/ΕΚ), έχει υποβάλλει ποτέ η Ελλάδα αντίστοιχο αίτημα για τα ελληνικά νησιά;

— Θεωρεί ότι υφίστανται σήμερα ισότιμες συνθήκες μεταξύ των καταναλωτών των ελληνικών νησιών και αυτών της ηπειρωτικής Ελλάδας στον τομέα της αγοράς καυσίμων;

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

1. Επί του παρόντος, το άρθρο 18 παράγραφος 8 της οδηγίας 2003/96/ΕΚ ([1]) επιτρέπει στην Ελλάδα να επιβάλει χαμηλότερα επίπεδα φορολόγησης στο πετρέλαιο που καταναλίσκεται στη Λέσβο, στη Χίο, στη Σάμο, στα Δωδεκάνησα και στις Κυκλάδες καθώς και σε νησιά του Αιγαίου.

2. Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 19 της οδηγίας 2003/96/ΕΚ, το Συμβούλιο, αποφασίζοντας ομόφωνα έπειτα από πρόταση της Επιτροπής, μπορεί να εξουσιοδοτήσει οποιοδήποτε κράτος μέλος να χορηγήσει περαιτέρω φορολογικές απαλλαγές ή μειώσεις για λόγους ειδικής πολιτικής. Το κράτος μέλος που σκοπεύει να θεσπίσει τέτοια μέτρα ενημερώνει σχετικά την Επιτροπή και της παρέχει όλες τις συναφείς και αναγκαίες πληροφορίες. Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει κάθε αίτημα λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την εύρυθμη λειτουργία της εσωτερικής αγοράς, την ανάγκη διασφάλισης συνθηκών θεμιτού ανταγωνισμού και την υλοποίηση των πολιτικών της Επιτροπής για την υγεία, το περιβάλλον, την ενέργεια και τις μεταφορές. Η Ελλάδα δεν υπέβαλε επίσημο αίτημα για εφαρμογή παρέκκλισης σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 19 της οδηγίας 2003/96/ΕΚ.

3. Η Επιτροπή είναι της γνώμης ότι η εφαρμογή ενιαίου φορολογικού συντελεστή σε ενεργειακά προϊόντα, ανεξάρτητα από τη γεωγραφική θέση της διάθεσης σε κατανάλωση των καυσίμων, δεν αποτελεί λόγο στρέβλωσης της αγοράς.

([1]) Οδηγία του Συμβουλίου 2003/96/ΕΚ της 27ης Οκτωβρίου 2003 σχετικά με την αναδιάρθρωση του κοινοτικού πλαισίου φορολογίας των ενεργειακών προϊόντων και της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (ΕΕ L 283 της 31.10.2003, σ. 51).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-007673/13
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(28 June 2013)

Subject: Reduction in the special excise duty (SED) on heating fuel or motor fuel for the Greek islands

In Greece, one of the economic sectors particularly affected by the current economic situation and high taxes (including VAT and SED) is the market in petroleum products; this has led to a reduction in consumption of these products and the closure of many businesses in this sector. Especially on the Greek islands, due to their remoteness from the mainland, and the small size of their population, that market has suffered a major decline, which will be virtually irreversible unless more favourable rules are implemented.

Since the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union recognises the special nature of the EU's outermost regions, which in many cases are isolated areas and islands, and the need to support their development requirements by specific measures that take into account their particular geographical location, will the Commission say:

— Taking as a model the framework that applies to geographical exemptions from VAT both for the Greek islands and other areas of the EU (Directive 92/77/EEC), could Greece invoke the provisions of Directive 2003/96/EC on restructuring the Community framework for the taxation of energy products and electricity (in particular Article 19 [1]) in order to apply a corresponding regime of geographical differentiation to the SED on motor fuels and heating oil for the Greek islands? Taking into account a proposed moderate reduction in the SED rate which compensates for the transport costs borne by these regions, but does not lead to unfair consumption practices, and the provisions of Article 7 of the directive in question on minimum proposed levels;

— Bearing in mind that the French authorities (in accordance with Article 19 of Directive 2003/96/EC) sought, and were eventually granted, permission to apply a reduced rate of taxation to unleaded petrol used as motor fuel and consumed in the Corsican departments (Council Decision 2007/880/EC), has Greece ever submitted a comparable request for the Greek islands?

— Does it believe that there is currently a level playing field between consumers in the fuel market on the Greek islands and those in mainland Greece?

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

1. Currently Article 18(8) of Directive 2003/96/EC [1] allows Greece to apply lower levels of taxation to petrol consumed in the departments of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, the Dodecanese and the Cyclades and on a number of Islands in the Aegean.

2. According to Article 19 of Directive 2003/96/EC, the Council acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission, may authorise any Member State to introduce further tax exemptions or reductions for specific policy considerations. A Member State wishing to introduce such a measure shall inform the Commission accordingly and shall also provide the Commission with all relevant and necessary information. When the Commission examines a request, it takes into account the proper functioning of the internal market, the need to ensure fair competition and the implementation of the Community's health, environment, energy and transport policies. Greece has not submitted a formal request to apply derogation under Article 19 of Directive 2003/96/EC.

3. The Commission is of the opinion that the application of a single tax rate on an energy product independent of the geographical location of the release for consumption of the fuel is not a cause of market distortion.

[1] Council Directive 2003/96/EC of 27 October 2003 restructuring the Community framework for taxation of energy products and electricity (OJ L 283 of 31.10.2003 p. 51).

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